

Gustav Kaser Australia

GK Training in Australia – For current and past participants

Brainwriting

Posted on **February 4, 2013** by **Noemi Bangel**

As promised ... a little more about this creativity method.

During our International work conference for quality control, many of our trainers had the possibility to take part in a workshop about creativity (hence the reason to share this with you) and one of the methods we used was **brainwriting!!**

In order not to reinvent the wheel – here is the information about **Brainwriting**

Brainstorming sessions are commonly used to generate ideas, and develop a creative solution to a problem. What often happens during brainstorming sessions is that key players on the team speak up and express their ideas. Everyone else then enters the discussion about those few ideas, and the team reaches a consensus on the solution – all without considering many other ideas that could have been generated.

Group dynamics, and the pervading organizational culture, play an important role in how individuals in a team interact and solve problems. Some members of the group may not speak up because they're shy, or are afraid that their suggestions will be rejected. Others may say nothing at all because they fear their ideas are simply too outrageous or bold. People with stronger personality types may loudly push and defend their ideas, without listening to others' suggestions. And 'conservative' people may tend to propose only safe alternatives.

Enter the brainwriting technique – an idea-generating process that enables EVERYONE in the group to participate in a nonthreatening way. This approach often generates more potential solutions than traditional brainstorming. Brainwriting 635 is a development of the original technique which benefits from structure and time constraints.

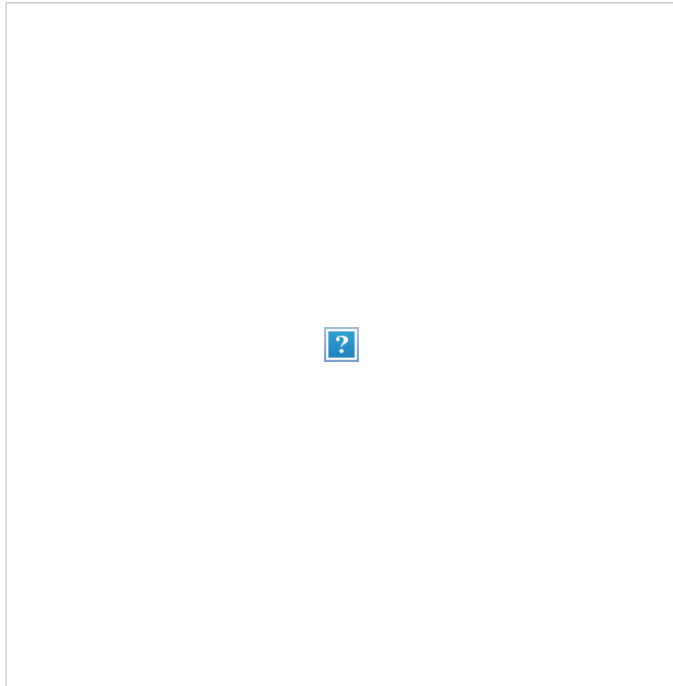
Brainwriting 635 involves 6 participants who sit in a group supervised by a moderator. Each participant thinks up 3 ideas every 5 minutes. Participants are encouraged to draw on others' ideas for inspiration, thus stimulating the creative process. After 6 rounds in 30 minutes the group has thought up a total of 108 ideas.

Why use it?

To provide the time and structure for team members to thoughtfully generate a large number of ideas and to find unusual connections and combination's among those ideas.

Method

Prerequisites for this technique are a "635 form" and a meeting location in which you can work as undisturbed as possible.



