

INTRODUCTION

Sarah Campbell, Head of Schools, Families and Young People

The Schools, Families and Young People's team in the Learning Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum devises and delivers hundreds of activities every year. Our attention is focussed on supporting and developing our audience's creativity and we work hard to ensure participants have high-quality experiences inspired by our collections and exhibitions. We rarely find the time to reflect on our own creative process and how we generate the ideas that fuel our programme of talks, tours, workshops, festivals, projects and performances.

A February afternoon with the ImaginationLancaster team was the perfect opportunity to step back from the daily pressure of deadlines and schedules and think about our practice as museum educators. Leon, Laura and Roger introduced a series of discussion-based activities that generated an inspiring mix of solutions –some were improbable and funny ('vulgarnomics' was a particular favourite); others were achievable and immediately try-out-able. We spent a lot of time discussing the office environment and how it could be used more effectively to support ideas development.

The session with ImaginationLancaster turned the tables – we weren't workshop leaders but workshop participants, and we had the freedom to think differently about our professional roles and how we support our creative development, both individually and as part of the team.



PROCESS AND CONTENTS



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Group to be More Creative
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End of Session

Designing Ways to be
More Creative
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FIVE WORDS, FIVE LINES

Introduction and warm-up

We were aware that most people in the room knew something about each other. We were also aware that levels of knowing each other were variable, and that the facilitation team did not have a good understanding of the group despite our scoping interviews. The Five Lines, Five Words tool was a good way to give everyone a chance to tell us where he or she was coming from. The notion for this is quite simple; a five-word biography that could be illustrated with a drawing of no more than five lines. These were then presented in five seconds, with the high tempo of presentation and high-speed handovers getting the group having fun and with high energy right at the beginning of the session.



Participants take it in turns to stand up and quickly share their Five Words and Five Lines with the rest of the group.



FINDING CREATIVE LEAPS

Thinking about when people were most creative

We asked the group in preparation for the event to think about the creative leaps they had made during the last eighteen months or so. In the first section of the event we asked the group to discuss these creative leaps. We then asked them to document some of the creative leaps on a selection of pro-forma cards. We invited the group to think about creative leaps that were prompted by circumstances with limited time, appropriation, limited resources, self-direction and surprise as well as wild card inspiration that did not fit with any of these categories.







MAPPING CREATIVE LEAPS

Looking for trends and patterns in everyone's creativity

Once all the creative leaps were completed and placed on a large board, we held a discussion on how to group or cluster these instances of inspiration. There was a wide-ranging discussion but one thing that kept coming back was the notion of responding to changes of circumstances (for example the numbers in an activity growing dramatically, or a change in venue). We contrasted this with ideas and innovations that were driven by intrinsic desires to experiment and invent. These two drivers for innovation created the first of our two axes, complementing a second axis around risk. This created a landscape of inspiration that allowed the participants to map out the creative leaps they had identified earlier in the session.

From the responses of the participants it was clear that they regarded most of their creative work to be risky; sometimes driven by curiosity and sometimes by externally imposed factors. It was also clear that participants regarded most of their creative leaps as coming from personal motivation rather than responding to changes in circumstance.

MORE
RISK

Creative leaps that were surprising

THE CREATIVE LEAP

SYMMETRY BREAKFAST (Instagram Account)

'GAMING VIBES' ONLINE AND THAT BECAME ME TO OUTRAGE WITH THE PAGES

A FRIEND SUGGESTED I TAKE IT FURTHER

IT HAPPENS EVERYDAY

Creative leaps that were surprising

THE CREATIVE LEAP

From being early in range of 'fast prices' to performance

From 'Drops' (New, better, cheaper) to 'Performance' (Quality, speed, reliability)

Being put out along a side in a right way - 'best' (longer) than 'more like' otherwise.

Creative leaps that occurred with limited resources

THE CREATIVE LEAP

From Small Scale to Large Scale, early

Freedom to work on many labels, ideas

numbers, audience, development

It's Spontaneous

Creative leaps that were surprising

THE CREATIVE LEAP

From Small Scale to Large Scale, early

Freedom to work on many labels, ideas

numbers, audience, development

It's Spontaneous

Creative leaps that were surprising

THE CREATIVE LEAP

Teen Town's (the one that only by)

Never been done before at the V&A

Feel that you be somewhat original for

Creative leaps that were surprising

THE CREATIVE LEAP

Reading to study art history rather than a practical degree

Not what people expected - Not what I expected!

Reading a course because of the location 'the way



PROACTIVE

Create your own story

Planning & writing the story	Writing & editing the book
1. Plan the story	1. Write the story
2. Write the story	2. Edit the story
3. Edit the story	3. Write the book
4. Write the book	4. Edit the book

What would happen if you...
to finish the story...
the story...
to the future...

What would happen if you...
to finish the story...
the story...
to the future...

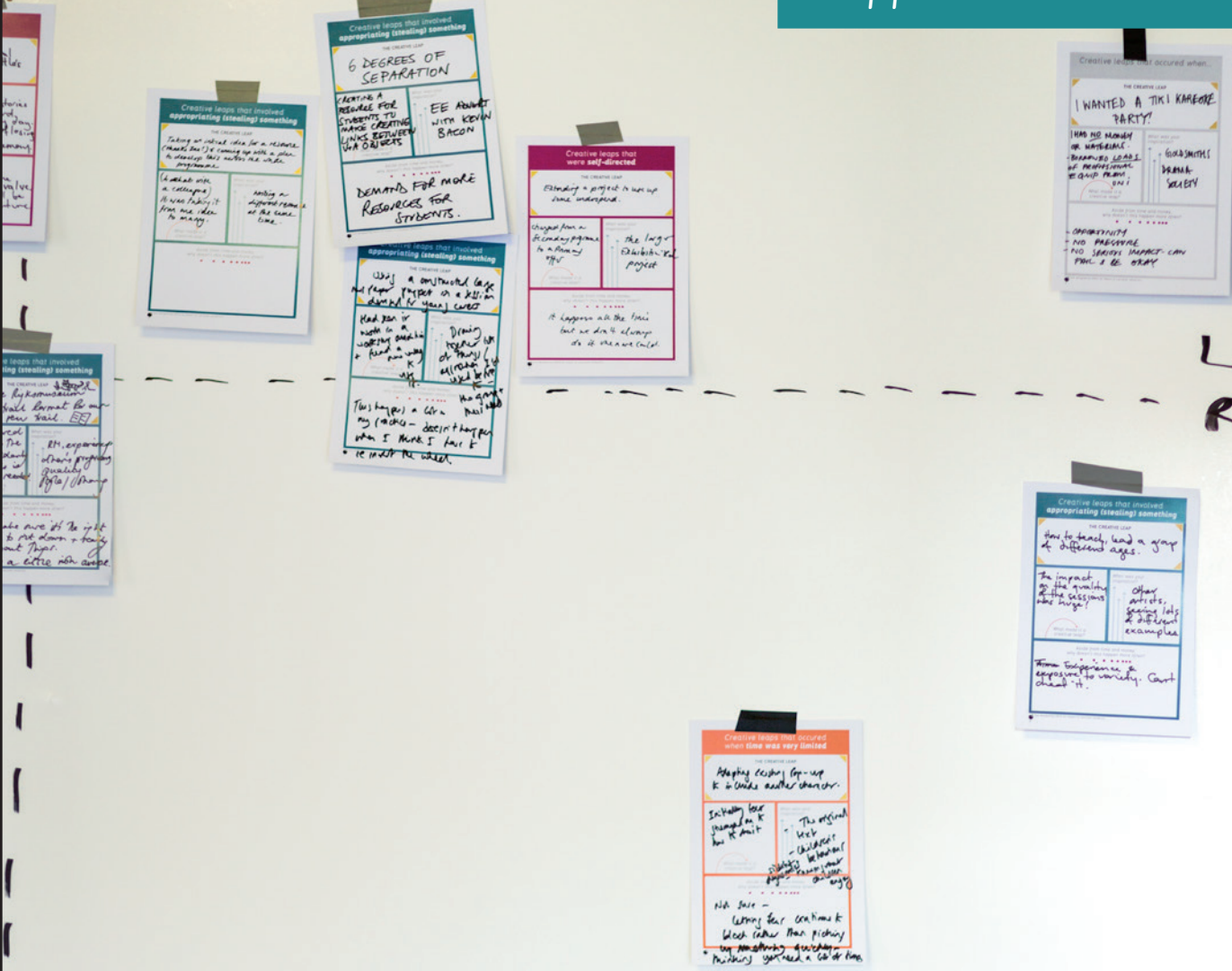
REACTIVE

Mapped Outcomes



ACTIVE

LESS RISK



The whole team's creative leaps mapped on an axes comparing risk and reactivity.

DESIGNING WAYS TO BE MORE CREATIVE

Practical and imaginary ways to be more creative, more often

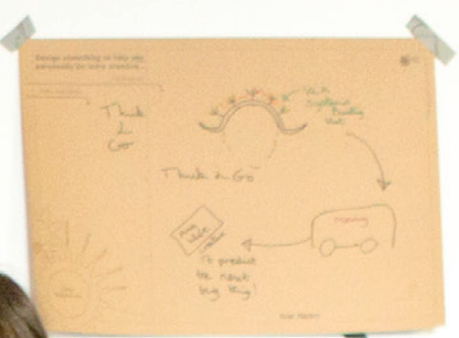
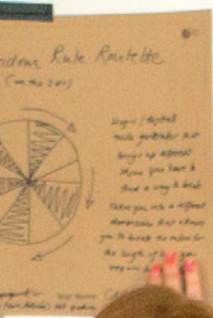
In this section we invited participants to reflect on how they and others were creative, where this occurred, and also why these creative leaps do not manifest themselves more often. Then we invited participants to design a highly personal approach, tool or process that would help them to be more creative. To help this along, the staff from ImaginationLancaster presented some of their own ideas for personal tools to enhance creativity. Responses included a half-baked ideas box (fittingly not really thought through in the documentation), a ruff of failure (to catch mistakes and failed ideas to use another time) and a pyjama party tool.

