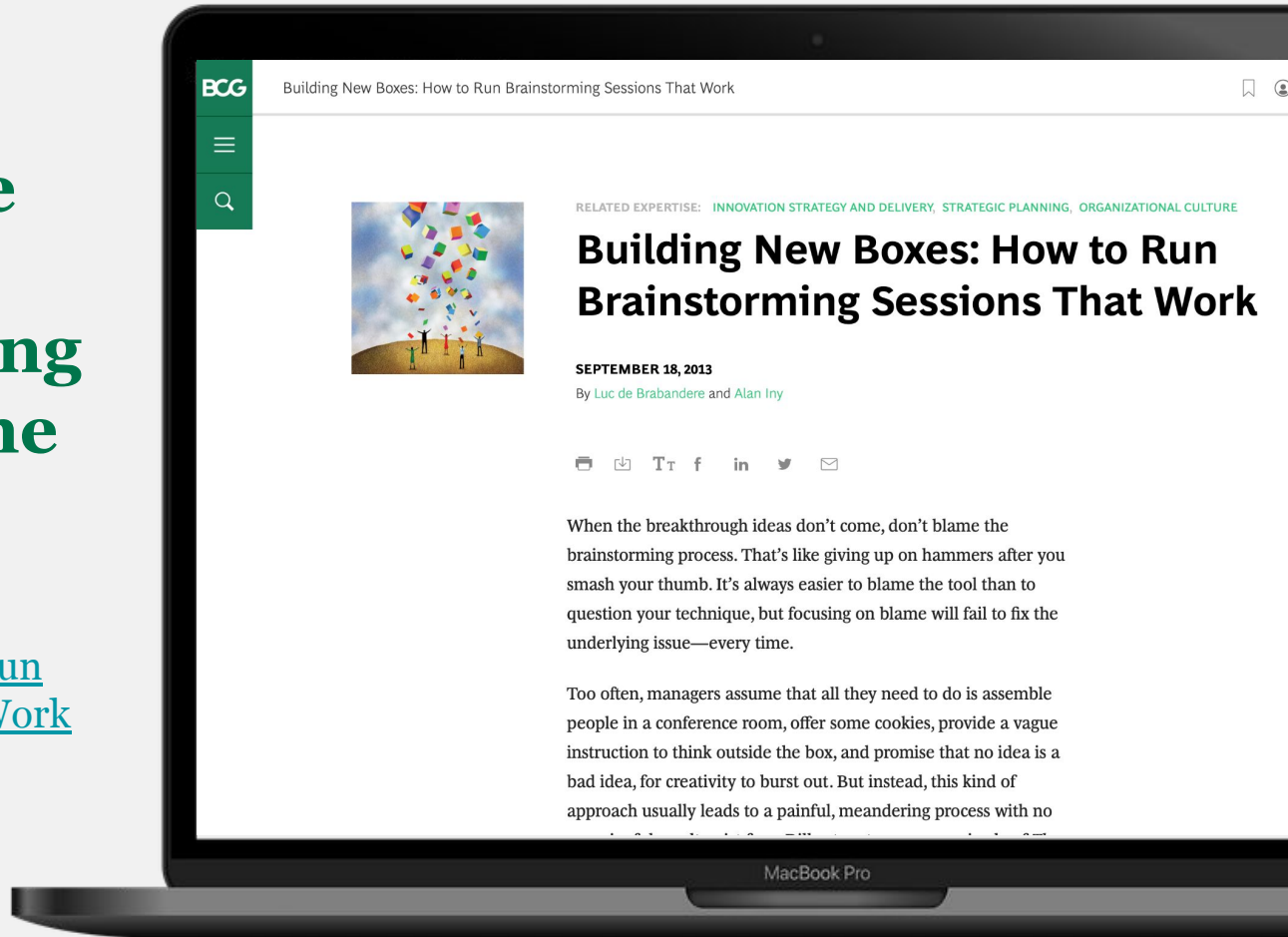


Building new boxes



We are going to discuss effective brainstorming. Start by reviewing this article on the BCG website:

