THE CHEAT SHEET

Simple Ideas That Changed the World

Seven moves. One question each. Keep this page open when you're stuck.

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1

See the real problem

What is the real problem?

USE IT WHEN
You start any problem, before you pick a solution.

WARNING SIGN
Your team agreed on a fix, but nobody watched the problem happen.

2

Flip it

What if I did the opposite?

USE IT WHEN
Everyone in your field does the same thing the same way.

WARNING SIGN
Every option on the table tweaks the current method.

3

Subtract

What can I take away?

USE IT WHEN
A process, product or plan has grown slow or hard to explain.

WARNING SIGN
Your first answer to every problem adds a step, a tool or a person.

4

Borrow and combine

Who has already solved this somewhere else?

USE IT WHEN
Your problem feels new, but its shape is familiar.

WARNING SIGN
All your ideas come from your own industry.

5

Design the environment

How do I make the right thing the easy thing?

USE IT WHEN
People know the right thing but don't do it.

WARNING SIGN
Your fix depends on reminders, training or willpower.

6

Exploit the constraint

How is this limit an advantage?

USE IT WHEN
A limit of money, time, space or people blocks the obvious plan.

WARNING SIGN
You say "we could do this if only we had more" about one resource.

7

Check the ripples

Then what?

USE IT WHEN
A solution looks ready to launch.

WARNING SIGN
You can say what the change does on day one, but not in month six.