Team members discuss their designs for ways to be more creative personally.









MORE
RISK



Design something to help you
personally be more creative...

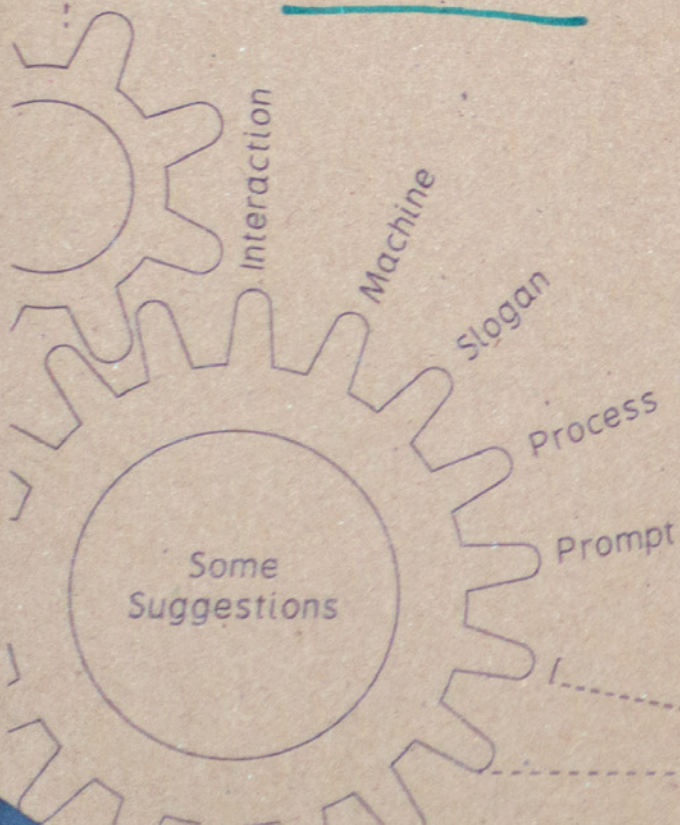
The proposal

Notes and ideas

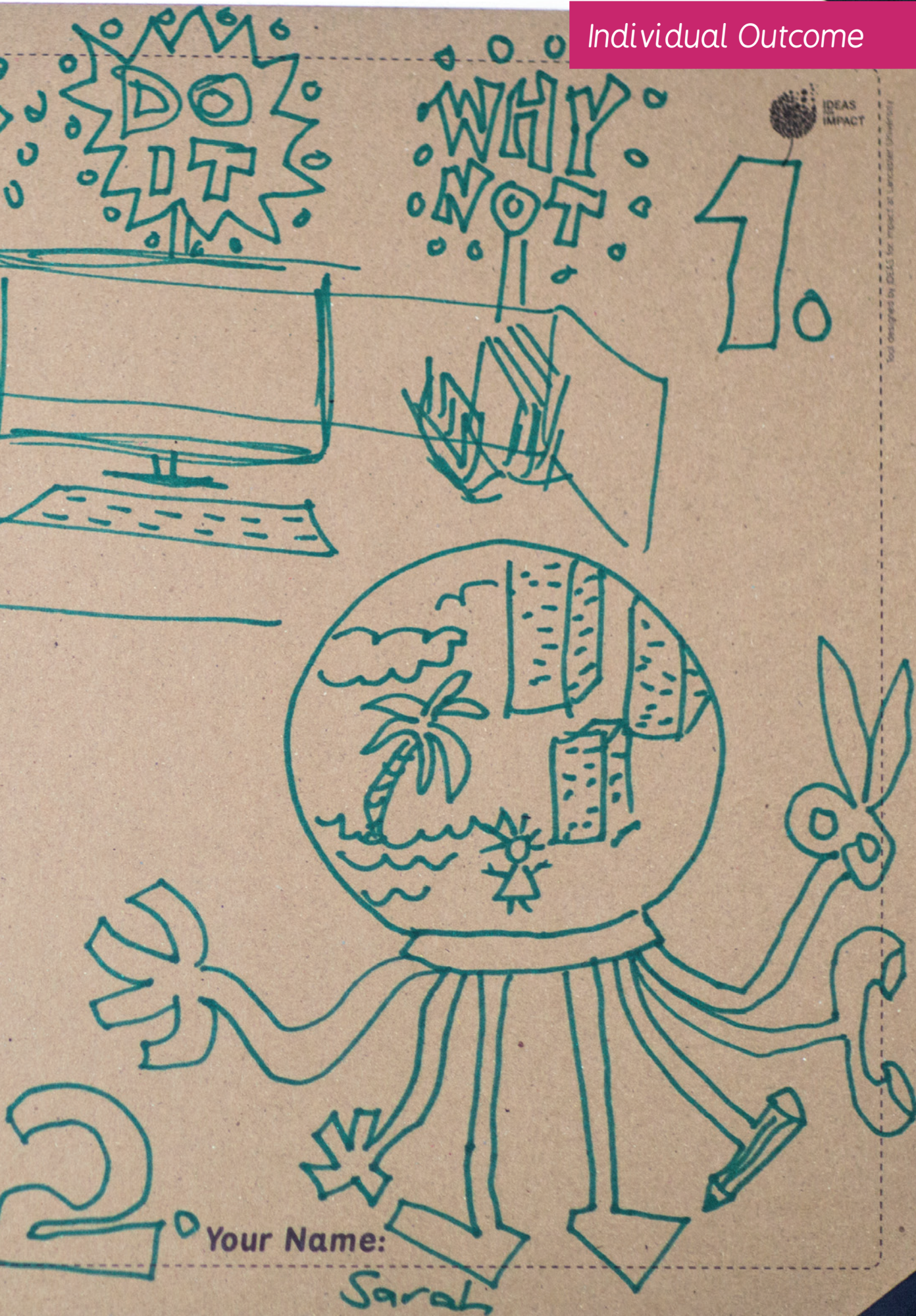
RISK & PROACTIVE
SPACE & CONSTRAINTS
CALM & PRESSURE
SURPRISING
EXCITING
UNEXPECTED



ACTION



OCTOBER 8 1986



Design something to help you
personally be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

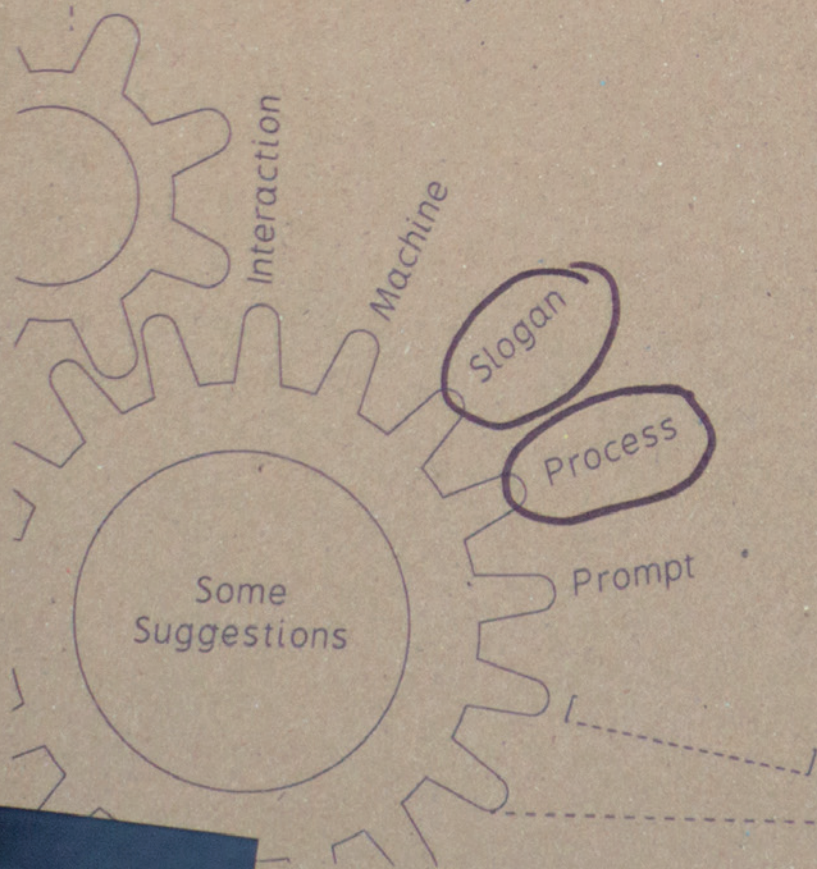
Absurd ideas
Drunk ideas
Child friendly
Vulgarnomics

How to Turn
INTO CH

- IDENTIFY
 - QUEST
 - APPRO
- "VU



RED WINE
AT THE SAMPLE



RN 'VULGAR' IDEAS
ILD FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

Y - DOCUMENT

ION

OPRIATE

LGARNOMICS"

DOCUMENT



FILTER

GREAT
IDEA

UTTER
CRAP

Your Name:

SCHOOLS
PROGRAMME

Design something to help you
personally be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

