

Five Brainstorming Tools

'Re-energise tired brainstorming discussions with one of these additional techniques according to your desired outcome'



Traditional

The method most people use

Assemble a group with a flipchart, identify the problem or opportunity, and encourage ideas to flow, without qualification, criticism or elaboration (at this stage). Record every idea on the flipchart.

Round Robin

Useful when you want a more orderly discussion, or to ensure everyone gets equal air time

Ask for an idea from each person in turn, systematically progressing around the group. Allow individuals to 'pass' if they wish. Keep going until all ideas are exhausted.

Gallery

A great way to build upon other people's ideas

Stick several flipchart pages around the room, like blank canvases in a gallery. Individuals or small groups stand at each flipchart and brainstorm their ideas onto the flipchart. After five minutes ask all groups to move around to the next flipchart, to review the ideas written there, and add new insights to that sheet, some of which will be 'sparked' by reading the previous group's ideas. Repeat this process until all groups have reviewed and contributed to every flipchart.

Secret Ballot

Useful for sensitive or controversial subjects

This is not such a dynamic brainstorm method as it requires individuals to write separate ideas on slips of paper and then put them anonymously into a 'hat'. Each idea is then read out loud by the facilitator until the hat is empty. Another round of anonymous written ideas is then encouraged in response. The process continues until the group feel they're done.

Sticky Step

Another, dynamic group brainstorming activity

Individuals each take a pad of sticky notes and flipchart marker, and brainstorm as many ideas as they can, writing one idea per sticky note. After 5 minutes they stick them randomly on the wall. The whole team then group the ideas together in like-minded clusters. Additional ideas can be written and added at any time.