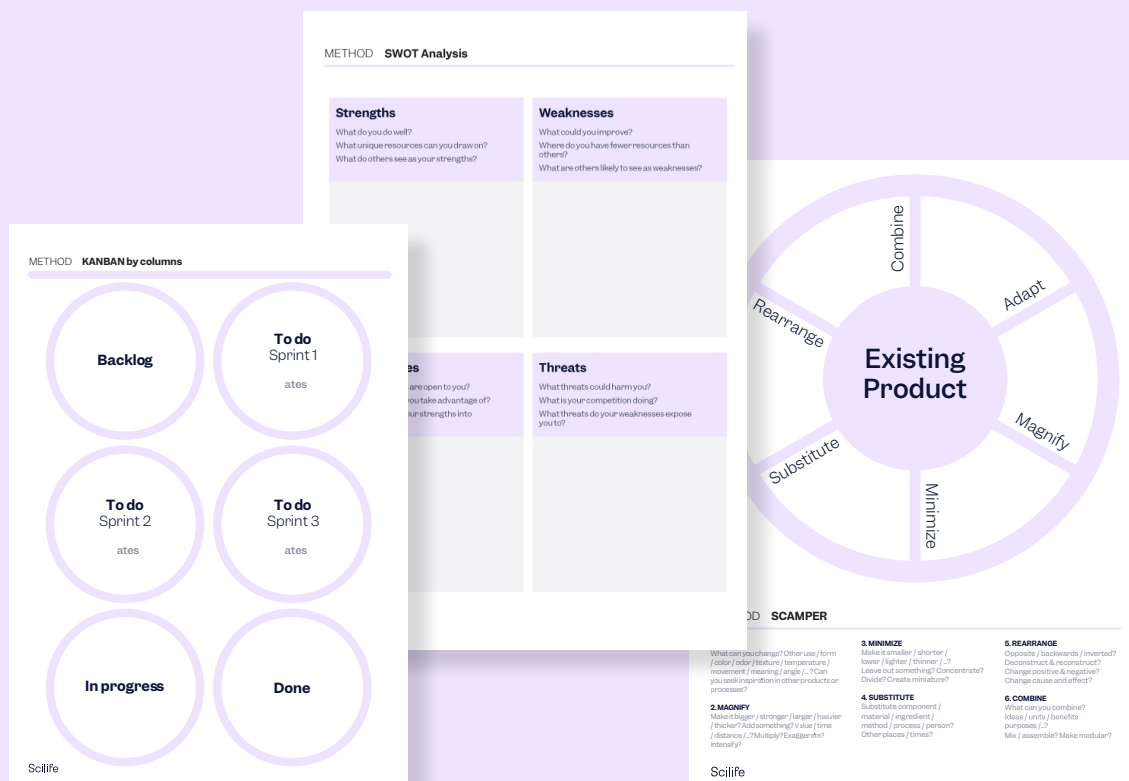


The Scilife Success Guide

Thinking Outside the Box to Create a Quality Culture

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Thinking Outside the Box to Create a Quality Culture

Are all the necessary instructions on the label? Is the right dosage supplied? Has the product been thoroughly tested and gone through a validated process before it gets to market? Within the Life Sciences, Quality Assurance is usually concerned with what is inside the box.

But what about *thinking outside the box*?

Of course, QA is about making sure everything is correct and of the highest quality. But sometimes **thinking creatively can help provide solutions**, which couldn't be found otherwise. Take the phrase 'thinking outside the box' itself...

In the 1950s, there was a well-known, nine-dot puzzle. What you had to do was link all nine dots with four lines without lifting your pen. Many people were stumped and couldn't find the solution.

The only way to solve the puzzle is to draw the lines so that they connect outside the box. A simple light bulb moment once you realize, but if you keep trying to solve it inside the box, you'll never master the puzzle.

The point is that we are often caught up inside a problem and can't see the solution. If we step outside the box and view it from a **new perspective**, we can get new ideas that solve the issue. And we don't have to be creatively minded to do this. From SWOT analysis to Kanban boards to SCAMPER mapping, there are **methods** out there to help us think outside the box.

To prove that these methods work, we've used them at Scilife to create a **Quality Culture**. Read on to find out about each method and see how it can be put into practice in your organization.

