

Brain Storming Technique Creation of Ideas

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“Brainstorming is “a conference technique by which a group attempts to find a solution for a specific problem by amassing all the ideas spontaneously by its members” - Alex Osborn

Abstract

New ideas are works as the foundation for innovation in any field. For creation of creative ideas, “to think up” is necessary. Such creation of unlimited ideas is just called brainstorming. This popular technique can be used to identify alternatives, obtain a complete list of items and to solve problems. Its can either be done alone or with a group.

Keywords: Use of Brainstorming, types, features, process, Principles and General Rules , Point to be Consider for Effective Brainstorming in Classroom, Advantages, Drawbacks.

Introduction

The word brainstorming was originally introduced by the advertising executive Alex F. Osborn in 1953 through his book Applied Imagination: Principles and Procedures of Creative Thinking. He called brainstorming “to think up”. But in his book he described the method also as “using the brain to storm a creative problem”.

“We Cannot Solve Our Problems With the Same Thinking We Used When We Created Them” —Albert Einstein

The Meriam Webster’s dictionary defines brainstorming as “a group problem-solving technique that involves the spontaneous contribution of ideas from all members of the group; the mulling over of ideas by one or more individuals in an attempt to devise or find a solution to a problem” (Webster 2015).

Meaning of Brain Storming

Brainstorming is a process for generating new ideas. To brainstorm is to use a set of specific rules and techniques which encourage and spark off new ideas which would never have happened under normal circumstances. Used in a structured way, this technique can be highly effective way of moving participants out of conflict and towards consensus. Brainstorming is founded on the principle that the quantity of ideas increases their quality. It is a large or small group activity that encourages students to focus on a topic and contribute to the free flow of ideas. In classroom it can begin by following way:

- The teacher may begin a brainstorming session by posing a question or a problem, or by introducing a topic.
- Students then express possible answers, relevant words and ideas.

- Contributions are accepted without criticism or judgment and usually summarized on a whiteboard by the teacher or a scribe as the ideas are called out.

- These ideas are then examined, usually in an open class Discussion format.

Page and thomas view:- “Brain storming is a technique of exploring possible solutions wherein participants are encouraged to contribute suggestion without risk of redicule.”

Osborn’s view- “Brain storming is using the brain to storm a creative problem and to do so in commando fashion, with each stromer audaciously attacking the same objective. The crux of brain storming technique lines in the fact that the exercise generates a wide spectrum of solutions as the participants explore along new and possible fruitful lines of thought.”

Brainstorming may be used when:

- There is a desire to generate many ideas
- Team approach and input are preferred
- Little or no quantitative data is available
- Creative thinking and problem solving are useful

Types of Brain Storming

1. Individual Brainstorming:- When you brainstorm on your own is called individual brainstorming techniques. In this you don’t have to worry about other people’s egos or opinions, and you can be freer and more creative. For example, you might find that an idea you’d hesitate to bring up in a group develops into something special when you explore it on your own. In group you forget these ideas while they wait for their turn to speak.

2. Group Brainstorming: - When a solution for a problem is discussing in a group of people called group brainstorming. Here, you can take advantage of the full experience and creativity of all team members. When one member gets stuck with an idea, another member’s creativity and experience can take the idea to the next stage. You can develop ideas in greater depth with group brainstorming than you can with individual brainstorming.

Another advantage of group brainstorming is that it helps everyone feel that they’ve contributed to the solution, and it reminds people that others have creative ideas to offer. It’s also fun, so it can be great for team building!

Features of Brain Storming

- Generating as many creative solutions as possible to tackle a problem.
- Encourage a group to express their views in a friendly environment.
- Each and every idea is welcomed without evaluation.
- It encourage chain thinking in group.
- Setting time limits.

- Listing every idea presented without comment or evaluation - deferring the judgment of ideas improves the volume of participant input and consequently the value and encourage creativity
- All opinions are equal.
- Subsequently, grouping ideas to reduce redundancy, allow for related ideas to be brought together.
- Encourage competition between members of group, everyone is trying to give best idea.

Procedure of Brain Storming

To make brainstorming process effective a step by step process should be followed:

STEP 1 - Assemble a cross-functional team of participants who are briefed and come prepared to engage in the brainstorming session

STEP 2- Open session and prepare participants by facilitating introductions and reviewing the brainstorming topic, ground rules, expectations, concerns, and deliverables of the session

STEP 3- Allow participants a few minutes in silence to think about ideas related to the brainstorming topic and session deliverables; participants will have been briefed and prepared for the topic prior to conducting the session

STEP 4- In a free-flow setting, ask participants to share their ideas with no discussion or evaluation

STEP 5- The facilitator records each idea exactly as presented on a flip chart

STEP 6- Continue presenting and recording ideas until participants have no additional ideas to add to the list or the agreed-upon time limit is reached

STEP 7- Use the brainstorming ideas to find out the solution of the problem.