REMEMBER
THIS
STUFF

M. LEAVE M
T. BE PROA
W. WHY NO
T. MY CREAT
F. RISK --
SS.

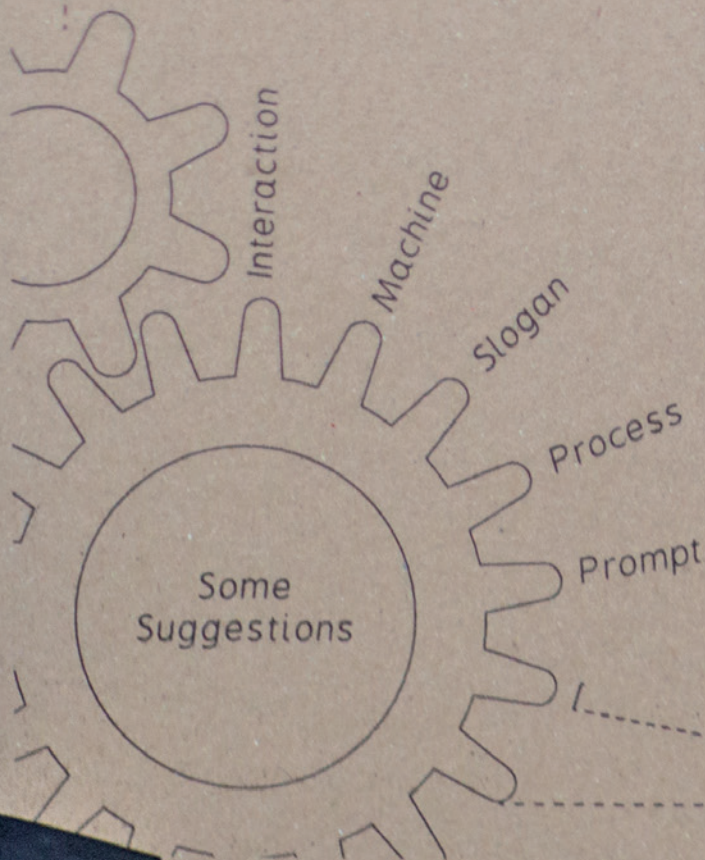
10 MINS PL

FIND A NEW
& USE IT

TURN OFF E

WORK OFF-S
WITH A TMS

VISIT AN EX



MY DESK
UTIVE
T?
VITY?
--
--

RANDOM GALLERY
GENERATOR

↳ RANDOM OBJECT
SELECTOR

↳ HOW DOES THIS
* RELATE TO MY
WORK?

MY
WORD

GOOGLE 10 STEPS

↳ *

EMAILS

TAKE A WALK

↳ CHOOSE A TREE

↳ SELECT A
BRANCH / LEAF

↳ DISCUSS

EXHIBITION

CHAT TO A G.A

Your Name: Sarah

Design something to help you
personally be more creative...

The proposal

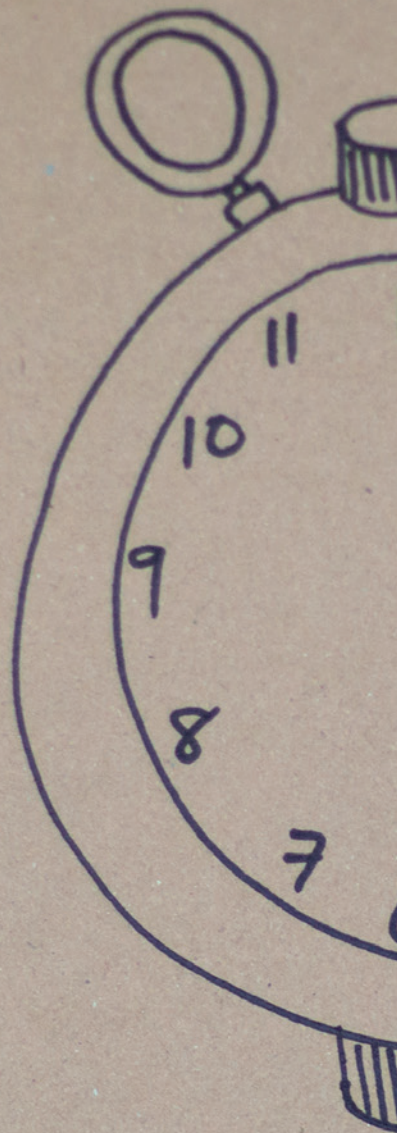
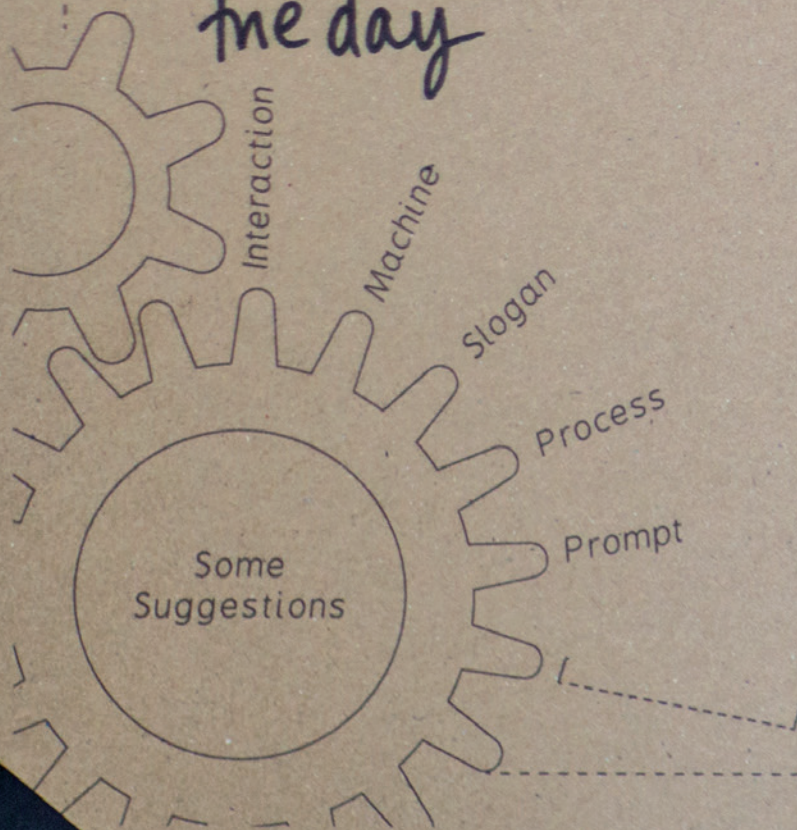
Notes and ideas

Always something to do/
a problem to solve

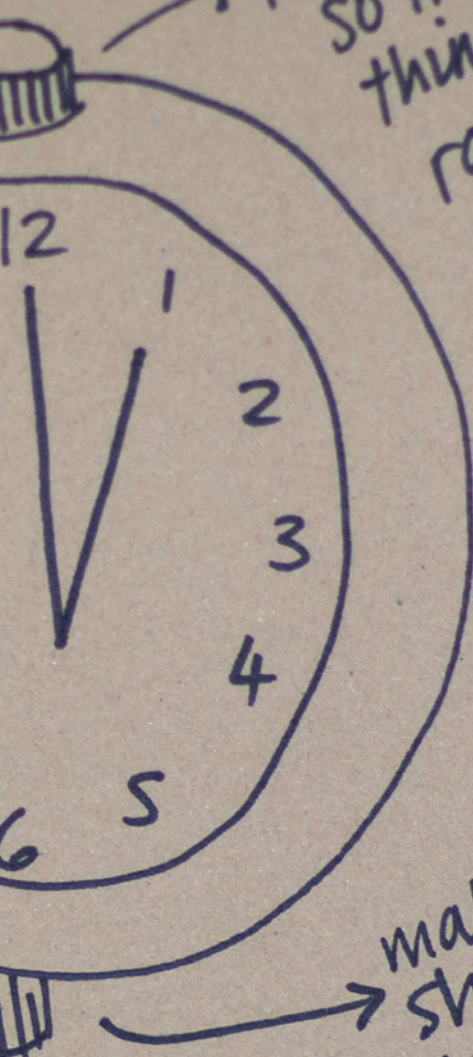
admin / emails

visible presence (shared
office)

never enough time in
the day



A watch that
invisible



pauses time,
so that I can really
think about an idea,
rather than being distracted
by logistics/emails/
problems/queries

makes me invisible - love our
shared office but you never
have the option to 'close the
door' and give yourself
time + space

pauses time and/or makes me
le

Your Name: Laura

Design something to help you personally be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

talking (informally)

