

Magnify the Problem

What are the dimensions of your problem that you could exaggerate? Once you have identified the dimensions that can be exaggerated then think how might you approach the problem with that dimension exaggerated? You can choose to increase or decrease a dimension of the problem significantly and explore how that may affect your approach.

Possible dimensions:

- Time – What would we do if we only had a minute? What would we do if we had a year?
- Number of items to process – Imagine if we needed to process just 1 item or 1 million items.
- The number of people involved – What would we do differently if we had 100,000 people involved?
- The level of quality – How would we approach it if it was a one-off (possibly a throwaway) or we needed it to be highly polished?
- Money – What would we do if we had £100? What would we do if we had £1 million?

Make the Problem Worse

This is a fun technique that usually gets a very good level of engagement. The approach in this technique is to think about what things we can do to make the problem worse. Imagining ways to work against the objective can stimulate a lot of discussion and can generate a lot of ideas. The elements to consider are dependent on the nature of the problem, but here are some ideas to seed the discussion.

Examples:

- Language – What if the people we need to engage with don't speak English? What if we use a language we don't know?
- Restrictive hours – What if we were only allowed to perform the activity in the middle of the night?
- Time zones – Spread the people involved out over very different time zones.
- Geographical locations – Make some resources geographically remote; send them to Timbuktu or put them on the moon!