01

SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

A traditional business tool, SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. SWOT analysis examines **internal and external factors that impact your organization**, so that you can challenge risky assumptions, uncover dangerous blindspots, and devise future strategies. It's not just about making lists, but about creating a SWOT matrix - a 2 x 2 grid, with a square for each element. And each box in the grid should contain one or two prompt questions. In this way, you can link SWOT aspects to come up with out of the box solutions.

Let's say a Pharma company has the following strengths: it has a product on the market that sells well and personalized customer service via digital technologies is set up for patients. But as a weakness, the company has no integrated system to track data from all the patients. There is an opportunity to utilize all the data, but a threat to this is a lack of training among staff. So, what solutions can be thought up? For a start, employees can receive training. But maybe AI and machine learning can also be utilized as part of a digital transformation within the company.

SWOT

02

Kanban Boards

To do, In progress, or Done

Originating from 1940s Japanese manufacturing, Kanban translates as 'visual signal' and was a way of showing that a team's work was done. Hugely popular in agile software development of today, Kanban requires **real-time communication** and **full transparency**. Work items are visually represented on a Kanban board, so that all team members can see every piece of work at any time - having a clear picture if work items are To do, In progress, or Done.

This might seem like more of a work model than out of the box thinking, but it depends how you use it. If your biotech company is developing a new solution that is ready to go to market, maybe the Kanban board can help you see **where you need to focus**. If all the research is 'done', but the marketing is 'to do', then your marketing team can get to work with creative ideas.

KANBAN

03

SCAMPER Maps

Innovate by looking at seven different lenses

Also known as the Osborn Checklist, the SCAMPER method was originally created by the godfather of brainstorming, Alexander Osborn. It takes an existing product or concept and helps you **innovate** around it by looking at it through seven different lenses:

- Substitute**
- Combine**
- Adapt**
- Modify**
- Put to another use**
- Eliminate**
- Rearrange**

Imagine your company is at the research stage for a medical device that alerts for epileptic seizures. There will be constraints according to regulations and patient needs. But apply the SCAMPER method and you might come up with out of the box ideas that really work. Can the material of the device be substituted? Maybe a plastic wristband instead of a watch. Can it be combined with a Smart watch? Or maybe it could be used for a completely different patient need. With SCAMPER, you can ask yourselves all kinds of questions to get you thinking out of the box.

SCAMPER

04

Scilife Case Studies

At Scilife, we provide Smart QMS solutions for Life Sciences companies.

But how do we implement a *quality culture* ourselves?

Let's start with **internal training**. At Scilife, we want to ensure that everyone on our team is constantly **up-to-date with their skillset**, so that we can provide the best possible solutions to our customers.

Using SWOT analysis, we looked at how our training could be improved. In terms of strengths, we knew that we're a group of highly talented and driven people. And we also had a system for providing continuous training. But as a weakness, not all trainings were completed on time by everybody. There was a clear opportunity to improve these stats. What threat was stopping us from achieving this? Maybe there wasn't enough company-wide awareness and encouragement.

04

Scilife Case Studies

SWOT Analysis: Embedding a Quality Mindset

Scilife aims to embed a quality mindset throughout all departments, ensuring everyone in the organization understands and engages with the importance of quality.

Strengths

*What do you do well?
What unique resources can you draw on?
What do others see as your strengths?*

1. Scilife is home to a highly talented and motivated team, which provides a strong foundation for achieving the desired quality mindset.
2. Scilife has leaders who prioritize and promote a quality culture.
3. Scilife has an established platform that provides ongoing training. This is a crucial resource for enhancing quality consciousness and skills across all levels of the organization.
4. Scilife has defined quality metrics and performance indicators to assess and measure the effectiveness of quality culture.

Weaknesses

*What could you improve?
Where do you have fewer resources than others?
What are others likely to see as weaknesses?*

1. Not all members are completing trainings on time. This could lead to a disparity in the level of quality awareness and understanding across different individuals and departments.
2. Not every employee feels responsible or believes they are capable of contributing to quality. This is a significant barrier to achieving a comprehensive quality mindset within the organization.

