every
woman

NETWORK

BRAINSTORMING

CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

FOUNDED IN 1999, everywoman recognised there was a lack of support for women who wanted to improve their skills and status within business.

Today, we deliver a range of innovative products and resources that realise the potential and talent of women in business globally. We also uncover success stories and elevate role models to inspire others across a diverse range of sectors.

Why brainstorming?

On a daily basis managers, leaders and employees need to generate ideas and solve problems.

'Brainstorming' is a term synonymous with creating ideas – and is used the world over. It is both a generic umbrella term for 'generating ideas', and a very specific creative technique that was devised by New York advertising executive Alex Osborn in the 1940s.

These days, brainstorming comes in all shapes and sizes, and often managers and co-workers make the mistake of thinking that after a brainstorming session the hard work is already done.

Brainstorming, applied effectively, allows individuals to open their minds to explore various and often quick solutions to problems. Brainstorming is often applied ineffectively and there is often a lack of understanding of both what's involved and the importance of competent facilitation.

This workbook will outline the key concepts and guidelines that will make your next ideas generation session the best one yet. We will walk you through the creation of the brainstorming environment, shine a spotlight on the role of the facilitator (getting this right is a crucial skill for all effective leaders), and give you lots of examples of how to make it work and what to look out for in terms of challenges and potholes.

Try the exercises as you go along and have this workbook on hand the next time you need to get ideas flowing and problems solved. On completion of the workbook you will feel more confident and ready to face the brainstorming challenge.

SECTION 1.
INTRODUCTION TO
BRAINSTORMING

When can brainstorming be used?

A BRAINSTORM SESSION can result in fresh ideas and solutions to problems in all sorts of areas. The everywoman team held its own one-minute brainstorm to come up with just a few areas where brainstorming can be useful!

- Creating new services within your business
- Risk analysis of a project
- Finding new investors
- New advertising concepts for your project
- Editorial – headlines, captions, blog categories
- Team away day locations
- Product design
- Enhancing an existing product or service
- Customer service processes
- Restructuring teams
- How to conduct new business research
- Customer emails and marketing communications
- Improving working cultures
- How to improve a business event the second time around
- Staff holiday planning and rotas

The list can go on and on, and as the variety of the above list shows, brainstorming is a tool that can improve your business across the board.

To get you started, hold your own one-minute brainstorm – either with a colleague or alone. What initiatives or problems within your team, department or company could be aided by effective brainstorming? List them below.

Of course, brainstorming is not a catch-all to problem solving, there are many times when it is not the right tool. Here are some situations where brainstorming should not be used:

- As team leader you already know what you want to do and are holding a brainstorm in the hope someone in your team will come up with the same answer or solution;
- When the group needs to overcome historic obstacles before they can work together effectively;
- A situation where some members of the group are intimidated by others and as a result will probably refuse to open up.

Recently an everywoman trainer was facilitating a board meeting where it was obvious the CEO and a few others had lost faith in the Marketing Director. During our brainstorming session on ways to expand the client base, almost everyone in the group discounted what the Marketing Director said, those who didn't at first, quickly caught on that they should. The session had such a negative undertone that nothing interesting or useful came out of the two-hour session. What a waste of everyone's time; imagine how much it cost to have those people in the room and generate nothing!

Can you think of a time when you or someone else attempted to brainstorm and it failed?

The role of the brainstorming facilitator

THE FACILITATOR TRULY MAKES OR BREAKS the effectiveness of any brainstorming session. It is a crucial role and one that needs thought before a session is organised and colleagues are invited to get involved.

Great communication skills are the number one criteria. As Friedrich Nietzsche said, "We often refuse to accept an idea merely because the tone of voice in which it has been expressed is unsympathetic to us".

As a facilitator you need to juggle a lot of things simultaneously; you need to be able to ask questions to get the thinking going, listen for what is being said (and what is not being said) and read the body **language** of the group and individuals to know how to navigate the session. Just because you happen to be the project manager or team leader does not necessarily mean you will be the best person to facilitate the brainstorming session.

Do a quick check on your skills:

Questions: Use open or probing questions that allow the team to have room to give a range of insight. Avoid leading questions, such as 'Does anyone else want to agree with that really brilliant idea?'

Listening: Don't interrupt or cut people off. Don't finish their sentences or say 'I think what you mean is…' Instead ask them to expand their thoughts or ask probing questions to get out the information.

