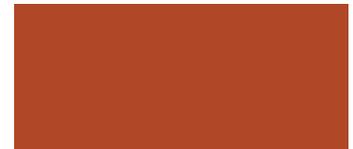
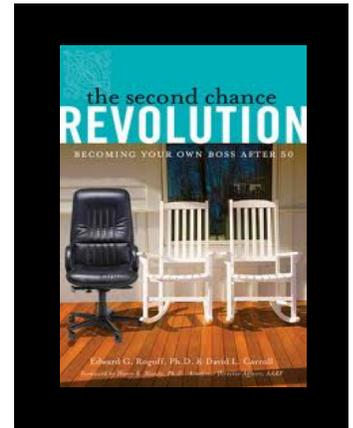


WHAT IS THE BEST ENTREPRENEURIAL PATH TO CHOOSE, AND HOW DO I START MAKING CONSIDERATIONS?

Try the SCAMPER technique: A creative thinking exercise designed by educator, Bob Eberle, SCAMPER is designed to help people solve a wide range of problems. It can be used to plot a story, design a computer, play a better game of chess, or win a war. It can definitely be used by people who are searching a new vocation, and/or who wish to fine-tune their new business once they discover it.



TRY THE SCAMPER TECHNIQUE SCAMPER IS AN ACRONYM THAT STANDS FOR:

SUBSTITUTE

COMBINE

ADAPT

MODIFY

PUT

ELIMINATE

REVERSE

THE ITEMS IN THE SCAMPER ACRONYM WORK LIKE THIS:

SUBSTITUTE: Devise a better idea for a business by replacing—and/or improving on—the systems and materials currently used by the competition. For instance, if you want to manufacture a new and innovative stereo speaker, consider substituting wood casings for plastic. If you're thinking of opening a movie theater, how about installing a computerized ticket-taking apparatus to free up employees for more important jobs.

COMBINE: Can you take the best parts of other businesses and unite them into a bigger, better business? If you intend to open a food shop, why not include a sushi counter, a catering service, and/or a wine-tasting (and selling) kiosk to attract more customers.

If you plan to start a manicure and pedicure salon, consider offering foot massages and back rubs as value-added services to attract customers.

A**DAPT:** You improve on a business by making it attractive to a wider market and/or to a larger customer base. You might, for example, turn a seasonal ice skating rink into a year-round enclosed rink. You might open a gourmet food market with foods on the shelf that appeal to persons from other cultures as well as to Americans.

M**ODIFY:** Change (and thus improve) an essential feature of a product such as its size, ingredients, color, packaging, or price. Try, for instance, selling brownies with nuts rather than plain. Open a gift basket business that includes flowers, plants, and hard-to-find food items in its selection.

P**UT (TO OTHER USES):** Can you alter your business or product in such a way that it provides more than one good or service? Besides offering custom sound systems, you might also sell a technical service like product testing. If you start a miniature golf course, think of renting the course out after hours for private parties or business events.

E**LIMINATE:** Prune the dead wood. If three persons get the job done crafting your new line of jewelry and you're employing five, cut the roster. If plants sell better in a nursery than fresh-cut flowers, deep six the flowers and concentrate on items your customers want most.

R**EVERSE:** Reverse conventional wisdom. For example, buy speakers from other manufacturers, and then only provide marketing and distribution. If you open a liquor store, install a bar in the back to serve drinks.

A good website for learning creative thinking about topics such as career change is www.mycoted.com/creativity/techniques/index.php. The section on idea generation is especially helpful. You'll see SCAMPER mentioned here as one of the techniques.