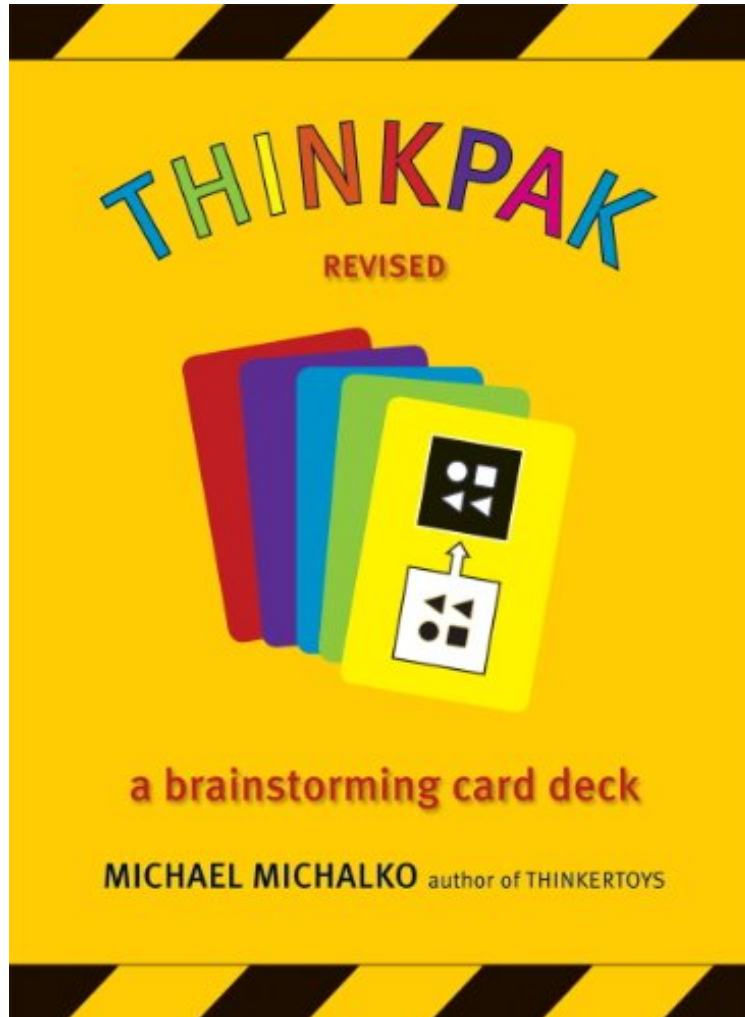


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## Thinkpak: A Brainstorming Card Deck

*Michael Michalko*

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**Michael Michalko : Thinkpak: A Brainstorming Card Deck** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Thinkpak: A Brainstorming Card Deck:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Involuntary IdeasBy John W. PearsonOn most teams, you can divide the room into two groups: those "Idea-a-Second" somewhat-crazy, but fun people--and then the "I'm-Not-Very-Creative" gang of introverts. Where are you?Today when many organizations, departments and teams are struggling to do more with less, the need for fresh ideas is even greater. But here's good news: Thinkpak (a brainstorming card deck) can help!Michael Michalko, author of Thinkertoys: A Handbook of Creative-Thinking Techniques (2nd Edition), is described as "one of the most highly acclaimed creativity experts in the world. As an officer in the U.S. Army, Michael organized a team of NATO intelligence specialists and international academics in Frankfurt, Germany, to research, collect, and categorize all known inventive-thinking methods."The problem says Michalko, "If you always think the way you've always thought, you'll always get what you've always got."The solution: "Everything new is

