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ZOOM: A Creativity Game

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1. Divide the participants into two or more teams of three to seven members each.
2. Ask each team to identify an opportunity or a problem. Ask them to convert this opportunity or problem into a question, using the format suggested by Van Gundy: *In what ways might we . . . ?*
Give an example to illustrate the task. Here's one that I use:

In what ways might we sell books to professionals on the internet?

3. Ask the team to transform this question into four higher levels of abstraction, one level at a time. Give an example such as this:

Original question: *In what ways might we sell books to professionals on the Internet?*

Question at the next higher level: *In what ways might we sell books on the Internet?*

Question at the next higher level: *In what ways might we sell things on the Internet?*

Question at the next higher level: *In what ways might we sell things?*

Question at the next higher level: *In what ways might we persuade and influence others?*

4. Distribute five index cards and a rubber band to each team. Ask the teams to write their five questions, one on each card. Then ask them

to put the question cards on top of each other, with the question sides on top. The most abstract question should be visible on the top card and the other questions should be hidden below. The most specific question (the original question) should be at the bottom of this packet of question cards.

5. Ask the teams to place a rubber band around the packet of question cards, give the packet to another team and receive a packet from yet another team. (No two teams may exchange their packets with one another.)
6. Ask the teams to read the question on the top card and spend 3 minutes brainstorming alternative responses. The team should record its answers on a flip chart or a piece of paper.
7. After 3 minutes, ask the teams to remove the top card and to read the question on the next card. As before, team members should brainstorm alternative responses for this question for the next 3 minutes, building on the earlier responses.
8. At the end of 3 minutes, ask the teams to read and respond to the question on the next card. Repeat this procedure two more times to end with responses to the most specific form of the question.
9. Ask the teams to return their packet of question cards along with the lists of brainstormed responses to the appropriate teams. The teams should review the responses, select the most useful ideas, and integrate them into an action plan.

(ZOOM is one of the games from Thiagi's forthcoming book, *More Creativity Games*. You will find a model for the creativity process and several games for profiting from opportunities and solving problems in Thiagi's earlier book, *Creativity Games*.)

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