

RULES AND PRINCIPLES OF BRAINSTORMING



The idea and function behind brainstorming is to gain a large number of diverse ideas or solutions related to some goal or problem. Brainstorming also serves a second function of bringing people to express themselves without fear of being criticized. To fulfill the functions of brainstorming, a few simple rules and principles should be adhered to:

1. **Do not criticize an idea.** Every idea is acceptable, even if it sounds silly. Remember, we're trying to gain a large number of ideas. Criticism tends to shut some people up. As a leader, it is your responsibility to inform the group of the rule and to ENFORCE IT!!!
2. **Encourage piggybacking.** Piggybacking is picking up on an idea and altering it a little, or taking something away, or even expressing the exact opposite. You'll be surprised to find that the screwiest thing you ever heard can turn into a beautiful idea just by applying a little piggybacking.
3. **Keep things moving -- the faster the better.** As a leader, you should keep the brainstorming storming. The best way is to save your ideas for a dull moment.
4. **Don't forget to keep a record of the ideas expressed.** The group leader lists each idea as quickly as possible. Hesitation in recording the idea sometimes gives the impression of disapproval.
5. **Add an encouraging word when a shy or withdrawn person offers an idea.** This positive reinforcement will make it more likely that they will contribute again.
6. **Evaluation comes only after as many ideas as possible are brainstormed.** Then the group goes back over the list to determine which projects or ideas are valuable.