

Helpful Hints

Using brainstorming in a group that is unfamiliar with the concept can be difficult. To help break the ice, form a circle and have each person very quickly name something in a category like "the world 's worst food." This should get people in the mood to brainstorm.

Specify the brainstorming rules before you begin:

- Evaluation and criticism is forbidden.
- All contributions are to be encouraged. Every ideas counts, no matter how silly or impossible it may sound to you.
- Quantity is the goal.
 Generate as many ideas as possible. Remember—the more ideas generated, the more likely it becomes that you'll get good ones.
- The combination and improvement of ideas is sought. Combining two or more ideas can generate a better idea.

For more icebreaking tips see Tiger Bits Icebreakers



TIGER BITS

is a publication of the Center for Student Involvement. Copies available in the CSI, lower

level rm. 014, FHSU Memorial Union, Fort Hays State University 628-4664. Center for Student nvolvement

CSI staff offer programs and consultation in these and other areas of personal and organizational leadership.

Information adapted from the Student Organization and Leadership Development Center at The University of Kansas

Revised Jan. 2008

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is designed to help an organization or group come up with many ideas and suggestions in a short time. It can be used to generate ideas for projects, help you visualize possible problems, and suggest solutions.

How do we brainstorm?

Here are a few guidelines you should follow when beginning to brainstorm:

- State the problem or topic clearly: make sure that the issue is understood before you start talking.
- Focus on only this one issue.
- Try to limit the group size to ten people, if possible the smaller the group the more people will open up.
- Organize all members or individuals involved so that everyone can see each other
- Plan brainstorming jam sessions in the morning if you can as your minds are more productive then, don't rush people; (Remember, true genius can't be rushed.) An organization or group more likely to come up with ground-breaking ideas when they are relaxed.
- Write all suggestions and ideas down so that everyone can see them; this will help the members or individuals to remember all ideas and can help stimulate additional ideas or new combinations of ideas.
- If the organization or group come to a standstill, restate the problem and

reassure everyone that ALL ideas are welcome

To brainstorm...

Relax

Brainstorming is anything but a rigid and formal exercise. If your members are comfortable the brainstorming will be much easier and it will be more enjoyable.

Record

Select someone to write down the ideas as they develop (two people if ideas start pouring in).

Focus

Select what you want to brainstorm (new projects, problems and solutions, publicity, etc.).

Blurt

Have everyone in the group blurt out as many ideas pertaining to the subject as they can. Don't discuss the ideas; that will come later. Don't worry if any of your ideas might be considered silly. Often such suggestions turn out to be extremely useful.

Review

After your organization or group have exhausted it's great mental reservoir, review all ideas. Throw out the impractical and unworkable ideas and discuss the good ones.

Don't discuss ideas
Don't criticize, praise, or judge
Be spontaneous; just call out your ideas
Repetitions are O.K.
Quantity counts
Build on each other's ideas
Enjoy the silences, often the best ideas
come out of them
Be outrageous, have fun.
Put each idea on the list without editing.

Once we have brainstormed, what do we do?

The second step is evaluation. Here's some tips on how...

- Post the lists of everybody's brainstorming ideas on the wall and let everyone read each other's work.
- Organize the ideas into related categories.
- Decide which ideas are most promising and which can be eliminated; this can be done by the group putting a + or by the ideas.
- Rank-order ideas.
- Pick the ones with the greatest potential and highest priority for either implementation or refinement.
- Be sure to use the ideas generated. It's
 demoralizing for a group to invest its time,
 energy, and creativity and have its ideas
 disappear. On the other hand, seeing your
 idea come to life is really rewarding and
 motivating.
- Determine which options are feasible by evaluating the time, money, work, and other resources required to make the idea come to life.
- Next give each proposal a feasibility rating.
- Finally, decide on a solution that is both feasible and appealing to the majority of group members.