



by FLANDERS **DC**

Manual

How do I set up
a GPS session?

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STEP 1



1

PREPARE FOR THE SESSION

Define the key question

Define a clear question that will be the topic of the session. Make the question action-oriented, ambitious and open. Make it as broad as possible; that leaves room for lots of ideas.

It is best to start with “How can we ...”. That way the question does not send participants in a specific direction. If you start with “How can we...” then the brainstorm can literally go in any direction.

To make the question sufficiently ambitious, it often helps to add a time scale. Use concrete numbers to focus the question.

A few examples of suitable questions:

- How can our organisation capitalise on the present trends by 2030?
- How can our company double its turnover in the next two years?

Determine the trends

Choose five trends and place them in the centre of the GPS board. They serve as inspiration for new ideas. Several trends suggestions are listed on www.flandersdc.be/en/gps, such as globalisation, experience economy, etc. Of course specific trends might be relevant within your sector. You probably know the best trends. Make sure that you are not too specific. The more detailed a trend is, the less space for real brainstorming. Be sure to choose a few trends that, at first sight, are more removed from your situation. That often leads to more creativity.

You can consult the following websites for more trends:

www.trendwatching.com

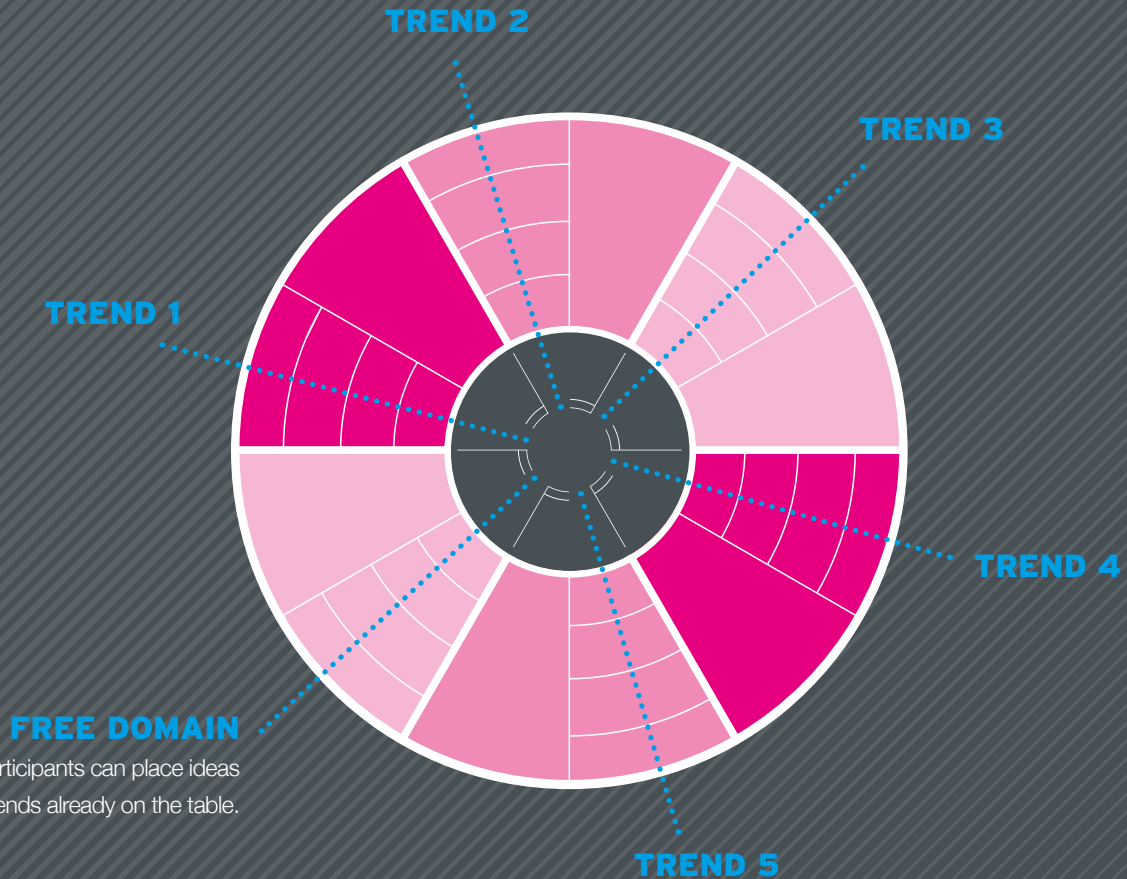
www.trendslator.nl

www.thefuturelaboratory.com

www.iconoculture.com

Make a summary of each trend with a short, appealing description to get participants started.

