



# Re-Expression

The idea behind re-expression is that people in the same business or from the same background often use the same words to describe issues and ideas. When we use the same words many times, they become connected to a lot of associations or schemas. For example, let's say that your task is to come up with fresh new ideas for improving a fitness app and make it stand out against its competitors. If you think about the word **'fitness'**, you probably have many associations about what fitness is and how you achieve it, especially if you have done your background research properly. Your associations are probably not that different from your competitors'—who, not unpredictably, are also trying to come up with innovative solutions for a fitness app. You might think about fitness centres, fitness trackers, training programmes, and so on.

Re-expression is a method to help you think about the challenge in a new and different way that is also different from what your competitors are thinking. This is where the fun really starts. Have you ever heard the phrase “can't see the wood for the trees”? It means being too close to something to be able to notice aspects of it or even its true identity. So, getting distance on your target subject is vital. The book suggests three ways you can do this:

## Re-express in different words

- 1 | Write down as many related words or metaphors as possible for the issue (product or service) you are seeking to innovate. The word does not have to mean exactly the same thing; it can be something related

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- 2 Write down what associations do you have for each of the new words. Do some of them inspire your original issue? How? Why?

You can use the following table:

Related words	Associations	Inspirations

## Re-express in different senses

Another method for bringing about new ways to think about an issue is to use different senses. You can **draw** it, **act** it out, **build** it in Legos or something different that you come up with yourself.

Expressing it in different senses will allow you to see connections that were not previously obvious. Again, you should figure out *how* they inspire your original issue. As you're doing this, ask yourself *why* each connection links to the issue

## Re-express from another perspective

Try to think about how someone else, with different sensibilities from yours, would think about the issue. E.g., how would a 5-year-old think about fitness?—probably more like play and fun than

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exercise. And how would a person in a wheelchair think about fitness? Challenging? With envy? With nostalgia?

This method is in line with 'Extreme Personas'. Your assumptions do not need to be an accurate reflection of how the other person *would* think. The main thing is that imagining another perspective will allow you to see the issue differently, and that's the key to the enterprise here.

