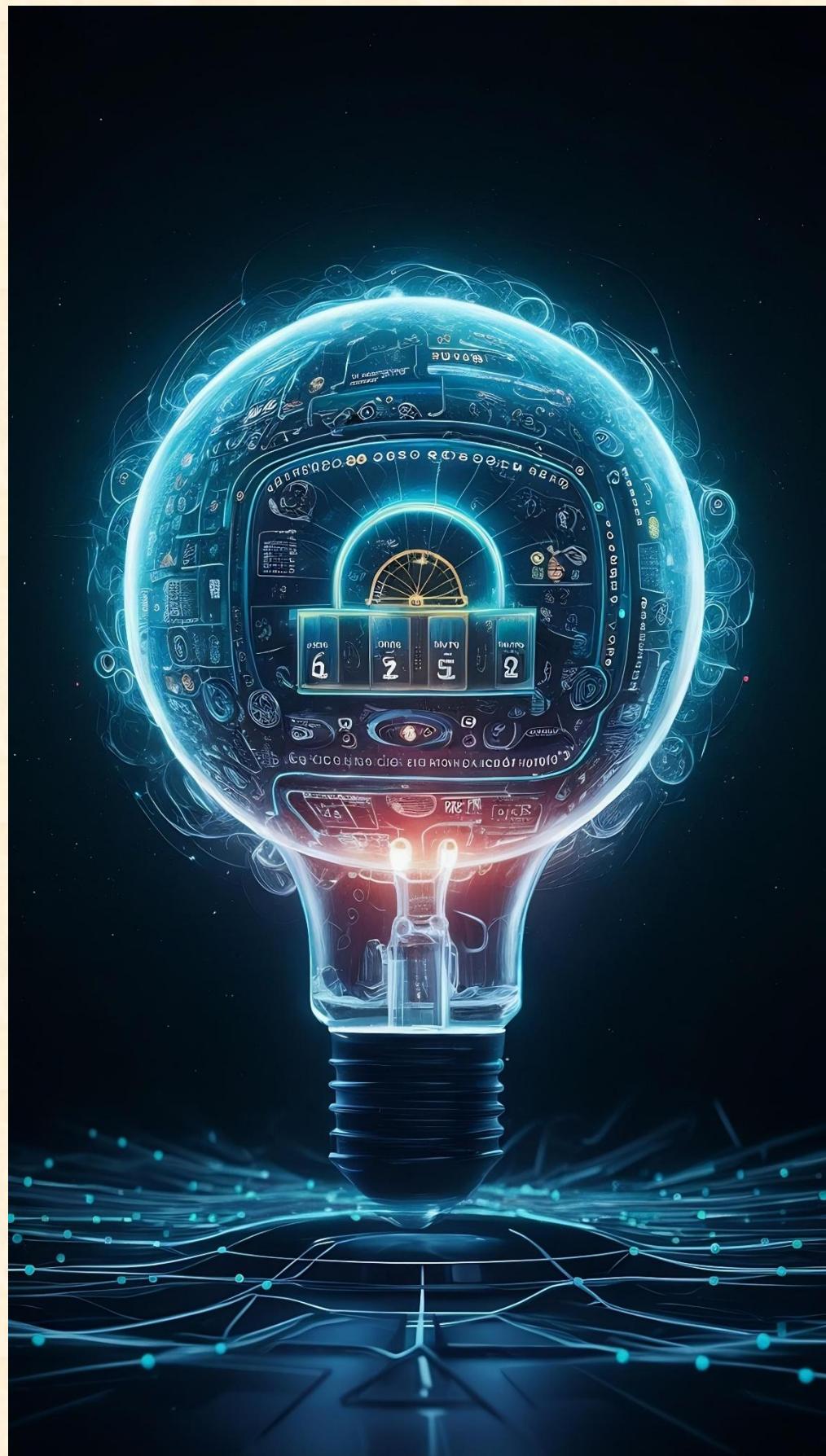




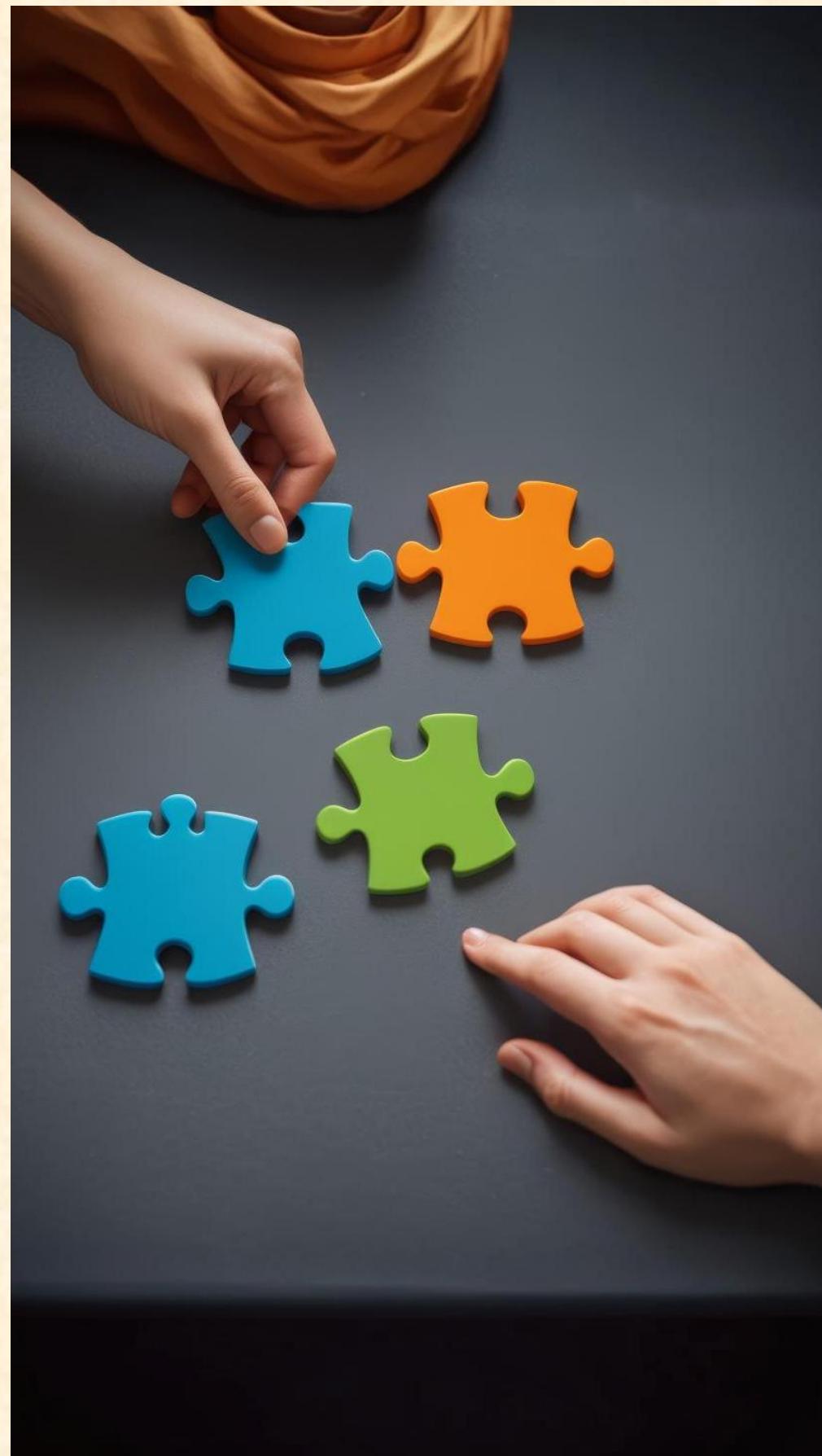


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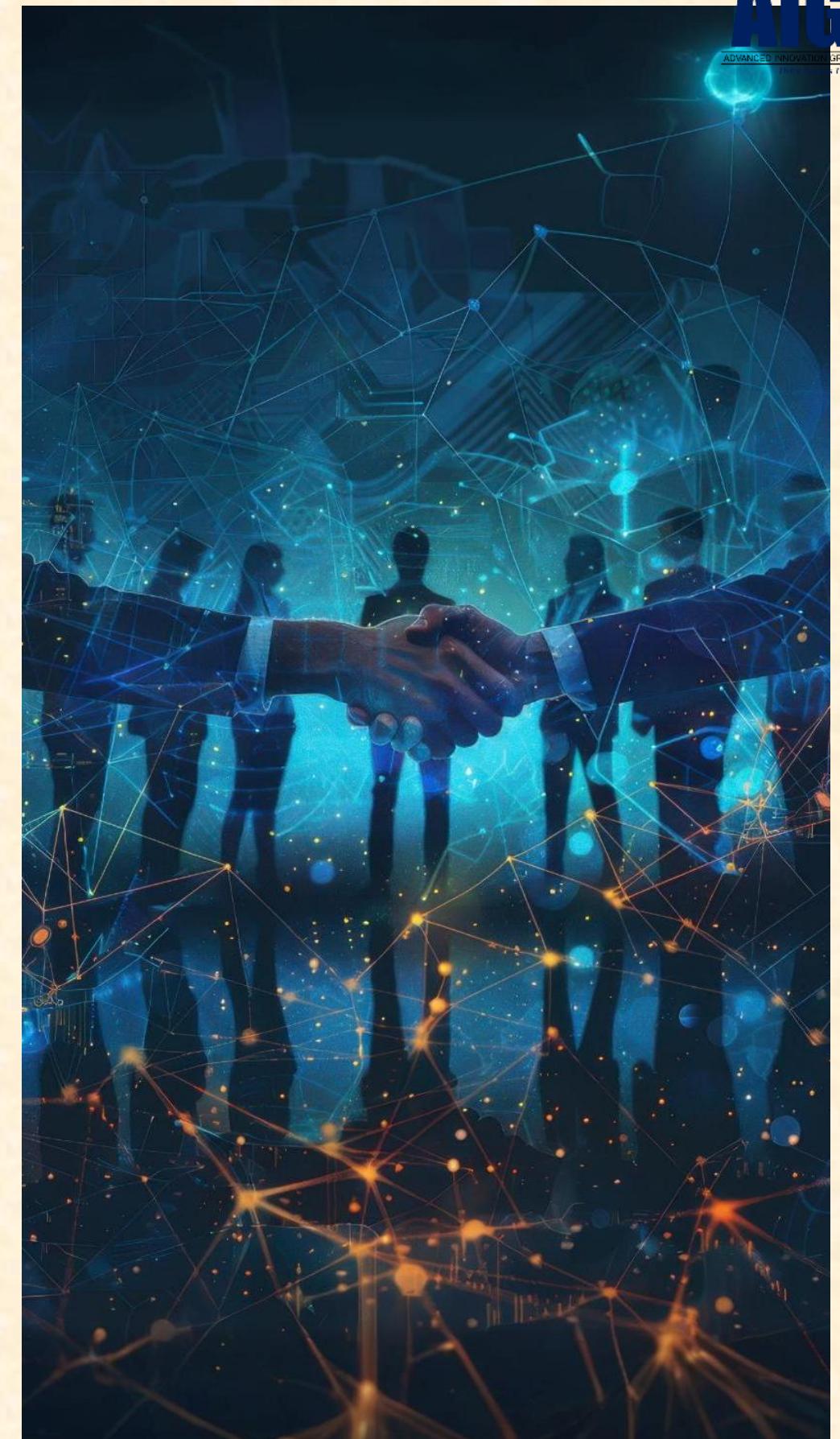




UNLOCKING INNOVATION



PROBLEM-SOLVING



COLLABORATION



A black and white photograph showing several people in a meeting or workshop setting. In the foreground, a person's hands are visible, writing on a whiteboard with a marker. Other people are partially visible in the background, also appearing to be engaged in discussion or writing. The overall atmosphere suggests a professional and collaborative environment.

