

# Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a method for generating ideas. It can be done by individuals or in small or large groups. In a brainstorming session, participants express any ideas they have on a subject. One idea may spark other ideas. No one puts down or even evaluates any idea. The purpose is to come away with a long list of ideas to choose from.



## Rules for Brainstorming

- Pose a problem to solve or a question to answer. Be specific and choose an issue that is most relevant to you.
- Set a time limit on the brainstorm. A deadline helps get more ideas out. Try to work as fast as you can.
- Think fast and reflect later. Quantity is more important than quality at this point. The more creative ideas you come up with, the better. You'll have time later to narrow down your ideas.
- Build on each other's ideas. Try to add extra thoughts to each idea. Other people's ideas may serve as an inspiration for your own.
- Encourage outlandish, even silly ideas. No idea is too outlandish or silly. You never know, a silly idea may lead to a good idea. Have fun!
- Don't criticize or judge any idea. All ideas have the potential to be good and spark other ideas.
- When you run out of ideas, wait and try again. Don't give up; sometimes all you need is a quick mental break to refresh yourself.
- Write down every idea. One person should record the session so that you can remember the ideas.

*The best way to have a good idea is to have a lot of ideas.*

—Linus Pauling (1901–1994), winner of two Nobel Prizes