Cromas

Field of application	#Ideation #Idea improvement #Product design #Service design #Process design #Creativity skills development
Resume / Brief description	CROMAS is a group of 6 routes to create new ideas, proposed in 1953 by Alex Osborn, and whose original name was SCAMPER. As CROMAS sounds closer to Chromatic (related to colors) this is a good alternative to the original denomination. CROMAS is a set of actions intended to help innovators to find ideas to avoid mental fixation and find new alternatives to tradicional solutions. The technique uses a set of questions to encourage ideators to find new concepts. The actions are: - To Combine - To Reorder - To find Other uses - To Modify - To Adapt - To Supress or Substitute Category: Ideation
Target group	Entrepreneurs I&D teams Innovation teams Students Community
Group Size	Teams from 1 to 6 people. 1 to 10 Teams
Objectives	The objective of CROMAS is to find new ideas to: - Solve a problem - Improve an existing product, service or process - Create a new product or service
Material Required (Physical version)	Material: • Paper and pens • CROMAS questions list • a digital platform to write ideas. It could be a digital board (Google jamboard, Microsoft Board or other) or a conventional word processor. Time: • 30 to 90 minutes

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Implementation - Overview	The technique can be used following these steps: 1. Identify and write in a clear way the challenge or the problem to solve. 2. Apply the CROMAS questions 3. Select the best ideas

Implementation - Guidelines	1. The first step is to identify the problem to solve or the product, service or process to optimize. Write it down as a clear objective for the session in a way that every participant can read it and be sure that all them understand it perfectly. 2. If you have a big group it is a good idea to break it into teams of 2 to 6 participants each. Having groups will let you to assign different letters to each one or compare results adding some competition to the activity. Appoint an idea-writer on each team and assign her the task of writing down every idea in detail. Encourage them to use not just words but drawings also. 3. Explain the CROMAS general idea and the way the questions are used to search for new ideas. To start the activity you have to options: - To assign a different letter to each team. You can do this using a dice to pick a number between 1 and 6 (Remember that CROMAS has 6 letters/questions) - To go letter by letter asking all the teams to use them simultaneously. 7 to 15 minutes can be a good time for all the teams to work on the assigned letter. 4. Project or hand-out a card with the questions related to the present letter. Remember that each letter is a mental game, an enticing question that leads to generating ideas. In this technique the most important thing is to let the imagination be led by the brain's right side, to explore new roads. The key is not to base ourselves in logic to find new ideas but do it "without thinking too much." Logic will come after, when the time por idea evaluation arrives. A base question for each letter is: C: COMBINE – What new idea can I create combining (without thinking it too much) two things or actions already existing? R: REORDER – If I change (without thinking it too much) the order of doing things, is there something new and genial? O: OTHER USES – If I change this context element (without thinking it too much) will it have a novel use and will it originate something innovating? M: MODIFY – If I change the dimensions, or the material, or the colors (without thinking it too much) do I change my idea into something surprising? A: ADAPT – If I take (without thinking it too much) a strategy or solution that is already functioning into another different environment, can I bring it into my situation, creating something innovating? S: SUPPRESS/SUBSTITUTE – If I take (without thinking it too much) something that is supposedly necessary in my original design, and I force myself to rethink it over, will it be renovated? The CROMAS questions list includes other questions than can help in the process. One important thing to remember is that it's not required to follow a specific order when applying the letters. 5- Idea evaluation. This activity can be carried out as part of the CROMAS session or in a session afterwards. You can do the evaluations grouping similar ideas, letting a group of experts to vote, using the impact/viability matrix or other tools

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| Example of application: | The CROMAS technique was used by an airline company who was searching for new actions to improve quality service and differentiate from competition.

The challenge was defined as:
How could we differentiate in an outstanding way from other airlines?

The first step was to divide the service delivered by the company into stages or steps, as booking, check in, baggage drop, waiting, boarding, etc.

The following step was to apply each of the CROMAS letters to those stages to find ways to re-think the entire process. Some of the ideas were:

COMBINATION:
- What if we combine the check-in with the trip to the airport? Maybe the taxi driver can do part of the check-in process. Or maybe the online checking adds a cab to your reservation.

REORDERING:
- What if we change the order of the baggage dropping and the trip to the airport? Maybe a transport can pick-up the bags BEFORE the passenger go to the airport

OTHER USES:
- What if the waiting time has other uses? Maybe a nurse can check the blood pressure of the passenger while waiting to board.

MODIFICATION:
- The boarding bridge (or tunnel) can be changed to offer a different experience. Maybe this place can be thematic.

ADAPTATION:
- What if we adapt (from those big concerts) the practice of throwing a big ball for the public to play with. Maybe this will make the trip more fun.

SUPPRESS/SUBSTITUTE
- What if we eliminate the uniforms in the crew? Maybe it will be funnier if they go every month with a different costume. |
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| Templates, Graphics for download | CROMAS questions list |
| Additional format/references | https://www.designorate.com/a-guide-to-the-scamper-technique-for-creative-thinking/

https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/learn-how-to-use-the-best-ideation-methods-scamper

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8w0rJhztJ4&feature=emb_logo |

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