**Leading
Techniques**

**Facilitation
Skills**

**High-Impact
Brainstorming
Sessions**



**Participation
Strategies**





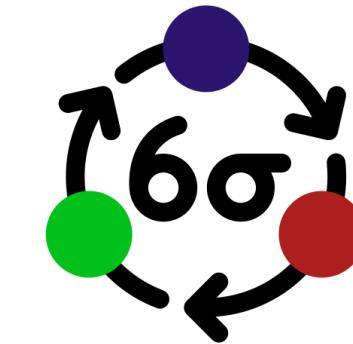




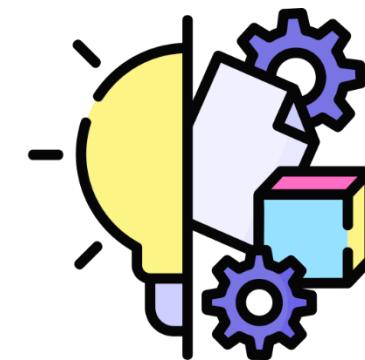
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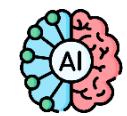
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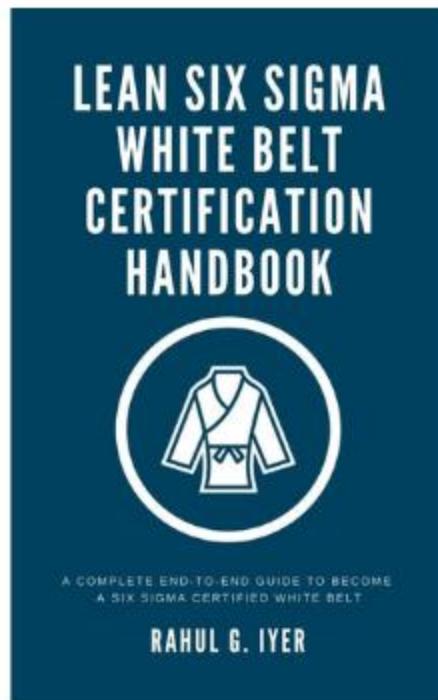
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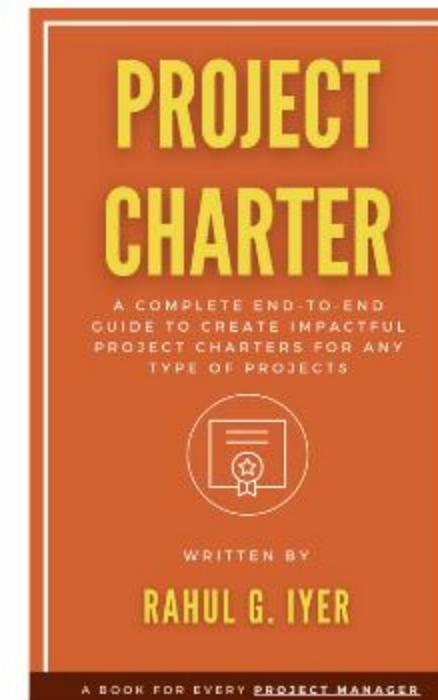
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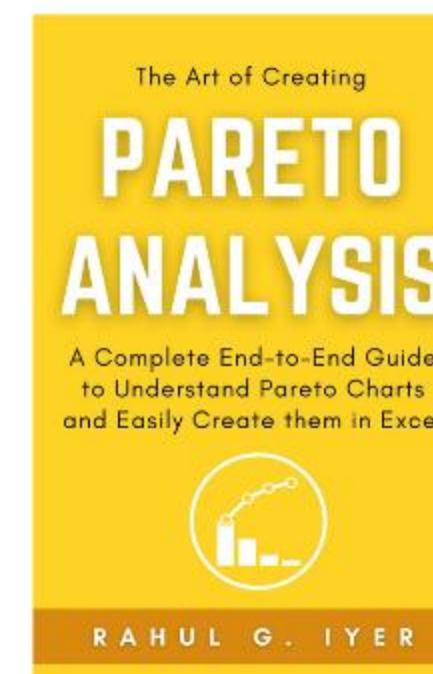
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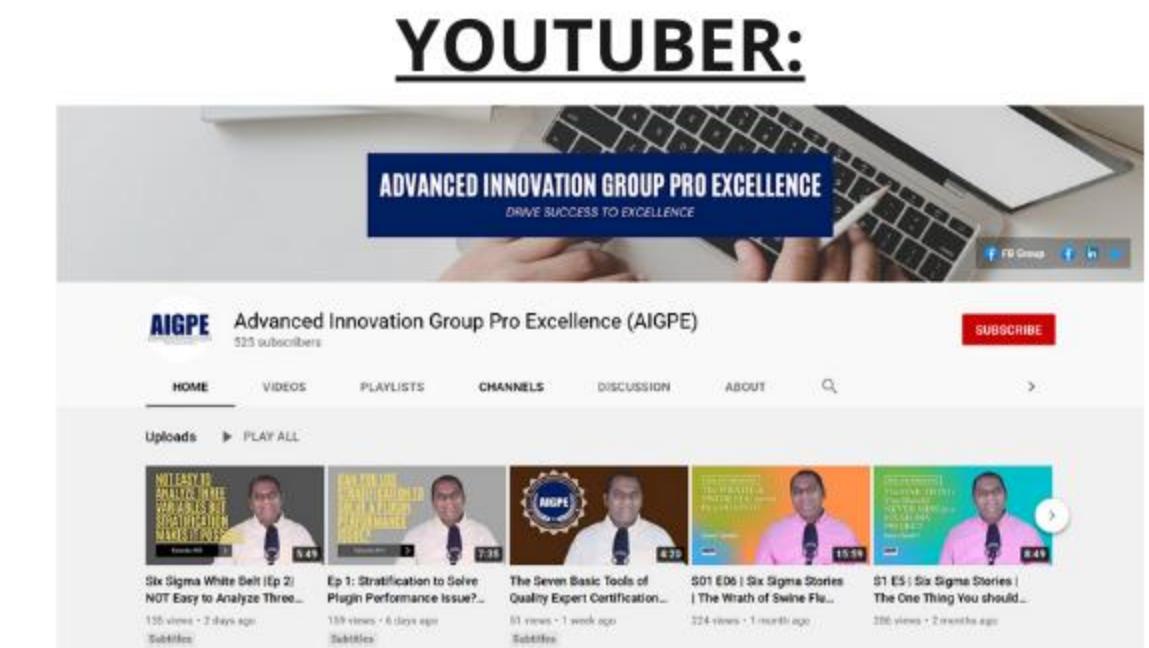


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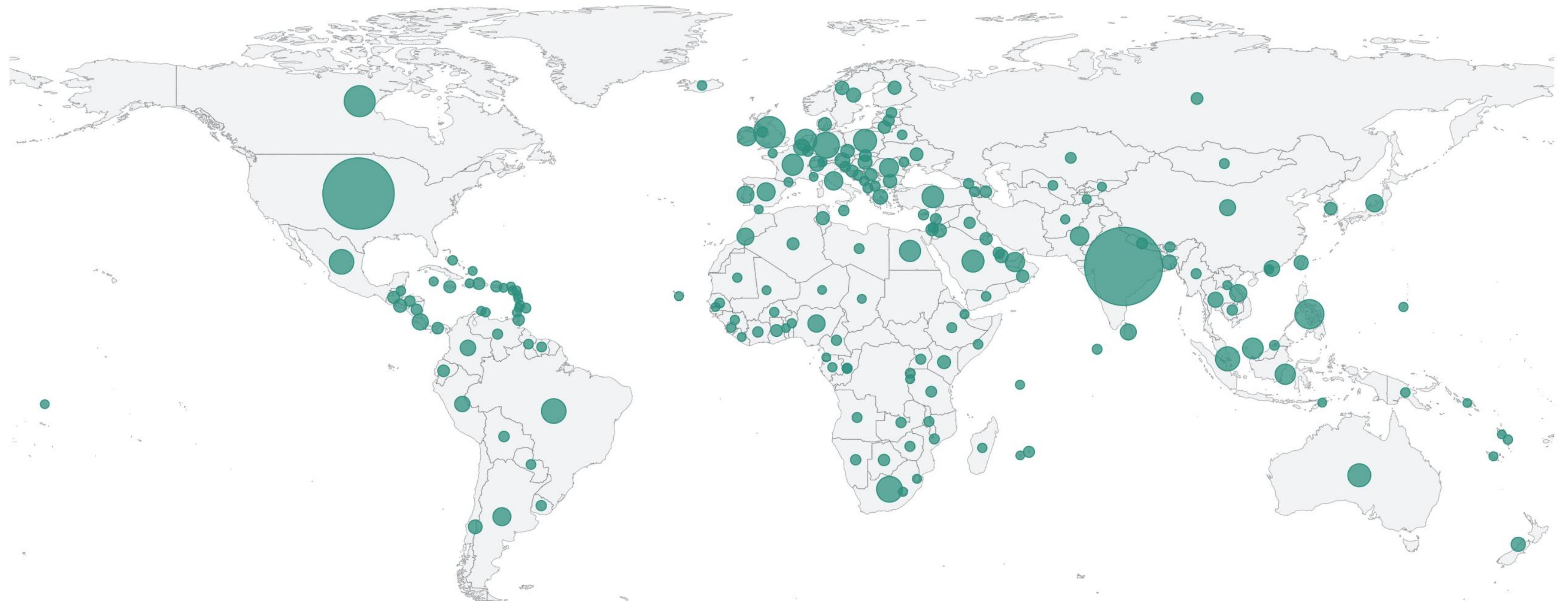
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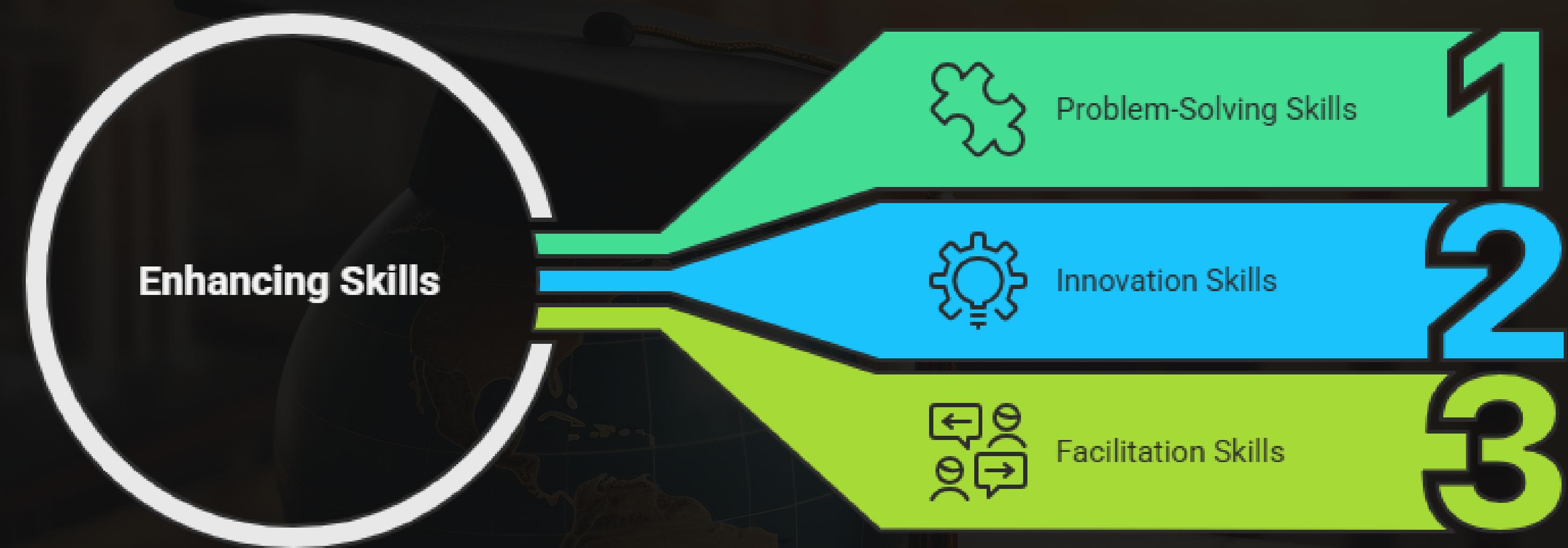