04

Scilife Case Studies

SWOT Analysis: Embedding a Quality Mindset

Opportunities

*What opportunities are open to you?
What trends could you take advantage of?
How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?*

1. By focusing on empowering each employee and educating them about the crucial role they play in maintaining quality, Scilife can build a stronger quality culture.
2. Encouraging employees to take ownership of quality can foster innovation and creativity, leading to process improvements and new solutions.
3. Develop and implement initiatives that encourage employees to take pride in their work and see the value of high-quality output, such as quality awards or recognitions. This can help instill a deeper understanding of the importance of quality.
4. A strong quality culture can set Scilife apart from competitors and attract customers who value high-quality products and services.

Threats

*What threats could harm you?
What is your competition doing?
What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?*

1. The lack of ownership or understanding of the quality goal by some employees can lead to resistance to change or lack of adherence to quality standards.
2. If not all employees complete their training on time, this could lead to skill gaps within the organization, potentially impacting quality and productivity.

04

Scilife Case Studies

SWOT Analysis: Embedding a Quality Mindset

By linking the SWOT elements, we came up with a creative solution. Basically, we implemented the same strategies internally that we used externally. Completing trainings shouldn't be an arduous, time-consuming task, but one which is useful and even fun. The dashboard was altered to clearly show how many tasks need to be completed. And a quick quiz was created after each training test to encourage learning. On top of that, we used internal slack channels and monthly team meetings to show quality scores. As a whole company, how many trainings did we complete each month? And how did each departmental team fare? A bit of fun competition that boosted quality culture.

As we are always seeking to drive **continuous improvement**, we were also looking for other ways to help drive quality within Scilife. What about the phrase 'thinking out of the box' itself? It's one of our company values, so how could we encourage everyone to do this across teams?

With Scilifers coming together from all over Europe, we took part in a Manual Thinking workshop. Each task involved people mixing from different departmental teams, ensuring that there was multi-functional brainstorming. And all of us, individually and as groups, had to come up with **innovative ideas using Manual Thinking methods**. This ranged from thinking about variations on product to UX design ideas for better user experience to practical elements of making meetings more efficient. It was a workshop that empowered us all to explore how we could always **come up with new solutions**.

So, what about Scilife solutions themselves? How could we embed a quality culture within our product? In particular, how could we implement Smart Quality. We don't just aim to transform an organization's quality processes, but also **mindsets**. We want to create a learning culture, to engage everybody with quality, and to boost data-driven actions. And so we used the SCAMPER method to help us come with new ideas.

04

Scilife Case Studies

SCAMPER (or Osborn's Checklist): Quality Mindset



Substitute regular training with gamified learning modules. This can make the training more engaging and potentially improve completion rates.

Combine the quality training with personal development modules. This approach could help employees see how quality practices can benefit not just the company, but their personal growth as well.

Adapt peer recognition programs to specifically highlight quality-focused behaviors. This adaptation can provide a new avenue to reinforce and reward quality-conscious actions.

Modify the internal communication strategy to emphasize success stories around quality. Regularly spotlighting teams or individuals who have made significant contributions to quality improvement can enhance the overall quality culture.

04

Scilife Case Studies

SCAMPER (or Osborn's Checklist): Quality Mindset



Put to another use: Utilize quality metrics not only for performance evaluation, but also as a learning tool. Sharing and discussing both successful and sub-par quality metrics can help everyone understand what works and what doesn't.

Eliminate any bottlenecks in the feedback loop for quality processes. This could include reducing the number of approvals required to implement a suggested improvement, ensuring that good ideas can be put into action more swiftly.

Rearrange workspace layouts or team structures to better support quality practices. For instance, you might create cross-functional teams for quality improvement projects, or rearrange workspaces to encourage more open, collaborative problem-solving.

04

Scilife Case Studies

SCAMPER (or Osborn's Checklist): Quality Mindset

What could we combine our solutions with? How could we adapt or modify them? What could be put to another use? In terms of a learning culture, we had expert knowledge that we turned into video trainings as part of the **Scilife Academy**, so that users can always keep improving. And then we modified the scripts, turning the videos into bite-sized learning sessions.

With engagement, we wanted to bring in **gamification** elements - talking with experts in the field and working as cross-functional teams to align product, UX design and copy.

