

Brainstorm and Critique

Generate Ideas

OUTCOME

Enrich idea generation with psychologically safe critiques.

PROCESS

- Instruct the group of brainstorming research (see chapter 6 and “History and Warnings” under the brainstorm strategy). Brainstorming as commonly practiced has been found to be only partially effective, asserts Paulus (2003, 2006). Researchers find that idea generation and idea quality increases when after traditional brainstorming, members individually study the list thinking of downsides or alternatives.
- Define the subject.
- Give everyone a minute or two to think.
- Brainstorm in which members call out ideas without commenting or questioning other items on the list.
- Provide time in which members silently critique items, and then share and discuss.

VARIATIONS

- Instruct trios to offer critiques, downsides or counter arguments for as many ideas as possible within a time frame (twelve to fifteen minutes), report, and process by full groups.
- Arrange the recording sheets in such a way that small groups can move to the sheets and record their ideas.
- Use the rule of one-third to identify the top few ideas. Critique these.