

# Problem inventor

<b>Field of application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>#Problem Analysis.</li><li>#Strategic planning</li><li>#Product design</li><li>#Service design</li><li>#Process design</li><li>#Creativity skills development</li></ul>
<b>Resume / Brief description</b>	<p>Innovation usually searches for spaces to work on problematic situations. A badly working product, a source of customer dissatisfaction, a growing problem, etc. But apparently perfect situations can be spaces for innovation too. As innovation is a way to "re-think" things, there is no need to be limited to those problematic scenarios.</p> <p>This tool opens questions as: Is it possible to innovate in a situation going well? Is it possible to making a better product starting from a good one? Is it possible to delight a simply satisfied customer?</p> <p>Category: Problem reframing</p>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Entrepreneurs</li><li>• I&amp;D teams</li><li>• Innovation teams</li><li>• Students</li><li>• Community</li></ul>
<b>Group size</b>	2 to 20 people
<b>Objectives</b>	To find innovation opportunities in apparently perfect situations.
<b>Requirements</b>	<p>Material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the Problem inventorss handtool</li><li>• Paper</li><li>• Pens</li><li>• the Problem inventors handtool in a digital version. It can be a presentation to be shared</li></ul> <p>A word processor software or a digital board (Google jamboard, Microsoft Board, Miró or other)</p> <p>Time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 20 to 40 minutes</li></ul>
<b>Implementation - Overview</b>	<p>The essence of this technique is to use the "Problem inventors handtool", a set of sentences designed to change perception about a situation. To to this, the steps are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Define the situation to improve</li><li>- Organize teams</li><li>- Use a game to put them in a "critic" attitude</li><li>- Explain the situation to improve, give them the "Problem inventors handtool" and ask them to identify failures in this, otherwise, perfect situation.</li><li>- Convert the just discovered failures into challenge questions</li><li>- Share discoveries.</li></ul>



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<p><b>Implementation - Guidelines</b></p>	<p>1. Define the subject of problem invention. Take a normal situation, a good product, a service with low amount of complaints, a process working well. This will be the starting point for this technique.</p> <p>2. Organize the group into teams (1 to 5 members). Explain them that from now on they will be "Problem inventors", capable of point problems out of the most perfect situations.</p> <p>3. "Brain warm" them by doing this simple exercise: give them three minutes to look around and write down all the wrong things they can identify: something misplaced or broken, a badly designed object, an unsatisfied need. Give them some time to share their discoveries. Now you have a very critical group, ready to act as real problem inventors.</p> <p>4. Start the session by walking them through the situation which is to be improved. Then explain to them that the general idea is to see it in a different way, in a negative way. To do this, the participants must analyze the product, service, process or whatever the object of our improving effort could be, and use the Problem inventors handtool to view it as a failure instead of a success:</p> <p>Problem inventors handtool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Although everything seems to be all right, there is something that is not as good as it could be. What is it?</li> <li>- Our actual situation is satisfactory... or mediocre. What we should really aim for is having...</li> <li>- This version of our _____ is just good. To be really outstanding, it must _____</li> <li>- A good competitor would launch a copy of our _____ but improved ten times. How could it be?</li> <li>- A good observer will identify the true faults and weaknesses of our _____, which would be:</li> </ul> <p>The result of the team's work will be a list of "fails" detected (or invented) in the selected situation.</p> <p>5. Each discovery can be converted in a Challenge question using the form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How could we _____ (get the new desired situation)?</li> </ul> <p>6. Provide time for the teams to share the discoveries. Encourage them to identify which possible innovation will bring the more benefits to the organization.</p> <p>The exercise will highlight the incredible possibilities we have to innovate, but were not aware of.</p>
<p>Example of application:</p>	<p>The Problem inventor tool was used as a teaching tool to show undergraduate students how to find opportunities to innovate. The teacher asked their group of students to come up with the thing they liked the most. They thought of video games, music concerts, tv series and others. Then the teacher divided the group into teams and gave them the Problem inventor handtool. Students had to find wrong elements on those things they liked so much.</p> <p>As a result, a good amount of innovation opportunities aroused. Some of them began to think on the possibility of starting a business to take advantage of them...</p>
<p>Templates, Graphics for download</p>	<p>The problem inventors handtool</p>

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