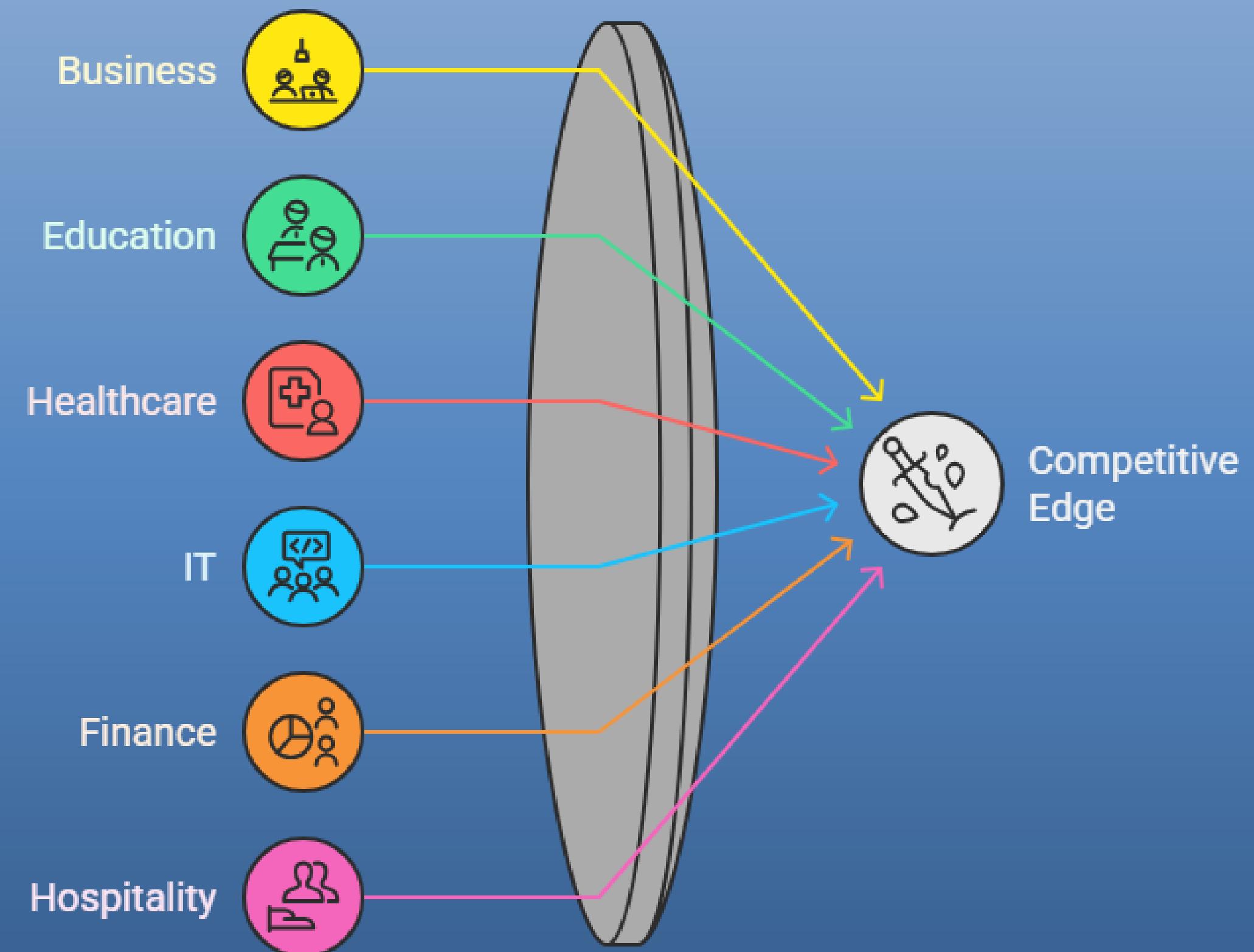
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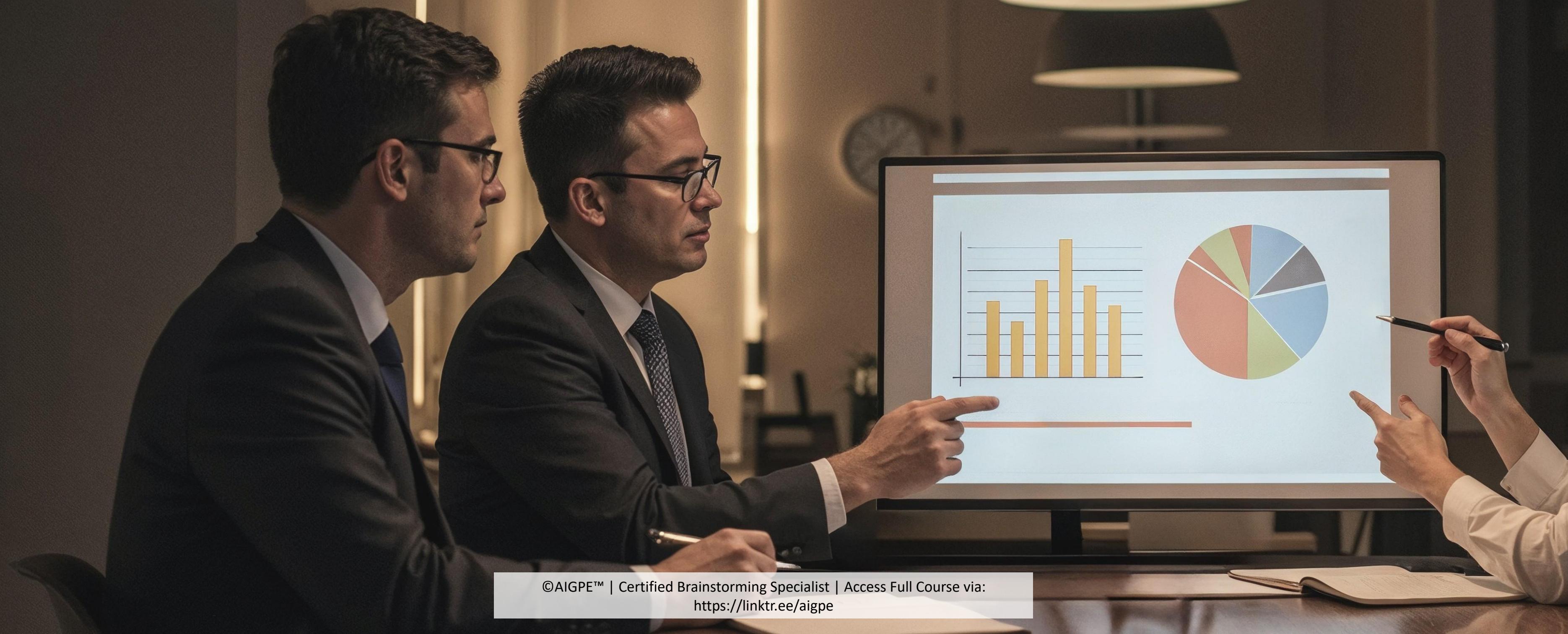














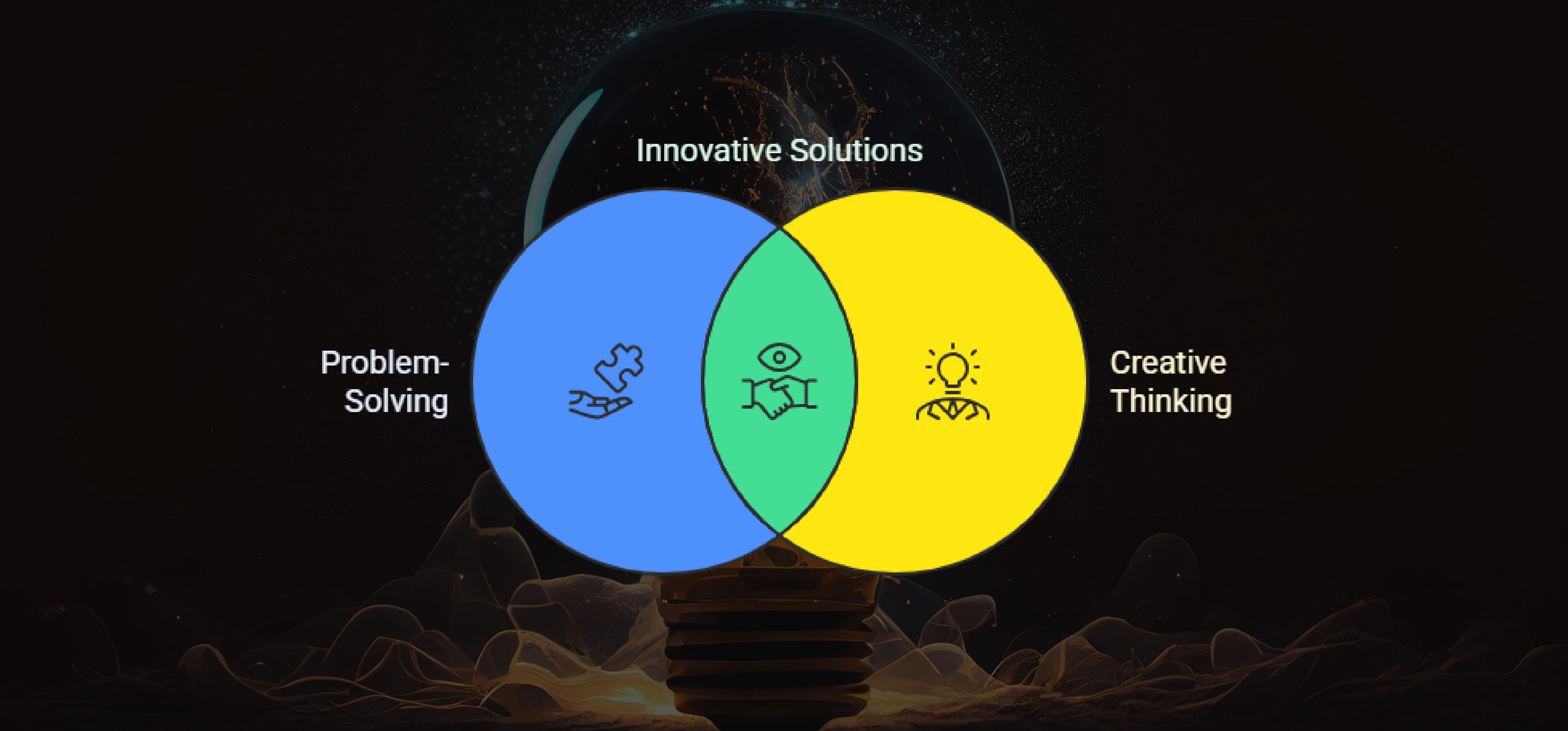
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Rahul Tyer