[Building New Boxes: How to Run Brainstorming Sessions That Work](#)



The article offers five suggestions to achieve real, valuable insights from brainstorming

We will focus on four in today's task (as well as the brainstorming itself), highlighted in green

1.
**Frame the
question
effectively**

2.
**Create
creativity
conditions**

3.
**Reveal and
doubt your
boxes**

4.
**Bring new
boxes**

Brainstorm

5.
Follow up



RELATED EXPERTISE: INNOVATION STRATEGY AND DELIVERY, STRATEGIC PLANNING, ORGANIZATION, CULTURE

Building New Boxes: How to Run Brainstorming Sessions That Work

SEPTEMBER 18, 2013

By Luc de Brabandere and Alan Iny

Your task

BCG has been brought in to help ClothingCo, a luxury clothing brand, grow their top line (i.e., increase revenue) after a period of declining sales.

The client is gearing up for the winter season. Imagine that you are a strategy consultant working on the project.

You will enter your responses in the green boxes throughout the remaining slides.



Frame the question effectively

“If I were given one hour to save the planet, I would spend fifty-nine minutes defining the problem and one minute resolving it.”

– Albert Einstein

Question to be reframed

How could we sell more outerwear this winter season?

–

Revised, effective questions:

1. How can we ensure our trench coat is worn by the most popular celebrities this winter?
2. How can we have every high-schooler add our down jacket to their holiday wish list?
3. What would it take to get our company trending on social media?

–

Remember: A good question for brainstorming will be narrow and concrete, so that people feel they know how to begin answering it.

Reveal and doubt your boxes

The first step in the creative process entails identifying and doubting one's current boxes and determining which ones require re-evaluation or replacement.

Make a short list of the shared beliefs and assumptions that likely prevail in ClothingCo. Determine which are still relevant and which need to be redefined.

In this fictional scenario, make assumptions that seem reasonable

—

What boxes currently exist that are still relevant?

1. Our products are known for their premium, luxury quality.
2. A high price-point is non-negotiable.

—

What boxes currently exist that need to be doubted?

1. Low stock levels and exclusivity are key to our image.
2. We do not sell our products online, only in owned showrooms.
3. We only produce three color versions of each product line.

Bring new boxes

Prepare for brainstorming by creating new boxes to bring to the session; new boxes will nurture ideation and can dramatically increase the odds of a useful result.

Remember: Defining new boxes requires a mixture of analysis and art. Boxes need to be grounded in fact. Different sectors will call for different inputs.

New box #1

Channel expansion is not brand destructive

- Making our products accessible through additional channels will not harm our brand image.
- There is enough nationwide demand to expand channels (and therefore volume), while maintaining an air of exclusivity.
- There are sufficient high-end channels (e.g., department stores, online) to support a targeted expansion.

New box #2

Increased variation within a product line is positive

- Customers appreciate more color choice than we currently provide, and would purchase more if we met that need.
- We can adequately project demand for various color options to optimize production levels.
- We are able to support customization within product lines, further than only customizing item color.

Brainstorm

Choose one of the effective questions you created on slide 5, and a new box from slide 7, and brainstorm potential ideas to address the question

Question

How can we have every high-schooler add our down jacket to their holiday wish list?

New box

Increased variation within a product line is positive

- Offer product in expanded number of color options
- Allow customization/personalization and enable through website (e.g., similar to Nike by You)
- Hold down-jacket customization/design challenges within high schools
- Partner with other brands targeted at this demographic to develop co-branded items (e.g., similar to LEGO x Target merchandising)
- Sponsor celebrities and influencers popular with high-schoolers (YouTubers, etc.)
- Increase presence on channels utilized by high-schoolers (TikTok, etc.)
- Start down-jacket social media challenge/campaign
- Open pop-up stores outside of large high schools
- Launch high-school ambassador/sales program