BRAINSTORMING

Definition

Brainstorming is a technique used to generate ideas. Brainstorming involves everyone, permits new and unusual ideas to surface, produces many choices, encourages synergy and discourages negative input. All team members contribute ideas and a recorder captures each idea as suggested.

When to use

To create options

Benefits

+ Involves everyone in the problem-solving process
+ Develops creative and innovative ideas
+ Generates options that meet varying interests
+ Enlarges the pool of options

Tips for effective use

+ Be freewheeling
+ Imagine, wonder, dream, share mental images, synonyms, play on words, free associations, farfetched ideas
+ Take risks
+ Don't censor your own ideas
+ Build on others' ideas
+ Listen, combine, adapt, expand, hitchhike, piggyback, aim for quality
+ Don't worry about similarities or duplicates or finetuning an idea

What to avoid

Do not critique, evaluate, ridicule or otherwise comment negatively on any idea during brainstorming. A team member who hears immediate criticism may feel inhibited and withdraw from the process. Though the first idea that comes to mind may not be the best, that kernel may lead to an excellent idea. Criticism interrupts the flow of developing ideas!

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