Reading non-verbal signals: Check if people are engaged by watching their body language. They may give away how they feel about a person or idea so it is essential to check this behaviour and reiterate the rules of brainstorming. Watch your own non-verbal signals too. Be aware of your modelling. Check your tone and body language to ensure it is sending the right message.

Over to you

My communication strengths are:

Pitfalls I know I need to avoid are:

I will do this by:

Creating the environment

THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT is vital to making your session effective. The participants need to feel relaxed and uninhibited in both the physical and mental environment created by the facilitator.

The first tip is to engage as many senses as possible. The brain has enormous potential, so the more you use it, the more associations and connections you make. The left and right halves of the brain process information in different ways. The right brain responds to art, music and patterns - it processes information holistically, grasps the whole picture quickly and is more sensitive to subconscious influences while the left brain tends to work on a step-by-step basis. Fully involve the right brain and you don't just double your brain power, you increase it many times over.

Think about each of the senses in turn:

Sight

Be visual. Colour stimulates us. Pin up quotes around the room or even company vision and mission statements. They may help to put ideas out there.

Sound

Use music to charge and energise the brain. Choose music appropriate to the mood you want to create (e.g. fast, upbeat music to energise a group, baroque music to create an atmosphere for relaxed learning). Music, especially baroque music, is an ideal accompaniment to new material. It ensures left/right brain linkage, creates an auditory and rhythmic association with the material, and simultaneously promotes a state of relaxed awareness.

Touch

Touch stimulates the nerve endings near the skin surface which sends messages to the brain - provide table-toppers (stimuli such as stress balls, tangles and silly putty for participants to 'fiddle' with during the session). Movement stimulates the flow of blood and oxygen to the brain and helps people to stay more alert and energised.

Smell

Scent has quicker access to the brain, more so than any other sense - it raises attention and awareness levels dramatically.

Taste

Stimulate your participants' taste buds - provide fruit, sweets and chocolates for them to snack on, and of course keep the brain hydrated by having water readily available.

SECTION 2.
GETTING THE
ENVIRONMENT RIGHT

Physical environment

IN AN IDEAL WORLD, we would all have the cool idea-making rooms which so many creative organisations have; rooms that mean you can relax, sit how you want and get stimulus from the surroundings.

It is probably a given that an Advertising agency will have a space that feels more creative than a finance department. But we can't all have swanky New York loft spaces with exposed brick and coloured cushions! You can, however, adapt most spaces to help create inspiration.

Some things to think about:

- Moving tables and chairs around so they don't look as they always do for regular work and meetings
- Avoid a boardroom style setting if possible – we tend to subconsciously go around the table in order or look to the people in the 'chair' positon to give all the answers, which defeats creativity
- Opening blinds and curtains to let in light and air
- Put up temporary white boards
- Introduced accents of colour to the room
- Introduce music – you could even ask delegates to 'vote' on appropriate music choices beforehand as an ice breaker and to get their involvement in the creation of the session

Case study

A large retail company wanted help making its teams become customer-centric. The facilitator arrived to find a dire room; the tables set up exam-style, it was dark, and the walls were covered with huge charts highlighting in red circles, which teams were failing to hit their financial targets. The facilitator arrived an hour early and so set to work – throwing open blinds and curtains, moving the desks into small groupings, and covering the walls with plain flip chart paper and posters with relevant quotes. When people walked in they all commented on how the room was transformed and instantly looked more relaxed and ready to open up. One team leader wasn't happy with the target sheets being covered up. After being told that it would be difficult for people to focus on the customer if the surroundings focused on the issue with targets, he reluctantly agreed.

Think about the environment you might brainstorm in, what can you do to make the environment as effective as possible?

Mental environment

IT'S IMPORTANT TO CREATE an environment in which your brainstormers feel safe voicing their opinions and ideas without being laughed at or ridiculed. The most bizarre, outrageous or even ridiculous ideas are often the seeds of a new product, process or innovation.

Get your own mind-set right first

A mind-set is a belief you have in something. It could be about yourself and what you are capable of (or not) in a political system, in people or in a religion.

Spend some time thinking about what preconceived ideas you have about the group or the problem trying to be solved? Do you have some history with a person that might make you subconsciously cling onto every word they say, or, discount what they say? Do you really believe in the problem that is trying to be solved?

Your role is to be neutral – how can you do that?

