Concept Generation

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... the best way to get a good idea is to get a lot of ideas...

Linus Pauling



Concept Generation Exercise: Vegetable Peelers





Vegetable Peeler Exercise: Voice of the Customer

- "Carrots and potatoes are very different."
- "I cut myself with this one."
- "I just leave the skin on."
- "I'm left-handed. I use a knife."
- "This one is fast, but it takes a lot off."
- "How do you peel a squash?"
- "Here's a rusty one."
- "This looked OK in the store."



Vegetable Peeler Exercise: Key Customer Needs

- 1. The peeler peels a variety of produce.
- 2. The peeler can be used ambidextrously.
- 3. The peeler creates minimal waste.
- 4. The peeler saves time.
- 5. The peeler is durable.
- 6. The peeler is easy to clean.
- 7. The peeler is safe to use and store.
- 8. The peeler is comfortable to use.
- 9. The peeler stays sharp or can be easily sharpened.



Problem Decomposition: Function Diagram





External Search: Hints for Finding Related Solutions

- Lead Users
 - benefit from improvement
 - innovation source
- Benchmarking
 - competitive products
- Experts
 - technical experts
 - experienced customers & sales staff
- Patents
 - search related inventions
- Literature
 - technical journals
 - trade literature



Internal Search: Hints for Generating Many Concepts

- Suspend judgment
- Generate a lot of ideas
- Infeasible ideas are welcome
- Use graphical and physical media
- Make analogies
- Wish and wonder
- Use related stimuli
- Use unrelated stimuli
- Set quantitative goals
- Use the gallery method
- Trade ideas in a group
- Solve the conflict



An Excursion to TRIZ

Theory of Inventive Problem Solving



The first 13 (of 39) TRIZ Metrics

- 1. Weight of Mov. Obj.
- 2. Weight of Stat. Obj.
- 3. Length of Mov. Obj.
- 4. Length of Stat. Obj.
- 5. Area of Mov. Obj.
- 6. Area of Stat. Obj.
- 7. Volume of Mov. Obj.

- 8. Vol. of Stat. Obj.
- 9. Speed
- 10. Force
- 11. Stress
- 12. Shape
- 13. Stability



The first 19 (of 40) TRIZ Principles

- 1. Segmentation
- 2. Taking out
- 3. Local quality
- 4. Asymmetry
- 5. Merging
- 6. Universality
- 7. "Nested doll"
- 8. Anti-weight
- 9. Preliminary anti-action
- 10. Preliminary action
- 11. Beforehand cushioning

- 12. Equipotentiality
- 13. The other way round'
- 14. Spheroidality Curvature
- 15. Dynamics
- 16. Partial or excessive actions
- 17. Another dimension
- 18. Mechanical vibration
- 19. Periodic action



Child Car Seats: Volume vs. Shape





- 7. "Nested Doll"
- **29. Pneumatics and Hydraulics**

Principles 7 & 29

- 7: "Nested Doll"
 - Place one object inside another
 - Pass one part through a cavity in the other
- 29: Pneumatics & Hydraulics
 - Use gas and liquid parts of an object instead of solid parts (e.g. inflatable, filled with liquids, air cushion...)



Systematic Exploration: Concept Combination Table







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Team Processes



- Suggestion: Assign a manager for each assignment.
- Be inclusive of all team members.
- Try to meet once or twice a week.
- Team meetings are for sharing results, reaching consensus, making decisions, and assigning the work.
- The "real work" gets done outside of the meetings.
- Many teams are meeting at noon before class Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Suggested Reading

• TRIZ

 Genrich Altschuller: "And suddenly the inventor appeared"

- Function Analysis
 - Kaneo Akiyama "Function Analysis"
 - Gerhard Pahl and Wolfgang Beitz "Engineering Design"