THE 6 DOMAINS OF THE GPS BOARD



Choose the participants

A GPS session works best with at least 12 but no more than 15 people on one board.

Think as broadly as possible when choosing the participants. Involve **different departments** or positions within your organisation. Make sure you include participants from the administration, production floor, the warehouse, marketing, HR, etc. Different insights often result in surprising ideas.

Be sure to include **external participants**: customers, suppliers, knowledge centres, other organisations, etc.

You will see that their contribution is very valuable; sometimes they emphasise completely different areas. External participants are also handy if you only have a few employees in your organisation.

A good ratio is 1/3 external participants and 2/3 internal employees. Participants are seated in pairs around the GPS board.

POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENT

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

Pay attention to the disciplines or points of view that you want to involve in the session (e.g. strategy, production, sales, etc.).

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

On www.flandersdc.be we have listed knowledge centres that you can involve in your GPS session.

INNOVATION ADVISOR

You can find advisors in your province on www.innovatiecentra.be.

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

OUTSIDER

A neighbour, acquaintance, relative, etc. may have fresh ideas.

CUSTOMER OR SHAREHOLDER

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

INTERNAL PARTICIPANT

SUPPLIER

Provide a flipchart for Round 3.



FACILITATOR

Upon request Flanders DC can give you a list of professional facilitators who are familiar with the GPS method.

Preparing the GPS session: a concrete example

To get started quickly and efficiently, preparation is essential. It only takes a few steps.

- 1** Define the key question of the brainstorming session. What is the session's main topic? Ensure your question is clear, concise and compelling. Start with: "How can we..."
- 2** Determine the trends for the GPS session. You can find some interesting suggestions for trends on www.flandersdc.be/en/gps. Find an inspiring picture for each trend and add a short text that sets the context.
- 3** Print trend signs and place them on the GPS board. Tip: Arrange 2 trends alongside each other on an A4 page in landscape mode. Cut the A4 page in half. You can now easily fold the resulting A5 pages in half to create signs that can stand on their own on the GPS board.
- 4** Prepare a presentation to introduce the session. The presentation is meant as a warm-up to prepare participants for the brainstorm. You can find a presentation sample on: www.flandersdc.be/en/gps

Before you start: take care of logistics and agree on who will write up the report

Make sure that you are not disturbed. Plan the session at an external location if necessary. Why not turn it into a team event or a customer day?

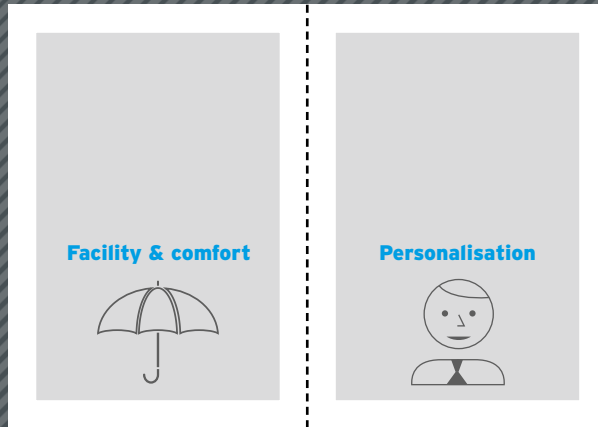
Provide a space where the group can sit at a large table so you can work around the GPS board.

Provide a flipchart and markers, large number of post-its, pens and coloured stickers (e.g. yellow and red stickers) for voting.

Agree in advance which participant will write up the report. This is very important: the report should be distributed to all participants within 10 days. See step 3 for more explanation about the report.

GETTING STARTED QUICKLY

A4



CREATE TREND SIGNS

- Print 2 trends alongside each other on a A4 page
- Cut the A4 page in half
- Fold the A5 pages in half, so the signs can stand on their own

RESULT



Trend signs



Trend summary

STEP 2





2

DO THE SESSION

Preparation

GPS boards, seating plan, flipchart

Get the flipchart ready before the session begins:

