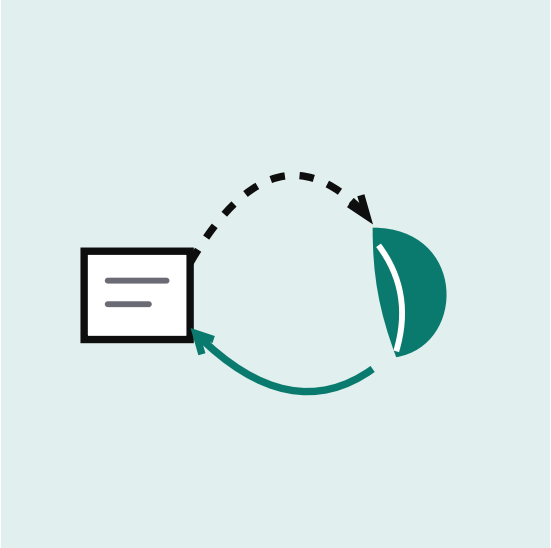
Method

# Synectics

A group creativity method that uses analogies and metaphors to move away from the problem and come back to it with new ideas.



In Spanish
*Sinéctica*

Origin
Gordon (1961); Gordon and Prince, Arthur D. Little (1950s)

Output
New ideas that come from comparing the problem with things from other worlds

## What it's for

It helps break out of the usual solutions when a team knows a problem so well that it no longer sees it.

## Key elements

### Make the familiar strange
Look at the usual problem as if for the first time.

### Make the strange familiar
Understand something new by comparing it with what you already know.

### Move away to come back
The analogy takes you far from the problem; then you return to it with what you found.

## How it's done

1

**State the problem** and set it aside for a moment.

2

**Look for analogies** in nature, in other trades or in yourself.

3

**Return to the problem** and turn the comparisons into ideas.

## Applications in design

### When to use it

When the team gets stuck on ideas similar to what already exists.

### Avoid

Staying in the metaphor without bringing it back to the real problem.

### Don't fall for it

It needs someone to guide the session; without a guide, it gets lost in anecdotes.

## Connections

**Related to**

- Design by analogy
- Brainstorming

## Authors and works

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|---|---|---|
| 1961 | **William J. J. Gordon** | Developed the method with George M. Prince in Arthur D. Little's invention group and explained it in his 1961 book. |

### Sources

**Original sources**


- Gordon, W. J. J. (1961). Synectics: The development of creative capacity. Harper & Row.


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