really an addition to or modification of something that already existed. To create a new idea, product, service, process, breakthrough, or whatever else you need, just take a subject and change it into something."S.C.A.M.P.E.R. So this creativity guru recommends you "S.C.A.M.P.E.R" and leverage the nine principal ways of changing a subject: Substitute something. Combine it with something else. Adapt something to it. Modify or Magnify it. Put it to some other use. Eliminate something. Reverse or Rearrange it. The Thinkpak brainstorming card deck has 56 cards including two instructional cards, four or five cards for each of the nine key processes, plus seven cards with creative ways to evaluate ideas. It's a brilliant instant brainstorming system. But caution! It could be dangerous to your boring, status quo! The Thinkpak cards contain "idea-triggering questions based on these nine principles. The questions are designed to focus your attention on your subject in different ways and give you different means of interpreting what you are focusing on. These different ways of focusing will break your habitual thought patterns and let you look at your subject in fresh ways."Did our biblical heroes have access to these Thinkpak cards? Maybe! Think Noah's Ark, water-into-wine, and the Red Sea crossing. In the fast-reading 52-page instructional mini-booklet, the author continues, "You'll generate a quantity of ideas quickly, including ideas that you wouldn't have otherwise considered. Once you apply the Thinkpak questions to your subject or situation, ideas begin to appear almost involuntarily."I used the cards at a strategic planning retreat this month. Fun broke out! Especially when the leaders of one entity played the "Reverse It" card--and suggested they trade real estate with the other entity! Each of the nine principles is illustrated with a memorable story, like the Walkman radio. Sony engineers attempted to design a small portable stereo tape recorder. Nothing worked. Then Masaru Ibuka, honorary chairman of Sony, leveraged several creativity principles to find success--recalling a separate project to design lightweight portable headphones. The Sony chief brainstormer asked, "What if you combine the headphones with the tape player and eliminate the recorder function altogether?" At the time, by combining, eliminating and reversing, the Walkman became Sony's top selling electronic product of all time. Steve Jobs should have been grateful! Fire Your Board! Speaking of eliminating, Thinkpak shares the story of the chairperson of a nonprofit board that "wanted to energize her board members out of their lethargy." So she asked the members to imagine that they were all fired. "Then she asked them to reapply for the board. This shocked the board members and forced them to rethink their knowledge and competencies," and most important, what they needed to bring to the table to truly be effective board members. Should you modify or magnify something? One entrepreneur hands out business cards with one rounded corner, with a tagline, "25 percent safer than most other business cards." Clients keep his card and show others. Ray Kroc, after buying the first McDonald's stand, stored his spuds in the basement but couldn't get the french fries to taste right. The original McDonald family had exposed their potatoes to desert winds that cured the potatoes. SCAMPER Solution: "Modify the storage area. Kroc cured the potatoes by installing large electric fans in the basement." Kroc also employed the Rearrange It approach to differentiate his hamburger stand from all the other box-shaped burger joints. Presto: Golden Arches! So to breathe fresh air into your team's ventilating system (now...there's an idea!), and delegate this creativity tool to a team member. P.S. Where do you dream up your best ideas? One company, referenced in Thinkpak, created a special room with educational toys, games, videos and bean bag chairs--and included baby photos of every team member; a reminder that we are all born with creativity. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Greatest tool for being innovative! Highly recommended. By Oliver Schinken This is my favorite purchase of all times on . As an educator in a project based learning system these cards revolutionized the creativity and innovation in our projects. Most people believe that you are either born creative or you were not. Nonsense. Use these cards to tackle any problems or projects in your life and you will amaze yourself with the ideas you generate. Although I know it is probably strange, I carry this deck with me everywhere I go, every day. This is my most valued tool in being innovative. Love, love, love these!!! 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Brain storming is harder than spit-balling. By Dutch D. Brainstorming cards remind me to use alternate modes of thought and creativity. These go well with the book which I also have. Few projects take the time to truly brainstorm...most of what happens is what I call spit-balling an idea, which is the tip of the iceberg. But, it takes cognitive energy to breakthrough with a truly innovative approach, so cards like these and others provide the methods to get there with guided cognitive effort.

Looking for a unique invention, an untapped market for an existing product, or a new solution? Stretch and flex your mental muscles with Thinkpak, a creative-thinking tool designed by Michael Michalko, author of the groundbreaking book Thinkertoys. This deck of illustrated idea-stimulating cards distills Michalko's proven methods, allowing you to view challenges in a new light. Shuffle, mix, and match the cards to spark fresh insights, then use the critical evaluation techniques to test, shape, and refine your original ideas into realistic creations. Filled with thought-provoking questions and examples of the techniques put to use, Thinkpak provides endless creative fuel to fire up the imagination.

Praise for Michael Michalko's Thinkertoys: "Designed to change the way you think."--Wall Street Journal From the Publisher This is a new edition of the highly popular brainstorming cards based on one of Michael Michalko's creative thinking techniques. Michael is the author of "Thinkertoys" and "Cracking Creativity." From the

AuthorHave you ever tried to get a new idea simply by choosing to have one? Spend a few minutes and see how many new ways you can think of to sell your product. How did you do? If you're like most of us, you probably had difficulty coming up with more than a few. Our minds generally don't cooperate in such matters. It is very hard for us to simply will new ideas without some kind of intermediate step. But it's a snap, by comparison, to generate new ideas, solutions, breakthroughs, or whatever you need when you use a checklist of idea-spurring questions. Thinkpak contains a checklist of idea-spurring questions based on "Scamper" a technique from my book Thinkertoys and the work of Alex Osborn, a pioneer teacher of creativity and father of brainstorming. Everything new is some manipulation of something that already exists. To create something new (idea, product, service, process, or whatever you need), all you need do is take a subject, and manipulate it in some fashion. There are nine principle ways to manipulate a subject and the Thinkpak cards reflect all nine ways. The cards give conscious direction to your creativity. Instead of trying to juggle several concepts in your mind, hoping that an idea will somehow magically appear, the cards focus your imagination on the subject in a different way and will give you a different way to interpret what yoursquore focusing on.