We didn't want downloading documents or completing trainings to be boring, but something that everyone within an organization is engaged with.

And we wanted companies to see **real results**, so that meant incorporating advanced data analysis - enabling an organization to see not just their



04

Scilife Case Studies

Finally - Let's Brainstorm!

As a company, we'd identified our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats using the SWOT matrix. We'd also taken part in a Manual Thinking workshop and explored the SCAMPER method.

So, we encouraged our Scilife teams to think outside the box and come up with innovative ideas for creating a Quality Culture.

Here are some of the best ideas from that session:

04

Scilife Case Studies

Finally - Let's Brainstorm!

1

Develop a Quality-Oriented Reward System

Introduce rewards and recognition for quality achievements to incentivize employees to adhere to quality standards and engage with the quality mindset.

2

Create the Scilife Academy

Design an augmented learning platform that will ensure everyone understands and aligns with the company's quality standards. It will be bursting with bite-sized video courses on a vast range of quality concepts within the Life Sciences.

3

Establish a Quality Ambassador Program

Incorporate quality-related goals into all job descriptions and launch a company-wide training program emphasizing the role of quality in everyone's work. Establishing a quality ambassador program can drive home the importance of quality and make it a part of the company culture.

4

Foster a Continuous Learning Culture

Institutionalize a 'Quality Moment' in every meeting where quality successes, challenges, or learnings are shared. Also, set up a shared quality dashboard accessible to everyone in the company to increase transparency and engagement with quality metrics.

04

Scilife Case Studies

Finally - Let's Brainstorm!

5

Personalize Training Approaches

Tailor training sessions based on individual roles and their connection to the overall quality goal. This customized approach can make the training more relevant and encourage prompt completion.

6

Facilitate Collaborative Quality Improvement

Initiate systems for cross-departmental collaboration on quality improvement projects. This can foster a sense of shared responsibility and engagement with quality.

7

Implement Feedback Loops

Set up regular feedback mechanisms that allow employees to share their views on the quality processes and propose improvements. This can aid in continuous improvement and promote a sense of ownership among all employees.

8

Focus on Leadership Training

Provide specialized quality-focused training for leaders in the organization. This will equip them to promote and manage the quality mindset more effectively within their respective teams.

05

Tips, Tricks & Templates

Creating a **Quality Culture** is more than mere compliance. Of course, it's vital within the Life Sciences to meet regulations and ensure quality of processes and products. But thinking outside the box can empower any organization to be even more successful. At Scilife, we've used SWOT analysis, Kanban boards, and SCAMPER mapping to come up with ideas that improve our culture and our solutions.

There are loads of other methods out there. Check out **Design Thinking and Manual Thinking**, both of which inspire creative thinking. Of course, it's not always easy to generate new ideas, so here are some tips to energize your team's brainstorming efforts.

✓ **Assemble a diverse set of people.** Success in brainstorming comes from using small, diverse groups, as free as possible from internal political considerations. Brainstorming cannot abide groupthink, so it is essential to go way beyond the project's core team.

✓ **Work with a clearly stated challenge.** The brainstorming team must focus on a clearly stated challenge. The design criteria represent a great starting point.

05

Tips, Tricks & Templates

- ✓ **Foster the Right Mindset:** The mindset required for brainstorming is that of a creator, not a critic. Here are some guiding rules:

- One voice at a time

- No filibusters (30 seconds per idea)

- Share your ideas visually (through sketches and stick figures)

- Postpone judgment (evaluation comes later)

- Build upon the ideas of others

- Have fun!

- ✓ **Inspire people.** People draw inspiration from others. For a successful brainstorming session, participants need to care about the problem, which means demonstrating its human implications to them.
-

- ✓ **Select your brainstorming tool and jot down possible trigger questions** (e.i. how do we create an environment where every employee feels responsible for and capable of contributing to quality?, how can we increase the engagement and active participation of all departments in maintaining and improving quality?) or analogies or elements of contra-logic you want to include.

Having given those tips, we'll leave you with **Scilife templates** we've created for you to use.

Whether it's at the research stage, during design and development or at the marketing phase, working in cross-functional teams to brainstorm and implement creative ideas can make your organization even more successful.

