Creating Open Minds: Using Brainstorming Techniques to Lead to Innovation

Jill Hurst-Wahl
Director, LIS & School Media Programs
Syracuse University
@jill_hw

Warning! This workshop will be successful ONLY if you participate fully!

Agenda
- Introductions
- Setting the stage & learning outcomes
- Quick brainstorming exercise
- Cardinal rules
- Five brainstorming technique
  - What it is?
  - How to do it?
  - How to lead it?
- Practice.
- Reflection.
- Final wrap-up
Introductions & Setting the Stage

- Who are we?
- Why brainstorming?
- Learning Objectives
  - Apply techniques that will lead to productive idea generation.
  - Lead an ideation activity with library staff and/or community members.
  - Teach others how to brainstorm effectively.

Brainstorming ⇨ Innovation

Sharing Your Brainstormed ideas!

Ideas shared in this Google Document will be available to everyone in the workshop.

http://tinyurl.com/nylaideas ("NYLA ideas")

Quick Brainstorming Exercise

- Divide into groups.
- Brainstorm a new design for a library information desk.

- 5 minutes! Go!
What worked? What didn’t?

Creating an Environment for Brainstorming

The Environment

- Be picky about the location.
- Give people room to move.
- Give play a chance.
- Have a diverse group.
- Appoint a facilitator.
- Stick to the rules. (next slide)
- Keep notes.
- Limit any parameters.
Brainstorming Rules from IDEO

- Defer judgment
- Encourage wild ideas
- Build on the ideas of others
- Stay focused on the topic
- One conversation at a time
- Be visual
- Go for quantity

And...

Stick to the rules!
Work quickly.
No idea is refused.

Technique #1
MIND-STORMING

Mind-Storming

What is it?  Brainstorming with yourself.

Why?
1) It is the basis for other techniques.
2) Often we only have ourselves.

Example: Mind-storming names for a new library program.
Mind-Storming

How do you lead yourself?
- Give yourself a specific question.
- Give yourself a time limit.
- Focus.
- Stick to the rules.

Practice! What new programs should be developed for banned books week? (20+ ideas)

Report out.

Technique #2

ROLE-STORMING

Role Storming

What is it? You select a specific real or fictional character and brainstorm from that person’s point of view.

Why? Frees you to think of wild and imaginative ideas.

Example: Brainstorm as Darth Vader, Ron Burgundy, Roseanne Conner, Olivia Pope (Scandal)
Role-Storming

**How do you lead?**
- Create the question.
- Define the groups.
- Give examples of possible roles.
- Encourage them to start quickly.

**Practice!**
How can we better serve senior citizens?

**Report out.**

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**Technique #3**

**OPPOSITES**

**Opposites**

**What is it?** You consider the exact opposite of what is normal.

**Why?** It provides a different perspective and can spark useful ideas.

**Example:** Rather than a library being a safe place, it is a dangerous place.
Opposites

How do you lead?
• Create the question.
• Define the groups.
• Talk through 1+ examples.
• Be tolerant if this doesn’t work easily.

Practice!
What is the opposite of what we’re doing now? (10 minutes)

Report out.

TIME TO REFLECT

• What challenges would you have in leading a brainstorming session in your library?
• With staff or community members
• When is brainstorming the wrong tool?
Long List

What is it? You brainstorm as many ideas as possible (100+).

Why? The early ideas are the easiest and least creative. Real creativity occurs after the easy ideas have been said.

Example: Allow patrons to create their own summer programming.

How do you lead?
- Create the question.
- Define the groups.
- Challenge them! (long list, short time)
- Remind them of the rules.

Practice!
What programs should be included in the 2015 NYLA Conference? (100 ideas, 15 minutes)

Report out.
What is it? You (group) select a specific brand and brainstorm from that point of view.

Why? Provides a different basis for your brainstorming.

Example: If Apple, Lego, Disney, or NBA designed a new library, what would it look like? What services would it provide?

How do you lead?

- Create the question.
- Define the groups.
- Give them brands to select from.
Brand-Storming

Practice!
What would a community room look like for college age library users?

Brands:
• IKEA
• Nordstrom
• Lucasfilm

• I.M. Pei
• McDonald’s
• Starbucks

Report out.

Wrap Up

• What questions do you have?
• What will you take back to work from this workshop?
• What will you tell your colleagues?
• What worries you about using these?