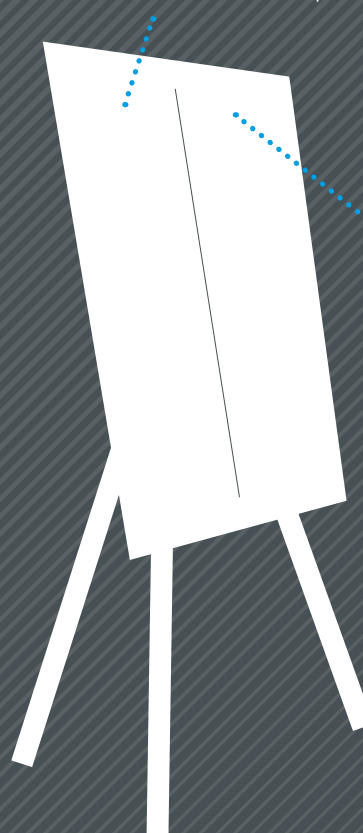
- 1 Write the key question on the first page.
- 2 Divide the second page into two columns: one for 'Red ideas' the other for 'Yellow ideas'.

Place the GPS board on the table. Place the titles of the five trends plus one free domain in the middle of the board. The free domain is for all ideas that have nothing to do with the trends. Place the descriptive summary of the trends on the table. Make sure that there is at least one copy for every two people. A draft trend summary is shown on page 11 of this manual.

Seat the participants around the board. Explain that they must sit in pairs. Each pair is seated at one domain on the board. Never place a single participant on a domain even if you have an uneven number of participants. In that case turn one pair into a trio. If you have less than 12 participants then the entire board will not be filled. Even in that case we encourage you to work with five trends and one free domain. This offers more opportunities for more good ideas! Some pairs may have to start at an empty domain twice.

RED IDEAS

short-term: can be realised quickly



YELLOW IDEAS

long-term: feasibility must be investigated

Round 1

Generating ideas

40 - 70 minutes

1 PREPARATION AND EXPLANATION

Explain that every pair must generate ideas that satisfy the key question, and that relate to the trend where they are seated. Explain that the ideas can be illegal, crazy, out-of-order, etc.

You expect participants to spout ideas without thinking about budgets or other limitations. Explain that all ideas are good and must be written down: postpone judgement because 'quantity breeds quality'.

Explain that they can find more info about their trends on the trend summary. Explain that the free domain is meant for all possible ideas that do not fall under one of the trends and for their wildest ideas.

Explain that must write their ideas on post-its (one idea per post-it) and must stick them on the domain where they are sitting. Ask them to write in CAPITAL LETTERS and to be as CONCRETE as possible. Tip: have them write the ideas with marker. That is easier to read.

2 START THE SESSION

Always indicate when it is time to turn the board (according to a pre-determined time schedule). Adjust this depending on the amount of available time and the group's 'flow'. Even the minimum amount of time will result in lots of ideas.

- a. Min. 8 - Max. 12 minutes then turn
- b. Min. 7 - Max. 12 minutes then turn
- c. Min. 6 - Max. 10 minutes then turn
- d. Min. 5 - Max. 10 minutes then turn
- e. Min. 4 - Max. 8 minutes then turn
- f. Min. 4 - Max. 8 minutes (turn one last time so every pair is back at their starting domain)

3 CLASSIFYING THE IDEAS

Everyone is back at their initial domain. Explain that every pair has 5 minutes to classify the ideas in this domain into realisable in the short term and realisable in the long term. Use the columns on the GPS board: place post-its with short-term ideas on the left half of the domain and long-term ideas on the right/shaded half. Classify post-its with similar ideas.

Round 2

Selecting the ideas

30 minutes

1 PREPARATION AND EXPLANATION

Give each pair voting stickers. 8 red stickers and 8 yellow stickers. If there are more than 120 ideas on the table then you could give up to 10 stickers of each colour. The pairs have **10 minutes** for this.

Explain that the stickers are for voting on the ideas that they find really fantastic. Ideas that they would really like to realise. Explain that the pairs must divide their votes across all ideas on the board. The red stickers are for creative ideas that they think can be realised in the short term and yellow stickers for creative ideas that can be realised in the long term. Do not vote according to reason and feasibility right now. The pairs can follow the classification that was made in the previous round, but they are not required to agree with that classification.

Explain that every pair can place a maximum of two stickers on one idea so they should spread their stickers over several ideas and not place all their stickers on one idea. They must use all their stickers!

2 ATTACHING THE STICKERS

Allow the pairs to walk around the table. Continue repeating that when choosing they must be gutsy and must choose ideas that give them energy. Tip: try to maintain a good tempo, if people choose quickly and spontaneously then they choose the most original, out-of-the-box ideas. If participants are indecisive, they often lapse into classical thinking patterns.

