

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.

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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.