



## Knowledge to lead

# Conducting a Brainstorming session

### Preparing a Brainstorming session

1. Select a specific problem, on which the brainstorming session should focus. It must be a clear problem and, if too complex, it should be broken into smaller parts, each one connected to a question. Before the session, it may be useful to send the participants an invitation, containing a description of the issue that will be discussed, so they can start thinking about it.
2. Select suitable participants, ideally between six and twelve, both non-experts and experts on the subjects. It is important that they have a positive attitude towards brainstorming and that they are open-minded. Each member of the group should participate, since observers can inhibit the creative process.
3. Create a positive environment, where each participant can feel comfortable and free. If the members of the group feel judged, they will probably generate less unusual ideas, which often help to find the effective solution.
4. Select a group moderator, who should be able to conduct the discussion and to enliven it, if the creativity decreases. A list of lead questions may help the facilitator in accomplishing this duty.
5. Aim at generating a large quantity of ideas, according to the assumption that *quantity breeds quality*.
6. Avoid judgement and criticism, as negative thinking can demotivate some members of the group to contribute their ideas.
7. Combine ideas by a process of association in order to improve them.



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## Running a Brainstorming Session

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1. Warm-up, to make the participants feel in a criticism-free environment.
2. Introduce the problem, including also further explanations of it.
3. Ask the members of the group for ideas.
4. Encourage their creativity, if necessary.
5. Let participants express their ideas and select someone to record them.
6. Let participants elaborate their ideas to make them clear.
7. Let participants organize and cluster ideas.
8. Let participants evaluate ideas in order to identify those worthy of action.
9. Thank the participants.



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