Over to you

Think back to a brainstorming session you have attended – either as the facilitator or a participant.

What preconceived ideas did you or anyone else have?

How did that help or hinder the thinking process and the overall session?

What can you do to avoid that in the future?

Watch the power of the pen!

If you are writing ideas as they emerge onto a white board or flip chart, it is easy for the facilitator to simply not include ideas they don't think will work - either subconsciously or consciously. This is something to be mindful of – and avoided at all costs.

SECTION 3.
GETTING THE SESSION
STARTED

Break the ice

IF THE BRAINSTORMING PARTICIPANTS don't know one another, you might want to use an icebreaker to get them talking and relaxed before you ask them to open up with ideas.

Choose your icebreakers carefully – you don't want to make the environment worse! Avoid the clichéd 'tell me something interesting about yourself'. Some participants will come up with several things while others will not participate at all and the session will get off on an uneven foot.

Choose an icebreaker that will create a learning environment, make the introductions and create an atmosphere that is warm, relaxed, informal and creative so that the participants are willing to open their minds and participate effectively. Ask yourself if your icebreaker idea will do this and if the answer is no, find another one.

The internet is full of great ideas, be careful to choose one that is suitable for your audience and the topic of discussion, should you choose to link the icebreaker to the brainstorming issue. A good facilitator will make each exercise their own by tweaking it to make it feel authentic.

Here are two icebreaker ideas:

1. Get in partners. Spend two minutes meeting each other and then introduce the other person to the rest of the group.

2. Ask the group to think about 'If I had an hour free a week I would…' and use that to introduce themselves.

You could try and link the icebreaker to the topic you're going to be brainstorming, for example:

1. What do you think is the best invention in the last 100 years? (If you're brainstorming new products or services, for example)

2. What is one thing our business is really good at? (If you're brainstorming a new departmental vision or mantra, for example)

3. What is one thing we don't do here that you did in a previous company? (If you're brainstorming improved processes and efficiencies, for example)

Get the creative juices flowing

ONCE YOU'VE BROKEN THE ICE you'll need to help everyone see that they are creative. So many people have a picture in their heads of what creativity looks like and it's usually connection with something artistic (drawing, painting, modelling, writing).

But creativity is as much about ideas and inventiveness. It's important to get every individual in the group to understand they have the potential to form an idea or invent a new solution to a problem.

Ask the group: "How many of you have…."

- Opened a fridge or cupboard and managed to make a meal 'out of nothing?'

- Been in traffic or had a journey disrupted and figured out a new way home?

- Given someone a present which was 'exactly what they wanted'

- Found a use for an object that wasn't its original purpose? E.g. using a box as a table, a bottom drawer as a crib, a jar as a candle holder, an eyeliner as a pencil.

"Why is it I always get my best ideas while shaving?"

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Next get them thinking about their own ideas-generating style. Ask them "when do you feel at your most creative or when do you tend to get your best ideas?"

Common answers tend to be: in the bath, when having a cup of tea, going for a run outdoors, just before I fall asleep. These answers are generally around the feeling of relaxation and not being forced to think at a given time. This is the kind of environment we want to replicate in the brainstorming session.

When do you think of ideas?

Things I want to make sure I do next time I set up a brainstorming session are:

Brainstorming within problem-solving

First let's look at where brainstorming fits within the whole process of problem-solving. Remember, we said it is often used as a generic term for generating ideas.

The Stages of Creative and Innovative Problem Solving

Problem Identification - what is really going on?

Idea generation - what are some ways we could solve the problem?

THIS IS WHERE WE USE BRAINSTORMING

Evaluation - how we can choose the right solution?

Implementation - putting the right solution into place

It is essential to remember that brainstorming is only as good as what you do with the results. We have all been to uplifting sessions where we leave a room with post-it notes all over the walls, feeling exhausted but engaged. If nothing happens and we are asked to do the same thing again six months later we ask ourselves: 'what happened to all the ideas and hard work we did last time?'

So, only engage in brainstorming if you are willing to ensure what you come up with is eventually turned into something actionable and relevant to the participants.

To learn more about the entire problem solving process see our workbook 'Killer problem solving'.

'Group' versus 'individual' brainstorming

BY DESIGN, brainstorming is a group process. But brainstorming can equally be done individually with fantastic results.

