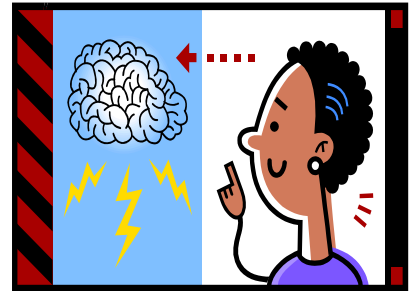


BRAINSTORMING

Is your organization lacking fresh ideas? Do only a few members do all of the talking during meetings? Does your group do the same activities the same old way every year? Brainstorming could be the perfect technique to revitalize your group and to get all of your members excited and involved.



Brainstorming is a process of seeking to stimulate spontaneous, creative solutions to a given problem by sharing the ideas and suggestions of each member in the group. The more ideas your group can come up with, the better your choices will be! The rules for brainstorming are very simple. Make sure that the rules are explained thoroughly to each member and that someone is in charge of facilitating the brainstorming process.

CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE

- Set a time limit, 10 to 20 minutes, depending on the size of the group and the intricacy of the issue.
- There should be 3-15 people involved in order to generate as many ideas as possible. If you have more than 15, you can break into two or more smaller groups and brainstorm simultaneously.



- It is preferable to have the group members facing each other during the brainstorming session.
- Focus on only one issue at a time, and make sure that it is an issue that everyone can respond to.
- At the top of a chalkboard or piece of newsprint, write the goal, problem or purpose for the actions the group will be brainstorming.
- Give each person several minutes to think alone and write down some ideas.
- Record all responses under the problem statement so that everyone can see them.
- Record only key words and phrases, not verbatim.
- Also, do not include the name of the person suggesting each point.

RULES FOR BRAINSTORMING

(EXPLAIN AND POST FOR ALL TO SEE)

1. Do not discuss ideas.
2. Do not judge, criticize, or praise any ideas.
3. Repetitions are okay.
4. Do not bother to raise your hand, just call out ideas.
5. Quantity counts.
6. Build on each other's ideas - "piggy-backing" is encouraged.
7. It is okay to be outrageous or silly. The wilder the ideas, the better.
8. Appreciate silent moments - great ideas can come from silent contemplation.
9. Making Use of Your Brainstorming List
10. If more than one group brainstormed simultaneously, post the lists near each other.
11. Group related ideas into categories.
12. Decide which ideas are most promising and which can be eliminated. Place a "plus" or "minus" mark next to each item.
13. Rank the most promising.
14. Of the ideas with the most potential and priority, make selections for implementation or for refinement by committee.
15. Be sure to make use of the brainstorm list. It is extremely gratifying for a group to see its ideas brought to life, yet it is also demoralizing when those ideas are completely discarded.

