

Brainstorming

What is brainstorming?

Brainstorming is a tool organizations use for creative exploration of ideas of problems or issues without any organization member's criticism.

Narrowing down the ideas:

You have a huge list of ideas, now what? It is now important to look at your list and have a discussion about it –

- Combine similar ideas that can become one great idea and improve the ideas that were thrown out that need some work
- Discard ideas that are not feasible, impractical, impossible, against the laws or University policy
- Choose the three best ideas by bringing all ideas to a vote.
- Examine your organizations top three choices. Discuss all possibilities, potential, pro's and con's. Keep in mind the work and resources needed for each of the ideas.
- Pick the idea that makes the most sense for your group and that everyone thinks will work best.

Ground rules for brainstorming:

- In setting up a brainstorming session is it important to explain the rules to all the members of the group.
- All members and ideas have equal weight
- Ideas should be written down and visible to everyone, a dry-erase board or flip chart can help.
- A time limit is set
- One specific problem or issue is dealt with at a time
- Quantity over quality
- Everyone is encouraged to speak often
- Building on one another's ideas is encouraged
- Negative and critical remarks are not allowed

Why is brainstorming important?

- Brainstorming helps an organization break free of doing the same types of events over and over again.
- Brainstorming encourages creativity. It helps to expand your thinking and to identify a wide range of options never thought about before.
- Brainstorming rapidly produces a large number of ideas. By encouraging members to give ideas rapidly and as soon as they enter their mind, brainstorming helps develop many ideas quickly.
- Brainstorming equalizes involvement of all organization members. It provides a nonjudgmental atmosphere in which all ideas brought up are recorded.
- Brainstorming fosters a sense of ownership. Having all members of the organization participate in the brainstorming session helps them to feel more connected to the ideas being presented.