There is a lot of debate on the effectiveness of group brainstorming versus individual brainstorming. There have been several studies that have consistently shown that when people are asked to come up with ideas on their own they outperform groups in terms of more ideas and higher creativity. That said, studies have also shown that research papers and scientific papers written as a collaboration of several authors are usually held in higher regard and cited more often.

What are some of the benefits to individual brainstorming?

• You only have to worry about yourself – nobody else's personality, ego or status in the organisation comes into play

• You can do it when you want – remember, people are creative at different points in the day

• You can put all your ideas down, you won't get cut off or have to worry about being laughed at

Where does that leave us?

A hybrid of group and individual brainstorming can be very effective. When appropriate, ask people to come up with ideas on their own first before having a group discussion. It is still crucial to ensure everyone is very clear on the problem that is being solved or the goal that is being worked towards. Ideally, don't give them too much advance notice. If people have weeks to think of ideas they can become focused on their best idea and start planning it and therefore form 'an attachment' to it; the idea becomes their baby so they become less open minded about hearing others' ideas.

This is also useful if you have some less assertive or less confident people in the room. If they have had time to write down ideas first you can then ask "what's on your list that hasn't come up yet?". This will most likely get them to put their ideas forward.

When have you used individual brainstorming?

When did you learn?

The brainstorming process

Following a rough process will help keep the session focused and flowing.

1. Decide who will facilitate the session.

2. Get the environment set up properly.

3. Make sure the right people are invited – you ideally want people with a range of experience and knowledge who are engaged and interested in the problem.

4. Tell the group what the problem is that needs to be solved – write it up clearly somewhere so you can refer to it when needed.

5. Remind the group the idea is to generate as many ideas as possible.

6. Make sure everyone is comfortable.

7. Ask people to shout out their ideas when they come to them, as long as they are not interrupting anyone.

8. Be clear who is capturing the ideas.

9. Once all the ideas are captured decide how you will evaluate and communicate the next steps.

The brainstorming guidelines

SOME PEOPLE are reluctant to put boundaries around being creative, but we know that there needs to be some boundaries so that people know what they are doing and where they are going.

Some people are reluctant to put boundaries around being creative, but we know that there needs to be some boundaries so that people know what they are doing and where they are going.

1. Be clear on the goal
2. State that everyone has an equal voice – regardless of rank
3. Build on each other's ideas
4. Encourage vertical and lateral thinking
5. State that quantity is more important than quality initially
6. Know when to stop pushing for more ideas
7. Withhold any criticism of ideas

1. Be clear on the goal

First and foremost, be very precise about the problem you are trying to solve. Agree this with the group and ensure everyone understands before the brainstorming starts.

Some examples might be:
• What do we want to focus on this year?
• What do we want this service to provide?
• What do we need our website to do?
• How can we motivate our staff?
• How can we get gender diversity on the CEO's radar?

Thinking about your upcoming brainstorming session – what is the goal? Would this make sense to the group? Would they agree?

2. Everyone has an equal voice

Make the ideas belong to the group, not the person. Avoid referring to ideas as 'Jane's idea' or 'John's idea'. Encourage people to speak up by using probing questions such as "who has something else to add?" or "what other ideas are out there?".

3. Build on each other's ideas

Use one another's ideas as inspiration for your own. For each idea, ask the group if they have anything to add to it.

4. Encourage vertical and lateral thinking

Vertical thinking involves a step-by-step process, following rules, processes and procedures. Vertical thinkers tend to like to do things in order and correct the first time.

Lateral thinking is a more indirect way to solve problems. It is what we call 'out of the box' thinking because it does not fit in a nice tidy structure. Lateral thinkers will make many mistakes and be ok with that, as long as they are learning.

5. Quantity is more important than quality initially

Use the energy of the room to keep ideas coming. The more ideas the better so that you have more to pull from when making a decision on the next step.

6. Know when to stop pushing for more ideas

When ideas stop coming, decide if there are enough ideas to work with. If not try another idea-generating technique (more on these later). Don't keep trying the same procedure if the session has naturally drawn to a close.

7. Withhold criticism of ideas

This is one of the original guidelines that is important to put into context. No one should directly criticise an idea for being stupid or ridiculous or plain 'wrong'. However, there should be room for debate on ideas, because this will often lead to new ideas. Again research has shown that more useful ideas are generated when the group is allowed to debate and discuss ideas. Remember the idea is to choose people who are passionate about the problem and getting it solved; those same people should want to positively build on each other's ideas.

