

## Enterprise

### Activity 4: Sourcing new ideas (Diamond nine)

#### Introduction

Coming up with new ideas is one of the key elements of being a successful entrepreneur. These new ideas could be, for example, an idea for a new business venture, how to improve an existing business or how to make a department within an organisation more effective. Some new ideas may occur in an instant – the so-called ‘light bulb’ moment – but most new ideas result from a structured way of thinking about your own skills, your local area and your local community.

This activity uses an experiential learning approach and provides an opportunity for learners to engage in simple but higher-order decision-making tasks. Part 3 of the **Cross-curricular themes: continuing professional development guide** has more detailed information on experiential learning.

Learners are given a Diamond nine board and statement cards that they place in order of importance to answer the key question provided. There is no right or wrong answer to the question. However, the activity does provide a degree of cognitive conflict that will require learners to share views, negotiate and compromise in order to complete the task. In this example cognitive conflict means a situation where the learner is required to make a decision (in this case because there are too many cards) and therefore experiences conflict in their thinking. In order to resolve this conflict the learner must challenge their original thinking.

This approach gives learners the opportunity to think about where new ideas come from, the factors that determine whether the idea will work and the considerations that should be taken into account when generating new enterprise ideas.

#### Learning objectives/outcomes

Learners should be able to:

- explain different ways to source enterprising ideas
- evaluate the risk associated with enterprising ideas.

## Resources required

- Copies of the **Enterprise: the learning points** document (found in the Enterprise theme section of these resources).
- Copies of Sheet 4.1: Diamond nine board.
- A set of statement cards prepared from **Sheet 4.2: Statement cards** for each group.
- Some blank cards or sticky notes that learners can use to add their own characteristics if required.
- A set of pens.
- **Sheet 4.3: Feedback sheet** to prompt and facilitate discussion and to summarise learning points at the end of the activity.

Please note: the sheets for this activity are included as a separate PDF document.

## Starting points

It would be beneficial for learners to have previously discussed the meaning of enterprise using one of the other Enterprise resource activities. This could have been completed in a previous lesson, or may be performed at the start of this activity.

## Planning learning in multiple environments

The Diamond nine could be made into a drag-and-drop activity so that individuals could complete it in their own time, and in a location of their choosing. If you do choose to use this method, learners should provide you with feedback on the reasons for their choices.

## Suggested approach

The difference between high-order and low-order tasks is not their level of difficulty, but the mental processes involved. Low-order tasks such as knowledge, comprehension and application require recall and minimal understanding. High-order tasks such as the prioritising tasks used to complete the Diamond nine require deep understanding and are best used in groups, where learners can challenge each other's views and conduct reasoned arguments. Coming to a group consensus requires negotiation, compromise and the ability to present an explanation for the final proposal as there is not always a right and wrong answer to the questions.

Learners are presented with a Diamond nine board and 11 or 12 statement cards. The purpose of providing more cards than spaces available on the board is to provide cognitive conflict and stimulate discussion between learners in order to resolve the conflict. Learners are required to make choices not only about the ordering of the cards but also which cards to reject. You may also choose to include a blank card for each group to write its own statement.

You will find more information about approaches to active learning in Part 3 of the **Cross-curricular themes: continuing professional development guide**.

## Stage 1

To set the scene for the activity, check the learners' understanding of enterprise and where entrepreneurs get their ideas. You could ask them to name some ideas that have worked well and some ideas that did not work well. Ask learners to consider why they may have worked well.

Conclude this discussion by summarising the sourcing of new ideas as 'spotting opportunities, creating new ideas and having the confidence and capabilities to turn these ideas into working realities'. Add that in sourcing new ideas there are a number of factors to consider that will influence whether you will be able to make the idea a reality, and that the following activity will explore this.

## Stage 2

Divide the learners into small groups. The following guidelines may be helpful in arranging the groups:

- You may want to use your knowledge of individual learners to ensure that each group contains at least one more confident learner.
- Group sizes of two to three are particularly good for this activity.

To set the scene, ask the groups to imagine that they have come up with a new idea for a product, a service or an improvement to an existing business. For the activity to work effectively, it is not important that they specify the fine detail of the idea, but they may want to spend a couple of minutes coming up with a broad imaginary enterprise idea.

