

Introduction

Brainstorming is a technique for generating a list of ideas about an issue (divergent thinking). It may be used alone or as a technique in support of other tools. It helps a group to generate as many ideas as possible in a relatively short time and should be followed by multi-voting or some other form of convergent thinking. Use Brainstorming to (1) generate ideas, (2) add creativity to a process, and (3) develop ownership for next steps. See Turning Points: *Prioritizing Options* to learn about the next step (convergent thinking).

Rules of Brainstorming

Brainstorming can be done in both a structured and unstructured way. For both ways, use the following rules.

1. Write the (agreed on) issue to brainstorm on the flipchart.
2. Review the Rules of Brainstorming
3. Allow everyone to participate.
4. Never criticize an idea.
5. Write every idea on the flipchart.
6. Record in the actual words of the speaker.
7. Do it quickly.
8. Build on the ideas of others.
9. Quantity is more important than quality.
10. "Pass" when you cannot think of anything to offer.
11. Stop when there are no more ideas.
12. Have fun!