Principles and General Rules

Osborn claimed that two principles contribute to “ideative efficacy”. They are: 1. Defer judgment, and 2. Reach for quantity. These principles were followed by four general rules of brainstorming. The rules were established with intention to reduce social inhibitions among group members, stimulate idea generation, and increase overall creativity of the group.

1. Focus on Quantity: This rule is a means of enhancing divergent production, aiming to facilitate problem solving through the maxim quantity breeds quality. The assumption is that the greater the number of ideas generated, the greater the chance of producing a radical and effective solution.

2. Withhold Criticism: In brainstorming, criticism of ideas generated should be put ‘on hold’. Instead, participants should focus on extending or adding to ideas, reserving criticism for a later ‘critical stage’ of the process. By suspending judgment, participants will feel free to generate unusual ideas.

3. Welcome Unusual Ideas: To get a good and long list of ideas, unusual ideas are welcomed. They can be generated by looking from new perspectives and suspending assumptions. These new ways of thinking may provide better solutions.

4. Combine and Improve Ideas: Good ideas may be combined to form a single better good idea, as suggested by the slogan “1+1=3”. It is believed to stimulate the building of ideas by a process of association.

Point to be Consider for Effective Brainstorming in Classroom

In a group activity to make each and every student attentive is a very typical task for a teacher. Initially, some students may be reluctant to speak out in a group setting, but brainstorming is an open sharing activity which encourages all students to participate. Teachers should emphasise active listening during these sessions.

Students should be encouraged to:

- Listen carefully and politely to what their classmates contribute.
- Tell the speakers or the teacher when they cannot hear others clearly.
- Think of different suggestions or responses to share.
- Focus attention on a particular topic.
- Generate a quantity of ideas.
- Accept and respect for individual differences.
- Demonstrate their knowledge and their language abilities are valued and accepted.
- Introduce the practice of idea collection prior to beginning tasks such as writing or solving problems.
- Share ideas and expand their existing knowledge by building on each other’s contributions.

Advantages

1. Encourages Critical Thinking: One major advantage of brainstorming is that it requires you to think critically to solve a certain problem or create something innovative. The more you brainstorm the better you become at encountering a problem and thinking about it critically. This means taking a topic or situation and looking at it in a logical and clear way, free from personal bias. Critical thinking may require you to break a topic or problem down into smaller parts. For instance, if you need to form a campaign around a new product, you’ll need to consider various pieces of the campaign, like product packaging, advertising mediums and messaging.

2. Brainstorming Builds Teams: When you practice brainstorming as a group, you take team ownership of a campaign, product or event. This means that one person isn’t left feeling like he is carrying the workload for the entire company, and also cultivates a feeling of team ownership. Groups that practice brainstorming together may also learn how to work together better. Your brainstorming sessions will enable you to see certain talents or expertise in your co-workers of which you weren’t aware, which can be a great advantage when you need help in the future.

3. Generation of new ideas: Brainstorming brings new ideas on how to tackle a particular problem – the freethinking atmosphere encourages creativity, even imperfectly developed thoughts may push the thinking of other participants.

4. Reduce conflicts: Brainstorming helps to reduce conflicts – it helps participants to see other points of view and possibly change their perspective on problems. All participants have equal status and an equal opportunity to participate.

5. Arousal of attention: Brainstorming is helpful in arousal of attention among students. They have to be attentive in a group activity while listening the ideas of others.

6. Joy and satisfaction: In brainstorming group activity everyone feels that they've contributed to the solution, this will bring joy and satisfaction in them.

7. Equal participation: Brainstorming helps to avoid conflict and to give everybody a chance to air their views without immediate evaluation or judgment. In a brainstorming session, everybody should have an equal opportunity to participate in the discussion.

Drawbacks

The importance of the moderator is often underestimated. Often the two phases are confused, ideas start to be discussed just after they are thrown out and the specific value of this technique is wasted.

- The brainstorming process can take time. It could be hours, or even days before a solution is reached.
- Brainstorming requires a leader or facilitator who will take control of the session and ensure it reaches a satisfactory conclusion.
- Sometimes the ideas produced are unworkable. The outcomes depend on the ability of the facilitator of maintaining the discussion alive. Opponents may refuse to consider each other's ideas. It is important to explain to participants how the results will be used to underline that they are not wasting their time.

Conclusion

Being stuck in a creative rut can happen to even the best brains on the planet. Brainstorming can be the solution, but only if it is done right. To make it effective a leader should have that capability by which he can control the activity of the group. As because it is a group activity so mutual respect should be exist in the members of group for generating effective and qualitative ideas without having conflicts. New variants and effective alternatives could help us to reach the right solution in the least amount of time.

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