

Brainstorming

Description

Brainstorming is a popular technique for eliciting all the creative ideas in a group. In normal communication, people often hold back for fear of ridicule or judgement. Brainstorming overcomes the fear factor.

Method

- * Keep the atmosphere relaxed - disciplined but informal
- * Break down barriers
- * Choose a facilitator
- * Define the problem or options clearly
- * Encourage wild ideas. Don't criticise or try to evaluate.
- * Everyone has an equal chance to participate
- * Write down all ideas in the words they are given on flip chart, whiteboard, butchers' paper.
- * Allow time for ideas to gel.
- * Finally analyse / sort / sift / prioritise.

Voting

If you need to, vote on it. Use the weighted voting technique if you like. Here's how it goes: if there are say, 5 options, each person has five votes. You can put the whole 5 on one option if you feel strongly, or spread the votes in any way you want. Everyone votes, and the votes are tallied. It gives a good idea of what a group thinks.

Rules

1. No comment, critical or praising, is permitted during the brainstorm.
2. Wild ideas are welcome.
3. Quantity not quality is desired.
4. The second stage involves refining the first round of ideas by combining some of them or improving them.