



## The "How To" of Expert Brainstorming Part III: Group Brainstorming Sessions

**Before we start: What questions are on your mind about group brainstorming or facilitating sessions? Just chat over numerous questions.**

*Be sure to have a journal or paper to do the activities & capture your ideas & thoughts*



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### Take the GreenGov Challenge!

From October 19th through October 31st, we are calling on Federal employees to take the GreenGov Challenge – an online participatory program that challenges Federal employees to take part in the President's Executive Order on Federal Sustainability by submitting their own clean energy ideas and voting on others.

You can submit and vote on ideas within six main categories: Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions - New strategies for how we use energy, travel, and commute can help lower our carbon footprint; Conserving Energy - Making Federal buildings, fleets, and electronics more efficient saves energy and money; Conserving Water - Using native plants for landscaping and reusing water to flush toilets are just two examples; Eliminating Waste - Reduce, reuse, and recycle (and compost!) are just the beginning. How can we close the loop? Sustainable Products and Purchasing - How can Federal purchasing power support great clean tech companies that create American jobs? Sustainable Buildings - We spend, on average, 90% of our days indoors. How can our Federal workspaces be more efficient and healthier?

**8,351 people** have submitted **2,976 ideas** and cast **98,862 votes**

- + GREAT TOPIC & QUESTIONS.
- + CROWDSOURCING BRAINSTORM WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- LESS THAN .5 IDEAS PER PERSON!?!?
- RULES - BRAINSTORMER TRAINING - FACILITATION

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### TOP VOTED GREENGOV IDEAS



"Stop using styrofoam containers and plates in federal cafeterias."  
[Aaron Helton](#), OPM, Washington, DC

"Get rid of all bottled water in the cafeteria's and offer filtered water for free"  
[Katie Stanton](#), Washington, DC

"Allow employees to work remotely from home for a set amount each week/month. This reduces gasoline consumption and carbon emissions."  
[Dana](#), Kansas City

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## HOW TO MIND MAP (TONY BUZAN)

\* Start in the center of a blank page turned sideways. Why? Because starting in the center gives your brain freedom to spread out in all directions and to express itself more freely and naturally.

\* Connect your main branches to the central image and connect your second and third level branches to the first and second levels, etc. Why? Because your brain works by association. If you connect the branches you will understand and remember a lot more easily.

\* Use one key word per line. Why? Because single key words give your mind map more power and flexibility. Each single word generates its own special array of associations and connections.

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## PROGRAM TO PROFESSIONALIZE BRAINSTORMERS

Train and develop the most creative consumers, brainstormers, and innovators

- RECRUITING
- SCREENING
- ASSESSING
- PROFILING
- TRAINING
- SELECTING
- INNOVATING
- PERFORMANCE HISTORY:
- 2006 FIRST 10 PRO BRAINSTORMS  
AVERAGED 427 IDEAS PER SESSION
- POST TRAINING 10 BRAINSTORMS  
AVERAGED 732 IDEAS PER SESSION  
(2007)
- IDEAS PER BRAINSTORMER  
INCREASED FROM 42 TO 77 IDEAS  
PER SESSION



- 2008 BRAINSTORMS  
AVERAGE OVER 1,000 IDEAS  
PER SESSION AND OVER 100  
PER PERSON.

## GROUP BRAINSTORMING RULES

- 1) DEFER JUDGMENT
- 2) ENCOURAGE WILD IDEAS
- 3) BUILD ON THE IDEAS OF OTHERS
- 4) STAY FOCUSED ON THE TOPIC
- 5) ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME
- 6) BE VISUAL
- 7) GO FOR QUANTITY

(Alex Osborn & IDEO)

**Brainstormers**

Diverse  
High Achievers  
Creative  
Engaged  
Idea Quantity  
Idea Quality  
Lead Users  
Practiced





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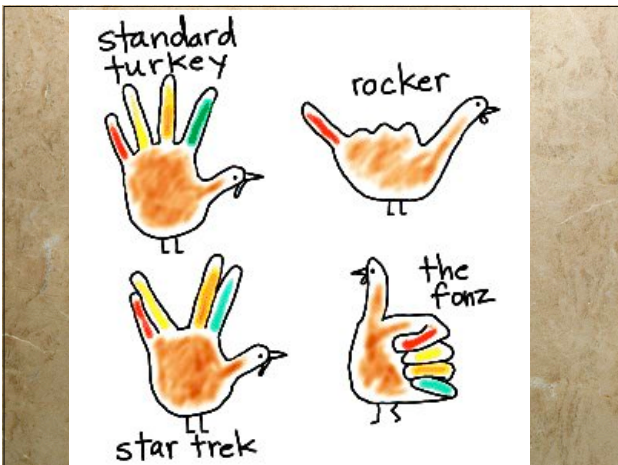
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## HOW TO COOK A TURKEY

“Put [the turkey] in the oven for four minutes. The oven is hot--hotter than the sun--about 30 degrees.”

