

Brainstorming

What Brainstorming is a procedure that allows a number of people to express problem areas, ideas, solutions or needs. It allows participants to state their opinions or ideas in a non-threatening environment.

When Brainstorming is helpful when you need to generate information in a short period of time. It is used early, and often, in the process improvement team environment.

How 1. **Select the right team:** This is always the first step of using a tool. Using a tool with the wrong people present makes the process slightly more than useless. Members should be chosen for their working knowledge of the process under consideration.

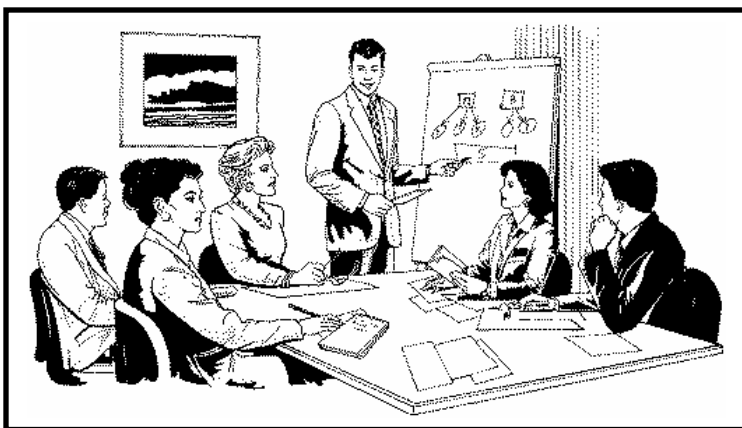
2. **Establish the session objective:** Clearly identify the purpose of the session and what the desired outcome is.

3. **Choose a Brainstorming method:** **Structured Method:** Using a "round-robin" process every member provides a response as their turn arises, or passes until the next time around. This method is used when you have unruly groups, dominating members, or a new team.

Unstructured Method: Any member of the team can call out their ideas as they come to mind. The speed of the method is limited only by the recorder's ability to write fast. This method is used when you have a functioning and focused team.

4. **Set a time limit:** Establish a specific limitation on the time you will allow for this event.

5. **Record all ideas:** All ideas are good. The recorder is the only person allowed to question inputs and then only to ensure they record the true meaning of the input. The recorder will write every idea on a board, or flip chart to ensure everyone can see the accumulation of ideas.



CAUTION!

Do not allow people to ridicule or question ideas.

Ideas should not be discredited or discussed during the session by anyone in the group.

When the ideas are coming slow keep with it. Stick to the agreed upon time. Some of the best ideas come near the end.