# Wisemen council

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| **Field of application** | #Problem Analysis.<br>#Strategic planning<br>#Ideation<br>#Idea selection<br>#Idea prioritization<br>#Idea improvement<br>#Product design<br>#Service design<br>#Process design |
| **Resume / Brief description** | Imagine if we can have a group of experts helping us to solve every problem. And now imagine if that group was formed by the most wise people in history. It would be great! In fact, that is what the Wisemen council technique does: help the innovator to think as the better brains in history. The Wisemen council uses images or names of great people in history to imagine how they would have solved our problem. Can be played individually or in group.<br><br>Category: Ideation |
| **Target group** | • Entrepreneurs<br>• Innovation teams<br>• Students<br>• Community |
| **Group size** | This game can be played by teams of 1 to 6 people. The minimum number of teams is 3 and a maximum of 5." |
| **Objectives** | Find a way to understand a situation or problem from a different perspective and imagine possible new solutions. |
| **Requirements** | Material:<br>• A set of cards showing a picture representing a famous person from history. It's important to have variety about style, age, gender and area of expertise, for example you can include a famous militar as Napoleon or a writer as Tagore, a scientist as Marie Curie or a football player as Sadio Mane. You can even include fictional characters as Sherlock Holmes or Harry Potter. A good reference to check if we are including different thinking styles is to follow the Intelligence model developed by Howard Gardner. You can use cards showing just the name of the person or character.<br>• Paper and pen to write down the ideas.<br>• The Wise men set of cards can be arranged in a page of a digital board (Jamboard, Microsoft board, Miró or other). Also can be replaced by a numbered list of famous people and characters. The players can pick a random number and search on the Internet for that character using the image function on a search engine.<br>• a document to write down the ideas. It could be a text editor or maybe another page on the digital board.<br><br>Time:<br>20 to 60 minutes |
| **Implementation - Overview** | The first step is to define clearly the question we will ask to the wise. But before to disturb them, the group will need to make a good effort to find solutions and answer to that question. This is the "Empty head" phase. Once the group creativity is exhausted, a random card is selected. The group looks at the wise depicted in it and tries to imagine what ideas could that person or character give if asked to solve the same question. |

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| **Implementation - Guidelines** | 1. Define, as a group, the question or problem to solve. Put that question in a visible place and be sure that everyone understands it.<br>2. Do a brainstorming activity asking all the participants to write down all the ideas they can on how to solve the problem. This phase is called "Emptying heads".<br>3. Read or ask some participants to read the ideas presented and put them on the wall so everyone can see them.<br>4. Announce the arrival of the Wisemen council. Tell the group that those important persons from history are ready to use their intelligences to add some new ideas.<br>5. Select one card or name randomly and present it to the group. Ask the group if everybody knows that person or character. You can use Wikipedia or other resources on the internet to gather more information about the kind of expertise and intelligence of that person or character. Don't spend too much time on the historical facts but on the style that person or character has to solve problems or get results.<br>6. Invite all the group to figure out: What ideas would this sage or wise person, contribute with if they were here, with us, trying to solve this challenge?<br>Give this instruction to the player: "Imagine that the sage is really working in your organization; that is, do not imagine that Cleopatra is in Egypt during the pharaohs´ times. Imagine someone with her personality, her style, her way of thinking, in our current context, and ask yourself: What ideas would someone like her give to us in a situation like this? |
| Example of application: | In 2020, a governmental program to help entrepreneurs to grow their business in the midst of Covid-19 pandemy, was going as planned. Not only more than 1000 entrepreneurships had participated in big online working sessions but some of them were being accompanied by personal mentors to address particular issues.<br>During the coaching sessions, the search for new original strategies to grow was becoming an issue. The entrepreneurs, stressed by the market difficult situation, lacked enough creativity power to imagine new ways to act.<br>The team behind the program decided to introduce some creativity techniques to use on those sessions. The Wise council was one of them.<br><br>For the sessions using the Wise council tool, a Jamboard (The digital board from Google) was prepared. The first board was filled with 36 cards from the digital version of the WakeUpBrain game. The cards, showing different famous people and characters, were organized in a grid of 10 columns by 6 rows. A web site that provided a virtual version of dice was used to generate 2 random numbers and hence, select a card.<br><br>During the session, facilitators asked the entrepreneurs to "empty their heads" doing a preliminar brainstorming. Then, asked them to try to imagine what ideas the selected character would have proposed if facing the same situation. The facilitator runs between 3 and 7 rounds.<br><br>The tool helped participants to find new and original ideas as their brains were trying to think as someone else.<br><br>A couple and their son, owners of Sholittos, a brand of pet care products, were really happy with the result: "We got Andy Warhol. We didn't know who he was so we searched for him on Google. Then we realized that was a very famous painter that used everyday objects in his art. That fact gave us a lot of ideas on how to promote our products'', said Diana Cardona, partner of the company. Even, in the following session, ideas on how to modify the logo were discussed. The brains were working at full speed thanks to this game. |
| Templates, Graphics for download | |

| Additional format/references | https://www.multipleintelligencesoasis.org/the-components-of-mi |
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| | https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory_of_multiple_intelligences |

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