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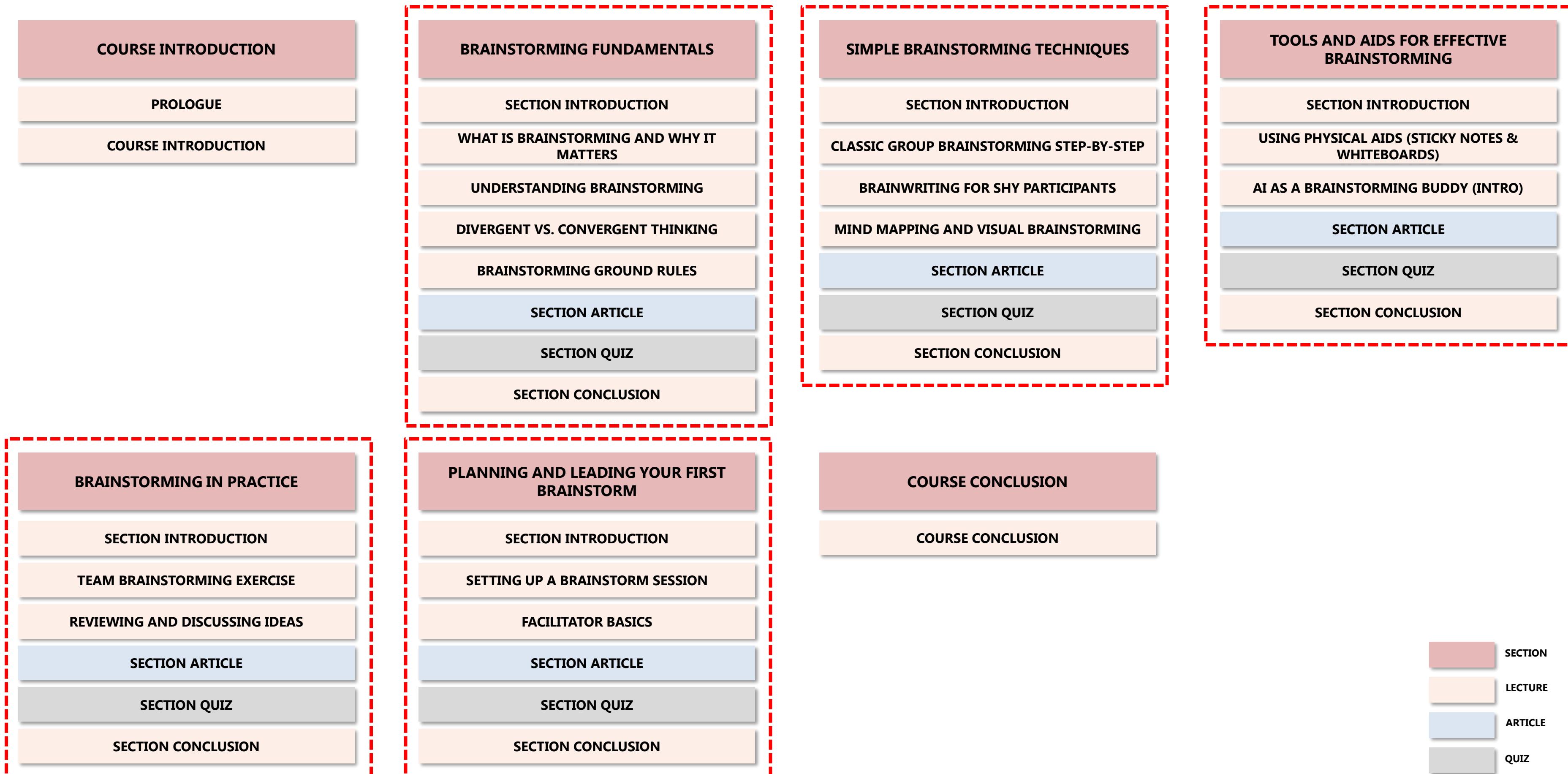
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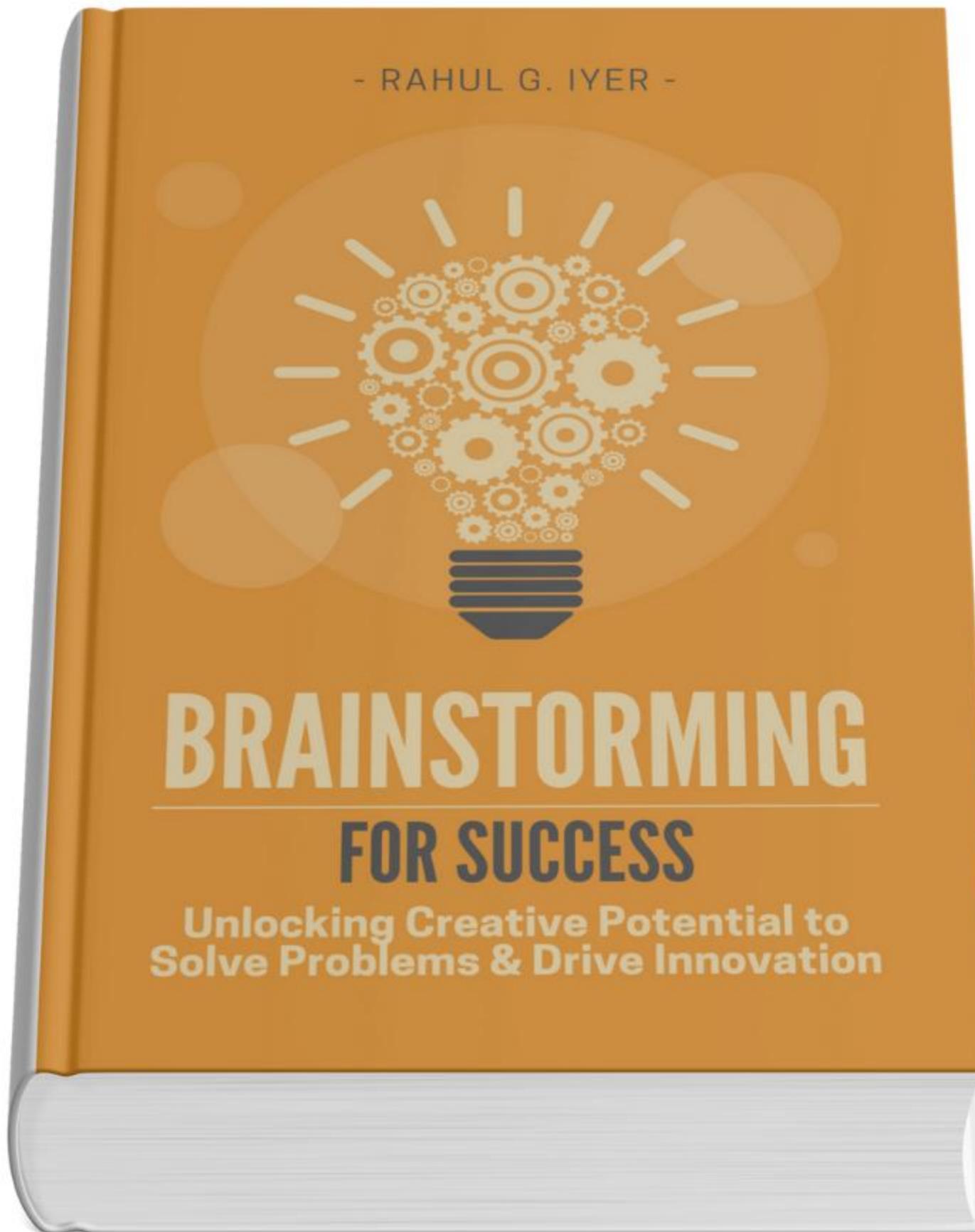


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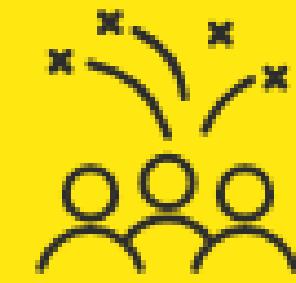


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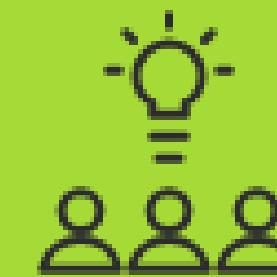


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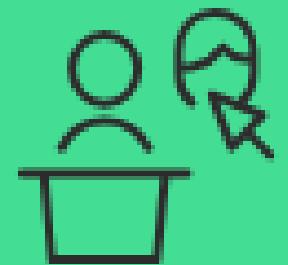




Brainstorming Methodologies



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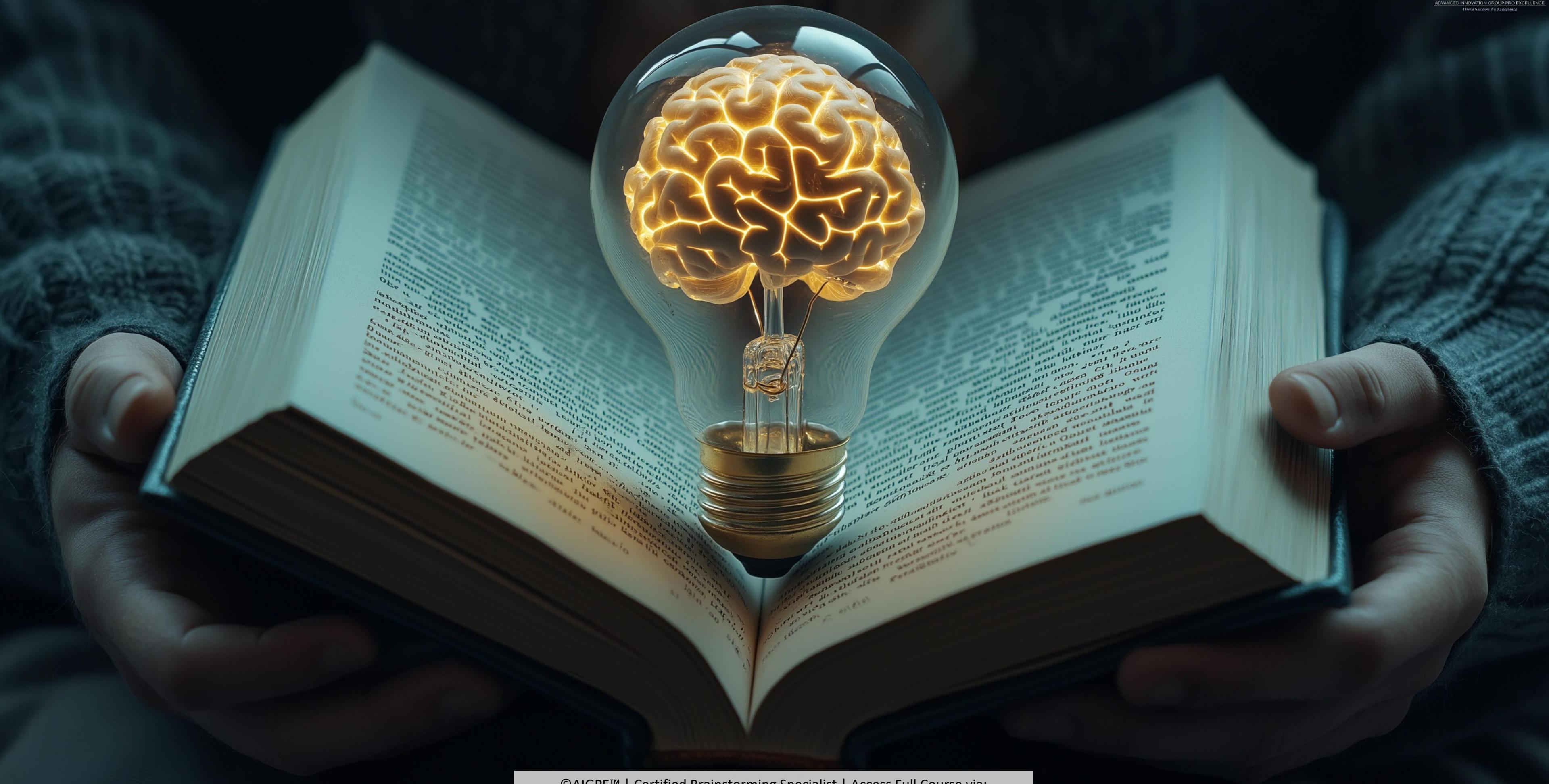
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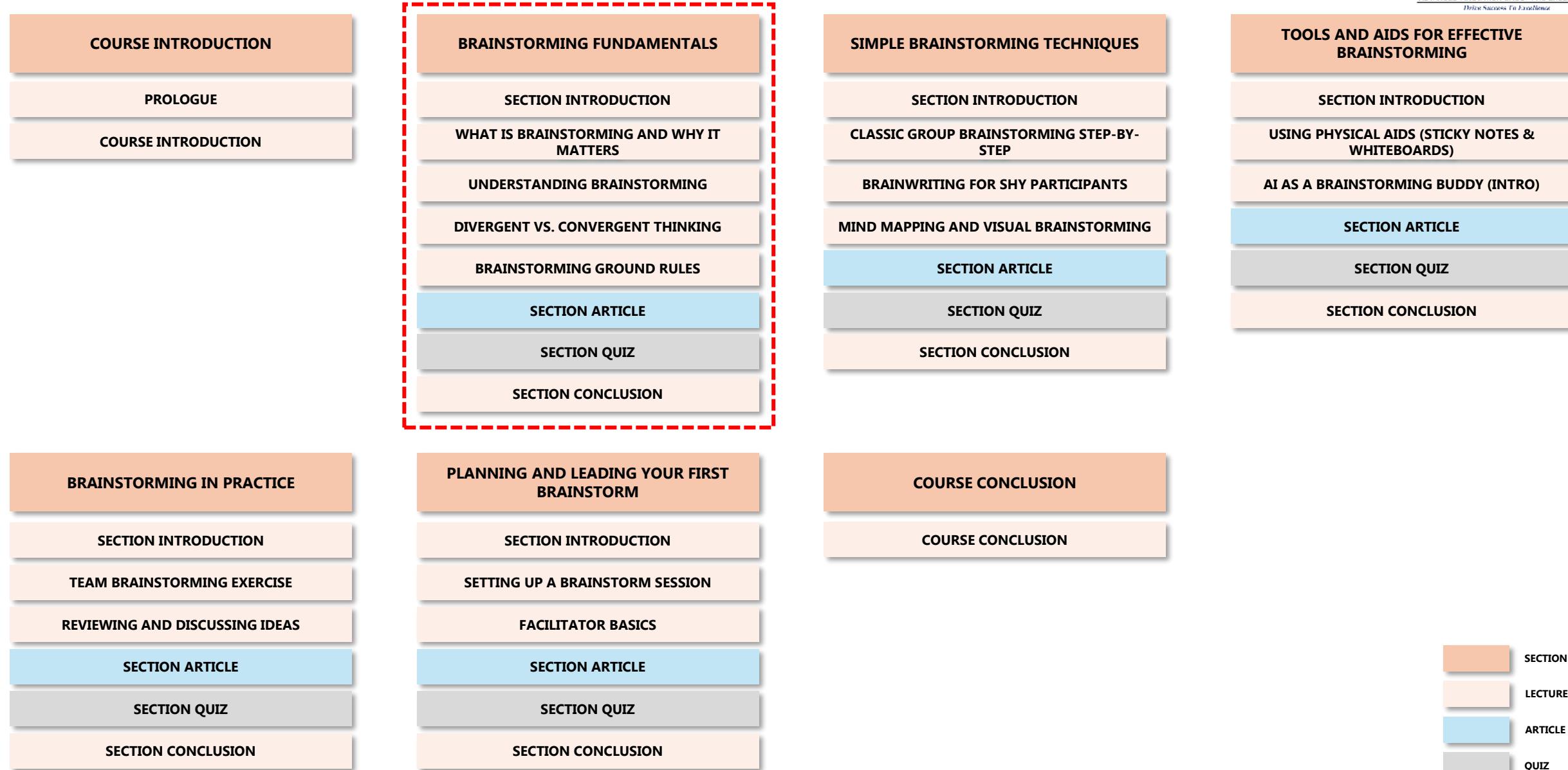


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SECTION **BRAINSTORMING FUNDAMENTALS**



IN THIS SECTION, YOU WILL LEARN

WHAT IS BRAINSTORMING AND WHY IT MATTERS?

UNDERSTANDING BRAINSTORMING

DIVERGENT VS. CONVERGENT THINKING

BRAINSTORMING GROUND RULES

What is Brainstorming and Why It Matters



KEY LEARNINGS: WHAT IS BRAINSTORMING AND WHY IT MATTERS

Definition of Brainstorming

- A creative problem-solving technique where individuals or groups generate numerous ideas in a judgment-free environment.
- Focuses on quantity first, then refines and evaluates ideas later.
- Used for various challenges, including launching products, improving processes, or solving operational issues.