Give each group **Sheet 4.1: Diamond nine board** and a set of the statement cards prepared from **Sheet 4.2** describing a factor in relation to the idea. The factors should work with any idea.

Brief the learners as follows:

- On the cards there are 11 statements describing a factor in relation to the idea. Factors may include:
  - where the idea came from
  - the reason the idea seems good
  - the skills and knowledge available
  - the feelings about the idea.
- There is one blank card for you to write your own statement on if you feel there is an important factor that you would like to include.
- Your task is to answer this key question: which factors are most important in deciding whether the idea is likely to succeed – and why? Write this question on a blank sheet of paper and keep it next to the Diamond nine board to help you focus on the question throughout the activity.

- Put the most important statement at the top of the diamond. Then place the other cards ranked in order of importance from the top to the bottom of the board. Be prepared to explain why you have prioritised them this way.
- As there are 11 cards and one blank card for your own ideas, you will need to reject three cards that are not important.

Provide additional instructions on how to approach the task:

- In your group, discuss each of the cards in turn and agree where it should be placed on the diamond. You should observe rules of turn-taking.
- If there is a disagreement as to where a card should be placed, the case should be made for its place on the diamond. Each member of the group has a vote and a consensus should be reached.
- Similarly, if there is a disagreement as to whether a card should be rejected, the same process should apply.
- At the end of the activity you should have a diamond on which the group agrees and that you can justify.

### Stage 3

Learners should work independently on this stage of the activity. Your role is to monitor the discussion, monitor individual contribution and provide prompts to stimulate further discussion or help groups when they become stuck.

This stage provides an opportunity for you to observe engagement in the discussion by individual learners, which can support their future development. For example, if you observe a learner who is reluctant to engage in the discussion your observation can support you in working with the learner individually, to set personal targets.

The time allowed for this task will vary dependent on time available and group size; however, you might want to allow approximately 15 minutes.

### Stage 4

Ask groups to move round to observe other groups' ideas and to compare their diagrams. What do they agree/disagree with? What would they change? Why?

### Stage 5

As part of a whole class discussion, ask each group to share their most important factor and the reason why it has been placed as most important. As each factor is offered, engage the whole group in a discussion to draw out the benefits and the risks associated with that factor. The suggestions included on **Sheet 4.3: Feedback sheet** can be used to facilitate feedback. For example, ask one learner to explain why they have put a particular factor at the top of the diamond and another learner why they have placed the same factor elsewhere on the board.

## **Stage 6: Consolidation, checking and reflecting on learning**

To conclude the session, ask learners what they have learned about the topic. Responses might include these:

- Ideas for new ventures, new projects and new businesses can come from many different places.
- Ideas are not always completely new or spectacularly clever. They may just be slightly different ways of doing something.
- Ideas may come from particular skills that you have or a hobby or interest.
- Even though an idea may look as though it could generate lots of money there could be big risks involved if some of the other factors, such as having people who can help and advise, are not in place.
- There is no right answer to the Diamond nine activity. There is no single factor that will ensure success. An idea is more likely to succeed if you are really enthusiastic about it, if you have the necessary skills, if you know people who can help you, and if you believe strongly in it.

You will also want to ask learners about the process of learning. Questions could include:

- How did you feel about having to make decisions about which card to select and reject?
- Was it easy or difficult to come to a group decision? How did you do this?
- Did the process of discussing the factors help or hinder the decision making process?
- How might you use these skills in your workplace? What about other settings?
- Has anyone spotted a gap in the market?

### **Alternative approaches**

You could use this as a whole class activity with the teacher facilitating the session using a flip chart drawn up with a Diamond nine or displayed on interactive whiteboard.

To create a more challenging version of this activity:

- Ask individuals or groups to identify factors of their own to help answer the key question.
- After a few minutes discussion, brainstorm all these ideas onto the board.
- Ask learners in small groups to discuss and agree the nine factors they think are most important. Not all the factors will be valuable and a good case will have to be made for their inclusion.
- Take feedback to negotiate a whole group agreed list of nine factors.
- Groups write these onto sticky notes and then complete the Diamond nine activity.

### **Differentiation to meet individual needs**

Some of the terminology on the statement cards might be unfamiliar to some learners so you may want to alter the wording to suit your learners. For example, the concept of risk may be difficult for some learners. You may wish to illustrate these more difficult concepts with a few examples prior to starting on the activity.