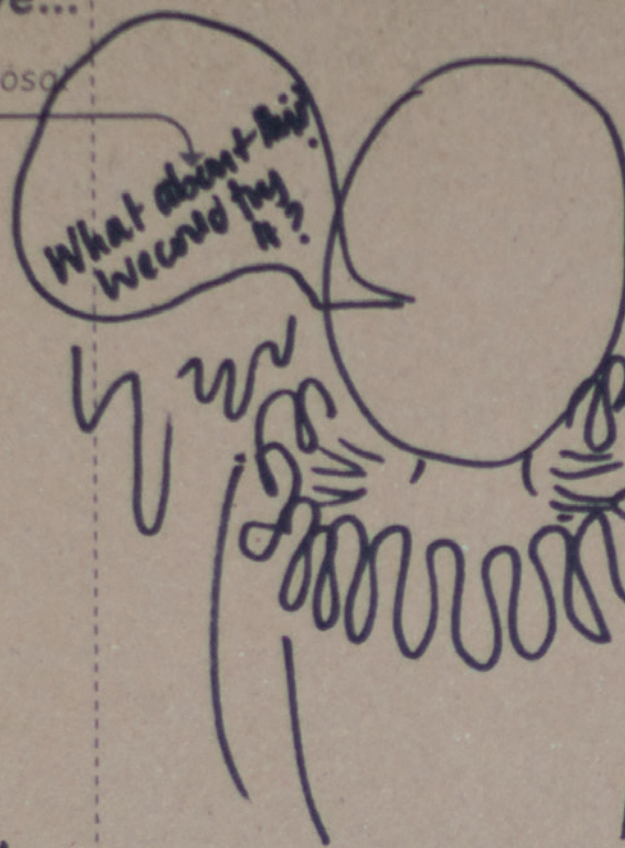
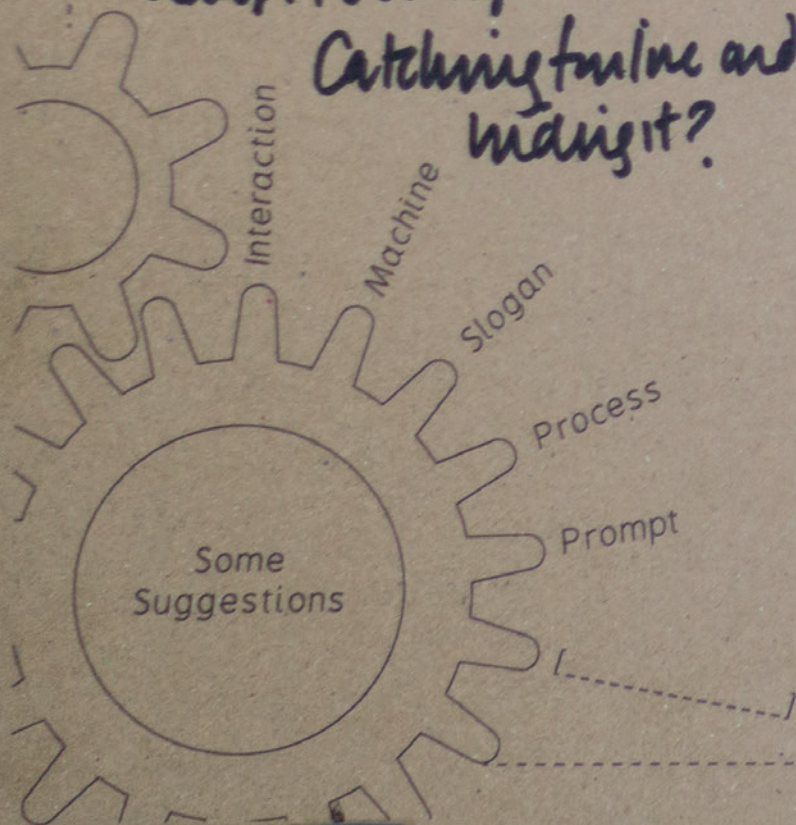
eating & drinking

1 min briefs / pitches

Chatting through ideas

Idea hatching - one
good idea - pitch it in to
different people/colleagues
adapt/develop.

Catching failure and
making it?



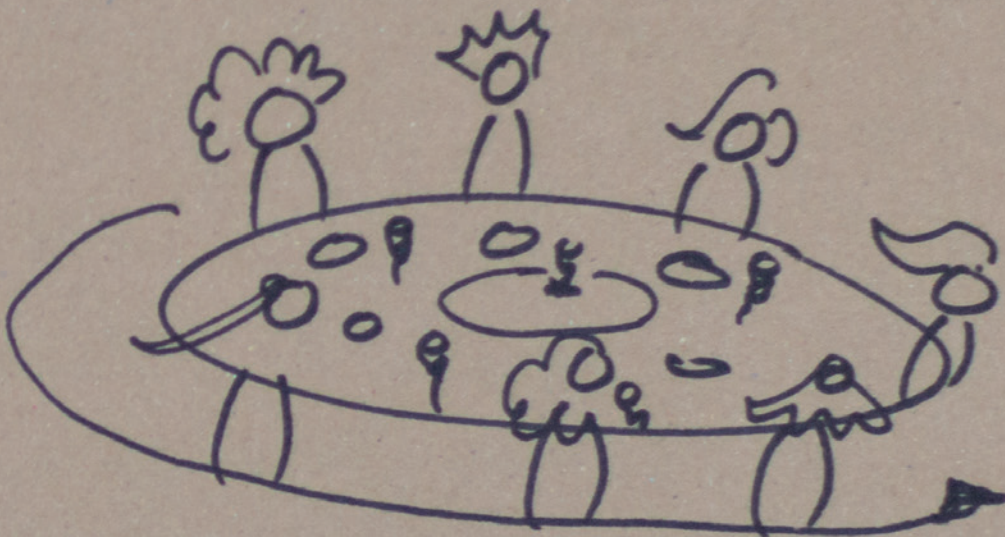
Always Say - 'We could have
seen what'

The Ruff of Failure -
my failures and
Ideas....

We could do this... It might be a bad idea?

~~NO~~ must include food and drinks....

...it all happens...
-caterers all gone wrong



Breakfast meetings
with a chinese rotating
table - pitch your
problems or ideas and
get 5 mins brainstorm
and advice - discussion
with your colleagues.

Your Name:

BECKY BRUNN

Design something to help you personally be more creative...

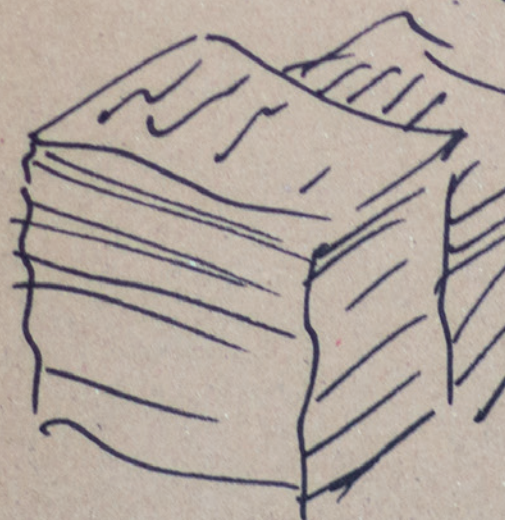
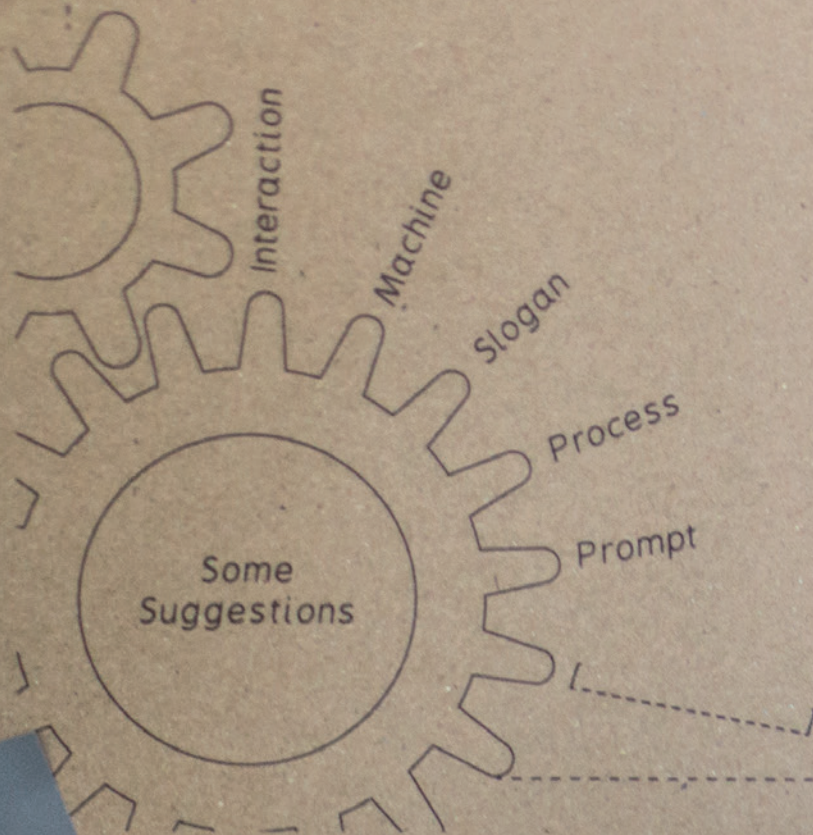
HOW TO

The proposal

Notes and ideas

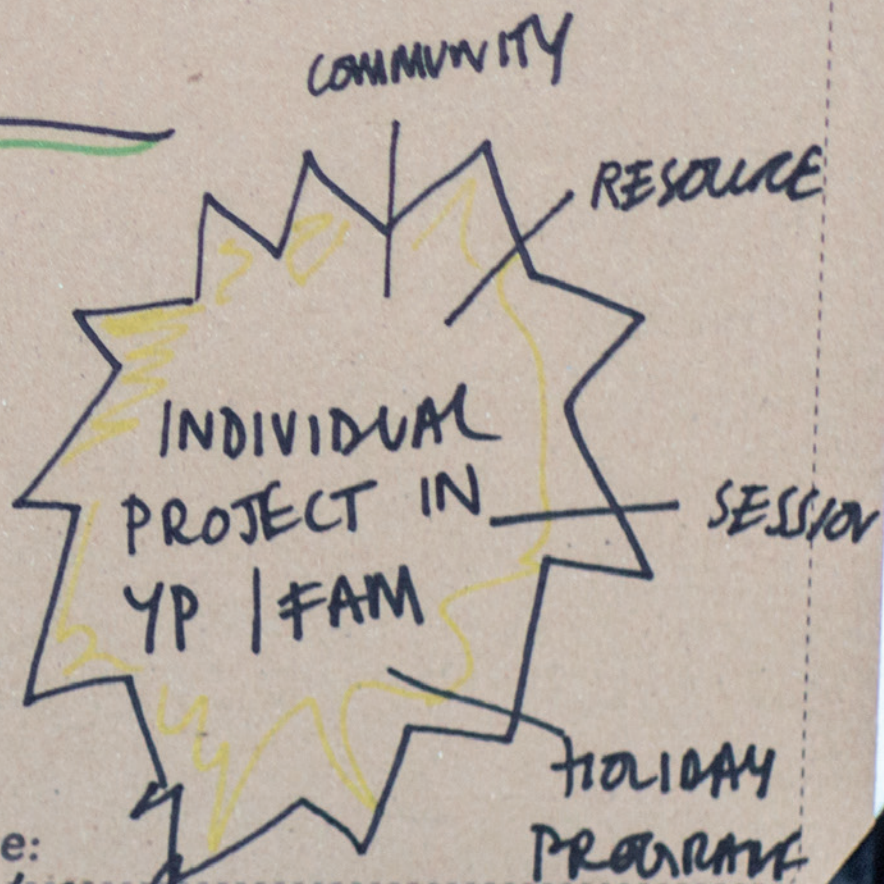
- Having an administrator
- Time to have own projects
- More time & confidence in admin side of role
- less emphasis on practical issues

- ADMIN
- SUPPORT
- LEARNING
- FINANCE



MAKE ADMIN CREATIVE

80% 20%



Your Name:

Rachana

Design something to help you
personally be more creative...

