



## Principles

1. The PMI is important because, without it, you may reject a valuable idea that is associated with a point of view that seems bad or silly at first sight.
2. Without a PMI, you are unlikely to see the disadvantages of an idea that you like very much or the advantages of an idea you dislike.
3. The PMI directs attention by showing that ideas are not just 'good' or 'bad' but also 'interesting' and can lead to other ideas.
4. Without a PMI, most judgements are based, not on the value of the idea itself, but on the emotions prevailing at the time. These emotions may be yours or those of other people.
5. With a PMI, you can decide whether or not you like the idea, after you have explored it, rather than before.

## Project

Use the PMI on the following suggestions:

1. When a school rule is made, teachers should explain why the rule is necessary rather than stating that rules should be obeyed.
2. When the school publishes its Yearbook at the end of the year, all school examination results should be shown with student names, in a ranked list. In this way, high achieving students will be rewarded and low achievers will be encouraged to improve.
3. At home, there should be no division of tasks into "jobs suitable for boys" and "jobs suitable for girls".
4. All cars should have an alcohol sensor built-in to the ignition switch so that the car will not start if the driver has been drinking excessively.
5. Sport at school should be compulsory for everyone ■

# PMI

P

Plus Factors

M

Minus Factors

I

Interesting Possibilities

CoRT 1  
Breadth  
Lesson 1



# PMI

## Plus, Minus, Interesting

P	PLUS	The <i>positive</i> or <i>plus</i> factors about an idea; why we like it.
M	MINUS	The <i>negative</i> or <i>minus</i> factors about an idea; why we dislike it.
I	INTERESTING	The <i>interesting possibilities</i> offered by an idea; what are the possibilities if the idea is changed in some way?

Instead of saying that you like an idea or don't like it, you can use the PMI Thinking Tool. This tool can be applied to old and new ideas.

The PMI encourages a review of the positive factors first, then the negative factors and finally, the interesting possibilities in an idea, even if we didn't initially like it.

### Example

The city administration has decided to remove seats from its buses.

P	More passengers could be carried on a bus. It would be easier to get on and off a bus...
M	If the bus stopped quickly, some passengers would fall over. Old and disabled people would find these buses inconvenient...
I	It would be interesting to see if bus fares reduced. It would be interesting to see if the buses remained popular and profitable...

### Practice

- The government is considering a law that states:  
*From January 1<sup>st</sup> next year, all new cars imported into the country will be painted yellow.*
  - Apply the PMI to this possibility.
- Because students usually want to know, all teachers should wear badges showing their mood on that day; black for an unhappy mood, yellow for a happy mood and so on.
  - Apply the PMI to this proposal.
- Students should be paid to go to school. This would be an incentive to attend and would teach students to manage money while at school. Those students who behave well and perform best in assessments and examinations would be paid more than those who do occasionally misbehave or do not perform well.
  - Apply the PMI to this suggestion.
- Teachers are asking for a pay rise.  
The government has noted that some popular televised music competitions use public voting to decide the winners.  
The government has asked that teachers put their case for a pay rise to the public on TV at prime time. Then, the public can vote, using their mobile telephones, on whether they believe the teachers have an acceptable case for a pay rise.  
If 75 percent of the public agree that teachers deserve a pay rise, the government will agree.
  - Apply the PMI to this innovative idea.

### Process: Discussion

- Do we always need to look for positive and negative points when they know they always exist?
- What is the value of exploring the interesting possibilities in an idea?
- Suggest why PMI is the first of the 60 CoRT Thinking Tools.
- How does the PMI improve our breadth of thinking?