



# Brainstorming

**B**rainstorming is designed to help you come up with many ideas and suggestions in a short time. It can be used to generate ideas for projects, help you visualize possible problems, and suggest solutions.

## TO BRAINSTORM...

### **RELAX**

Brainstorming is anything but a rigid and formal exercise. If you are comfortable you will brainstorm much easier, you will generate more creative ideas, and it will be more enjoyable.

### **RECORD**

Select someone to write down the ideas as they develop (two people if the ideas start pouring in). Try to write on a dry-erase board or flip-chart; something that will display the ideas for everyone to see (“mind-mapping”).

### **FOCUS**

Select what you want to brainstorm (new projects, problems and solutions, publicity, etc.).

### **BLURT**

Have everyone in the group blurt out as many ideas pertaining to the subject as they can. Don't discuss the ideas; that will come later. Don't worry if any of your ideas might be considered silly. Often such suggestions turn out to be extremely useful.

### **REVIEW**

After you have exhausted your great mental reservoir, review your ideas. Throw out the impractical and unworkable ideas and discuss the good ones.

## **HELPFUL HINTS**

**U**sing brainstorming in a group that is unfamiliar with the concept can be difficult. To help break the ice, form a circle and have each person very quickly name something in a category like “the world's worst food.” This should get people in the mood to brainstorm.

### **SPECIFY THE BRAINSTORMING RULES BEFORE YOU BEGIN:**

- Evaluation and criticism is forbidden.
- All contributions are to be encouraged. Every idea counts, no matter how silly or impossible it may sound to you.
- Quantity is the goal. Generate as many ideas as possible. Remember – the more ideas generated, the more likely it becomes that you'll get good ones.
- The combination and improvement of ideas is sought. Combining two or more ideas can generate a better idea.

For more information on organization and personal development skills in the SOAR series, stop by or call UNL Student Involvement, 200 Nebraska Union, 472-2454; or 300 Nebraska East Union, 472-1780. Staff members will be happy to assist you and answer your questions.

**student involvement**  
<http://involved.unl.edu>

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