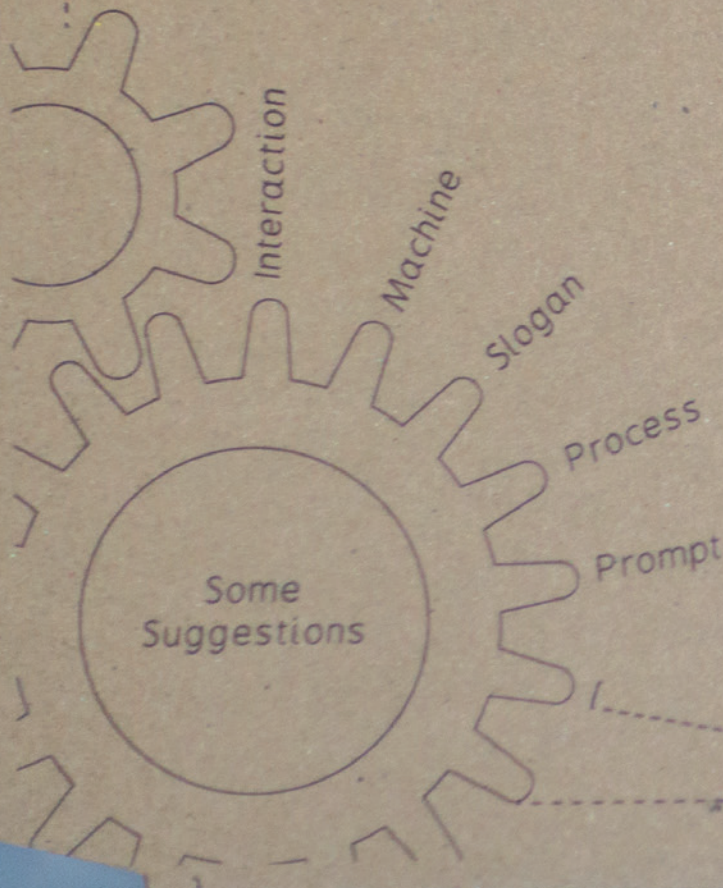
The proposal

Notes and ideas

A rule book
to break

Random rules or
constraints to work
around.

Random

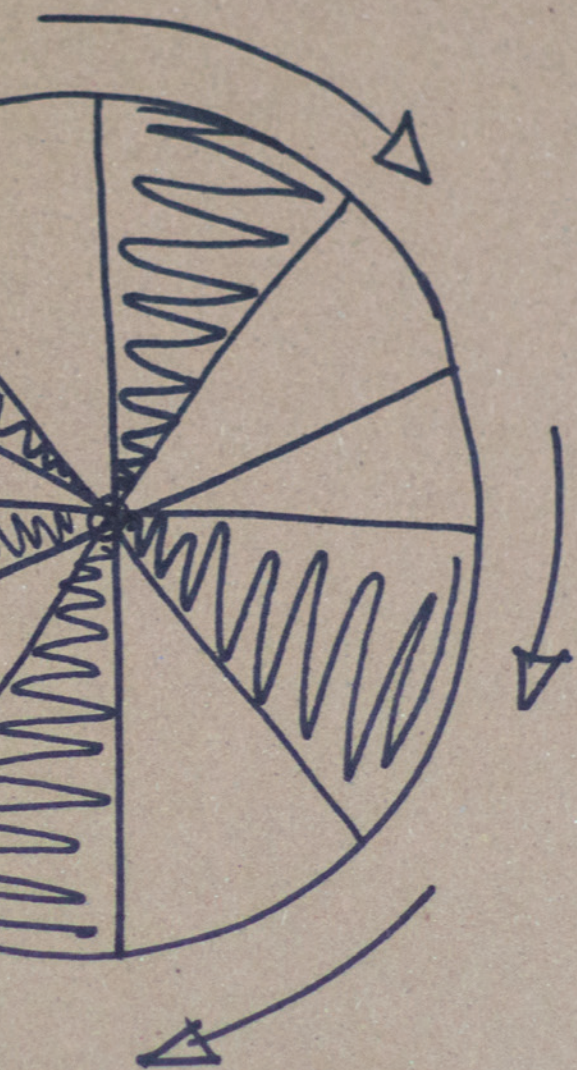


Spin it once
for a rule &
once for an
idea

→ re-approach
nick the ideas for

om Rule Roulette

or the 3 Rs)



Magic / digital
rule generator that
brings up different
ideas you have to
find a way to break.

Takes you into a different
dimension that allows
you to break the rules for
the length of time you
require for your ideas.

pract'ar

Your Name:

CARA

Adrian's Hit Machine

Design something to help you personally be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

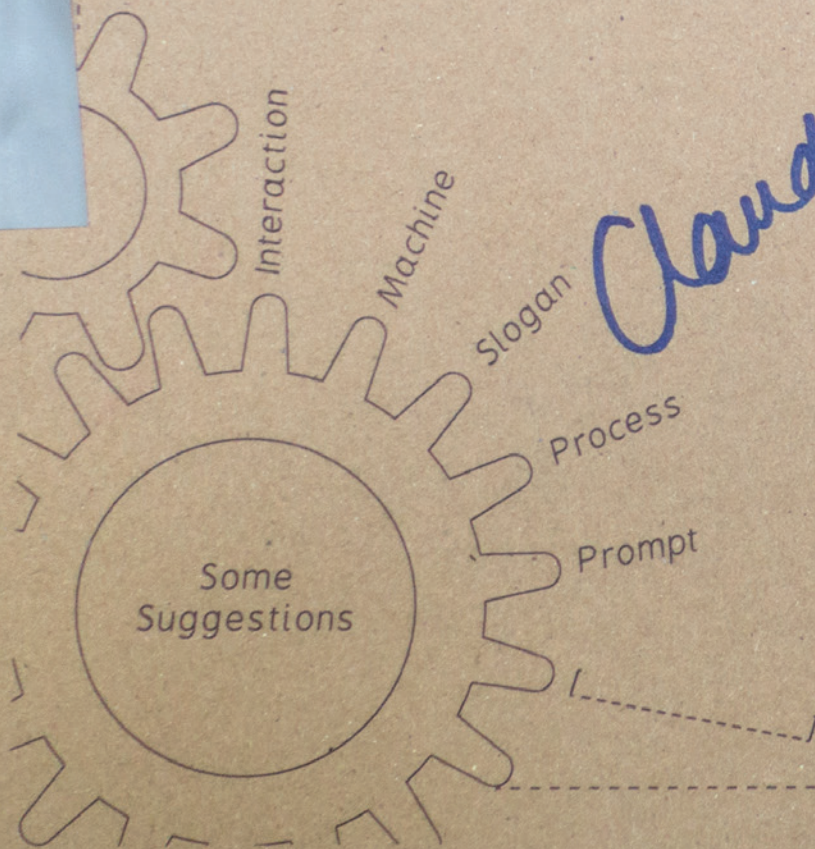
Push:

- Dream time / play time
- A range of stimuli
- People to share with
- Comfy space
- space !! headspace

you can
work at
home in
your PJ's
this morning -
best idea time!

"Museum

Claudia



When we
you have one
explain the
washed

"Pass"



"Mander"



ing this
how to
museum where you
- no soul - no me allowed to talk to
you!

Your Name:



tree shaped post box
where people put

"Let me
your..."



15 minute
brainstorm session with
members from the
team to explore a
creative idea / block
proposal.

Pick

images
quotes
recurring
colours
is an
idea

IDEA FOR IMPACT

not designed by IDEAS for IMPACT

Design something to help you personally be more creative...