“Put the turkey in a big bowl and put it in the oven. Cook the turkey for 15 hours. It is done when it's not burned. Climb inside and eat it, but only after you shut off the oven.”

“To get our turkey we go to a chicken farm (they have turkeys too). You get a net and put the net over the turkey. We put him in a box and he sits in the front seat with Mom. I sit in the back seat with my brothers, Dominic and Noah. The turkey squeaks all the way home. Mom takes him out of the box and he flies around. Mom cleans him in the sink with a washcloth. She cleans his head first. Then she puts him in a pan and puts popcorn all over him--even inside him! She adds water and sticks him in the microwave. She cooks him for 4 minutes.

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Fellow brainstormer

Consultant

Question Creator

Structure organizer

Introduce Attributes

Introduce Idea example

Reframe question

Introduce idea technique and tool

Energizing Activity

Time Manager

Flow Guide

Facilitation

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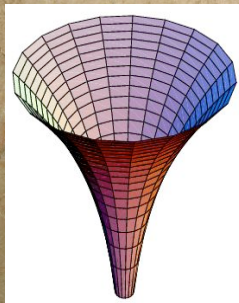
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## QUESTION FUNNEL

Multiple targeted questions organized from general to specific



1. What are ideas around what a positive culture of innovation in our organization could be like or feature?
2. How might we innovate the way innovation happens in an organization through better processes using the web?
3. How might we assess individuals, identify strengths, educate, enact, and build efficacy to innovate realistically successfully?
4. What projects might we start to create something new systematically and provide experience in innovation?
5. What are ideas for programs, events, or activities that could engage all employees in their own innovation project?

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## FUNNEL SPECIFIC QUESTION CREATION

GET MORE SPECIFIC TO THEME OF GREATEST INTEREST:

6. WHAT MIGHT WE CREATE NEW SYSTEMATICALLY &  
PROVIDE EXPERIENCE IN INNOVATION THROUGH  
ORGANIZATION AND INDIVIDUAL PROJECT STARTS?

NEW 6A. WHAT ARE IDEAS AROUND NEW PRODUCTS TO  
CREATE TO HELP PEOPLE INNOVATE IN OUR  
ORGANIZATION?

NEW 6B. WHAT ARE PRODUCTS THAT WOULD ALLOW ANY  
INDIVIDUAL IN OUR ORGANIZATION A CHANCE TO CREATE,  
CAPTURE, AND DEPOSIT, AND SHARE 10 IDEAS WITH  
COLLEAGUES?

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## Catalyzing Questions

**Experiences**

**Nuisances**

**Benefits**

**Other Products**

**Quick Wins**

**Create Questions that Access the Relevant Ideas**

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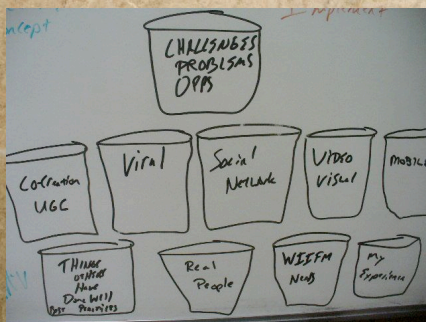
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## CREATE BUCKETS



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## Statement Associations

- LOOK AT A STATEMENT, WORD, OR HEADLINE.  
WHAT IDEAS CAN YOU ASSOCIATE TO YOUR PROBLEM FROM THAT STATEMENT?
- LOOK THROUGH A NEWSPAPER IN A NEW WAY.  
USE THE TITLES AS STIMULUS FOR ASSOCIATIONS.
- EXAMPLE:  
"LIFE TAKES RISKS."
  - PEOPLE CAN KEEP A RISK LOG ABOUT THE POSITIVE RISKS THAT THEY HAVE TAKEN AND JOURNAL ABOUT WHAT THEY HAVE CORRESPONDINGLY LEARNED.

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## Picture Associations

- Find a picture. What ideas does it give you?  
How can it relate to your problem?
- Accumulate a wide range of different pictures that can be used as stimulus.
- Example:
  - PICTURE OF FISH SWIMMING: SWIM WITH THE INNOVATION CURRENT. CREATE A CURRENT FOR PEOPLE TO EASILY SWIM WITH TO INNOVATE.
  - FINGERPRINT: EACH INDIVIDUAL SHOULD HAVE A SAY IN THE INNOVATION THEY UNIQUELY CREATE.

