

## 5 of our favourite Creative Problem Solving Techniques

*Designed to catapult you out of your problem zone and start thinking more creatively about ideas and solutions...*

1. **Quick Thinking.** Grab a pen and write down a list of the most obvious ideas and solutions. Don't give yourself too long – no more than 15 minutes. Now take each obvious solution and see how you could take it one step further. Do this again for your second list of ideas...
2. **Go for a walk.** It could be around your office. Around your business park. To a local cafe or sandwich shop. Around a shopping centre. Through a supermarket. Through a car yard. Through an industrial area. Preferably an area where you can see people or businesses in action and observe. **Note down the things that you see that are interesting, clever or intriguing. Don't relate them to your problem, just write them down. Now get back to your bunker. What did you see? What was interesting?** Are there any ideas or lessons that you could transfer to your business challenge?
3. Get ideas in your leisure time. **Read a magazine that you would not normally read.** If you are usually a Financial Review lover, try WHO Weekly or Marie Claire. If you can't be torn away from NW, try Franchising for Success or Motorsport weekly. **Make a list of interesting observations and things that you've learned from this journey. Any ideas that you could use to form a solution for your challenge?**
4. Your company or brand or department has sadly passed away. **On a sheet of paper, list the top 5 words or phrases that you'll use in writing the obituary.** (They could be good, positive attributes, but they could also be the reasons for its demise). **Now write the antonyms to these words next to them on the page. How could using some of these antonyms come up with unexpected strategies that may provide fresh thinking?**
5. Choose **a winning business** and do some desk research into problems they have overcome in the past – it could be a business like Virgin, or a smaller scale like Sumo Salad or Jim's Mowing. What lessons and inspiration can you take from a different business's experience?

For more ideas, or for help applying some of these tools to your business challenge, get in touch with Plan-Tation today.

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