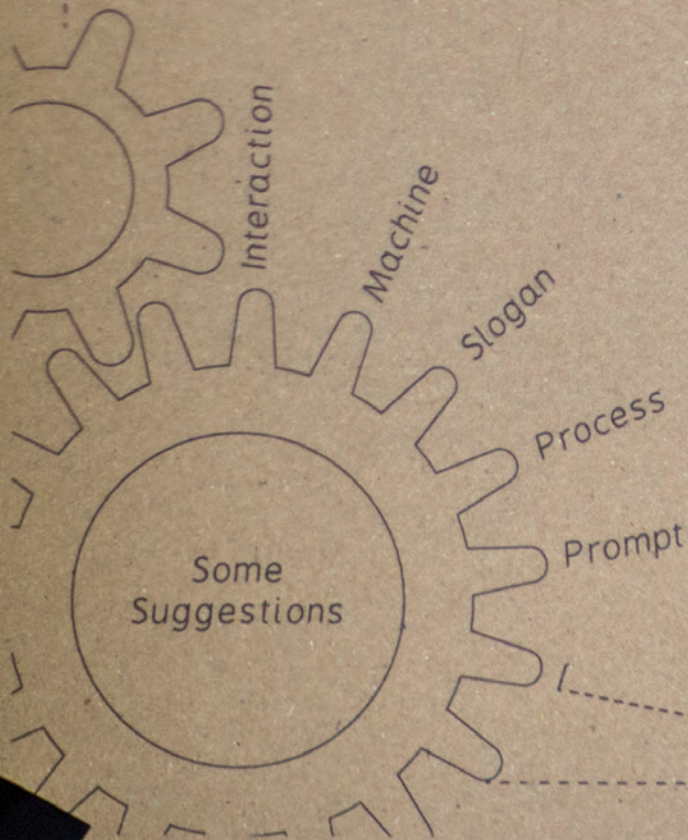
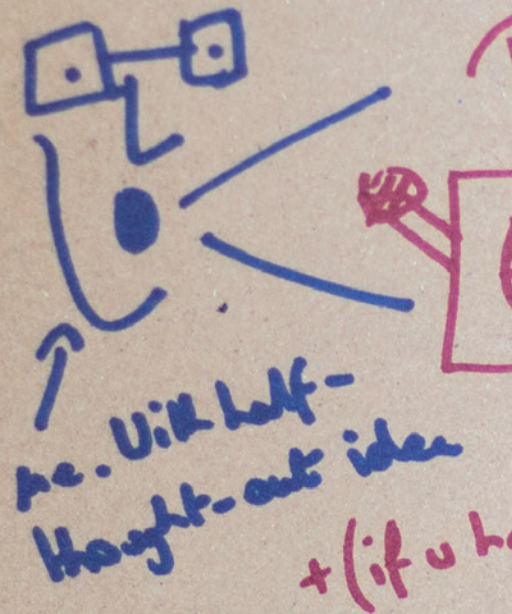
The proposal

Notes and Ideas

Tue

Hit

(The H)



Satellite system takes all the best world ideas and edits them a broadcast

PART ①

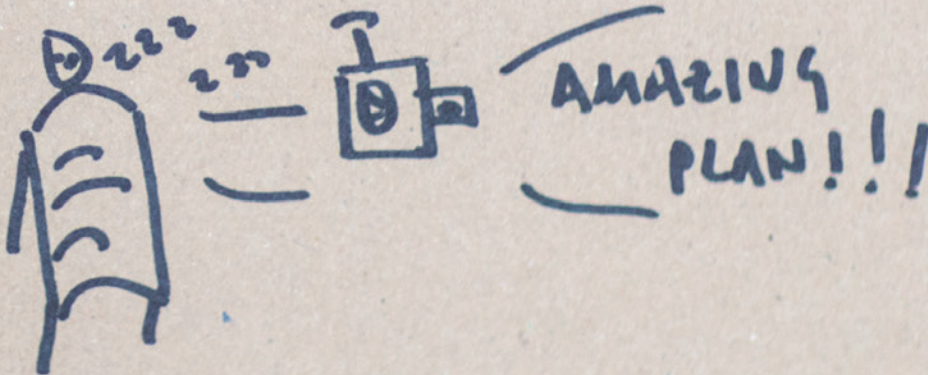
- machine

half - Idea Translator...)



..... 'What U meant was...'

... a bigger budget - combine with...)

The **Dot** - (Dream idea translator)NOT THE INTERNET.

Your Name:

Design something to help you personally be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

Brainstorming/mindmap
Collaboration

NEW Ideas

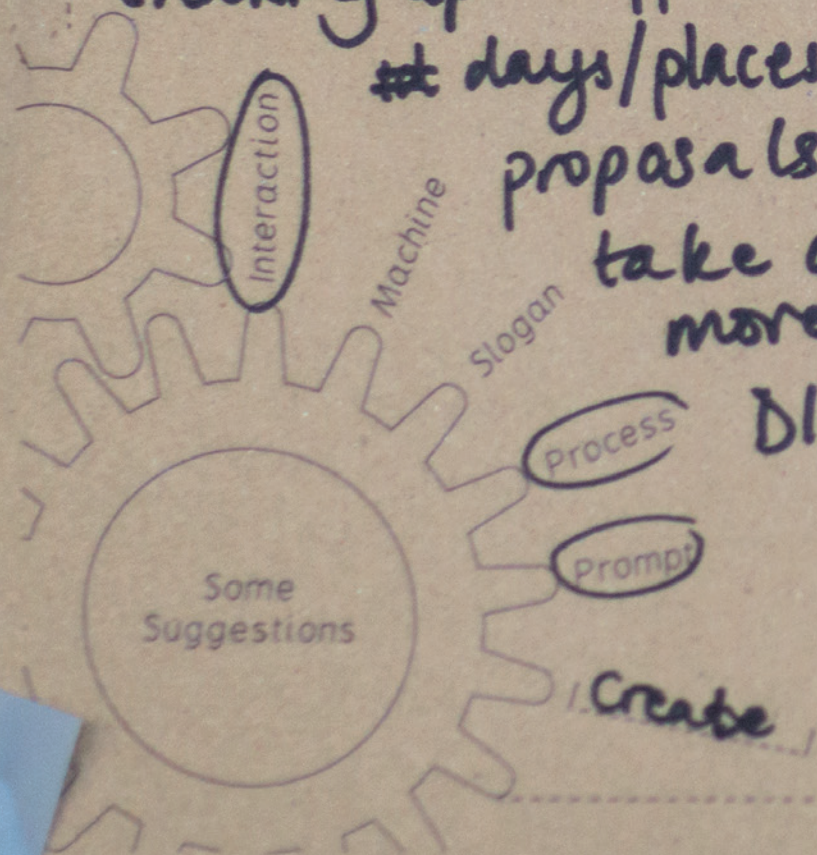
different perspective
" challenges

understanding whole
process

Shaking up - different
days/places
proposals

take on
more

DISCOVER

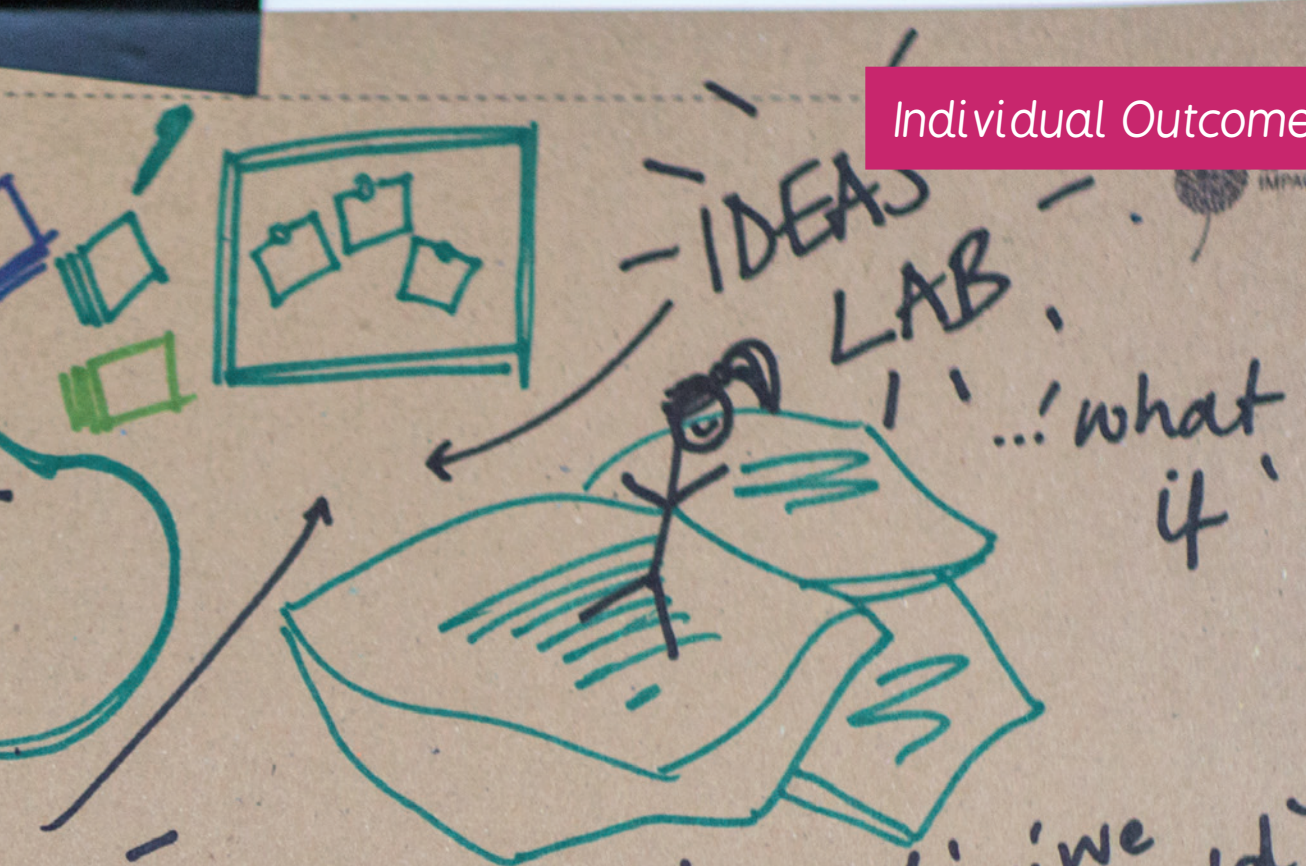


soft
space!



