

Overview of the Four Innovation Styles

Recognizing the different ways we like to innovate is a key to working together successfully – in a team or in an organization. We all have our own unique approach to meeting a creative challenge, using our own mixture of four Innovation Styles: **Visioning**, **Modifying**, **Exploring**, and **Experimenting**. To nurture a healthy team environment for innovation, each approach must be recognized, valued, and put to its best use... while practicing versatility among all four approaches.

How do you approach the innovation process?

Modifying and Visioning styles are more **focused**, well-planned, and results-oriented

VISIONING

People who have *Visioning* profiles like to imagine an ideal future and let long-term goals be their guide – they *envision* and *idealize*

What stimulates your innovative thinking?

Visioning and Exploring styles primarily use **intuition**, insights, and images

MODIFYING

People who have *Modifying* profiles like to refine and improve what has already been done – they *refine* and *optimize*



EXPLORING

People who have *Exploring* profiles like to question assumptions and discover new possibilities – they *challenge* and *discover*

What stimulates your innovative thinking?

Experimenting and Modifying styles primarily use **facts**, details, and analysis

EXPERIMENTING

People who have *Experimenting* profiles like to test out various combinations of new ideas and learn from the results – they *combine* and *test*

How do you approach the Innovation process?

Exploring and Experimenting styles are more **broad**, perceptive, and learning-oriented

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The “Compass” Exercise

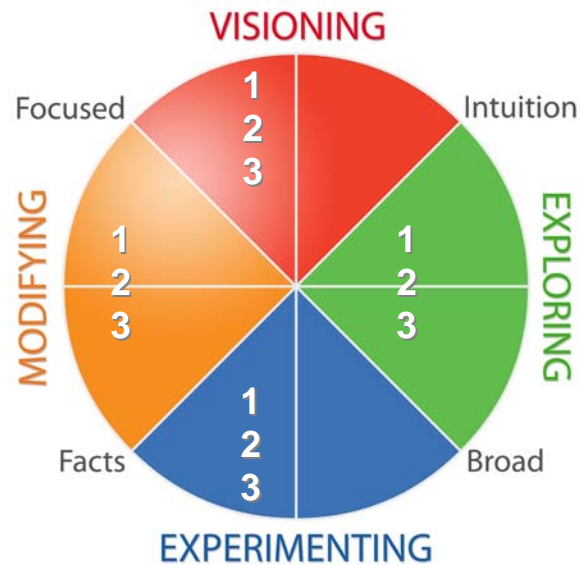
Generate ideas from four different directions. The “Compass” exercise will help you generate a more comprehensive as well as creative set of ideas. It changes your starting points and breaks up thought patterns that might limit you. For each question below, generate 3 (or 30!) options, listing each idea under the question that prompted it.

Visioning: What is the ideal long-term solution?

Modifying: What can we do to refine and optimize what we’ve done?

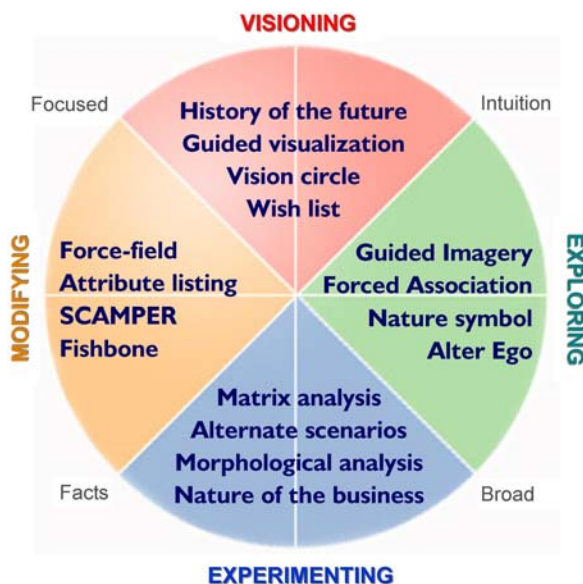
Exploring: What would be radically new and different?

Experimenting: What can we combine to put together a new solution?



Idea-Generation Techniques

Often the hardest part of coming up with new, innovative solutions is knowing where to begin looking for them. Whether you want to inspire your staff or to facilitate an idea-generation session, you’ll benefit greatly using idea-generation techniques associated with different Innovation Styles.



Modifying and *Experimenting* techniques begin by gathering facts, details and other data. *Modifying* builds on what is known, while *Experimenting* combines the components in new ways. *Visioning* and *Exploring* idea-generation techniques start with an intuitive insight, hunch or hypothesis. *Visioning* searches for a clear mental picture of the future, while *Exploring* seeks the novel and unique by questioning assumptions and using symbols and metaphors. Specific guidelines for each technique are available in a 30-page booklet, *Idea-Generation Techniques*.