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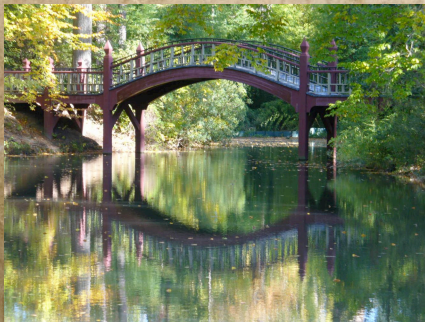
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## Picture Associations



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## Object Associations

- LOOK AT AN OBJECT THAT HAS EITHER BEEN GIVEN TO YOU OR ONE AROUND THE ROOM. WHAT IDEAS CAN YOU GET FROM IT FOR YOUR PROBLEM?
- WHAT OBJECTS CAN YOU ACQUIRE AS STIMULUS FOR IDEAS?
- EXAMPLE:
  - WHITE WALL. GIVE PEOPLE WHITE BOARD WALLS WHERE THEY CAN ALWAYS WRITE IDEAS AND STRATEGIES ON.

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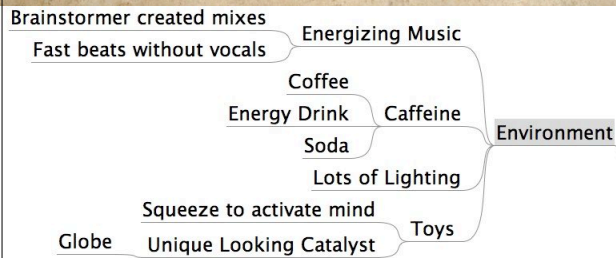
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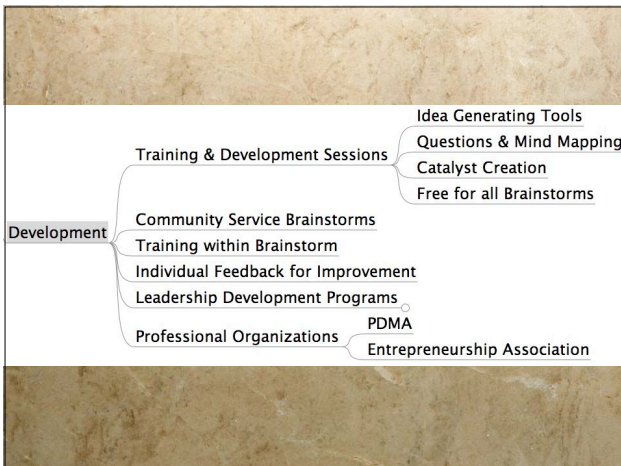
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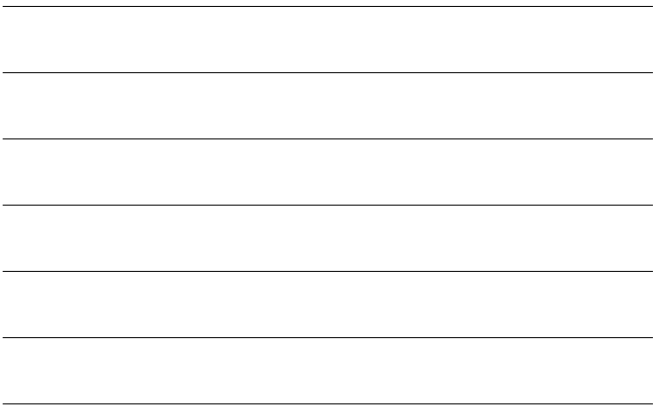
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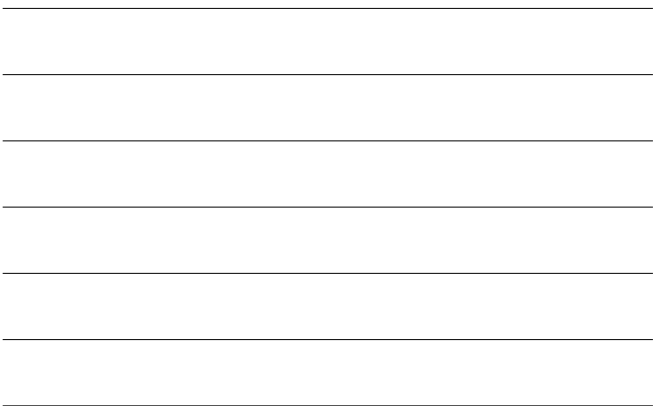
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## BRAINREACTIONS.NET BRAINWRITING BRAINSTORMS

