



CRAZY EIGHT

When you want to ideate quickly during a brainstorming, the Crazy Eight exercise is a great way to produce a wide range of diverse ideas from the whole team.

In just 8 minutes, this exercise challenges teams and partners to really think creatively, pushing past their initial 'normal' ideas to get to some really crazy, abstract or impossible ones. With the time set to 8 minutes, participants don't have time to critique, refine or overthink ideas. They just need to scribble something down in that small box and then keep the ideas flowing as they move on. Similarly, the sketches don't need to be artistic, they just need to express an idea.

The Crazy Eight is helpful particularly in the early stages of the project cycle, when creative ideas are needed for how to address a specific challenge or to create opportunities. However, this exercise can be used throughout the cycle, when new ideas are needed.

Step 1

Decide what to get ideas for

Agree on the challenge or opportunity for which you need new ideas. Be as specific as possible about the challenge or opportunity. Ideally, you have set an overall goal of what you want to achieve and now the question to ask is which challenge(s) to focus on to achieve the goal.

Example: "Our goal is to improve mental well-being for people on the move, the challenge we are narrowing in on for the Crazy Eight exercise is how might we build the capacity of people on the move to identify and assess their own needs, using their own resources"?

Print the Crazy Eight template and distribute a copy for each participant. If no printer is available, provide each participant with a piece of A3 paper and marker or thick pen and ask them to draw 8 equally big frames on the paper/fold the paper in half 3 times in order to get 8 frames, like below.

Step 2

Present, votes and select best idea(s)

As soon as the timer buzzes, it's time to stop. Ask everyone to put the pen away.

Now everyone takes turns presenting and explaining their three favourite ideas. Give 2-5 minutes per person.

Hang all sketches on a wall and ask everyone to get up and vote on the favourite ideas presented. Each person has 3 votes to cast and can place them on one of several ideas. Voting is done with sticker dots by assigning dots or a tick next to the idea.

INFORMATION

PHASE
DESIGN

TIMEFRAME
30 - 60 MINS.

MODE
FACE-TO-FACE

PARTICIPANTS
2 PEOPLE +

FACILITATION LEVEL
EASY

You may choose to move the winning ideas into the prototyping phase or do another round of Crazy 8's to refine the most popular ideas even further. See how to choose the right prototype with this [tool \[link\]](#). The overall aim of this exercise is to diverge until you have a wide range of ideas, then converge back until you land on the winning idea.

Step 3

Sketch 8 ideas

Explain everyone to sketch out 8 quick ideas in the frames within the time limit using the pen – one idea per frame. Explain that this is about getting ideas flowing and not to overthink things. Reassure participants that it's about the ideas, not the sketching skills. Their level of artistic skills doesn't matter, their sketches just need to capture the ideas. They can use icons, lines, text and shapes. No idea is too crazy!

The frenzy that follows can produce some pretty wild ideas. It is called Crazy Eight for a reason. Ask everyone to get ready to sketch.

Set the timer for 8 minutes – 1 minute per frame. Let everyone know when one minute has passed and it is time to move on to the next frame.

Facilitators tips

People may feel frustrated not to have time enough, therefore it can be good to keep on reminding participants that it is not about the perfection of the sketch but rather about capturing the idea. There will be time to explain afterwards. Encourage and motivate them to just go. If possible, you can show participants an example, like the one in step 1, before they start to give them an idea of the level of sketching.