

Generating ideas

Where do ideas for a project come from? If you're lucky, they just sort of pop up out of nowhere, but that doesn't happen often. Most of the time it requires work.

But it doesn't have to be a pain in the brain.

First, begin with research.

Let's say you're designing a logo for a new environmental campaign. Decide on the purpose of the campaign. What do you want to achieve? Who is it aimed at? Research as widely as you can to check what designs are already out there for similar campaigns. Look in books, go online, or if possible talk to professionals and experts directly.

Knowing what designs and colour schemes have been successful in similar projects is a great starting point, but now you need to generate your own ideas.

You could start by creating a mood board. That's when you take images and keywords from your research and put them all together on a board. It's not always easy to be creative but a mood board might help you to see ways of connecting or combining ideas that you hadn't before.

But there's one question to keep asking yourself - what is this campaign for?

In other words, don't let yourselves wander off with completely crazy ideas.

A mind map is a good next step to help visualise ideas - link concepts together, starting with the most important in the centre.

Working in a group can be really helpful because you can bounce ideas off each other, and you'll each be seeing things from a different angle.

Unless of course you start arguing, in which case you'll probably generate more insults than ideas.

You need to have some rules in place. Like, respect each other's ideas, and be constructive with feedback.

And it's really important that everyone has the space to contribute equally. Maybe the person who hasn't had a chance to speak has the best idea.

So, how do you get your ideas across? A campaign logo might appear on a poster, blog, website, leaflets... just keep coming back to that same question - what are you trying to achieve?

Bitesize

You might have some brilliant ideas, but if they don't pass the test of actually being helpful to the project in a realistic and focused way, they're not what you need.

You see? Generating good ideas might take a bit of work, but it can be fun. And who knows? You might even stay friends.