SECTION 4.
WHAT ELSE CAN YOU
DO TO GENERATE IDEAS?

What else can you use to generate ideas?

THERE ARE SO MANY TECHNIQUES that build on brainstorming. For all of these make sure you apply the basic brainstorming principles as mentioned in the previous section.

Who

How

What

The Problem

Why
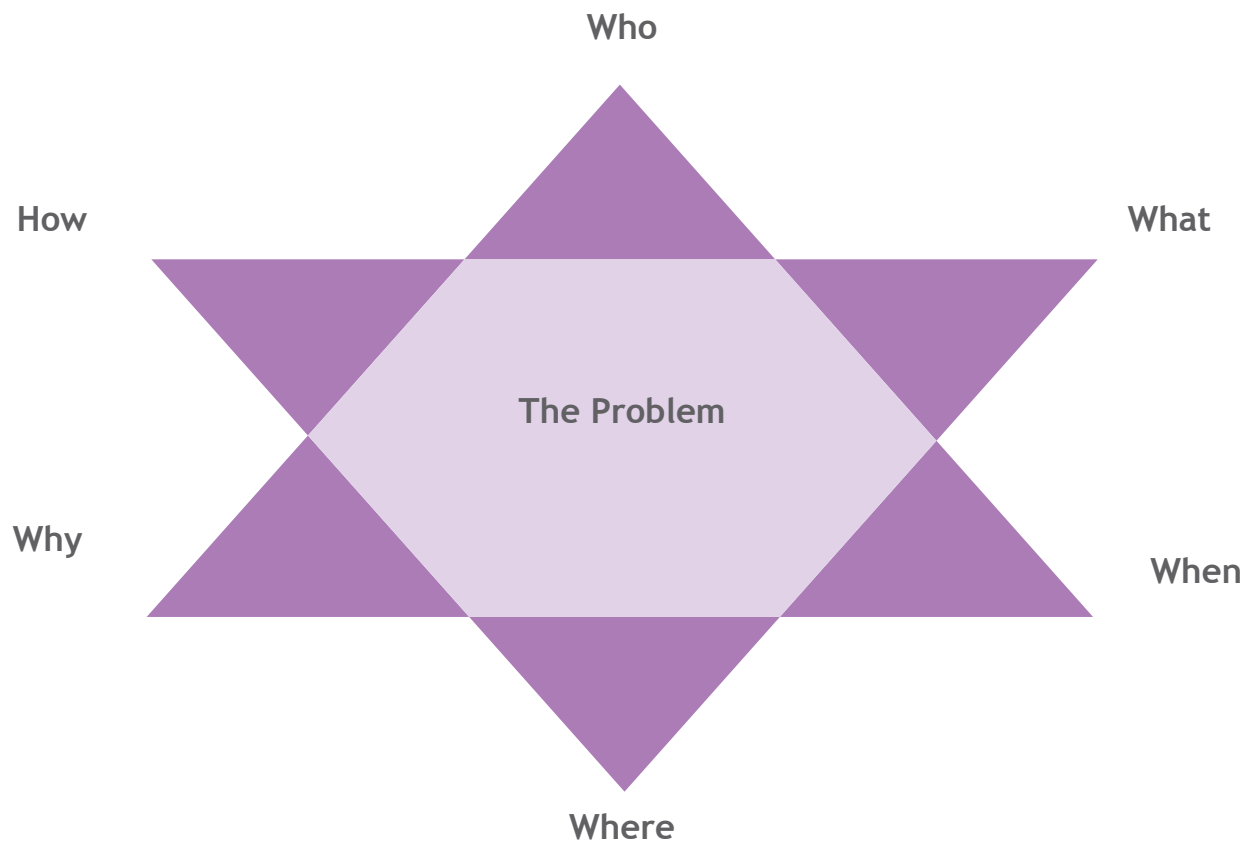
When

Where

This method gets the group asking questions instead of generating answers. Put the problem in the middle of the star and then work outwards. By using the who, what, when, where, why, and how questions you should be able to cover every angle.

You can ask the group to generate questions that need to be answered or you could even prepare the questions ahead of time. The idea is to then brainstorm the answers once you can think of any questions that could be asked.

You could even give smaller teams one point of the star to work on individually and then regroup to discuss the results.

Example 'when' questions

- When will the product be delivered?

