

Create Activity: ‘Generate a hypothesis/strategy’



“the ability to put parts together” (Kennedy et al., n.d., pp. 11). Essentially, this is bringing parts together to make a meaningful whole (the opposite of *Analyse*).

Learning objective:

Students will create an original strategy/solution in response to a need/problem/client brief.

Overview:

Students create a hypothesis or strategy in response to a need, problem or a client brief.

Each student gets a description of the task, but with a ‘tip’ that is unique to them*. They have to consider a hypothesis or strategy in light of this ‘tip’. Later, they work in a team with other students to compare their hypothesis/strategy, and determine what they should do in light of the ‘tips’ they have received. Ideally, each (or most) student in a team would have received different ‘tips’.

* An alternative would be to issue students with roles instead of tips. This means they will be required to focus on a particular element of the hypothesis or strategy.

Example:

John has been in the Astroturf business for over 20 years, mostly specialising in covering and maintaining areas around pools and tennis courts. John has seen sales steadily decline. John knows that his business has been behind (from a marketing perspective) for years and that he has to act to prevent further business decay. He has therefore hired a team of recent graduates to kick start his business, including you! Your team includes a Product Manager, Customer Relationship Manager, and a Marketing Manager. You need to provide John with a one-page list of recommendations by Friday 9 August (2 weeks from now), including justifications of your recommendations. You can ask John questions via the *Green’s Astroturf* forum – just remember that John is often out on site, so it may take a few business days for him to reply to your posts. In the interim, each of you will find information about John’s current product range and marketing efforts in the Module 4 folder, according to your role. Prepare to bring your ideas to your first Team Meeting,

Reference: Kennedy, D., Hyland, A. & Ryan, N (n.d.). *Writing and Using Learning Outcomes: a Practical Guide*. Retrieved, June 4, 2015, from http://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/academic-development/assets/pdf/Kennedy_Writing_and_Using_Learning_Outcomes.pdf (from Trinity College Dublin, Trinity Teaching and Learning)

FACE TO FACE VERSION*	
Activity Description/Steps	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefly explain the purpose of the task and how students will complete the task. Introduce the need/problem/client brief. Explain that each student will be given a unique tip/role. They must NOT share this with other students. <p>SCAFFOLDING TIP: If you are putting students into different roles, it may be useful to provide a description of each role and the kinds of perspectives/questions that this role may focus on. You may also wish provide a template to assist with hypothesis/solution/strategy development.</p>	Slide or handout with need/problem brief/client brief. It may also be useful to include slides/handouts to provide scaffolds (see <i>Scaffolding Tip</i> on left).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate each student with a tip/role. You may wish to use cards to facilitate this. Each student must jot down their idea for a hypothesis/solution/strategy, based on the tip/role that they have been allocated. Allow around 10 - 15 minutes for this, depending on the complexity of the task. 	Cards, each containing a tip/role unique to each group member. You must have enough slips to hand out to all students, so that groups are evenly mixed. It can help to have a symbol or card colour associated with each group, e.g. Role 1 *, Role 2*, Role 3*. This will help when it comes to organising groups later.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct students to form working groups. If you have used cards, students should form groups with students who have cards featuring the same symbol/colour. Explain the next stage of the activity. 	Slide/handout containing instructions for next stage of the activity (or write it up on a whiteboard).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students must share their ideas and tips/role with their group. They must work together to come up with a final hypothesis/solution/strategy that they are happy with as a group. They must be prepared to defend their hypothesis/solution/strategy. Allow at least 10 minutes for this. 	<p>You may wish to provide butchers paper for students to record their ideas.</p> <p>If the class is based in the TEAL lab, you could get students to type up their ideas on one of the computers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives from each group share the hypothesis/solution/strategy they have generated. You may wish to prompt students to ask questions or provide feedback. 	If the class is based in the TEAL lab, share a group's work across screens.

***NOTE:** You could run this as a synchronous session in an Online Room by using *Break Out* rooms. Only recommended for practitioners (and students) who are already somewhat comfortable in the *Online Rooms/Collaborate* environment.

ONLINE VERSION
PREPARATION IN MYLO

- Create two MyLO *Group Categories*. The first *Category* must contain Role/Tip groups (1 group per role/tip). The second category must contain a sufficient number of Discussion Groups (e.g. Discussion Group 1, Discussion Group 2 and so on). To ensure that students are distributed evenly into the second category, you will need to manually allocate students from the Role/Tip groups into each Discussion Group. If you plan for discussion to take place face to face, there is no need to set up the second category of group.
- Create one *New File* per tip/role in the relevant folder (e.g. Learning Hub > Week 2). In each file, describe the relevant tip/role.

Activity Description/Steps
Resources

- Briefly explain the purpose of the task and how students will complete the task.
- Introduce the need/problem/client brief.
- Explain that each student will be given a unique tip/role. They must NOT share this with other students.

You could introduce the task with a brief video or a well written piece of text, perhaps in the form of an *HTML Page*.

SCAFFOLDING TIP: It may be useful to provide a description of each role and the kinds of perspectives/questions that this role may focus on. You may also wish provide a template to assist with hypothesis/solution/strategy development.

- Each student must record their idea for a hypothesis/solution/strategy as a new post in the *Discussion Topic* allocated to their Discussion Group. Their post must be based on the tip/role that they have been allocated. They must also share the description of their tip/role in their post.
- Students should be given a deadline for this. For example, 'Your idea must be posted no later than Saturday 5 August at 5pm).
- Visit each group's *Topic* a couple of days before the deadline to encourage posters and chase up non-posters (by email).

A *Discussion Topic* will be required for each *Discussion Group*. You may wish to allocate a due date to the *Topic* to reinforce the deadline.

- The students must then work together to come up with a final hypothesis/solution/strategy that they are happy with as a group*.
- They must be prepared to defend their hypothesis/solution/strategy.
- One representative must post the final hypothesis/solution/strategy to the *Topic* by a specified deadline.
- Visit each group's *Topic* a couple of days before the deadline to encourage posters and chase up non-posters (by email).

A *Discussion Topic* will be required for each *Discussion Group*. You may wish to allocate a due date to the *Topic* to reinforce the deadline.

*Students could conduct their negotiation in the *Discussion Topic*, via an *Online Room* (you would need to set this up for them), *Chat*, etc.

- You/a tutor summarises the final solutions provided by groups. What similarities appeared? What differences in approach were evident? Acknowledge good/novel ideas and the students or groups that created them. If anything important was missed, this is a good chance to remind students of it/form a connection with it.
- To extend this, you may wish to ask students to vote for the most appropriate/novel idea/solution, then share the results.
- Students could be required to quote their most useful idea/insightful contribution in a reflection (e.g. submitted to a *Dropbox Folder*).

You could deliver this summary using a *News Item*. It could be in text form, or in the form of an embedded video.

A *Survey* could be created to register votes.