Importance of Brainstorming in the Service Industry

- Helps businesses innovate and improve customer experiences.
- Example: A coffee shop experiencing long wait times could brainstorm solutions such as a dedicated pickup station or a simplified menu.

Brainstorming as a Practical Tool for Innovation

- Companies like Starbucks and McDonald's continuously generate new ideas through brainstorming sessions.
- Example: The Pumpkin Spice Latte originated from a brainstorming session.

Real-World Examples of Brainstorming in the Service Industry

- Hotels: Brainstorming ways to enhance guest check-in efficiency.
- Healthcare: Finding solutions to reduce patient wait times.
- Airlines: Southwest Airlines' idea to make flight attendants rap safety briefings stemmed from brainstorming.

Benefits of Brainstorming for Employees

- Encourages frontline workers to contribute ideas, making them feel valued.
- Boosts morale and enhances engagement.
- Example: Housekeeping staff brainstorming ways to personalize guest rooms (e.g., handwritten welcome notes or towel arrangements).

What is Brainstorming and Why It Matters



KEY LEARNINGS: WHAT IS BRAINSTORMING AND WHY IT MATTERS

Key Takeaway: Brainstorming as a Mindset

- Not just a meeting but an approach to solving problems creatively.
- Encourages teams to view challenges as opportunities for improvement.
- Fosters collaboration and innovation to enhance customer experiences.

Understanding Brainstorming



KEY LEARNINGS: UNDERSTANDING BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming Can Be Formal or Informal

- Can happen in structured meetings or casual settings (e.g., two friends sketching ideas on a napkin).
- Can also be done individually (solo brainstorming).
- Focus in this course is on group brainstorming, as service industries rely on collaboration.

Key Concept: "Throwing Spaghetti at a Wall"

- Brainstorming is about generating a large number of ideas without immediate judgment.
- Prioritizes quantity over quality at the start—some ideas may spark better ones.

Brainstorming vs. Typical Meetings

- Normal meetings often lead to cautious, limited input.
- Brainstorming sessions encourage free-flowing, energetic idea generation.
- Example: Instead of just discussing "How can we improve customer satisfaction?" a brainstorming session could generate ideas like free cookies, customer apps, or even a welcome dance.

Does Brainstorming Lead to Usable Ideas?

- Yes, even silly ideas can lead to innovative solutions.
- Companies like Google foster open brainstorming sessions for innovation.
- Example: Mobile check-in apps in hotels likely started as brainstorming ideas.

Brainstorming is a Two-Step Process

- Divergent Thinking Phase – Generating as many ideas as possible.
- Evaluation Phase – Narrowing down ideas and selecting the most feasible ones.
- Common mistake: Evaluating too soon, which discourages creativity.

Encouraging Inclusivity and Creativity

- Brainstorming ensures everyone, from interns to executives, has a voice.
- Unlike hierarchical meetings, great ideas can come from anyone in the room.
- Example: An intern's wild idea could inspire the CEO's next big strategy.

Understanding Brainstorming



KEY LEARNINGS: UNDERSTANDING BRAINSTORMING

Takeaway: Brainstorming Maximizes Creativity

- Separating idea generation from evaluation leads to better problem-solving.
- Encourages a free-thinking environment where all contributions are valued.

Divergent vs. Convergent Thinking



KEY LEARNINGS: DIVERGENT VS. CONVERGENT THINKING

Introduction

- Divergent thinking and convergent thinking are two essential modes of problem-solving and brainstorming.
- The key to effective innovation is using them at the right time and not mixing them together.

What Is Divergent Thinking?

- Definition: The process of generating many ideas without judgment.
- Encourages creativity, free-flowing ideas, and exploration.
- Focuses on quantity, variety, and originality rather than feasibility.
- Example: A hotel brainstorming ways to improve check-out might generate ideas like:
 - "What if there was no check-out process?"
 - "What if guests could text to check out?"
 - "What if a drone collected room keys?"

What Is Convergent Thinking?

- Definition: The process of narrowing down ideas and selecting the best ones.
- Involves evaluating, refining, and deciding which ideas are practical and feasible.
- Example: After brainstorming, the hotel team evaluates and decides:
 - A drone collecting keys is impractical.
 - A texting-based check-out system is feasible.
 - A keyless smartphone check-in/out is both practical and beneficial.

Why Separating Divergent and Convergent Thinking Matters

- Mixing the two at the wrong time kills creativity.
- Example: If a manager immediately dismisses an idea during brainstorming (divergent phase), it stifles innovation.
- Companies like Disney and IDEO explicitly separate these phases to encourage both creativity and critical thinking.

Divergent vs. Convergent Thinking



KEY LEARNINGS: DIVERGENT VS. CONVERGENT THINKING

Practical Applications

- Divergent Phase: Go for volume—more ideas lead to better solutions.
- Encourage even "wild" ideas (they may inspire real insights).
- No immediate judgment or criticism.
- Convergent Phase: Analyze, refine, and select the best ideas.
- Focus on feasibility and impact.
- Use ranking, voting, or structured evaluation.

Key Takeaways

- Divergent Thinking = Expanding possibilities.
- Convergent Thinking = Narrowing down to the best solution.
- Keep these two modes separate for maximum innovation and problem-solving success.

Brainstorming Ground Rules



KEY LEARNINGS: BRAINSTORMING GROUND RULES

Why Ground Rules Matter

- Brainstorming without rules leads to interruptions, criticism, and lack of participation.
- Structured rules create a safe, creative, and productive environment.
- Example: A restaurant brainstorming session fails when ideas are immediately dismissed, but with ground rules, creativity flows and better solutions emerge.

Key Ground Rules for Brainstorming

1. Defer Judgment (No Criticism)
 - No idea should be dismissed, criticized, or shut down.
 - Encourages free thinking without fear.
 - Example: A mascot dancing outside may seem odd, but it could inspire an innovative marketing idea.
2. Encourage Wild Ideas
 - Thinking outside the box leads to breakthrough innovations.
 - Even impractical ideas can spark workable solutions.
 - Example: "Drone pizza delivery" might be unrealistic but could inspire bicycle-based local delivery.
3. Aim for Quantity
 - The more ideas, the better.
 - Setting a goal (e.g., 20 ideas in 15 minutes) pushes beyond obvious solutions.
 - The best ideas often come after the initial, easy ones.
4. One Conversation at a Time
 - No interruptions or side conversations.
 - Ensures equal participation and prevents dominant voices from taking over.
 - Facilitators should remind the group to listen fully before moving on.
5. Build on Others' Ideas ("Yes, and..." Technique)
 - Instead of rejecting ideas, expand on them.
 - Collaboration leads to richer, more refined ideas.
 - Example: "Free shuttle from the airport" → "Yes, and it could offer Wi-Fi and coffee to enhance the guest experience."

Brainstorming Ground Rules



KEY LEARNINGS: BRAINSTORMING GROUND RULES

6. Stay on Topic (Focus on the Goal)

- Keep the discussion aligned with the brainstorming objective.
- Example: If brainstorming ways to improve a spa's customer experience, logo redesign ideas should be parked for another time

7. Make Sure Everyone Contributes

- Avoid brainstorming sessions where only a few people speak.
- Encourage quieter participants by directly inviting their input.
- Techniques like brainwriting can help collect ideas from introverts.

The Impact of Ground Rules

- Encourages open participation and fosters creativity.
- Used by Google, IDEO, and Toyota to promote innovation.
- Creates a culture where ideas are valued and respected, leading to better problem-solving.

Congratulations

IN THIS SECTION, YOU LEARNED

WHAT IS BRAINSTORMING AND WHY IT MATTERS?

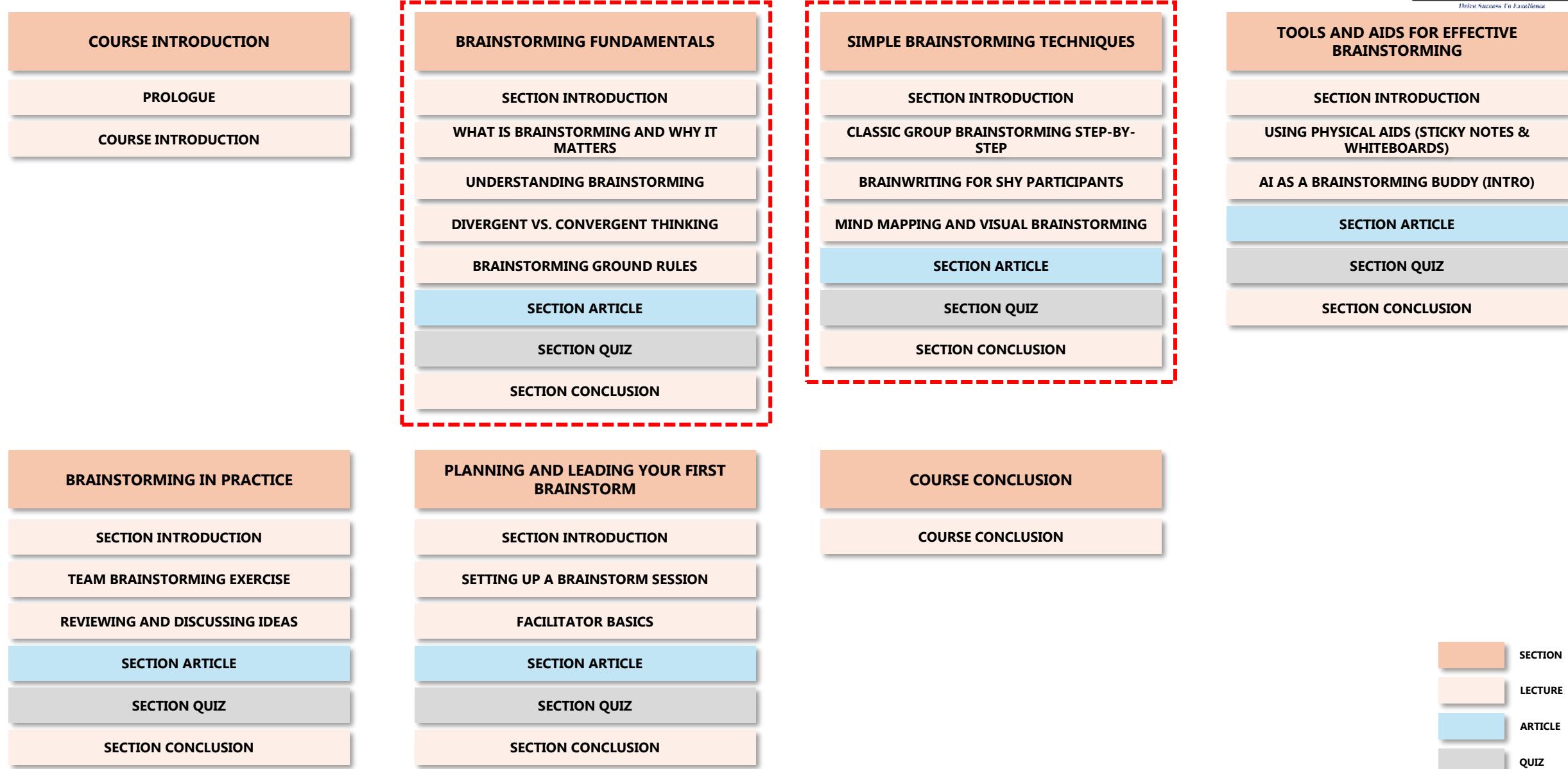
UNDERSTANDING BRAINSTORMING

DIVERGENT VS. CONVERGENT THINKING

BRAINSTORMING GROUND RULES

SECTION

SIMPLE BRAINSTORMING TECHNIQUES



IN THIS SECTION, YOU WILL LEARN

CLASSIC GROUP BRAINSTORMING STEP-BY-STEP

BRAINWRITING FOR SHY PARTICIPANTS

MIND MAPPING AND VISUAL BRAINSTORMING

Classic Group Brainstorming Step-by-Step



KEY LEARNINGS: CLASSIC GROUP BRAINSTORMING STEP-BY-STEP

1. Define the Problem or Goal Clearly

- Start with a clear, specific problem statement.
- The question should be open-ended to encourage creativity.
- Example: A bank brainstorming session might focus on, "How can we reduce wait times for customers in our branches?"

2. Gather the Right Team and Set the Environment

- Include people from different roles for diverse perspectives.
- Ideal group size: 5-8 participants (but can vary).
- Choose a comfortable, informal space (virtual or physical).
- Icebreakers, snacks, or caffeine help loosen up the group.

3. Review the Ground Rules

- No idea is bad—deferring judgment fosters creativity.
- Encourage wild ideas—even unrealistic ideas can spark breakthroughs.
- One person speaks at a time—ensures everyone gets heard.
- Aim for quantity, not quality—refinement happens later.