POP UP
in museum
hi

studio



can -
hidden
space

... 'experiment' ... 'we
could'

... 'lets meet' ...

... 'lets look at ...'

... 'pretend' ...

... 'research' ...

- different senses -
- " starting points -
- unexpected outcomes -

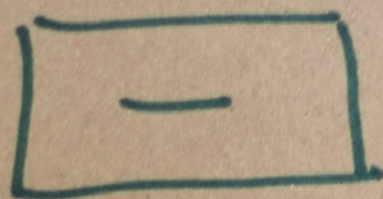
Your Name: Zoe

Design something to help you
personally be more creative...

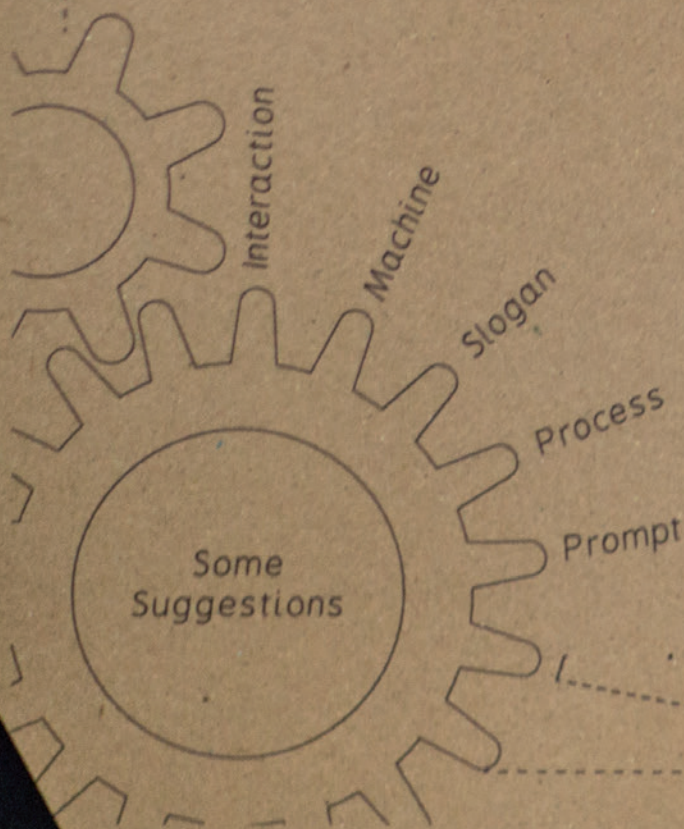
The proposal

Notes and ideas

" HALF- ARK
BOX .



...



PART (2)

D IDEAS

"

One a week, you have
20 mins to work it up.

Your Name:

Design something to help you
personally be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

help me be more creative?

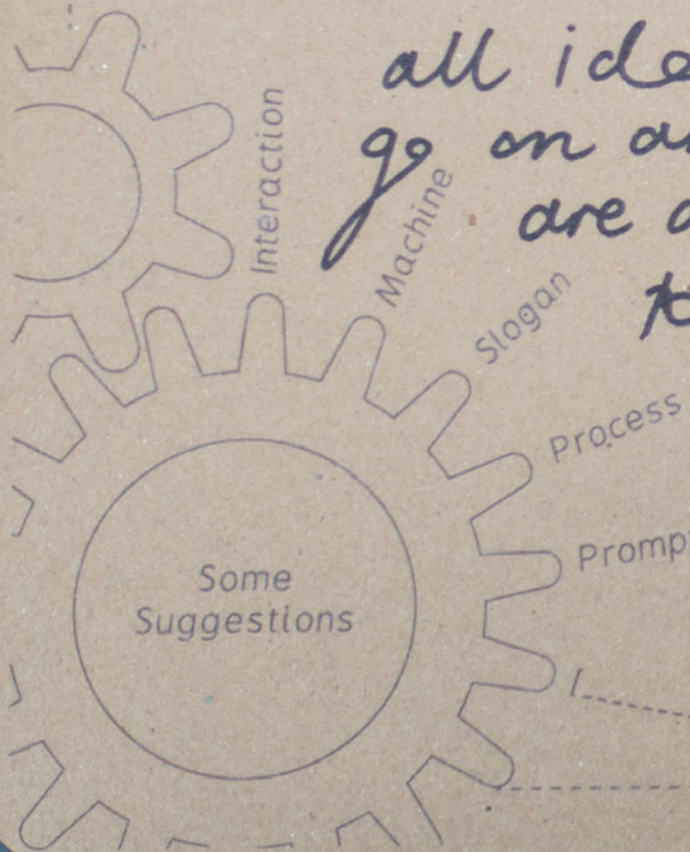
- be more concise
- clear
- enthusiastic

* ideas tree



all ideas
go on and
are added
to. so

creative
process is out
in the open.





Logo designed by: IDEAS for Impact at Lancaster University



Design something to help you
personally be more creative...

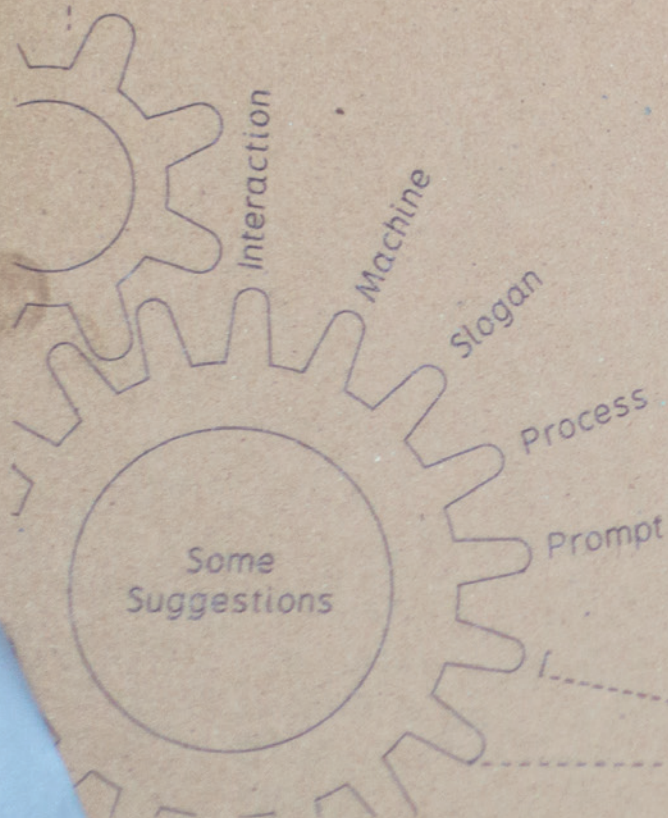
The proposal

Notes and ideas

Think
L
Go

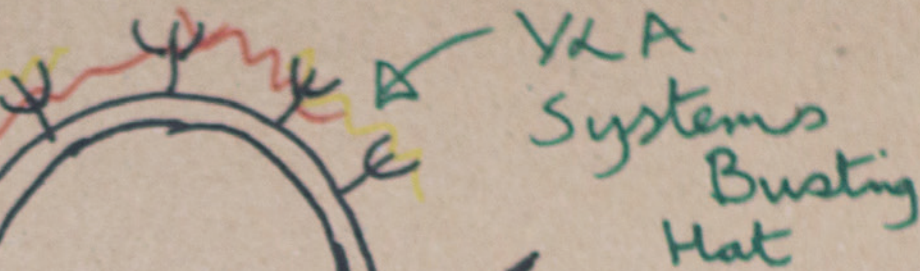


Think &



Any
where
creative

To pro
the ne
big t



Go

Moving

redict
xt
thing!

Your Name:

DESIGNING WAYS FOR THE GROUP TO BE MORE CREATIVE

Going from enhancing individual creativity to supporting the entire team

Once all of the personal ways to be creative had been displayed and examples had been shared, the group brought the ideas they had explored throughout the day together and were asked to think about ways that they as a team could be creative. The team split into four groups and worked together to complete a large-scale pro-forma. Several outcomes of the activity related to making the team's office space more inspiring, but other ideas emerged, included taking two days out a month to do something creative, having a creativity surgery where other members of the team could give advice on ideas, and going to work somewhere else to be inspired by another person or organisation's work practise.





Small teams discuss ideas for how they could be more creative as a group.



A view of the Lowther Room at the Royal Geographical Society as the teams work on ways to be more creative as a group.

Design something to help the group be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

fabaticals

paul smith's studio.

Curators + RIBA offices.

library, study space

pass to go somewhere - visit

more and tell table. gallery.

feed back more.

Walk and talk

Cabinet of Curiosities

Mr David Judd
Creative Close
Creatureshire



Interaction

Machine

Slogan

Process

Prompt

Some
Suggestions

SAVILE
ROW
TAILOR

- CHANGE OF SCENES
- SPEND A DAY / A WEEK IN ONE OF THESE PLACES
- LEARNING A NEW SKILL
- MEET NEW PEOPLE
- BRING IDEAS BACK



W ARIS
STUDIOS

ROYAL
COLLEGE
OF ART

INSIDE
BIG
BEN.

