



## Lateral Thinking

Lateral thinking is a popular approach to idea generation that may be applied by individuals or groups. The technique is based on the assumption that people think in known patterns and within certain boundaries. Lateral thinking changes these pieces of information to consequently break assumptions and cut across routine thinking patterns. There are a variety of tools that can be used to support this technique including, thinking hats, random word generation, and provocation.

### Using 'Lateral Thinking'

Step 1: Write down all assumptions that are made regarding a certain question or problem.

Step 2: Record all the obvious, straightforward solutions and then ask 'what if none of these were feasible?'

Step 3: Rewrite the initial question or problem.

Step 4: Work backwards, starting from the solution, this time excluding all the assumptions detailed earlier.

Step 5: Repeat step 4, but with a change of perspective. Pretending to be somebody else, for instance a customer or supplier, may provide novel insights into the situation and aid in the generation of a solution.