SWOT Template

METHOD **SWOT Analysis**

Strengths

What do you do well?
What unique resources can you draw on?
What do others see as your strengths?

Weaknesses

What could you improve?
Where do you have fewer resources than others?
What are others likely to see as weaknesses?

Opportunities

What opportunities are open to you?
What trends could you take advantage of?
How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?

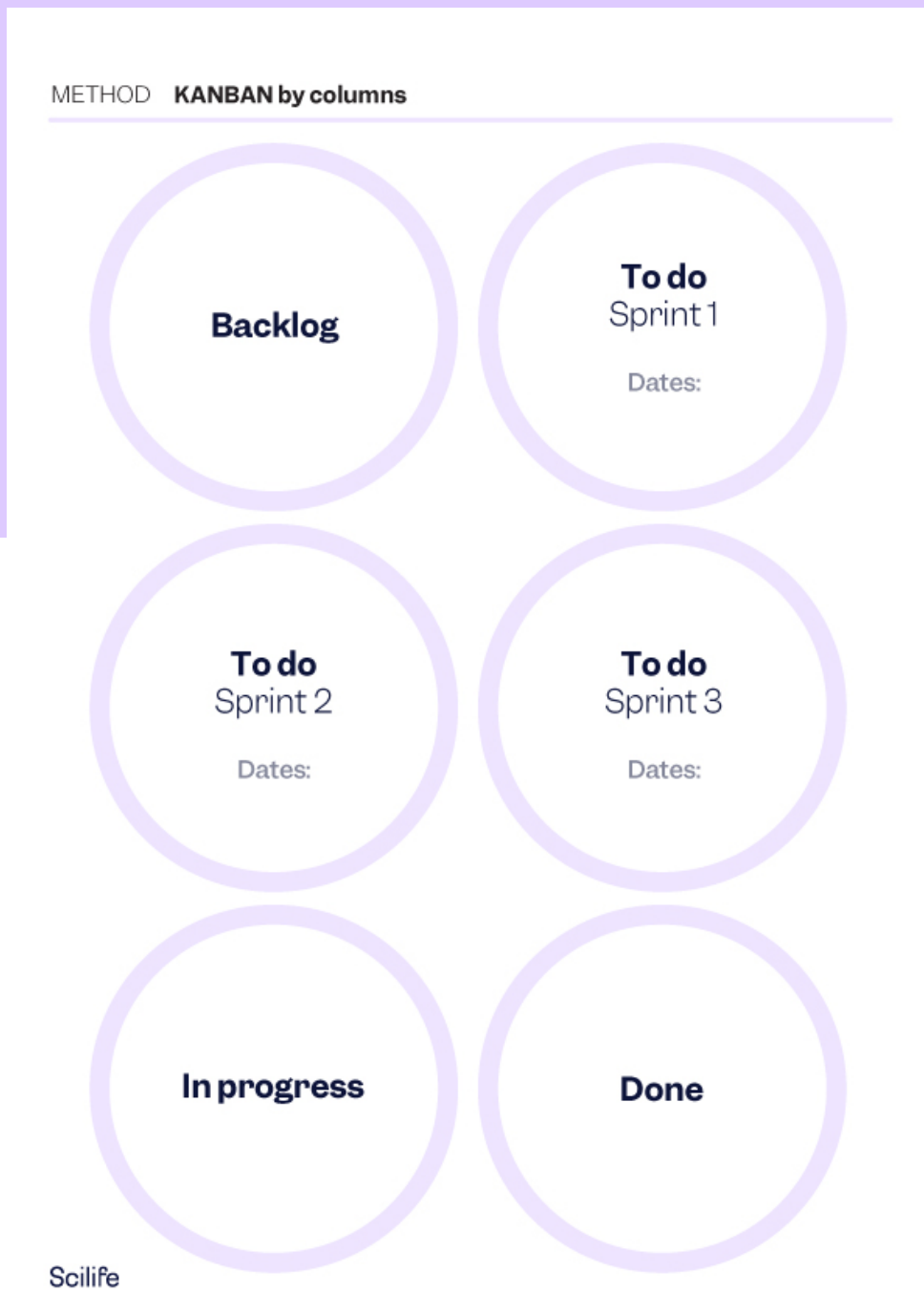
Threats

What threats could harm you?
What is your competition doing?
What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?