PAUL
SMITH'S
STUDIO

/ BE IN A MORE CREATIVE SPACE

WEEK WORKING IN
ACES

SKILL OR TECHNIQUE

E
K

Design something to help the group be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

bureaucracy - unpack new techniques, email free time

office space - a collective responsibility

forced time makes stuff happen

team time is limited - make the most of it

A work in progress space - rework the whiteboard

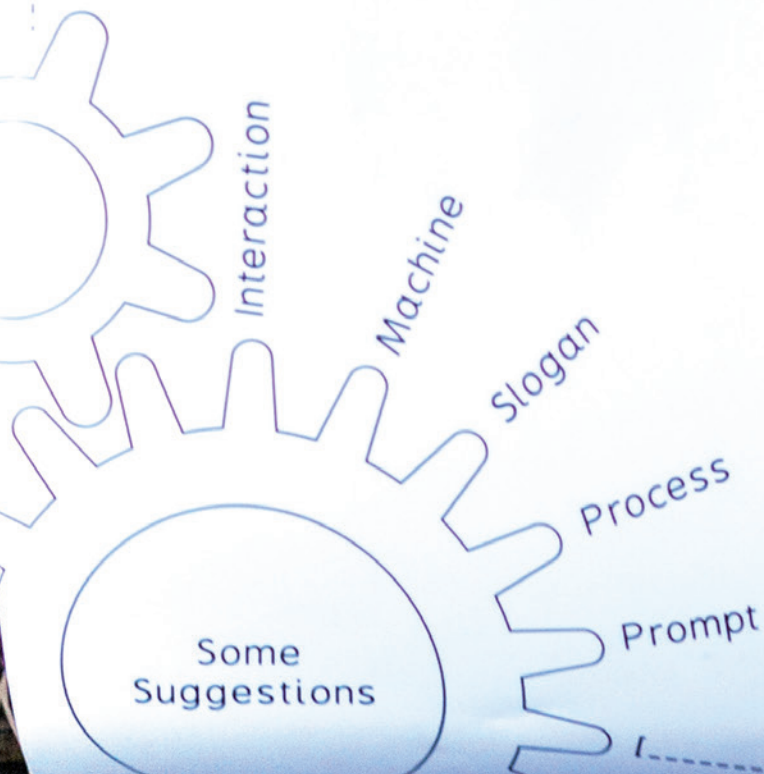
improve the office

→ work in progress

→ rework the office
↳ time

↳ new ideas

→ regular sessions
collective
table etc



ice space by . . .

gress space (either on lockers or whiteboard)
whiteboard (divide into sections eg inspiration ^{images}
specific, regular clear down ^{exhibitions}
magnets ^{articles} eg success section

time to focus on the office, take more
responsibility for overspilling stuff, meeting

Design something to help the group be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

Time out of office to work creatively in alternative location -

- research
- project planning
- creative content development.

on a regular basis - even if not working on something specific can take this time to be inspired ie visit another museum / performance etc.

- can use 2 days or just 1 ie 2 whole days 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ days etc.

Interaction

Machine

Slogan

Process

Prompt

Some Suggestions



FEB

1 day at Sadlers wells

1/2 day with a...

* Idea's Surgery -

* Speed Thinking



Help...

How about...

Days of Creativity!

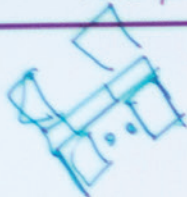
I HAVE YOU TAKEN
YOUR 2 DAYS OF
CREATIVITY THIS
MONTH?!



Design something to help
the group be more creative...

Notes and ideas

The proposal

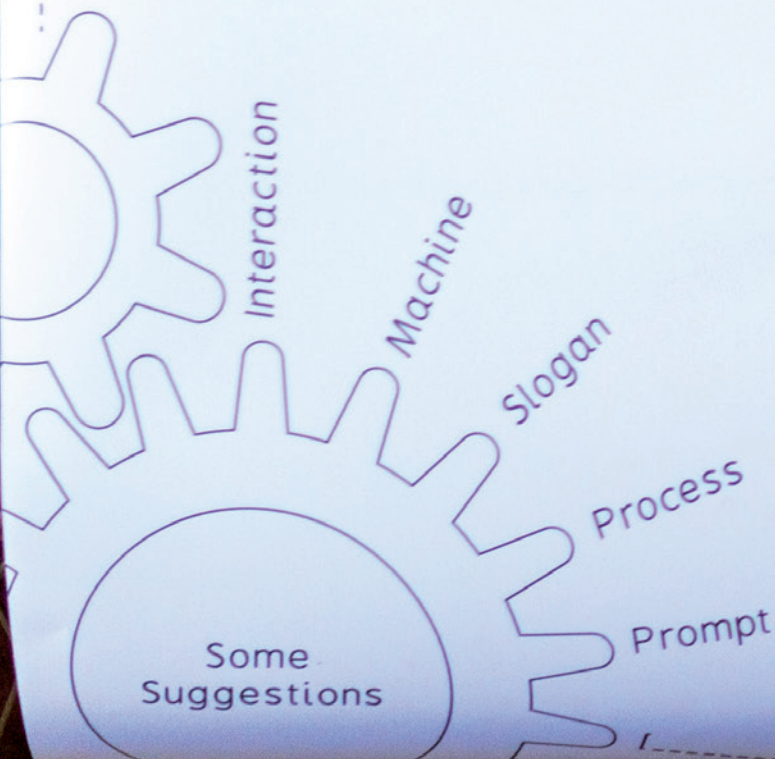
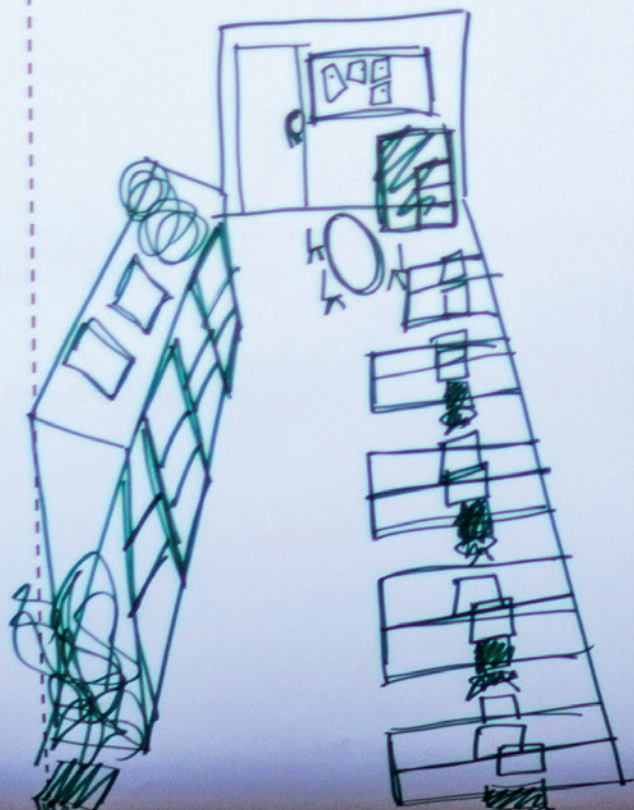


Environment of work

- mobile working device
- mess space
 - studio
 - practical
- Remove regimented angles
 - more colours

Now

SFYP office



FANTASY
VERSION.

mezzanine
levels

no grey!

SEMI-REALISTIC
VERSION...



portable
devices

charging
space

colour



whiteboard
wall?

texture
pattern

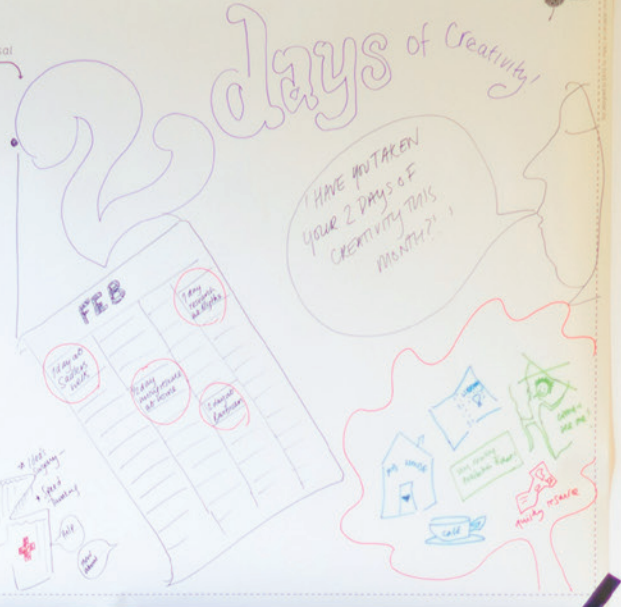
old
stationary
cupboard...

Design something to help the group be more creative...

The proposal

Notes and ideas

Time out of office to work creatively in alternative location -
- regular - research
- project planning
- creative school development
on a regular basis - even if not
working on something specific can have
this time to be relaxed - it will
enhance performance etc.
- can use 2 days at start
if 2 whole days
4 days etc.



Design something to help the group be more creative...

The proposal

improve the office space by...

- work in progress space (either on lockers or whiteboard)
- rework the whiteboard (divide into sections eg inspiration, success section)
 - ↳ time specific, regular clear down
 - ↳ new magnets
- regular set time for office, takes more collective responsibility, meeting stuff, meeting tables etc

NEXT STEPS

Making the day the start of the conversation

The interesting discussions that had arisen during the workshop were summarised by Sarah and other participants from the event. We observed a great deal of enthusiasm and energy from the team, indicating that some really useful ideas had come out of the day. To ensure that the work done during the session had continued meaning, we provided time during the session for the team to decide how they would take the content of the day forward in their normal working rhythms. We also produced this report and an accompanying tracking tool to allow the team to monitor each team member's efforts to engage with more inspirational activities outside of the office.



The small teams come back together to share the outcome from the group creativity task.

DELIVERED BY

ImaginationLancaster, Lancaster University

The workshop was designed and delivered by Leon Cruickshank, Roger Whitham and Laura Morris from ImaginationLancaster, a design research centre at Lancaster University. The tools used in the workshop were designed as part of the IDEAS for Impact project at ImaginationLancaster, which is funded by HEIF.

More information:

imagination.lancaster.ac.uk and impact.lancaster.ac.uk