- When will we need to decide?

- When will we need the funding?

Example 'who' questions

- Who will use the product?

- Who will benefit if we do this?

- Who will own the project?

Example 'where' questions

- Where will we produce it?

- Where will it be stored?

Example 'what' questions

- What will it look like?

- What can it be packaged with?

Example 'why' questions

- Why would adults use this product?

- Why would schools use this product?

- Why is there a need for this product?

Meta process/Crawford's slip approach

THIS IS A TECHNIQUE for individual brainstorming before a group session. It allows everyone to have a voice and all ideas get put up on a board together.

Give individuals cards or post-it notes to write their ideas on - one idea per card. Give them 5-10 minutes and hopefully they will come up with a range of ideas.

Collect all the cards and stick each one up on the board. Ask everyone to help put them into logical groupings. For example if you were trying to solve a problem around motivating employees you might end up with groups under headings such as 'environment', 'management', 'reward', 'culture'.

Get the group to decide which of the different areas they want to start on. This is a great example of using both individual and group brainstorming together.

The alphabet

This tool works like random word association. Each letter of the alphabet is a small trigger to spark creativity.

Write the alphabet down the side of a whiteboard or flipchart and ask people to come up with ideas that begin with each letter of alphabet.

You could also put people into groups and give each group a piece of paper with the alphabet and get them to think up as many ideas in the smaller group.

Give them 4-6 minutes; the time limit can add a sense of competition which can be useful when you are going for quantity.

Role play

This tool will help people see ideas from different perspectives, by trying to put themselves into someone else's shoes.

Ask each member of the group to name a famous person or a stakeholder in their organisation. List these somewhere for everyone to see. Now go through each name and ask the group "What would x think?" As soon as the ideas run dry move onto the next person. Don't try and force answers if they don't come easily.

For example – how do we increase our client base?

Superman – find some way you can rescue the clients

Madonna – give to a charity they support, hold a huge event, get yourself noticed

Kelly Holmes – practice your approach, do something every day towards your goal and once you have reached your goal make another

4. GENERATE IDEAS

1. INTRO TO BRAINSTORMING   2. GETTING THE ENVIRONMENT RIGHT   3. GET THE SESSION STARTED

Random word association

This tool works well when people need a bit of a trigger to get their thinking going. It encourages people to link the unfamiliar with the familiar.

Ask group members to write down any ten words. They do not need to be associated with the problem at all. Collect all the words and read out a word from each list in turn. The team members should then try and associate the word to the problem.

For example

The problem: what to put on the company website

Random words

Telephone: Contact details, how many users does our website have?

Scissors: What tools can be used to build on our own product?

Leaf: Green policy, environment pledges, pictures of our office roof terrace.

Brainwriting

Brainwriting is another technique that uses a hybrid of individual and group brainstorming. It is ideal to use when there is a large group or if you need quick feedback.

Individuals have their own sheet of paper on which they have the topic written on the top. Give them 3-5 minutes to come up with three ideas to help solve the problem. Gather in the papers and then re distribute asking people to think of another three ideas on top of the ones on the paper they have received. This helps encourage building on ideas and piggy-backing; participants can be inspired by others while working alone. Make sure people don't end up with their own paper. Do this a few times. Once the papers are full, collect all the sheets and put them up on a wall for discussion.

Brainnetting or electric brainstorming

This approach is similar to Brainwriting – the difference is you use the internet or intranet to store the documents. It is useful when trying to brainstorm ideas across a de-centralised group. You can either set it up as a video conference to do in real time, or ask people to spend some time over the week accessing the documents online and adding three ideas to at least three different documents.

It helps to keep things anonymous, and it allows people who might not normally be included because of location to get involved. If you are facilitating this you may need to keep track of the input and give nudges where needed to get people to make time to add their ideas.

As always, make sure you get back to the people about what has been done with the ideas.

Reverse brainstorming

Use this technique to come at a problem from a completely different angle.

Ask the group – how do we do the opposite of what we are trying to achieve? If you are trying to stop something happening, how might you ensure it happens? If you are trying to increase something, how could you decrease it?

Here is a simple example:

Instead of thinking how to deliver hot pizzas ask how to deliver cold pizzas?

