FORCE FIT EXERCISE

One common way to stimulate more ideas is to 'force fit' solutions to random objects. This makes your brain work as you seek similarities which spark fresh ideas through through doing forced fit exercise. If you've worked in pharmaceutical sales for most of your life, that becomes your frame of reference. Getting 'outside' of that and opening eyes to possibilities often needs a new starting point. This technique is often used in contexts where an accepted norm has evolved and new and innovative thinking is needed.

On the next page, are some pictures to help stimulate thinking about possible new directions. By forcing you to start from a point which is completely random and asking you to look at these objects from different perspectives, the idea is to stimulate thinking.

STEVE: A CASE STUDY

Steve started off with the Tent image. Going around the forced fit perspectives he came up with the following:
'Jobs where a tent might be used'. Steve's mind went to 'working with a homeless charity', scout camp leader, army personnel, hiking guide, professional explorer.
'Services where people might use tents'. Steve captured some ideas around adventure, holidays, and travel, thinking about running or working for a holiday business. He also questioned how old tents get recycled and how else the canvas might be used?
'Word association', he thought of canvas, circus, county fairs, marquee companies, weddings, festivals and this sparked some ideas about different colours, eco credentials, size of markets.
In what ways will my 'what next' be like this? He thought of more freedom and less baggage which reminded him in his 'what next' he wants less responsibility and more time to be outdoors (not camping, but travelling and walking)

YOUR TURN:

1. Set the timer and give yourself 5 minutes per picture.
2. Allow ideas to come to you. Go with things and try (we know it's hard) not to try and fit it to a job yet and layer in your 'needs' (ie don't dismiss things because it wouldn't earn enough income). Instead try and allow this to generate thoughts and ideas for now.
3. Complete the table at the end on page 4 to try and organise this into some things to investigate.

Jobs where a tent might be used?

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-

-

-

Services which would benefit people who use tents?

-

-

-

-

Word association!

-

-

-

-

How will my 'what next' be like this?

-

-

-

-

TENT

©Tilo via Canva images

Jobs where a tree might feature/be used

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-

-

-

Services which would benefit people who use tree?

-

-

-

-

Word association!

-

-

-

-

How will my 'what next' be like this?

-

-

-

-

TREE

©YugalSrivastava via Canva images

Jobs where a glass might be used/featuured?

-

-

-

-

Services which would benefit people who use glasses?
-

-

-

-

Word association!

-

-

-

-

GLASS

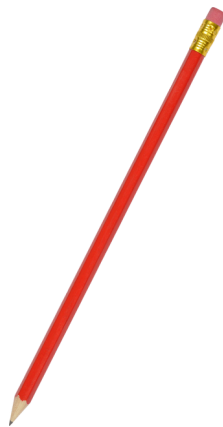©William Soellner
via Canva images

How will my 'what next' be like this?

-

-

-

-

Jobs where a pencil might be used/featuured?

-

-

-

-

Services which would benefit people who use pencils?
-

-

-

-

Word association!

-

-

-

-

PENCIL

©Phodopus via Canva images

How will my 'what next' be like this?

-

-

-

-

NEXT STEPS:

1. Go back over the ideas and thoughts. Select 3-4 ideas you'd like to explore further.
2. Run them through these next thought steps. We've provided a table but it may be hard to write down. This is more an aide memoire to help you filter thinking. You don't necessarily have to write lots down.

    - what appeals to you about this idea
    - what further exploration can you do?

3. How can I turn this into some form of action (e.g proposing it as an idea at your current work or taking some action to research it on line? Develop a survey to test an idea? Etc.)

IDEA	WHAT APPEALS?	WHAT FURTHER EXPLORATION?	WHAT ACTION TO TAKE NEXT?