
A Formula For Ideas

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Picking up on the theme of my last article, [The A to Z of Ideas](#), great ideas don't just spring out of nowhere. They aren't the sole preserve of 'creative' people. We can all have great ideas, we just need to put in the hard work and implement some basic techniques to help us arrive there.

This got me thinking. Aside from relying on simple lateral thinking techniques to help great ideas to flow, might there actually be a formula for ideation we could follow? Well apparently there is, and James Webb Young published it back in 1939; [A Technique for Producing Ideas](#). In his book he says,

"..the production of ideas is just as definite a process as the production of Fords; that the production of ideas, too, runs on an assembly line; that in this production the mind follows an operative technique which can be learned and controlled; and that its effective use is just

as much a matter of practice in the technique as is the effective use of any tool.”

Which is great, because it saves me any further time pondering the answer to that question, and I can get on with learning and practicing it to help the team here and our clients come up with great ideas.

In a nutshell, the five step formula Young presents in his book looks something like this:



I'd thoroughly recommend the read, spending the time processing these principles and training your mind until it becomes second nature.

Thanks to Liam Anderson for bringing this little gem of a book to my attention.

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