Scilife

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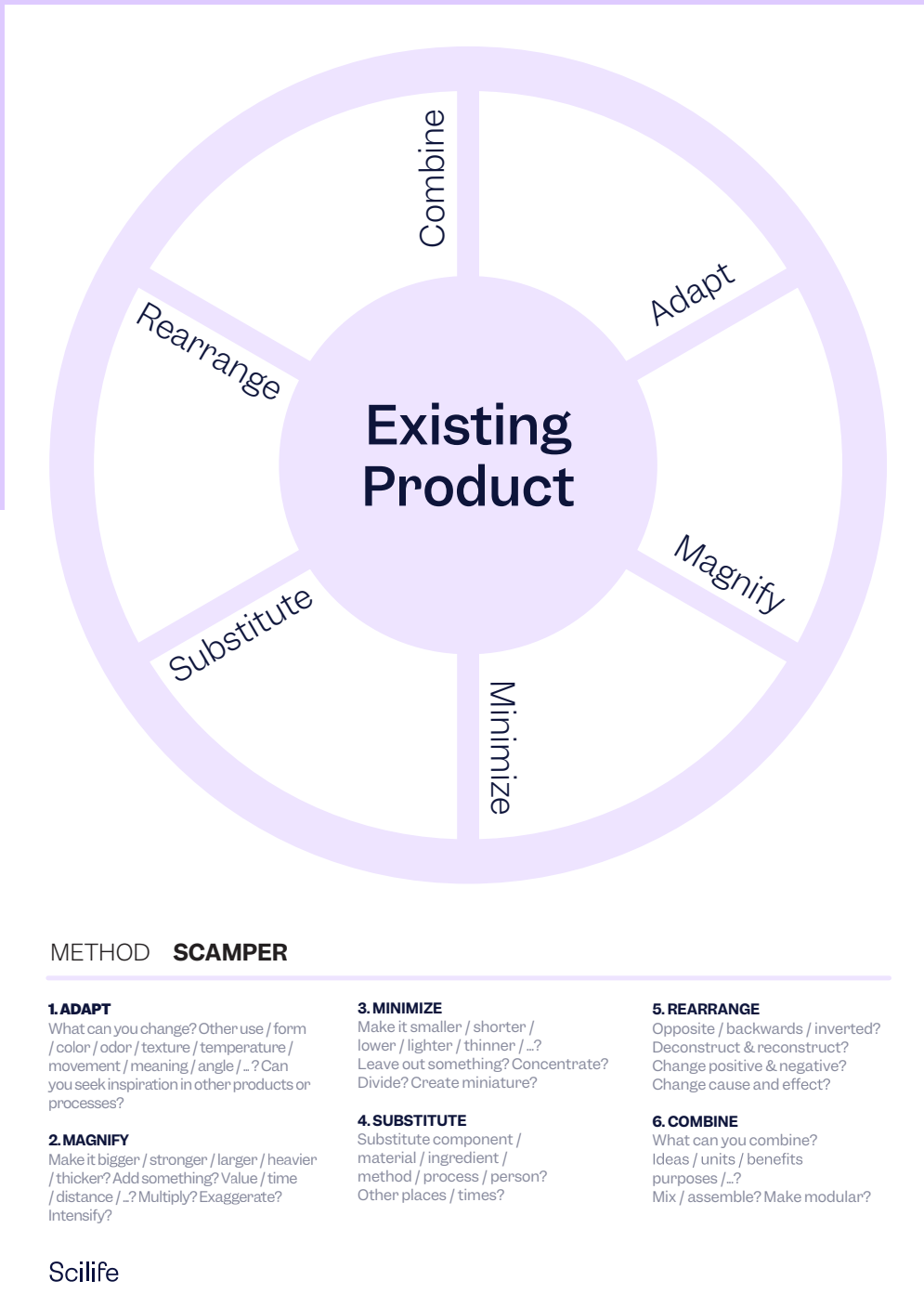
KANBAN Template



Tool by Manual Thinking

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SCAMPER Template



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