### ONLINE BRAINSTORMING, IDEA CAPTURE, AND ANALYSIS

- PROBLEMS BRAINSTORMING WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS
- PROBLEMS CAPTURING IDEAS FROM MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE
- BRAINWRITING HAS PROVEN EFFECTIVE WITHIN ORGANIZATION (WRITING RATHER THAN SAYING IDEAS IN FRONT OF THE GROUP)
- SIMPLE SYSTEM NEEDED FOR EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS TO BRAINSTORM WITH
- IDEA SPACES THAT ARE INTENTIONAL AND PRIVATE
- INVITE OTHERS (INSIDE + OUTSIDE INNOVATION) (EMPLOYEES + CUSTOMERS)
- SIMPLE IDEA ANALYSIS OF LETTING GOOD IDEAS RISE TO THE TOP

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## ONLINE GROUP BRAINSTORM

 **BrainReactions.net**  
ONLINE BRAINSTORMING

Sign-up | Login

Home | Brainstorming Rooms | **Open Brainstorms** | My Account | Customer Support/Feedback

**Open Brainstorms** | Brainstorms | [New Open Brainstorm](#)



**How can plastic grocery bags be creatively reduced, reused, or recycled?**  
These littering bags waste petroleum and aren't very biodegradable. How can they be minimized or utilized better? What are creative ways to reuse them? ALL CAN JOIN US HERE AT 4pm CST (21:00 GMT) ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10 TO BRAINSTORM THIS LIVE!

[Previous](#) | [Random Brainstorm](#) | [Next](#)

[Email Ideas](#) | [Invite People](#)

Brainstorming Tips: Focus on generating a high quantity of ideas. Don't judge ideas. Invite other people to add ideas.

**New Idea:**  
  
500 Characters Left

Enjoy Open Brainstorming?  
Get daily brainstorm by email:

Delivered by FeedBurner

Live: 180 ideas from 7 people in 1 hour  
Total: 223 ideas from 41 people at BrainReactions.net

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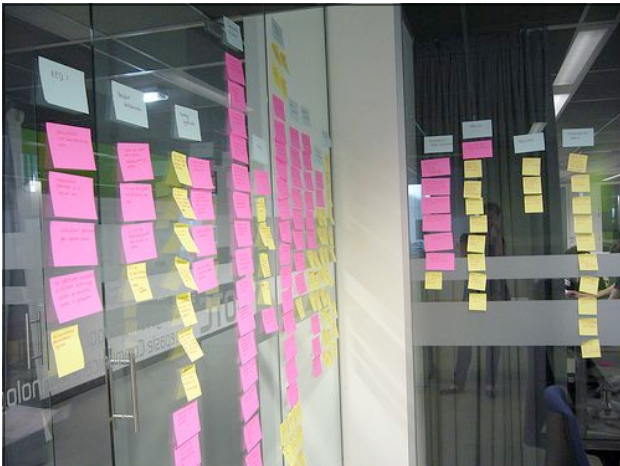
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**IDEA GENERATING IN THE FIELD**

GO TO A PLACE WHERE YOUR PRODUCTS ARE SERVED, SERVICES ARE RENDERED, OR WHERE PEOPLE ARE EXPERIENCING THE PROBLEM YOU ARE TRYING TO SOLVE.

GENERATE IDEAS FROM INDIVIDUAL OBSERVATIONS. JOT THESE IDEAS IN YOUR JOURNAL. HOW CAN YOUR NEW IDEA CONNECT IN AN OBSERVATION?

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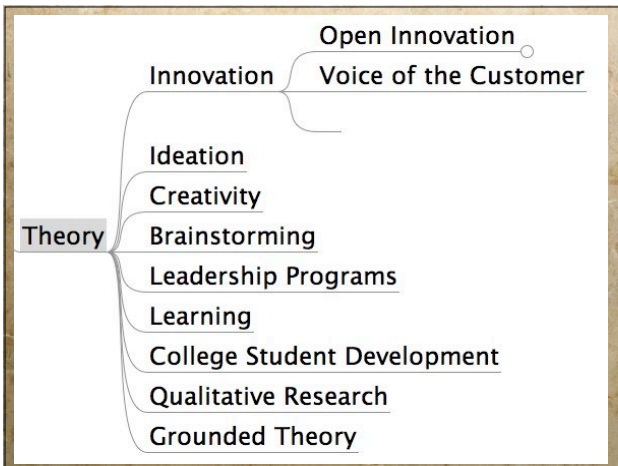
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## BRAINREACTIONS RESOURCES

Brainstorming Training: [BrainstormingTechniques.org](http://BrainstormingTechniques.org)

Front End of Innovation Training: [InnovationTraining.org](http://InnovationTraining.org)

Online Brainstorming, Idea Management,  
and Analysis: [www.brainreactions.net](http://www.brainreactions.net)

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