Ideas might include:

• Keep boxes stored in basement

• No insulation of delivery bags

• Slow delivery

Now take those ideas and turn them around, or use them to get more ideas such as:

• Don't keep boxes stored in basement – keep boxes in warm place by ovens

• No insulation of delivery bags – revisit insulation, find new supplier

• Slow delivery – more staff, better sat nav, learn route beforehand

Over to you

As with most new management tools, it is good to try these tools out within a small risk-free environment first.

Which tools are you already comfortable with?

Which ones do you want to try?

When can you try them?

Who can you get to support you?

What could go wrong?

1. People are trying to solve different versions of the problem

Make sure you are clear before the session even starts about what the problem is. Use tools to help define the problem if necessary.

2. Someone does all the talking

If this is a risk, start with an individual idea-generation technique such as brainwriting or metaprocess.

Remind the group that everyone has a voice.

Get the talker to write the ideas up for you. (Make sure they write every idea)

3. People are not engaged

Have you set up the environment properly?

Have you made them feel comfortable with the process?

If people are saying 'this will never work', remind them why the company has invested in the process.

Try reverse thinking. What happens if we don't tackle this problem?

Make sure you invite people who really care about the topic – but don't force attendance.

Tell them what the follow-up plan is and how it will be communicated.

4. Attachment to old ideas

Get these ideas out first and then encourage the group to add to them.

Try a different idea generation tool such as Random Word or the Alphabet.

5. People wanting to evaluate ideas as they arise

Promise there will be time for discussion and evaluation and stick to your promise.

6. People get tired

Of course they do – this is hard work. Build in comfort breaks.

Encourage people to swap seats and get a new perspective.

Take a fresh air break.

Pulling it all together

NOW IT'S TIME to put all your newfound knowledge into action.

When will you use brainstorming?

What will you do to set it up properly?

Which idea-generation technique(s) will you use?

How will you know if you have been successful?

What will you put in place to ensure the ideas are put to use?

What do you need to develop further before you are confident to run your session?

You now have everything you need to make the most of the brain talent you have in yourself and in others. Put it to use and see how effective the results are!

Next steps

You've got the ideas – now what?

Using the idea-generation techniques we've discussed will get you all the food for thought you need to go onto the next steps – deciding what to do and putting it into action.

You have managed to engage your staff to be part of the process so far – now it's essential you follow up with communications around what happens next. If at all possible you should involve them in deciding what idea to use. If you have managed to generate a lot of ideas then it is worth spending time thinking about grouping the ideas. It may be very obvious which idea stand out from the crowd but more often than not, you will need to use a proper evaluation tool to decide what is best for the team and the business.

There are several tools you can use that allow everyone to have voice on what they think will work best. Often we use a simple vote and let the majority rule. However, here are a few more you might want to add to your tool box:

Force-field analysis

Paired ranking

Star technique

Nominal group technique

For more information on how to use these techniques download the 'Killer Problem Solving' workbook.

Now the real work begins by putting the idea into action. Do not put off action-planning until a more convenient time. If you do this chances are it will never happen; all those ideas will be wasted and your team will wonder why they bothered.

Take the final ideas and use a simple format such as:

What is to be done?

Who will do it?

When will it be done?

How will we know it works?

Circulate this and make sure everyone feels accountable for getting the ideas into action.

every woman

This workbook has been produced and edited by everywoman, with content commissioned from associate expert Sara Parsons. It is part of the everywoman portfolio of resources that have been specially created to support and develop women as they advance their careers and businesses.

everywoman Expert

Sara Parsons has been an everywoman associate for 10 years and has worked in the field of Personal Development globally for 20 years, for clients including Paramount Pictures, The RSA, Ipsos MORI, RNLI, Oxford University Press. She holds an honours business degree and is a qualified expert in many professional assessments including Belbin and MBTI – the Myers-Briggs profile. Sara contributes to and delivers a variety of everywoman programmes including leadership and management development workshops, and everywoman's flagship Ambassador Programme. She is passionate about inspiring and supporting women to reach the potential they often don't know they possess.

Further reading

- Applied Imagination: Principles & Procedures Of Creative Writing, Alex Osborn, Paperback, Jun 2011
- The Training shop, www.thetrainingshop.com
- Lateral Thinking, Edward de Bono, Penguin, Nov 2009
- How to Have Kick-Ass Ideas: Get Curious, Get Adventurous, Get Creative, Chris Barez-Brown, Harper Element, Oct 2012

Go to everywoman.com/development for more personal development workbooks, tools and a schedule of our online seminars.