

A STROKE OF GENIUS

1. Reading

Read the title and the introduction of the article, using the glossary to help.

- stationery = pens and papers; things used for writing, study or office work
- stockings = a type of clothing that women wore to cover their feet and legs before tights were invented
- flat-pack furniture = furniture that you have to assemble, or build, yourself
- shop layout = the plan of a shop, the way things are organised and displayed

The Ikea effect

Read the text and write down the answer to the question: How did Ingvar Kamprad's company change the way we shop?

1. On January 27 2018, Ingvar Kamprad, who started Ikea as a teenager, died at the age of 91. Starting with stationery and stockings, he had built one of the world's biggest furniture companies. And the way he did it has revolutionised how retailers operate.
2. There are two features of modern life that we have Ikea to thank for: flat-pack furniture and a shop layout that gets you buying more of its products than you initially intended to. Both are principles that a number of other companies have copied.
3. Ikea first brought out its flat-pack furniture in the 1950s. Whether you love or **loathe** this concept, it was a stroke of genius and an effective way of making customers value the brand. There are the obvious aspects of cost and the practicality of shipping. But flat-pack furniture also has an important **subconscious** influence on consumers.
4. When Ikea stopped selling furniture that was already assembled, it was probably unaware of how this would influence its consumers. Scientists have since managed to identify exactly why consumers simply can't get enough of building their own furniture. The act of touching products while assembling the furniture can increase your perceived value of the product. In addition, the more effort a consumer has to put into building something the more they like it – a winning formula.
5. Tests have shown that the actual act of putting something together (so that it becomes a complete object) generates a much more positive perception of that object than purchasing it in a completed form. This is known as the Ikea effect. Furthermore, touch itself is associated with emotion. This means that when we touch something, the emotive part of our brain is activated and we experience a close connection with the product. Touch creates feelings of **ownership** and increases the perceived value of items. We feel proud of our achievement and experience feelings of being closely connected to the assembled item.

6.Round and round in circles

The layout of the Ikea stores has also paved the way for a more creative way of thinking about how to guide shoppers. If you have ever visited one of its huge **warehouse** stores, you may have gone in thinking you were only buying a few items, to find yourself coming out of the store with **a trolley** full of things. This is because of its circular design and one way system.

7.This design means you often can't see what is coming next and fear you'll miss something you need if you don't continue all the way along the path. There are potential escape points throughout the store, but that would mean that you will miss several sections. Consumers are rarely prepared to take that risk.

8.Because you know it may be **tricky** to go back for a particular item later on, you want to pick it up when you see it and put it in your big trolley. This ensures that the customer touches the product, which in turn again generates a psychological sense of ownership and decreases the chance that it will be put down before you get to the **tills**.

9.The fact that you can't see around the next corner also creates a sense of **mystery**. Environments perceived to be mysterious usually generate a stronger liking and so encourage shoppers to keep walking through the store. And the more you do this, the more likely you are to buy something – especially all the smaller items on display such as candles, napkins and picture frames as they seem cheap compared to the larger more expensive items.

10.Ikea's creative ability to influence the subconscious of consumers is undoubtedly a big part of its success – and also why it's been copied by many other companies. Even though Ingvar Kamprad is no longer with us, Ikea has inherited from him a way of thinking outside of the box to communicate with consumers. It will be interesting to see what follows next

2. Business vocabulary in the text

Match these phrases from the article to their meaning.

1	a stroke of genius	a	a really intelligent idea
2	can't get enough of	b	how important we think something is
3	perceived value	c	original and creative thoughts
4	thinking outside of the box	d	want to do something more and more

How could you translate these phrases into your language? Translate the idea, not each word.

3. Summary

This word cloud comes from the article. Using these words, or forms of these words, summarise the main points.



4. Homework: write a 50-word summary of the text, using these words.

