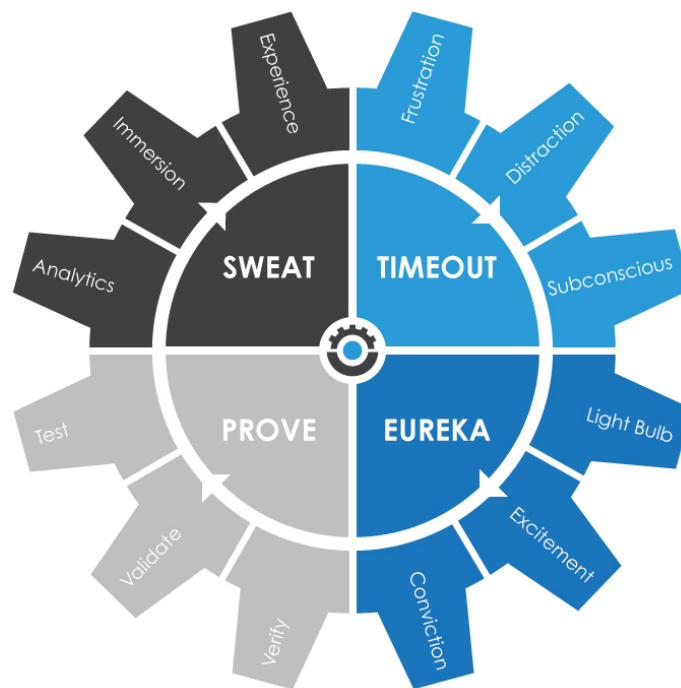


How To Be Insightful

The STEP Prism of Insight™

What do I need to know in 100 words?

How do you make it more likely that you will develop effective solutions to the complex issues that challenge your organisation today? What can you do to increase your chances of discovering the breakthrough insights you need to unlock a creative brief? Storytelling consultancy Insight Agents has developed the STEP Prism of Insight™ to help those tasked with solving problems and developing insights – especially but not exclusively in marketing communications – to do this with more certainty. And you and your team can learn *How To Be Insightful* at a STEP Prism training workshop.



What do we know about insight?

In life, creativity, and cognitive psychology, insight is defined as the capacity to gain an accurate and deep understanding of someone or something.

Mike Teasdale, one of the great minds of contemporary comms planning, defines insight as: *“A glimpse inside the mind of the target audience, shining a light on a possible solution to the problem we have defined.”*

Insights are born when we make connections between thoughts, facts, and ideas that weren’t connected before we put them in the blender of our brain and then, crucially, joined the dots.

Why does it matter?

Developing genuinely transformative insights can unlock a brief, increase the chances of a creative breakthrough, and make the process of having new ideas less painful and random. Perhaps most importantly, generating insights is the key to unlocking motivation and inciting behaviour change.

In our age of Big Data, we've never had access to so much information about brands, companies, and their customers. Social and digital content provides an unfiltered stream of potential intelligence that previous generations of planners and researchers could only dream of. But the challenge is harvesting and harnessing the relevant corner of Little Big Data that provides the content and context for insight.

How do we maximise our chances of being insightful?

Despite rapid, recent advances in neuroscience and the ability to map what's going on inside our heads, our understanding of how we think and have ideas is still in its infancy. But we do know quite a bit about the *process* of idea generation and the necessary stages we need to pass through in order to maximise our chances of having breakthrough insights.

The grandfather of insight, Graham Wallas, published an unassuming but influential book in 1926 about how we have ideas, called *The Art of Thought*. Wallas proposed that there are four stages leading to the generation of ideas: Preparation, Incubation, Illumination and Verification. At Insight Agents we've adapted and updated this model as the basis for our STEP Prism of Insight™, charting the four steps we need to pass through to develop genuinely insightful ideas: **Sweat**, **Timeout**, **Eureka**, and **Prove**, hence STEP. **Sweat** is the *research* phase, **Timeout** the *thinking* phase, **Eureka** the *ideation* phase, and **Prove** the *testing* phase.

This approach has been shown to work whether you're answering creative briefs, solving academic conundrums, or mediating disputes between parties in conflict.

Can this process really be learned?

Insight Agents believes that the key to learning how to be insightful is to step out of our day-to-day work roles and the unstructured – if instinctive – way we try to solve problems and generate insights. Conventional wisdom suggests we need to work and work away at a problem and make the challenge submit to force of our intellect. We recommend that you leave conventional wisdom at your workstation, and head instead towards a STEP Prism workshop, ideal for up to 12 participants.

What's a STEP Prism workshop like?

For more details of the Insight Agents' STEP Prism workshop, including costs, logistics, and an outline timetable, please contact Sam Knowles, as detailed below.