

LO / AS : 12.3.2

Apply creative thinking to respond to challenges in dynamic and complex business contexts.

Learners are expected to:

- Acquire advanced problem-solving skills.
- apply creative thinking to solve complex business problems in case studies and given scenarios.

1. Creativity

Creativity is the ability to imagine or make something new. This entails generating new or fresh ideas.

2. Steps for Problem -Solving

There are many techniques that can be used for solving problems. The steps in solving any problem are given below :

- Identify the problem / Obtain clarity on the Problem
- Collect information on the problem
- Develop and gather all possible solutions
- Evaluate each option
- Select the most appropriate solution
- Implement the solution
- Evaluate the solution

Read the following case studies and complete the tasks that follow.

Case Study (1)

A Group of Rude and Arrogant Workers

You are the manager of clothing store. Some workers reported to you that a group of fellow workers are rude and arrogant towards them. This has been going on for some time and they cannot tolerate this form of treatment any longer and request that you intervene and solve this problem.

- List the problems that you can identify in the case study.
- List the steps in the problem - solving procedure and indicate how you worked through each step.

Case Study (2)

Mr Zondo owns five taxis. He has employed a driver for each taxi. The taxis commute passengers on a busy route.

Mr Zondo has compared the daily income of each taxi with the daily income of taxis owned by other operators.

He found that the daily income of each of his taxis was far less than that of his competitors. Mr Zondo is concerned about this.

- List the problems that you can identify in the case study.
- What are the causes of the problem?
- List the steps in the problem - solving procedure and indicate how you worked through each step.



3. Creative Thinking Techniques

3.1 Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an idea-generating technique in which many people think about a problem and suggest ideas that could help solve the problem.

This technique is ideal for specific problems that need new ideas and solutions. During the brainstorming session, criticism, discussion and comments are not allowed. Here the ideas are evaluated and prioritised and this could offer new solutions.

Task

The CEO of Amber Ltd, a company operating in the greater Durban, has approached his personnel manager and request that he arrange an aid awareness day for the entire staff of the company.

Work with two other people and;

- List the criteria that you all believe are important for the event to succeed.
- How would you use these criteria if you were in charge of this event for Amber Ltd?

3.2 The Nominal Group Technique

Nominal groups are made of individuals who work alone. Their ideas are only later combined before they are assessed. This technique is similar to brainstorming.

The following steps are applied:

- Each member works independently and writes down all his ideas/solutions
- Members then present their ideas to the group one At a time
- The group discusses and evaluates each idea
- Each idea must now be ranked independently by each member of the group e.g. the ideas may be ranked from 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest score. The idea with the highest average score will be used as the solution

3.3 The Delphi Technique

This technique is similar to the nominal group technique. The main difference between this technique and the nominal group technique is that in this technique the members do not have to be physically present.

People independently identify solutions to problems. These ideas are collated and circulated until a solution is found. In order to achieve this a series of questionnaires are used.

Steps to be followed:

- Identify the problem and ask group members to submit solutions on a questionnaires
- Each members must do this independently

3.4 Scamper Technique

Scamper is a checklist of idea-generating questions that can assist in creative thinking.

Scamper stands for:

S	Substitute - Can other materials be used?	Use a plastic container instead of glass
C	Combine - Can parts be combined?	A shirt with a tie
A	Adapt - Can it be altered?	A coffee table that is controlled by remote
M	Modify - Can the shape etc be changed ?	Changes in cars over the years
P	Put to other use - Are there other purposes for it?	Using plastic carriers as bin liners
E	Eliminate - Can things be removed, omitted?	A watch that does not have extra gadgets
R	Reverse/Rearrange - Can parts be swapped or can it be turned around?	A belt that can be used on both sides

and anonymously.

- Collate and analyse the results at a central point.
- Forward a copy of the results to each member.
- Members are required to give new or amended solutions after seeing the result.
- Steps c, d and e may be repeated until consensus is reached.

There are many other creative thinking techniques e.g.

- Idea Advocate
- Reverse Brainstorming
- Forced Relations and Free Associations
- Buzz Groups
- Questioning Method
- Simplex
- Attribute Analysis
- Force Field Analysis

Task:

Match each of the following descriptions with one of the above - mentioned creative thinking techniques.

- A large group is divided into sub-groups and each group appoints its own leader, then a brainstorming session is held.
- This method asks five questions : What? Who? When? Where? and How?
- Creates a relationship between ideas and objects that have no relationship
- This technique asks the opposite of the question you want to ask and then applies the results.
- Examines the pros and cons of a decision
- Process of breaking down a problem, idea or issue into component parts and analysing these parts
- Views creativity as an ongoing process, necessary to find the best creative solution
- Person is appointed to identify the idea with the best benefits which may be selected as the solution.

Task:

Assume you are the sales manager of Work Well Computers. The sales for computers has declined over the past few months.

Use SCAMPER to solve the above challenge.



Conclusion:

Wishing all Grade 12 learners everything of the best for 2008 and we hope that your hard work will bring you the desired results.