

Executive Step

Start here when...

You need to make a careful examination of a situation, describe the nature of a problem or opportunity and make decisions about appropriate process steps to be taken. Before you begin, review the guidelines below:



Assessing the Situation

To describe and identify relevant data.
To determine next process step.

Diverge: Generate a large amount of data by asking and recording answers to questions that will help you gather information both from objective (observations, facts, sensorial elements) and subjective (hunches, feelings, opinions) sources.

Converge: Select the most important data, e.g., the information that looks more relevant to the situation you are facing. You can also cluster the data and label each cluster along with your goal, wish or challenge.

GUIDELINES

Diverge

Defer judgment
Strive for quantity
Seek wild, unusual ideas
Build on other ideas

Converge

Be affirmative
Be deliberate
Check objectives
Improve ideas

Clarification

Start here when...

You need to identify the goal or desired outcome of your efforts or when you need to pinpoint the right problem or opportunity to address.

Exploring the Vision

To develop a vision of a desired outcome.

Diverge: Generate a list of goals, wishes, challenges, and opportunities. Begin each with an affirmative statement starter: "I wish..." or "It would be nice if...."

Converge: Select the statement that best identifies the vision; improve the statement, if needed, until it expresses precisely the desired future state.

Formulating the Challenge

To identify the gaps that must be closed to achieve the desired outcome

Diverge: Generate a list of problems that need to be solved in order to achieve the vision. Begin each with an affirmative statement starter: "How to...," "How might...," "In what ways might...," or "What might be all the...."

Converge: Select the statement that best identifies the problem or opportunity you want to work on.



Transformation

Start here when...

You have a clearly defined problem and you need ideas to solve it or you have promising ideas and want to turn them into workable solutions.

Exploring Ideas

To generate novel ideas that address important challenges

Diverge: Come up with at least 35 ideas that might solve your problem. Come up with 35 more. Keep going! Even as you see good ideas emerge, keep pushing for novelty. Stretch!

Converge: Select the most promising ideas, remembering to keep novelty alive. Once completed, ask, "What I see myself (us) doing is..."

Formulating Solutions

To move ideas to solutions

Diverge: Generate a list of pluses, potentials, concerns, and ways to overcome the concerns; or, generate criteria to evaluate and build ideas into solutions; create prototypes to test the solution.

Converge: Select the best ideas for overcoming your concerns. By accepting and rejecting various aspects of the developing solution, make incremental improvements to the potential solution.



Implementation

Start here when...

You need buy-in from others and want a detailed plan of action to follow.

Exploring Acceptance

To increase the likelihood of success

Diverge:

Make a list of potential assisters. For each, list ways that you might be able to enlist their help or use their influence. Make a list of potential resisters. For each, list ways to overcome the resistance.

Converge: Select which assisters and resisters you will focus on, and which methods you will employ for addressing each group.

Formulating a Plan

To develop an implementation plan

Diverge: Generate a list of everything that will need to be done, including these details for each action: what needs to be done, who will do it, when it needs to be done, what steps precede it, who is notified upon completion. Include steps that involve acceptance—the work you did on assisters and resisters—from the previous step.

Converge: Review the list of action items. Remove those that do not need to be included in the plan, and combine steps that should be combined. List the action items in order, from start to finish, along with the pertinent details.

