

What if

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| Field of application | <ul style="list-style-type: none">#Ideation#Idea improvement#Product design#Service design#Process design#Creativity skills development |
| Resume / Brief description | <p>In this technique, the participants use the power of imagination to find opportunities to innovate. Motivating people to create questions based on "What if...?", will let the team to open new possibilities to re-invent products, services, experiences, processes, etc.</p> <p>Category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ideation• Idea optimization |
| Target group | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entrepreneurs• I&D teams• Innovation teams• Students• Community |
| Group size | 2 to 20 people organized on teams of 1 to 5 people |
| Objectives | To generate as many creative ideas as possible regarding a specific situation or problem |
| Requirements | <p>Material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper cards or flip charts for each team. Masking tape for posting cards.• Pens, colors, markers• The digital version can be done using a digital board (Google Jamboard, Microsoft board, Miro or other) <p>Time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20 to 120 minutes |
| Implementation - Overview | <p>The steps are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Define the objective- Ask teams to find "Wath ifs"- Ask teams to solve as many "What ifs" as they can |



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| <p>Implementation - Guidelines</p> | <p>1. Setting the objectives. To start the activity, explain the participants the objective of the session. It can be to find ways to solve a specific problem or simply to explore possibilities to make your business model stronger.</p> <p>2. Once everyone has agreed with the objectives, explain them the importance of using imagination to innovate. You can give examples on how imagination works as a "mental laboratory" to explore new ways to solve problems and to foresee the implications of executing one or another idea. Then explain the "What if...?" phrase as a way to activate imagination.</p> <p>3. In this phase, divide the group into teams of 1 to 5 members. Ask each team to select a note-taker. Each team must use the "What if...?" question to stretch the possibilities of the situation or imagine a way to solve the problem. Tell them not to worry about the level of "impossibility" of the outcomes. The note-taker must write down all the proposed "What ifs" in paper cards or the flip chart. Give this phase time enough (Between 5 and 20 minutes will be ok) to find 5 to 10 "What ifs".</p> <p>4. Once the first phase is finished, ask the teams to present their "What ifs" and sort them vertically in one flip chart. To define which "What ifs" go up in the classification, ask the group to rate how good the final situation would be if each "What if" became real. The better the situation generated by that "What if" becoming real, the higher in the flip board. Then you can group the "What ifs" according to their height. The upper group will be the more powerful "What ifs" and will award 5 points. The lower group will be the less powerful "What ifs" and will award 1 point.</p> <p>5. Ask the teams to use the following 20 to 40 minutes to solve as many "What ifs" as they can, that is, to imagine ways to make factible those "What ifs". To do that, the team must imagine practical ways to get that "What if" into reality.</p> <p>6. Each team will award points equal to the sum of the points of all the "What ifs" solved.</p> <p>7. Each team must present its solved "What ifs" and do a recommendation as to which one the organization must execute.</p> |
| <p>Example of application:</p> | <p>Innovative companies are full of stories about how great ideas are born. One of those stories takes place in Uber. The What if? technique was used to generate ideas of possible improvements to the service the company was providing to its users. Some of the What ifs proposed were:</p> <p>What If: Cars had vending machines for food, personal items, or gift cards?</p> <p>What If: People could pay more for drivers with better driving records?</p> <p>What If: Uber offset personal charges by increasing corporate rates and/or pairing airlines and travel agencies to offer discounts for a door-to-door travel experience?</p> <p>This is a good example about the way this technique opens new ways to innovate.</p> |
| <p>Templates, Graphics for download</p> | |
| <p>Additional format/references</p> | <p>https://www.fastcompany.com/1829576/role-imagination-plays-innovation</p> <p>https://www.conversationagent.com/2015/08/imagination-creativity-innovation.html</p> |

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