4. Set a Time Limit

- Typical brainstorming sessions last 15-30 minutes.
- A timer creates urgency and keeps energy levels high.
- Example: "Let's see how many ideas we can generate in 20 minutes!"

Classic Group Brainstorming Step-by-Step



KEY LEARNINGS: CLASSIC GROUP BRAINSTORMING STEP-BY-STEP

5. Brainstorm! (Idea Generation Phase)

- Ideas should be captured visibly (whiteboard, sticky notes, shared document, etc.).
- Examples of brainstorming for bank wait-time reduction:
 - "Hire a part-time teller for peak hours."
 - "Offer free coffee in line."
 - "Create an express window for simple transactions."
 - "Use a ticket system so customers can sit while waiting."
 - "Have a greeter at the entrance to answer quick questions."
- If ideas slow down, encourage out-of-the-box thinking:
 - "Give me an idea that would surprise our customers."
 - "What would be a completely radical approach?"

6. Keep the Tone Energetic and Inclusive

- The facilitator should maintain an upbeat, encouraging tone.
- Use phrases like "Great! What else?" or "Love that idea!"
- Ensure everyone participates—invite quieter members to share.
- If criticism starts, gently steer back to ideation mode:
 - "Remember, we're not judging ideas yet—we'll refine them later!"

7. Wrap Up the Session

- When the timer runs out or ideas slow down, thank participants.
- Communicate next steps—will ideas be reviewed later? Will there be another session?
- Example wrap-up:
 - "We generated 25 ideas today! Great job! We'll meet tomorrow to evaluate them and pick the best ones."
 - If time allows, do a quick ranking or voting on the most promising ideas.

Classic Group Brainstorming Step-by-Step



KEY LEARNINGS: CLASSIC GROUP BRAINSTORMING STEP-BY-STEP

Key Takeaways

- A structured brainstorming process ensures creativity flows without chaos.
- Separating idea generation (divergent thinking) from evaluation (convergent thinking) leads to better results.
- Proper facilitation and a positive, judgment-free environment encourage maximum participation and idea diversity.

Brainwriting for Shy Participants



KEY LEARNINGS: BRAINWRITING FOR SHY PARTICIPANTS

1. What Is Brainwriting?

- A brainstorming technique where participants write ideas instead of speaking them aloud.
- Useful for including introverted or reserved team members.
- Prevents dominant voices from taking over and reduces groupthink.
- Allows for parallel idea generation rather than waiting for turns to speak.

2. How Brainwriting Works (Step-by-Step)

1. Define the problem or topic (e.g., "New spa services to offer").
2. Set a time limit (e.g., 3-5 minutes for writing).
3. Each participant writes down as many ideas as possible on paper, sticky notes, or digitally.
4. Pass the paper to the next person (or collect all ideas and redistribute randomly).
5. Add new ideas inspired by others' suggestions (another 2-3 minutes).
6. Repeat the process for a few rounds, then review all ideas as a group.

3. Benefits of Brainwriting

- Encourages participation from quieter team members.
- Generates more ideas in less time.
- Prevents idea rejection or early criticism, since there's no immediate feedback.
- Allows independent thinking before group influence affects creativity.

4. Example: Spa Brainwriting Session

- A spa manager wants new service ideas from their team.
- Each team member writes ideas silently (e.g., "moonlight couples massage on the rooftop").
- Papers are passed around, and colleagues build on each other's ideas.
- Final ideas are shared with the group and evaluated later.

Brainwriting for Shy Participants



KEY LEARNINGS: BRAINWRITING FOR SHY PARTICIPANTS

5. Different Ways to Conduct Brainwriting

- In-person: Use sticky notes, whiteboards, or paper.
- Remote teams: Use a shared document, online whiteboard, or chat window (e.g., Slack, Zoom chat).
- 6-3-5 Brainwriting Method:
 - 6 people, 3 ideas each, 5 minutes (but any variation works).

6. Key Considerations

- Brainwriting doesn't replace discussion—ideas should still be reviewed collectively.
- First-time users may find it unfamiliar, but it quickly becomes a favorite technique.
- Works well in hierarchical settings where junior staff may hesitate to speak up.

7. What's Next?

- Moving to Mind Mapping and Visual Brainstorming—a technique for drawing connections between ideas.

Mind Mapping and Visual Brainstorming



KEY LEARNINGS: MIND MAPPING AND VISUAL BRAINSTORMING

1. What Is Mind Mapping?

- A visual brainstorming tool that starts with a central idea and branches out into sub-ideas.
- Helps organize thoughts spatially, revealing connections between different aspects of a problem.
- Works like a tree or a neuron with multiple connecting points.

2. How to Create a Mind Map (Step-by-Step)

1. Write the main topic/problem in the center of a blank page and circle it.
2. Draw branches from the center, labeling them with key categories related to the topic.
3. Expand each branch with sub-ideas or solutions.
4. Look for connections between branches—some ideas may relate to multiple areas.
5. Use visuals (icons, drawings, or colors) to make the map engaging and easier to interpret.

3. Example: Improving a Theme Park Experience

- Central Topic: "Improve Theme Park Experience"
 - a. **Branches:**
 - Rides: Interactive rollercoaster app, virtual reality add-ons.
 - Food & Dining: Mobile ordering, special dietary kiosks.
 - Lines/Waiting: Fast-pass system, live music in queues.
 - Staff/Entertainment: Employee costumes, street parades.
 - b. **Benefits:**
 - Identifies missing areas: If one category lacks ideas, it prompts more focus.
 - Reveals links between concepts: A mobile app could help with both ride interaction and queue management.

Mind Mapping and Visual Brainstorming



KEY LEARNINGS: MIND MAPPING AND VISUAL BRAINSTORMING

4. When to Use Mind Mapping

- When a problem is broad or multi-faceted and needs breaking down.
- When team members are visual learners who think better with images than words.
- When stuck in linear thinking, allowing creativity to flow differently.
- When needing a big-picture view of all brainstormed ideas.

5. Visual Brainstorming Beyond Mind Maps

- Sketch Brainstorming: Instead of writing, draw ideas (stick figures, rough sketches, arrows).
 - Example: Retail store team sketches window display ideas.
 - Example: A restaurant team draws customer flow through a buffet line.
- No artistic skill needed: Simple doodles spark conversation and creativity.
- Digital Tools: Apps like MindMeister or virtual whiteboards can be used in online meetings.
- Tip: Use colors for different branches to enhance engagement.

6. Why Mind Mapping Works

- Engages a different part of the brain, fostering creativity.
- Breaks down complex issues where a list might be overwhelming.
- Shows gaps and overlaps in ideas that might not be obvious in a traditional brainstorming list.

7. Mixing Techniques

- Combine mind mapping with brainwriting by writing ideas for each branch.
- Use verbal brainstorming first, then organize ideas into a mind map.
- No strict rules—adapt techniques based on team needs and brainstorming goals.

Congratulations

IN THIS SECTION, YOU LEARNED

CLASSIC GROUP BRAINSTORMING STEP-BY-STEP

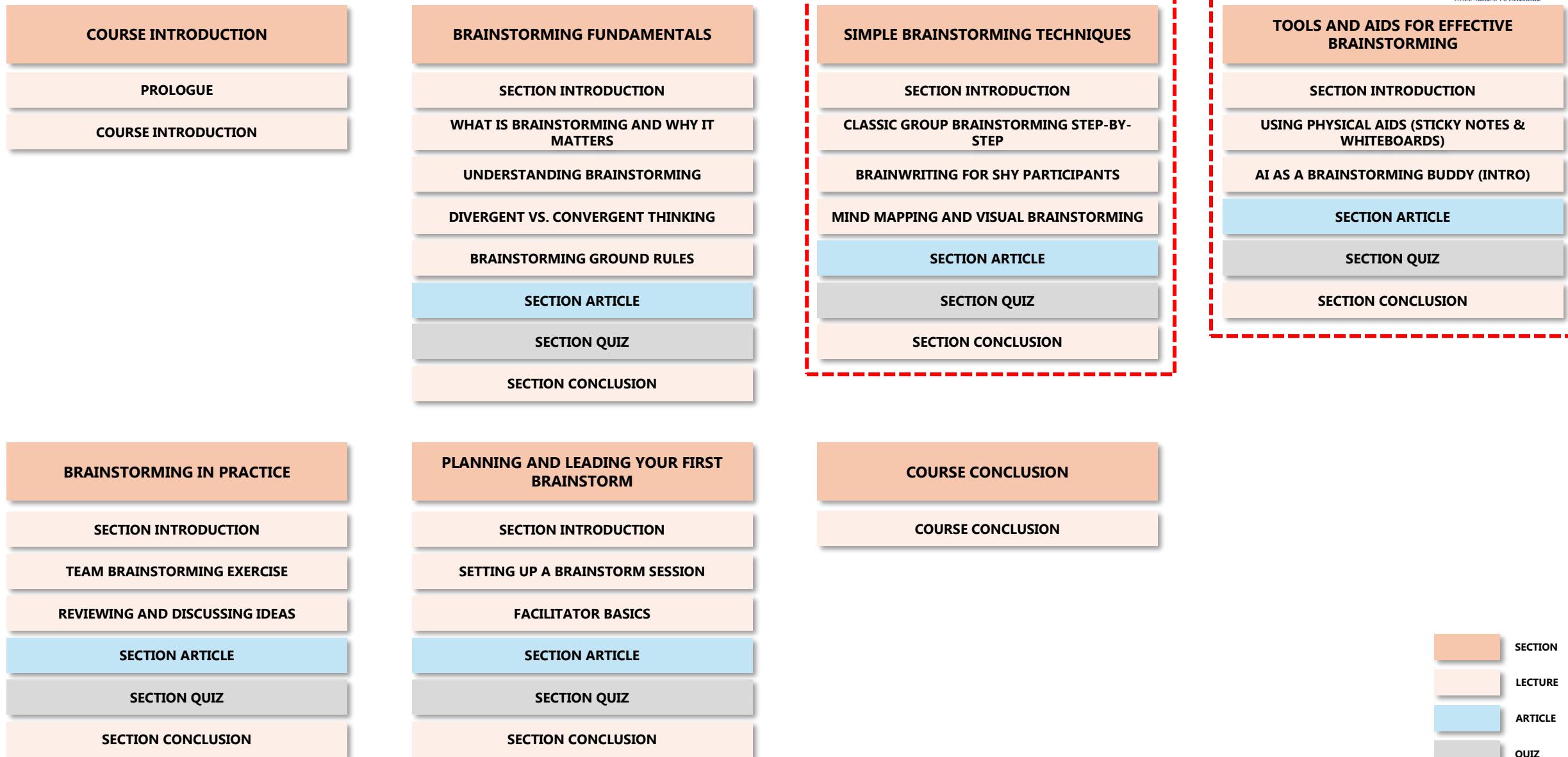
BRAINWRITING FOR SHY PARTICIPANTS

MIND MAPPING AND VISUAL BRAINSTORMING

SECTION

TOOLS AND AIDS FOR EFFECTIVE BRAINSTORMING

COURSE NAVIGATOR



IN THIS SECTION, YOU WILL LEARN



USING PHYSICAL AIDS (STICKY NOTES & WHITEBOARDS)

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AS A BRAINSTORMING BUDDY (INTRO)

Using Physical Aids (Sticky Notes & Whiteboards)



KEY LEARNINGS: USING PHYSICAL AIDS (STICKY NOTES & WHITEBOARDS)

1. Why Use Physical Aids in Brainstorming?

- Simple tools like sticky notes and whiteboards enhance creativity, collaboration, and organization.
- Commonly used by Google, IDEO, and other innovative companies to facilitate idea generation.
- Help externalize thoughts and make brainstorming interactive and engaging.

2. Sticky Notes: The Power of Small Ideas

- Write one idea per note and stick it up for visibility and easy rearrangement.
- Helps sort and categorize ideas by grouping similar ones (e.g., "communication techniques" vs. "policy changes" in a customer service brainstorm).
- Encourages movement—team members stand up, place, and reposition notes, keeping energy levels high.
- Great for dynamic collaboration, allowing people to physically interact with ideas.

3. Whiteboards (or Flip Charts): The Ultimate Group Canvas

- Captures all ideas in one place, making discussions more structured and visible.
- Allows for spontaneous sketching, diagramming, or mapping (e.g., drawing a restaurant layout to improve service flow).
- Encourages real-time modifications and group participation.
- Can be photographed for records before erasing and continuing the session.
- Flip charts serve a similar function but allow for saving each page separately for reference

4. Why These Tools Work

- Low-tech but highly effective—make ideas tangible and easy to interact with.
- Promote equal participation—everyone can contribute without needing to speak up.
- Visual organization helps teams see patterns, connections, and gaps in their thinking.
- Encourage creativity and engagement by making brainstorming active rather than passive.

