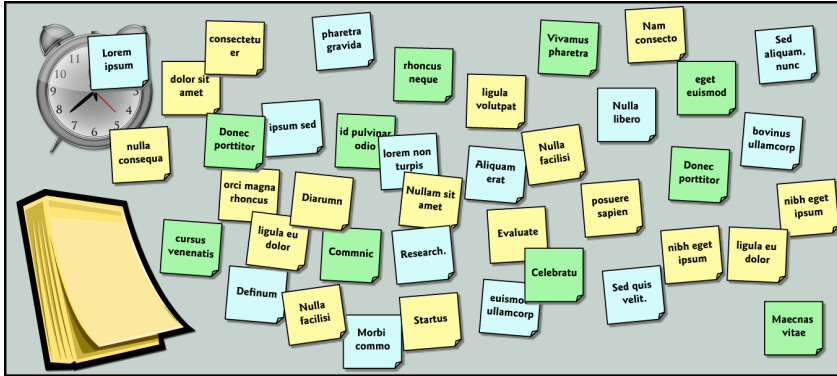


Brainstorming — Double-reverse variation



Brainstorming is creativity tool that is often used in the early stages of problem solving or planning. The method has been in use since the 1930s and these are our best practice guidelines to liberate the full creative power of brainstorming.

Select a venue to avoid distractions. It's difficult to be creative and listen out for the phone at the same time.

Use a warm-up session to get everyone in a creative mood.

Get everyone synchronised – state the problem or opportunity and confirm understanding. (Remember no solutions at this stage.)

Use silent brainstorming at the beginning of the session: a short period for participants to think. It enables the quieter people to be involved

Demonstrate enthusiasm – encourage freewheeling for deeper thoughts

Encourage quantity as you capture everybody's input onto a flip chart or large visible screen. Visibility is important – it triggers more ideas.

Recognise and record all contributions, ideas and options.

Seek clarity of the idea (not judgement) – there may be several ideas hidden and waiting to get out; the explanation may trigger yet more ideas. Build on ideas.

No judgements, evaluations, or dismissive grunts.

Watch out for the brain-drizzle moment. That's the time to stop the brainstorming and move on to the next step.

Group together those ideas and options that have the same or similar meaning, purpose or value

Refine, test and evaluate each group of ideas or options

Select those ideas or options that are to be undertaken - assign ownership (accountability) and responsibility for taking the ideas forward

Agree how the progress is monitored and measured for successful achievement of the outcome.

The rules of Brainstorming

- ◆ Suspend any and all judgement until after the brainstorming
- ◆ Encourage wild and wacky contributions
- ◆ Quantity is what matters – quality comes later.
- ◆ Recognize brain-drizzle – give time and space
- ◆ Build on the ideas of others.
- ◆ All ideas have value

And only then:

- ◆ Filter and refine
- ◆ Select working options
- ◆ Assign ownership

And finally... Celebrate success