

Synectics

A group creativity method that uses analogies and metaphors to move away from the problem and come back to it with new ideas.

In Spanish

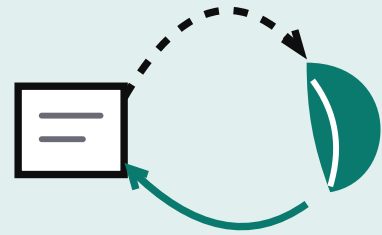
Sinética

Origin

Gordon (1961); Gordon and Prince, Arthur D. Little (1950s)

Output

New ideas that come from comparing the problem with things from other worlds



What it's for

It helps break out of the usual solutions when a team knows a problem so well that it no longer sees it.

Key elements

Make the familiar strange

Look at the usual problem as if for the first time.

Make the strange familiar

Understand something new by comparing it with what you already know.

Move away to come back

The analogy takes you far from the problem; then you return to it with what you found.

How it's done

1



State the problem and set it aside for a moment.

2



Look for analogies in nature, in other trades or in yourself.

3



Return to the problem and turn the comparisons into ideas.

Applications in design

✓ When to use it

When the team gets stuck on ideas similar to what already exists.

✗ Avoid

Staying in the metaphor without bringing it back to the real problem.

👁 Don't fall for it

It needs someone to guide the session; without a guide, it gets lost in anecdotes.

Connections

Related to

■ Design by analogy

■ Brainstorming

Authors and works

1961

William J. J. Gordon

Developed the method with George M. Prince in Arthur D. Little's invention group and explained it in his 1961 book.

Sources

Original sources

- Gordon, W. J. J. (1961). Synectics: The development of creative capacity. Harper & Row.

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