Using Physical Aids (Sticky Notes & Whiteboards)



KEY LEARNINGS: USING PHYSICAL AIDS (STICKY NOTES & WHITEBOARDS)

5. Key Takeaway

- Sticky notes capture individual contributions in a flexible, visual format.
- Whiteboards enable collective brainstorming and real-time idea development.
- Both tools make brainstorming sessions more interactive, organized, and productive.

AI as a Brainstorming Buddy (Intro)



KEY LEARNINGS: AI AS A BRAINSTORMING BUDDY (INTRO)

1. AI as a Brainstorming Tool

- AI enhances human creativity rather than replacing it.
- Think of AI as an idea machine that generates suggestions without fear or hesitation.
- Useful when a team is stuck or needs fresh perspectives.

2. How AI Can Help in Brainstorming

- Prompt Generator:
 - AI can kickstart idea generation when the team is stuck.
 - Example: A hotel marketing team asks, "What unique guest experiences could we offer?" and AI suggests ideas like "midnight rooftop yoga" or "personalized city tours by a local celebrity."
- Exploring Outside Perspectives:
 - AI is trained on vast information and cross-industry insights.
 - Example: A healthcare team brainstorming ways to improve patient check-in might get an AI-suggested idea from theme park queue management.
- Brainwriting Assistance:
 - AI can act as a non-judgmental brainstorming partner in solo or team settings.
 - Example: A restaurant brainstorming for new desserts asks AI for ideas and gets "chili chocolate lava cake" or "matcha-infused ice cream burger."
- Scenario & Character Generation:
 - AI can generate fictional customer journeys to spark empathy.
 - Example: Asking AI to describe a frustrated telecom customer's day may highlight pain points the team can address.

3. Caveats of Using AI in Brainstorming

- May generate unrealistic or generic ideas—human refinement is still required.
- Context limitations: AI may not understand internal company policies or highly specialized topics.
- Idea curation is essential—AI expands the idea pool, but humans filter and refine the best suggestions.

AI as a Brainstorming Buddy (Intro)



KEY LEARNINGS: AI AS A BRAINSTORMING BUDDY (INTRO)

4. Real-World Uses of AI in Brainstorming

- Advertising agencies use AI to generate hundreds of tagline ideas for campaigns.
- Product development teams use AI to list potential features customers might want.
- AI acts as a "super eager intern"—producing many ideas quickly, but requiring human direction to make them valuable.

5. Key Takeaway

- AI is a powerful brainstorming companion that speeds up idea generation.
- It provides unexpected insights but must be used wisely.
- The best results come from combining AI suggestions with human creativity, judgment, and refinement.

Congratulations

IN THIS SECTION, YOU LEARNED

USING PHYSICAL AIDS (STICKY NOTES & WHITEBOARDS)

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AS A BRAINSTORMING BUDDY (INTRO)



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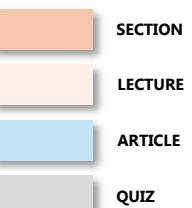
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IN THIS SECTION, YOU WILL LEARN



TEAM BRAINSTORMING EXERCISE

REVIEWING AND DISCUSSING IDEAS

Team Brainstorming Exercise



KEY LEARNINGS: TEAM BRAINSTORMING EXERCISE

1. Setting Up the Brainstorming Exercise

- Pick a common service industry challenge, e.g.,
 - "How can we get customers to leave more positive reviews?"
 - "How can we make our checkout process faster?"
- Clearly define the problem by writing it down or saying it aloud.

2. Involve Others (If Possible)

- If someone is available, invite them to join the brainstorming session.
- If working solo, use brainwriting—jot down ideas on your own.

3. Generate Ideas (Brainstorming Phase)

- Set a timer for 3-5 minutes and generate as many ideas as possible.
- No filtering or judging—just let the ideas flow freely.
- If unable to write, record voice memos or revisit later with a notebook.

4. Reflect on the Experience

- How many ideas did you generate?
- Did ideas start as obvious solutions and become more creative over time?
- Did you hit a mental block, then suddenly come up with a fresh idea?
- If brainstorming with someone else, did idea bouncing lead to better solutions?
- If unable to do it now, schedule a short brainstorming session later.

5. Quick Idea Analysis

- Identify one or two promising or intriguing ideas.
- Observe if you naturally followed brainstorming principles, such as:
 - Writing wacky ideas just in case.
 - Pushing past the first obvious solutions.
- If you judged ideas too soon, that's okay—defer judgment takes practice.

Team Brainstorming Exercise



KEY LEARNINGS: TEAM BRAINSTORMING EXERCISE

6. Key Takeaways

- Brainstorming is best experienced, not just understood theoretically.
- A good brainstorm can be energizing and improve creative thinking.
- Practice makes it easier—the more you brainstorm, the better you get.

7. Next Steps

- Brainstorming isn't complete until ideas are reviewed.
- In the next session, learn how to sift through and refine ideas into actionable solutions.

Reviewing and Discussing Ideas



KEY LEARNINGS: REVIEWING AND DISCUSSING IDEAS

1. The Purpose of Reviewing Ideas

- After brainstorming, you'll have many ideas—the next step is narrowing them down into actionable solutions.
- This is the convergent thinking phase where you evaluate, refine, and select the best ideas.

2. Step-by-Step Process for Reviewing Ideas

Step 1: Organize the Ideas

- Gather all ideas in one place (sticky notes, whiteboard, digital list).
- Group similar ideas together into categories to identify patterns and avoid duplication.
- Example: A hotel team might categorize ideas into "Tech Solutions", "Hospitality Touches", and "Entertainment."

Step 2: Clarify If Needed

- Ensure everyone understands each idea.
- Briefly explain unclear ideas or shorthand phrases (e.g., "Gold Cart" might actually mean "Golf Cart Shuttle from Parking").
- Avoid overlooking good ideas due to vague wording.

Step 3: Discuss Pros, Cons, and Criteria

- Evaluate ideas based on key factors, such as:
 - Cost: How expensive is it to implement?
 - Time: Can it be done quickly or does it require approvals?
 - Impact: Will it actually solve the problem?
 - Feasibility: Can we realistically implement it?
 - Originality: Is it a fresh, innovative approach?
- Example: The hotel team might say,
 - "A self-check-in kiosk improves speed (pro), but is expensive (con)."
 - "A welcome drink is low-cost and easy (pro), but doesn't reduce wait time (con)."
- Teams often use a simple matrix (Impact vs. Effort) to visualize decision-making.

Reviewing and Discussing Ideas



KEY LEARNINGS: REVIEWING AND DISCUSSING IDEAS

Step 4: Narrow Down the Best Ideas (Voting or Ranking)

- If there are too many ideas, use voting or ranking to determine the best ones.
- Methods include:
 - Dot voting: Each team member places dots or marks on their favorite ideas.
 - Verbal consensus: Discuss which ideas are mentioned most positively.
 - Ranking: Sort ideas from most to least feasible.
- Goal: Reduce the list to 1-5 top ideas for further action.

Step 5: Decide and Assign Next Steps

- Select the final winning idea(s) to move forward.
- Assign ownership—who will take the next steps?
 - Do you need to pitch to leadership?
 - Should a small prototype or test run be done first?
 - Can it be implemented immediately?
- Example:
 - The front desk manager organizes the welcome drink station.
 - The IT team schedules a meeting to explore tablet-based lobby check-in.

3. Key Takeaways

- If an idea isn't acted on, it's just a thought—execution is key.
- Reviewing ideas ensures you focus on what's feasible and impactful instead of just collecting random suggestions.
- This phase transforms brainstorming from just ideation to real innovation.

Congratulations

IN THIS SECTION, YOU LEARNED

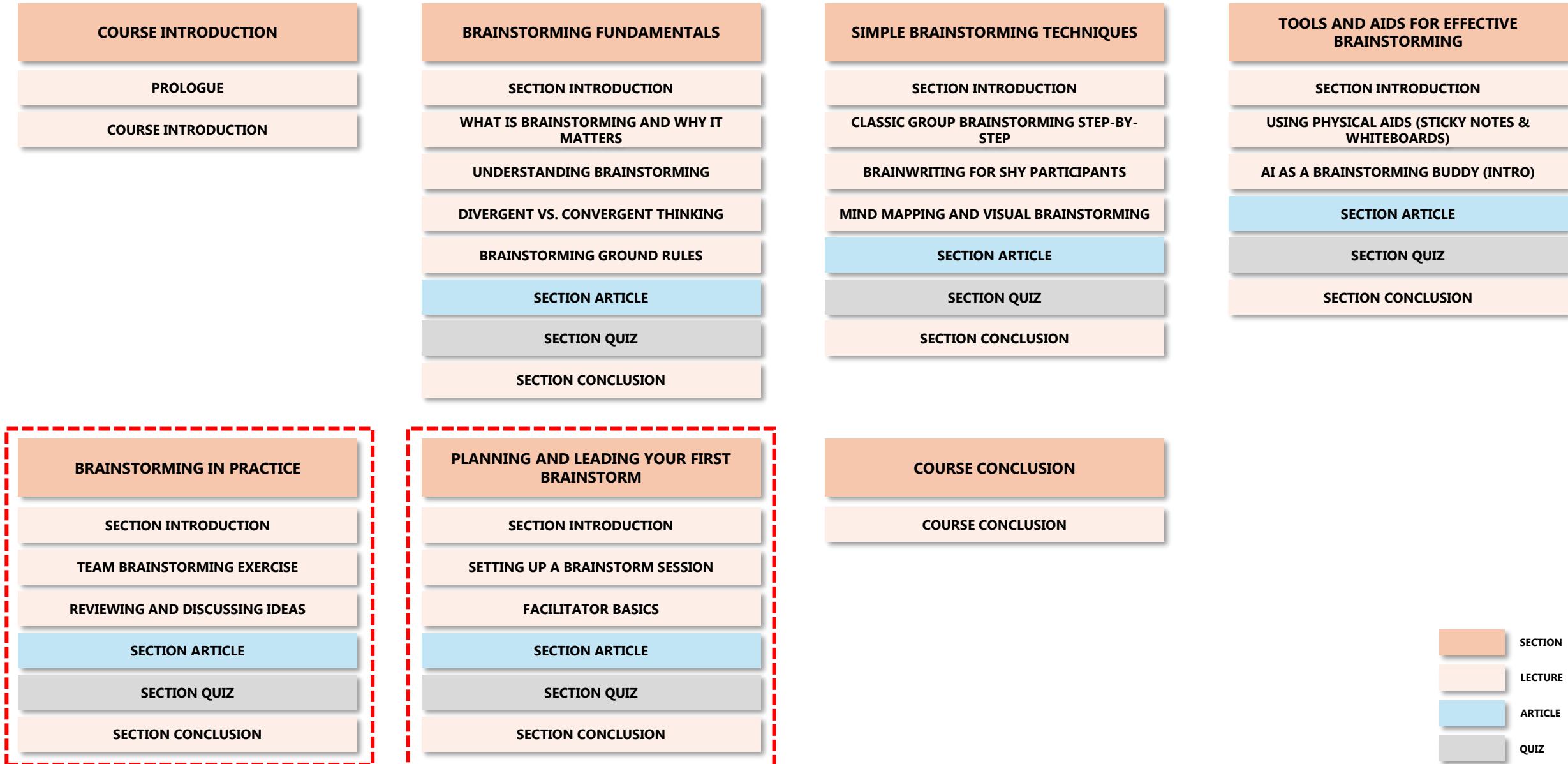


TEAM BRAINSTORMING EXERCISE

REVIEWING AND DISCUSSING IDEAS

SECTION

PLANNING & LEADING YOUR FIRST BRAINSTORM



IN THIS SECTION, YOU WILL LEARN



SETTING UP A BRAINSTORM SESSION

FACILITATOR BASICS

Setting Up a Brainstorm Session



KEY LEARNINGS: SETTING UP A BRAINSTORM SESSION

1. The Importance of Preparation

- A well-prepared brainstorming session boosts creativity and productivity.
- Think of it like setting the stage for a play—get the scene, cast, and props right for a great performance.

2. Step-by-Step Guide to Setting Up a Brainstorming Session

Step 1: Define the Purpose and Problem

- Be crystal clear about what you're brainstorming.
- Example problem statements:
 - “How can we reduce customer complaints about checkout time?”
 - “What services could we offer during the holiday season?”
- Write down the problem statement in one or two sentences.
- Include this in the meeting invite and display it clearly during the session.

Step 2: Choose the Right Participants

- Select a diverse group (mix of roles, perspectives, and expertise).
- Include people who experience the problem firsthand.
- Consider adding a "wild card" (someone from a different department for fresh ideas).
- Be mindful of group dynamics:
 - If someone is too dominant or negative, coach them beforehand.
 - If a senior leader might intimidate others, brief them separately instead.

