

Topsy Turvy

Introduction:

What would you normally do to solve a problem? Brainstorm on how to solve it – right? But this exercise will make you think about how to make the problem from bad to worse! Go ahead—break the rules and indulge yourself with some crazy thinking.

Learning Objectives:

To

- instill an open and resourceful mindset in the students
- initiate creative and innovative thinking
- engage in idea generation

The Exercise:

Instructions for the participants:

- Form groups of 5-6 depending on the size of the audience.
- Choose one big problem that you think is important to be solved – it could be traffic, waste management, water scarcity or any other everyday problem one faces.
- Think about what could be the opposite to finding a solution to the current problem – e.g., if it is traffic congestion, what will be lead to increased traffic? The more extreme the idea is, the better.
- You must come up with as many ideas as possible in the next 20 minutes. There is no right or wrong solution for the anti-problem and so do not get into analyzing the ideas or solutions.
- It is not necessary that the ideas are practical or viable. This may seem outlandish and illogical but the objective is not to solve the problem right away, but to initiate creative and innovative thinking.

Concluding the Exercise:

- Ask the participants to present their (anti) problems and the solutions.
- Encourage them to talk about their experience of being part of the exercise. Lead them to talk about how they engaged in creative thinking and how they were able to generate plenty of ideas.
- Highlight the innovative approaches that helped break from the usual perspectives of problems and solutions.

- Discuss whether this 'Topsy –Turvy' approach actually helped identify solutions for the actual problem. Often, there could be instances that this happens.
- Finally, do point out that good ideas come from bad ideas, but only if there are enough bad ideas!

Time:

1 hour, depending on the number of participants

Required Material:

Just the enthusiasm of the participants and instructor

Note: This exercise is adapted from Anti Problem by Dave Gray | filed under: [Gamestorming wiki](http://www.gogamestorm.com/?p=365), <http://www.gogamestorm.com/?p=365>