



1) DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL

Name of the tool : Brainstorming

BRAINSTORMING is a common technique for generating ideas, and you can find various exercises and approaches for implementing this method. With this technique, the goal is to produce as many ideas as possible within a particular time frame. For example, a group may set a 5-minute timer and allow participants to share every idea they think of, no matter how unusual they may seem. After sharing, the group can discuss these ideas aloud to determine which ones best suit the project's needs.

The concept of brainstorming was developed by Alex Faickney Osborn in 1942 while working in his advertising firm, BBDO.

When using this technique, it is essential to stay open-minded and non-judgmental about the ideas produced to ensure all participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts. Groups typically assign someone a facilitator role to oversee the brainstorming session and maintain a respectful and organized process. They should consider all the options and their viability before determining which ideas to pursue.

Time: 60 minutes

2) OBJECTIVES OF THE TOOL

- Its main purpose is **to solve a problem creatively or innovatively.**
- Brainstorming also **emphasizes on improving our ideation process and elevates the creative thinking of individuals.**
- One of the major objectives of brainstorming is **to withhold criticism and welcome all sorts of ideas** to the table.
- **Idea association** is another objective of brainstorming as it encourages us to club ideas or work on existing ideas.

3) CONNECTION OF THE TOOL WITH THE SKILL

The link is obvious because the brainstorming encourage creativity and helps you develop more innovative and creative solutions and ideas

4) RESOURCE MATERIALS

- an appropriate and comfortable meeting space for minimum 2 persons – office or virtual
- for virtual brainstorming tools like Miro or LucidSpark, and for an in-person session you'll need pens and Post-Its

5) HOW TO APPLY THE TOOL

To run a group brainstorming session effectively, follow these steps.

Step 1: Prepare the Group

How much information or preparation does your team need in order to brainstorm solutions to your problem? Remember that prep is important, but too much can limit – or even destroy – the freewheeling nature of a brainstorming session.

First, choose an appropriate and comfortable meeting space. This can be in the office, or virtual. Consider what would work best for your team. Make sure you have the right resources beforehand; you can use virtual brainstorming tools like Miro or LucidSpark, and you'll need pens and Post-Its for an in-person session.

Now consider who will attend the meeting. A brainstorming session full of [like-minded people](#) won't generate as many creative ideas as a [diverse group](#), so try to include people from a wide range of disciplines, and include people who have a variety of different thinking styles.

When everyone is gathered, appoint one person to record the ideas that come from the session. This person shouldn't necessarily be the team manager – it's hard to record and contribute at the same time. Post notes where everyone can see them, such as on flip charts or whiteboards; or use a computer with a data projector.

If people aren't used to working together, consider using an appropriate warm-up exercise, or an [icebreaker](#).

Step 2: Present the Problem

Clearly define the problem that you want to solve, and lay out any criteria that you must meet. Make it clear that the meeting's objective is to generate as many ideas as possible.

Give people plenty of quiet time at the start of the session to generate as many of their own ideas as they can. Then, ask them to share or present their ideas, while giving everyone a fair opportunity to contribute.

Step 3: Guide the Discussion

Once everyone has shared their ideas, start a group discussion to develop other people's ideas, and use them to create new ideas. Building on others' ideas is one of the most valuable aspects of group brainstorming.

Encourage everyone to contribute and to develop ideas, including the quietest people, and discourage anyone from criticizing ideas.

As the group facilitator, you should share ideas if you have them, but spend your time and energy supporting your team and guiding the discussion. Stick to one conversation at a time, and refocus the group if people become sidetracked.

Although you're guiding the discussion, remember to let everyone have fun while brainstorming. Welcome creativity, and encourage your team to come up with as many ideas as possible, regardless of whether they're practical or impractical.

Don't follow one train of thought for too long. Make sure that you generate a good number of different ideas, and explore individual ideas in detail. If a team member needs to "tune out" to explore an idea alone, allow them the freedom to do this.

Also, if the brainstorming session is lengthy, take plenty of breaks so that people can continue to concentrate.

In-person brainstorming

The Set-Up: We're a design team at a SaaS company. No one works remotely; everyone is in the office. Since we launched our new website, we've gotten fewer content downloads. We're trying to figure out how to change that.

The Problem: How can we get more people to download the content on our site?

The Brainstorm:

You're the facilitator. Before the meeting, you email everyone to let them know:

1. The problem you wish to solve
2. When and where the brainstorm will be held
3. That they should set aside 10 minutes to think about the problem before the session.

The design team isn't very large: just you and one other person. You decide it would be good to hear from some cross-functional partners too. So you invite the head of content, a copywriter, and a product designer.

The brainstorm is held in a quiet environment, away from the rest of the office. You make sure there are some snacks and drinks on hand. When everyone arrives, you start by laying the ground rules. You also explain the brainstorming technique you'll be using to sketch out ideas, like Crazy Eights.

- You present the problem: How can we get more people to download the content on our site?
- Some participants are visual thinkers, while others are not. To give everyone a chance to participate in the way that makes them uncomfortable, you break them into pairs. To warm up, the pairs each come up with a sketch. They have 10 minutes to do so.

- They then pass the sketch to the next pair, who come up with an idea based on the sketch. You repeat the exercise until everyone has seen the other participants' sketches.
- You then bring the group together to build on these ideas. When the conversation stalls, you get the ideas flowing again with a word association game.
- At the end of the session, you wrap up by setting the stage for the next meeting. Everyone will come together to group ideas based on their differences and similarities.

6) WHAT TO LEARN

Benefits

Promoting engagement: Many brainstorming activities encourage team members to speak openly about their thoughts, which may help even quieter team members feel comfortable involving themselves in discussions.

Encouraging creativity: Brainstorming typically helps you develop more innovative and creative solutions and ideas, which might help you develop a stronger final product.

Expanding your ideas: Understanding all the different approaches you could take to a situation may help you build problem-solving skills and consider perspectives you might otherwise ignore.

Bringing teams together: Brainstorming as a team might help you align and collaborate more effectively, especially if your team is large or remote.



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