3 COUNTING THE VOTES

In the next **20 minutes** look for the top ideas:

1. Ask participants to list the ideas that were voted on. Start by asking for ideas with three or more votes. Write these ideas on the flipchart: red ideas (short-term) in the left column and yellow ideas (long-term) in the right column.
2. Be sure to write down at least 12 ideas. Start with ideas with three votes then ideas with two votes, etc. Be sure to stop writing when you have 20 ideas.
3. Once these ideas are on the flipchart ask whether anyone wants to use a 'joker': an idea that should be chosen but that is not yet on the flipchart.
4. Perhaps some of the ideas on the flipchart are quite similar, or you can merge a few ideas in order to create a new, 'larger' idea. Consult with the participants and link these ideas with a marker in a different colour. Ideas can be merged from both columns (both red and yellow).
5. Order all the ideas. Ask every participant to make a mental note of their top-3 ideas from all the ideas on the flipchart. After one minute: ask each participant to state their choices. Place a check next to the chosen idea so you can keep track of the score. The top ideas will become apparent without a discussion.

Round 3: Developing the ideas

30 - 45 minutes

In this round participants develop a **project card** for each of the top ideas. Then participants **present** the developed ideas to each other.

1 PREPARATION

Divide the top ideas amongst the group (3 to 4 groups depending on the number of ideas and the number of participants). If there are several ideas with lots of votes then you can develop more than three ideas.

Give each group a project card for further developing the ideas. A project card template can be downloaded at www.flandersdc.be/en/gps.

Give every group a flipchart sheet for presenting the idea.

2 DEVELOP PROJECT CARD

Each group summarises the essential elements of their idea on the project card.

- a. Title of the idea
- b. Definition of the idea: a short description of what the idea contains in a few sentences.
- c. Advantages: what can we do more, better, faster, cheaper with this idea?
- d. Disadvantages, pitfalls and impediments: possible risks (technical, organisational, etc.) that can occur with the idea.

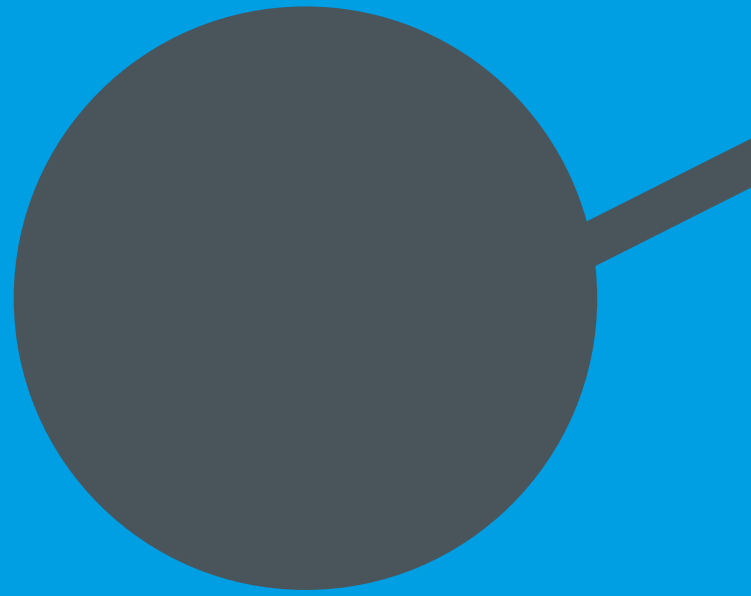
- e. Solutions: how can we solve impediments or anticipate the pitfalls?
- f. Impact: what needs to change in order to realise the idea?
Take into account technology and processes, organisation, market approach, etc.
- g. Required parties: who do we have to work with to realise the idea?

Give every group a flipchart sheet for presenting the idea.

3 PRESENTATION

Every group presents its idea. Tip: keep an eye on the clock. Maximum two minutes per project!

STEP 3





3

**AFTER THE SESSION -
WRITE A REPORT AND MAKE
A DEFINITIVE CHOICE**

Write a report...

The report must be written by someone who participated in the session and must be sent to all participants within one week.

This report includes the project cards, a list with the ideas written on the flipchart, and all post-its that were on the board.

And get started

Go over the report with the group (or with several participants) a few weeks after the session. Some of the ideas may not be relevant anymore because an initial feasibility study found that it is not possible to realise the idea. Perhaps the groups wants to pursue other ideas after a week-long 'incubation period'.