Some learners may find it difficult to 'create' their own scenario and you may want to provide them with a mini imaginary case study such as 'X has come up the idea of doing... what are the most important things you would get him/her to think about before he/she goes ahead?' You may also want to reword the statement cards with questions relating to the imaginary scenario provided.

### **Challenges – what learners might do next**

You could follow up this activity by asking the learners to consider the following questions:

- Think of something that may be lacking in your local area. How could this gap be filled?
- What do you feel strongly about? What are you doing about it?

### **Embedding literacy language and numeracy (LLN)**

Every learning activity includes many different opportunities to develop LLN skills. Always try to find a naturally-occurring opportunity where learners can immediately appreciate the relevance and importance of the skills they are learning to use.

Your LLN specialist will be able to help you to identify specific levels and curriculum references relevant to this activity and to create engaging learning activities to develop the skills.

The priority LLN skill that learners will need to complete this activity is language. In particular, learners will need to use speaking and listening skills to contribute and participate in discussions:

**At Level 1**, respect the right of others to contribute during discussions.

- Understand that an effective discussion involves everyone having a fair chance to make their contributions.
- Know and use some strategies to signal to others that they can speak (facial expressions, gestures, phrases).  
(Adult literacy core curriculum reference SLd/L1.2.)

**At Level 2**, support opinions and arguments with evidence.

- Understand that productive discussions involve making valid and convincing points.
- Know how to research information for a discussion.

- Use factual information and knowledge to support views and arguments. (Adult literacy core curriculum reference SLd/L2.4.)

**Useful activities might include:**

- Learners could watch a video or television programme that includes discussion. Learners could note how participants contribute – was anyone dominant in the discussion? Was there anyone who did not take part?
- Ask learners to discuss a topic familiar to them to practise their group contribution skills.
- Ask learners to develop discussions on a subject and ask learners to take opposing views. For example, the discussion could surround the statement ‘people should pick up their own litter’ or select a statement from the activity which elicit opposing views. Ask learners to contribute to the discussion by making by making a rational case that supports their viewpoint.

## Session plan

### Aim:

To help learners think about where new ideas come from, the factors that determine whether the idea will work and the considerations that should be taken into account when generating new enterprise ideas.

### Learning objective/outcomes

Learners should be able to:

- explain different ways to source enterprising ideas
- evaluate the risk associated with enterprising ideas.

Time	Teacher plan	Learner activity	Resources
0 -10 min	<b>Stage 1</b> Set the scene and test learners' understanding of enterprise.	Group discussion. Personal contribution.	<b>Enterprise: the learning points</b> document.
10-20 min	<b>Stage 2</b> Introduce activity and form small groups. Brief groups.	Form small groups. Understand briefing.	<b>Sheets 4.1 and 4.2.</b> Sticky notes and pens.
20-45 min	<b>Stage 3</b> Support groups as they complete task.	Activity.	
45-60 min	<b>Stages 4 and 5</b> Feedback and discuss activity with attention to risk elements.	Group discussion.	Flip chart. <b>Sheet 4.3.</b>
60-90 min	<b>Stage 6</b> Review activity and direct learners to follow on activities.	Group discussion. Individual reflection.	Learners may wish to add personal targets to their individual learning plan.

**Assessment of learning objectives/outcomes**

- Group feedback at end of the session.
- Flip chart poster with agreed whole group response.

**Differentiation to meet individual needs**

- Check that the terminology on the cards is suitable for all learners. If not, provide alternative wording, explanations or examples for some of the statements.
- Check that learners are able to ‘create’ their own scenario. If not, prepare a mini imaginary case study such as ‘X has come up the idea of doing... what are the most important things you would get him/her to think about before he/she goes ahead?’ You may also want to reword the statement cards with questions relating to the imaginary scenario provided.

**Teacher evaluation**

**Learner feedback**

Consider which parts of the session were effective and why.

Consider whether the activities were suitable for all learners and whether the session helped to develop the expert learners.

**Personal, learning and thinking skills developed**

- Creative thinkers:
  - Ask questions to extend their thinking.
- Team workers:
  - Reach agreements, managing discussions to achieve results.
- Effective participators:
  - Present a persuasive case for action.

**Literacy, language and numeracy skills developed**

Language:

At Level 1, respect the right of others to contribute during discussions.

At Level 2, support opinions and arguments with evidence.