

out, “*Big Bad Idea!*” at a meeting and for two minutes people must only add to or say positive things about that idea. After that, they can say what they want. This rule encourages people to take risks, builds an ethic of positive thinking and support, and allows the intelligence of the group to develop the idea. If 20 percent of the Big Bad Ideas turn out to be *great* ideas, as was the case for our client, that’s a fairly good percentage. Try it with your work team and notice the effect.

When you are leading a “brainstorming” meeting:

- Make sure to specify ground rules like “no judging ideas at first, no thumbs down,” etc.
- Suggest an amount of time for throwing out ideas without judgment.
- Write down all ideas.
- Choose a clear process for funneling the best ideas and building on them. (Some vote by show of hands; some give everybody sticky tabs to rate the ideas.)

Flexibility rule #2: Adapt your role to the reality

Leadership Styles

Purpose: To broaden your choice of leadership styles

Exercise: Leadership styles are a useful way to think about the alternatives you have as a leader to respond flexibly to the people and circumstances around you. Take a look once again at the description of the four leadership styles—captain, conceiver, coach, and collaborator—on page 63. Then take some time to answer the following questions in your journal:

- **Most Familiar/Comfortable Style.** Everyone prefers one of these roles. It’s the role you tend to use over and over, your core competency, or the one you default to in times of stress. You may even think it is superior to all others.

Pick the style you find most familiar or comfortable and answer these questions:

- Jot down a personal story or anecdote that represents your experience with this style.
- Brainstorm the skills and behaviors you’d associate with this style.
- Identify the “shadow side” of the style. In which situations does the style *not* work so well?
- **Least Familiar/Stretch Style.** In fact, all roles have their place—there are times when each is the most appropriate. While our fundamental preferences may not change, we can learn to behave differently. Pick the style you’d say is furthest from your normal behavior, and write about these points:
 - Why did you select this style as the most challenging? Give an example of how it has not worked for you and an example of where you think you could use it.
 - Brainstorm the skills and behaviors you’d associate with this style.
 - What is blocking you from employing this style?
- **Incorporating All Four Styles.** Complete this exercise by exploring the following:
 - How might you go about using each of the four styles in a given day or week?
 - What would change about your current situation or challenges if you applied a greater variety of styles?
 - Name five leaders, four of whom each embody a different one of the four styles, and one who manages to balance all four styles. Which qualities of each leader would you like to emulate?

Practice: Take a look at the “Skills, Behaviors, and Workplace Actions” chart to follow. Locate your stretch style and pick three new behaviors or actions to try on in the coming week. Ask team members to give you feedback on how well you are incorporating this new style.

Leadership Styles— Skills, Behaviors, and Workplace Actions

Captain

Skills and Behaviors	Workplace Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Confidence—self-trust ■ Energy—positive “can do” attitude ■ Discipline—rigor—logic ■ Presence—powerful use of voice and body ■ Risk taking—willing to be wrong ■ Quick decision-making—thinking on feet ■ Articulately and powerfully stating views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Making decisions—taking initiative ■ Deciding on resource allocation ■ Having heavy input into work plans ■ Having high share of voice in meetings ■ Taking a position/stand ■ Prioritizing options ■ Taking responsibility ■ Leveraging position and hierarchy

Conceiver

Skills and Behaviors	Workplace Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Confidence—self-trust ■ Being inspiring ■ Positive outlook—passion ■ Imagination—creativity— inventiveness ■ Presence—inspiring use of voice and body ■ Risk taking—willing to be wrong ■ Storytelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sharing vision ■ Reasoning, building the case ■ Developing a strategy ■ Seeing the big picture ■ Imparting knowledge, context ■ Using credibility to drive action ■ Influencing decisions ■ Motivating behavior

Coach

Skills and Behaviors	Workplace Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listening and empathy ■ Acknowledging others’ strengths ■ Sharing examples/analogies ■ Asking questions ■ Challenging respectfully ■ Sense of humor ■ Showing you care ■ Sharing personal stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Standing back—empowering others’ leadership ■ Letting people make mistakes ■ Offering options ■ Delegating ■ Unsolicited reaching out ■ Being specific in feedback ■ Supporting others’ ideas

Collaborator

Skills and Behaviors	Workplace Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listening and empathy ■ Acknowledging others’ strengths ■ Social skills ■ Sharing vulnerability ■ Sense of humor ■ Asking open-ended questions ■ Patience and flexibility ■ Facilitating decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Taking time for and getting things done through relationship building ■ Carefully building trust/consensus ■ Being generous with information ■ Communicating outcome as group product ■ Looking for minority opinions—valuing all voices ■ Encouraging brainstorming