Try to take action as quickly as possible: establish a project team, explore the market, check the feasibility of an idea or execute the idea immediately, etc.

The other steps
in the innovation process

An analysis of the current situation serves as a basis for your GPS brainstorm.

Analysis

A short analysis of internal and external factors gives you a clearer image of your current situation.

What does this step entail?

- You contemplate what your company is doing today and what you want to achieve.
- You ascertain your customer's needs.
- You identify your problems and your strengths in every domain.
- You examine what your competitors are doing and how good they do it.

Why should you do this?

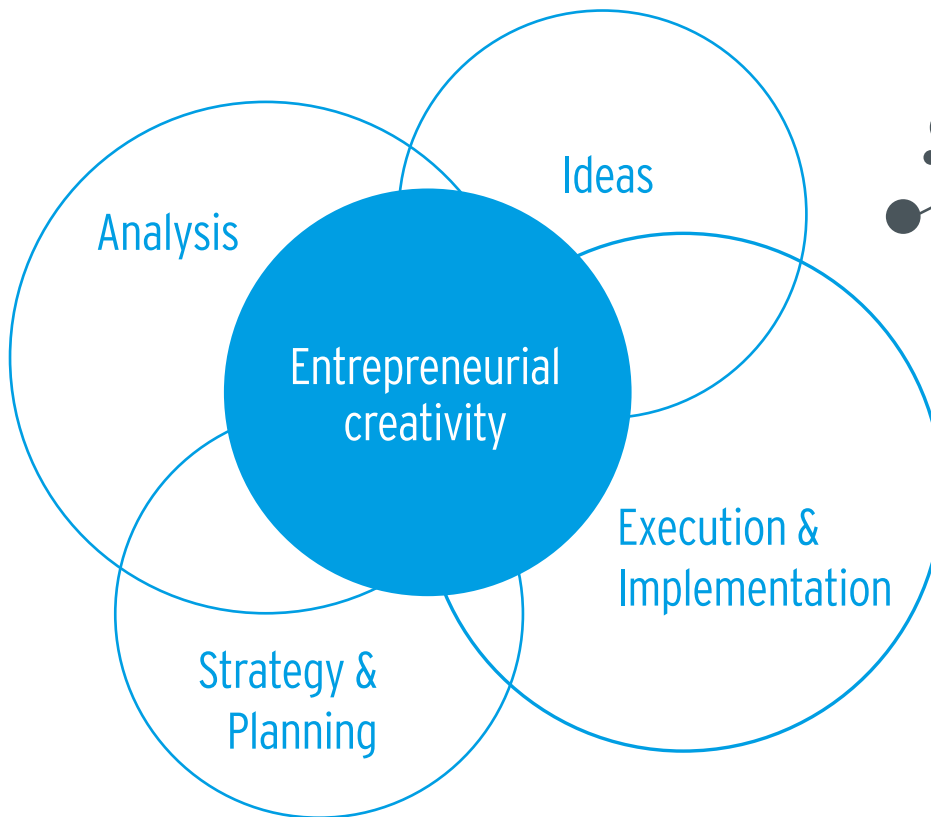
- A good understanding of your current corporate situation allows for more specific innovation. It enables you to select ideas for development from the GPS session more efficiently.
- An analysis before the GPS session makes it easier to select the trends to be discussed.

Who can you contact for help?

RIS innovation advisors help SMEs draw up innovation projects. They help you with the entire process, from audit to strategy, planning and supervision of innovation projects. The contact details of an RIS innovation advisor in your province can be found on www.innovatiecentra.be.

You want to get started on your own?

On www.flandersdc.be/en/gps you will find innovation cards that briefly explain which elements should be covered in each step.



Merging the analysis and the ideas generated in the GPS session results in an innovation vision. **You can start planning the details of projects based on this vision.**

What does this step entail?

- You develop an innovation strategy that maps out the big picture for the following years.
- You establish detailed project plans, in line with the strategy, to tackle the adoption of ideas in a structured manner.

Why should you do this?

- Innovation projects are based on the company's vision for the future. The innovation strategy indicates that vision.
- A successful project starts with good plans. A good project plan converts ideas into actions that can be executed.

Action is taken based **on the project plan.**

What does this step entail?

- You execute the project plan. The actions depend on your objectives. Project execution includes a few fixed phases: mobilisation, management and finalisation.

Why should you do this?

- Innovation is transforming creative ideas into reality: new products, services or processes with added value. Brainstorming and planning are not enough.

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