Step 3: Set the Time and Place

- Pick a time when people are energized (mid-morning or mid-afternoon is best).
- Avoid Monday mornings or late Friday when engagement is low.
 - Time allocation: Simple topic: 30-45 minutes.
 - Broader topic: 1-2 hours (but pure idea generation should stay under an hour).
- Choose a creative-friendly space (natural light, flexible seating, and room to move).
- Create a welcoming environment—use sticky notes, colors, snacks, and drinks.

Setting Up a Brainstorm Session



KEY LEARNINGS: SETTING UP A BRAINSTORM SESSION

Step 4: Gather Materials and Tools

- Classic brainstorming setup: Whiteboard or flip chart.
- Markers that actually work (test them beforehand!).
- Sticky notes, pens, and paper.
- For digital sessions: Set up an online whiteboard (e.g., Miro, MURAL, Google Docs).
- Ensure everyone has access before the meeting starts.
- Optional: Creativity triggers (magazines, objects, toys) to inspire unconventional thinking.

Step 5: Invite and Inform Participants

- Send a clear invite stating the purpose of the session.
 - Example: “Join us for a fun brainstorming session to generate ideas for X. No preparation needed—just bring your creativity! We’ll explain the ground rules, and all ideas are welcome.”
- Consider sharing background information beforehand if helpful (especially for introverts who prefer to prepare).
- Alternatively, keep it open-ended to encourage fresh, spontaneous thinking.

Step 6: Set the Creative Tone

- Arrive early to set up the space and display the problem statement.
- Write an inspirational or humorous quote about creativity on the board.
 - Example: “Imagination is more important than knowledge” – Einstein.
- Play light music as people arrive to ease tension and create an upbeat atmosphere.
- Greet participants warmly and break the ice with a casual remark or joke.

3. Key Takeaways

- Good setup = smoother brainstorming session.
- The goal is to create a space where people feel safe and excited to contribute ideas.
- A well-prepared environment boosts engagement and the quality of ideas generated.

Facilitator Basics



KEY LEARNINGS: FACILITATOR BASICS

1. Role of a Brainstorming Facilitator

- The facilitator guides the process, keeps energy high, and ensures productivity.
- The goal is to create an open and inclusive space where all ideas are welcomed.
- A good facilitator balances structure and creativity, making sure ideas flow without judgment.

2. Key Facilitation Techniques

Be Enthusiastic and Positive

- Your energy sets the tone—if you're excited, the team will be too.
- Use upbeat language, smiles, and positive reinforcement to keep engagement high.
- A warm and encouraging atmosphere helps people feel safe sharing their ideas.

Explain the Rules & Purpose Clearly

- At the start, clearly define the purpose of the session. Example:
 - “We’re here to generate as many ideas as possible for X problem.”
- Reiterate the ground rules:
 - No judging ideas.
 - Quantity over quality.
 - Build on each other’s ideas.
- Setting these expectations empowers you to enforce them later if needed.

Encourage All Voices

- Keep an eye on who’s participating and who’s staying quiet.
- Gently invite quieter participants:
 - “Sasha, since you work closely with this issue, any thoughts?”
- Try round-robin brainstorming (everyone shares one idea in turn) or brainwriting for more equal participation.
- If someone is over-participating, acknowledge them and shift focus:
 - “Great input! Let’s also hear from someone we haven’t yet.”

Facilitator Basics



KEY LEARNINGS: FACILITATOR BASICS

Keep the Momentum Going

- Acknowledge every idea:
 - Nod, say “Great idea!” or “Let’s write that one down.”
- If energy drops, use creative prompts:
 - “How would a child approach this problem?”
 - “What would happen if we had unlimited budget?”
- If needed, give a short break (a quick stretch can reset energy).

Enforce Ground Rules Diplomatically

- If someone starts criticizing an idea, intervene gently:
 - “We’re in idea mode right now—let’s evaluate later.”
- If two people start debating, acknowledge the idea and refocus:
 - “That’s an interesting point! Let’s capture it and move on to more ideas.”
- Keep the session safe and non-judgmental for idea sharing.

Manage Time Effectively

- Keep an eye on the clock or assign a timekeeper.
- If the session flows well, extend slightly (if the group agrees).
- If ideas slow down, wrap up—don’t force brainstorming past its peak.
- Allow some time for grouping ideas or first impressions after idea generation.

Stay Neutral on Content

- Avoid showing personal preferences for certain ideas.
- Even if you think an idea is brilliant or unrealistic, react the same way.
- If the facilitator seems biased, people may self-censor their ideas.
- You can suggest ideas sparingly, but focus on guiding, not leading.

Close with Appreciation

- End the session with gratitude and positivity:
 - “Thanks, everyone! That was an incredible session!”
- Reiterate next steps so participants know their ideas will be considered:
 - “I’ll compile these ideas and send them out.”
 - “We’ll meet next week to select the top ideas.”

Facilitator Basics



KEY LEARNINGS: FACILITATOR BASICS

3. Key Takeaways

- A great facilitator keeps the energy high, encourages participation, and ensures structure.
- Protecting the brainstorming space from judgment leads to better, more creative ideas.
- With practice, facilitators learn to read the room and adapt their approach to different groups.

Congratulations

IN THIS SECTION, YOU LEARNED

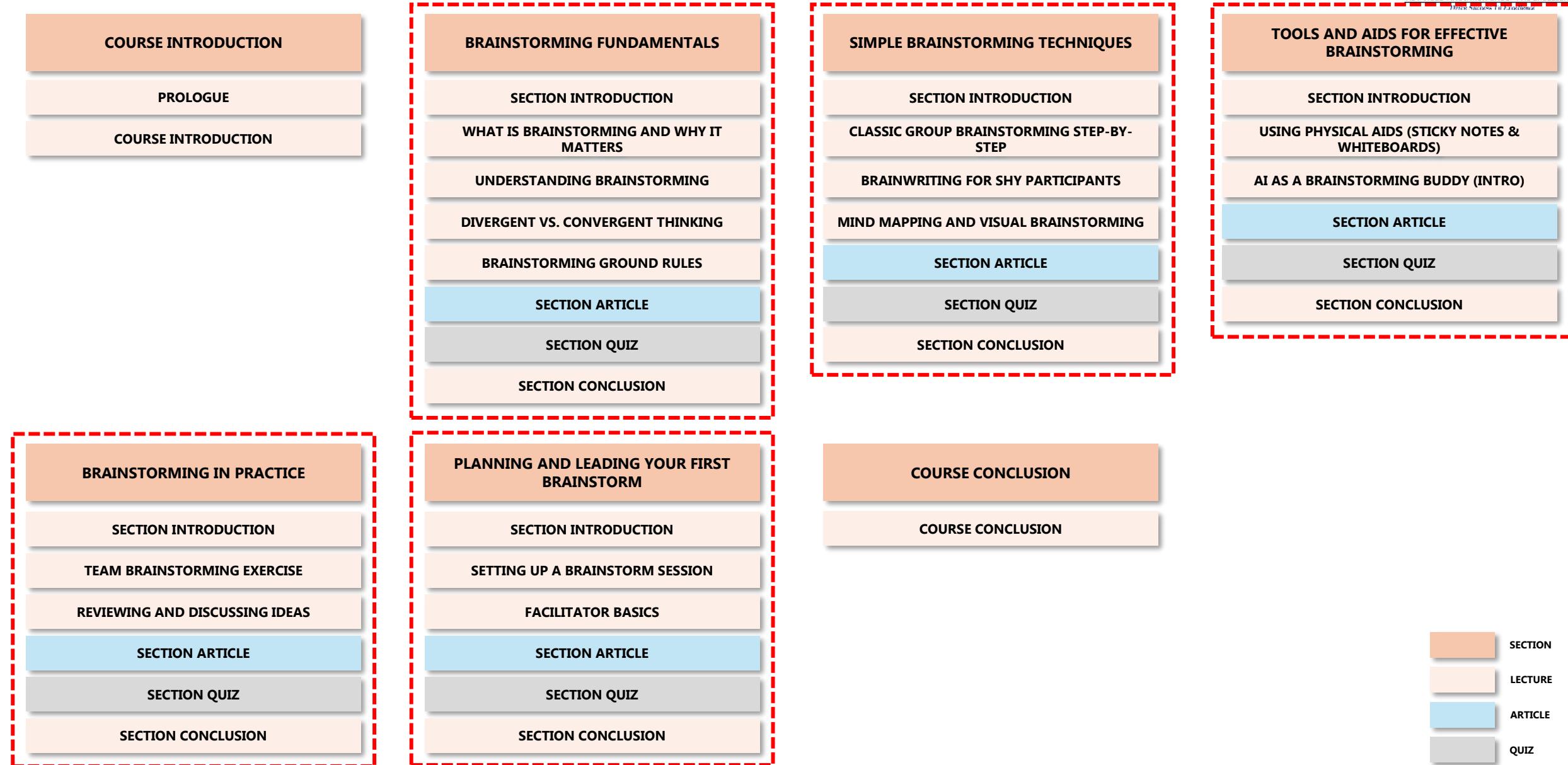


SETTING UP A BRAINSTORM SESSION

FACILITATOR BASICS

Congratulations



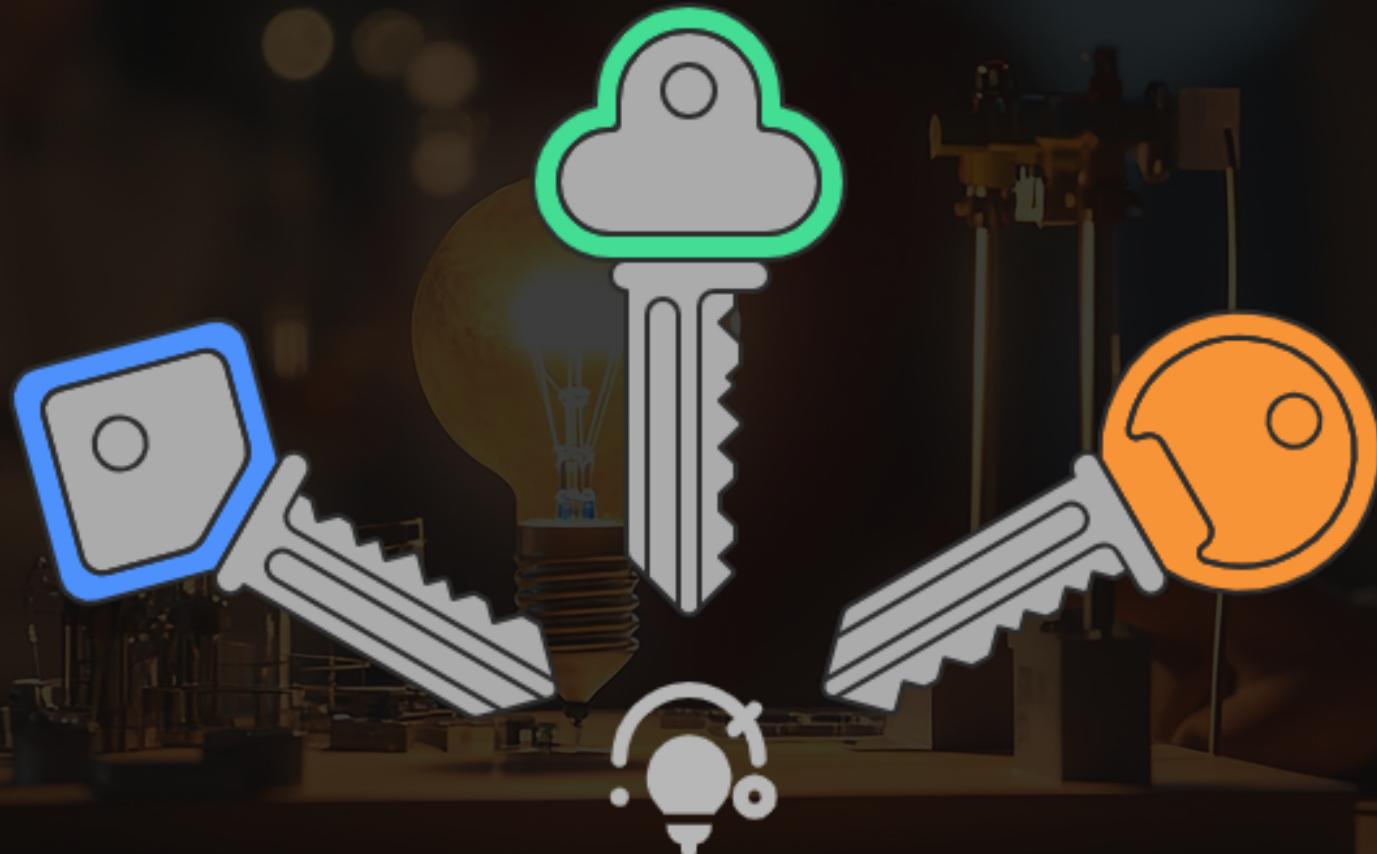




Embracing Diversity

**Fostering
Creativity**

**Actionable
Solutions**



Business Challenges

Customer Experiences

Innovation