1. Assemble the team and clarify the issue.

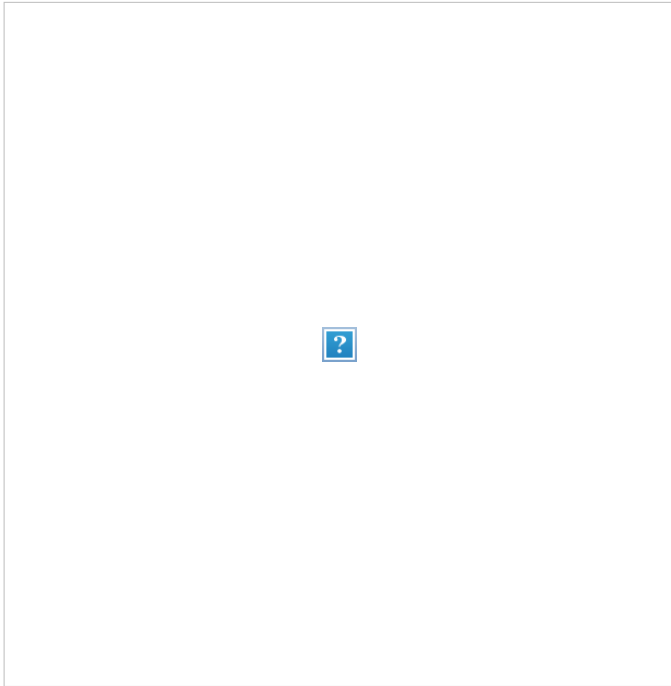
- The ideal number of team members is six but a smaller or larger group can also use this tool.
- Clarify the topic of the session. Consider using a *Problem Definition* tool as an aid.

2. Complete the 6-3-5 worksheets.

- The name Brainwriting 6-3-5 comes from the process of having 6 people write 3 ideas within 5 minutes.
- Each person has a blank 6-3-5 worksheet.

a) Each person records the problem statement at the top of the worksheet. Everyone should write the same problem statement, word for word.

b) Everyone writes three ideas in the top row of the worksheet within a five-minute time frame. Avoid talking during the writing process. Take the full five minutes to develop the ideas but also allow your ideas to flow freely, without editing them excessively.



- Write each idea as a concise but complete sentence; 6-10 words works well.
- Neatly write one idea per box so other team members can read the ideas.
- Sometimes it's difficult to think of three ideas. If so, just leave a box blank.

c) At the end of five minutes – or when everyone is finished writing – pass the worksheet to the person on your right. If all of the members have completed the round in less than the five minutes provided, check to make sure everyone is finished, and then move to the next round.

d) Circulate the worksheets until they are completed.

- With each pass, read all the ideas written on the worksheet to stimulate your own thinking, and then generate three more ideas. Remember to:

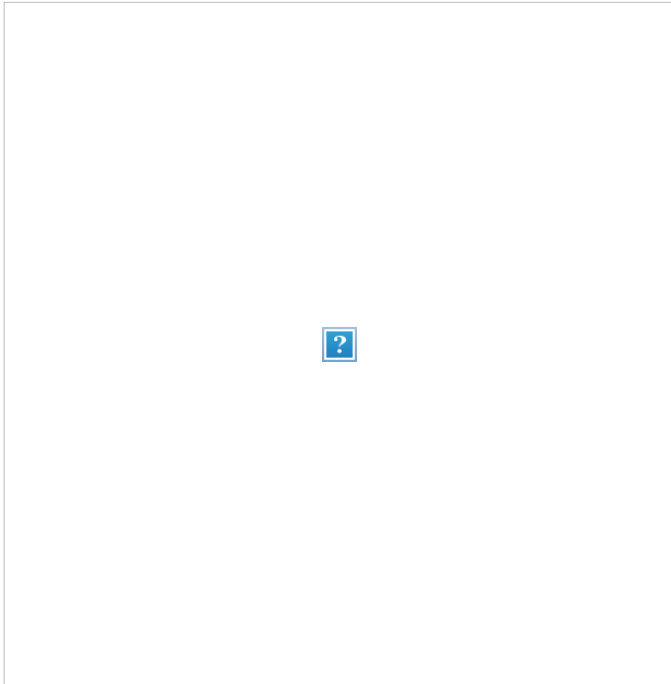
- Expand on an idea
- Write a variation of any previous idea
- Generate a completely unrelated new idea

3. Analyze the ideas and select the best ones.

- Review all the ideas.

- Eliminate any exact duplicates, but remember to keep any variations or extensions of ideas.
- As a team, review the ideas for clarity.

- Come to consensus around one to three ideas to pursue further. Use the *Nominal Group Technique* or *Prioritization Matrices* to narrow down the list of ideas that the team can work on.



What does it do?

- Provides a worksheet for team members to record their ideas.
- Combines the energy of exchanging ideas and the thoughtfulness of a nonverbal, written process.
- Defuses emotional issues that may reduce the participation and creative flow of ideas among team members.
- When compared to *Classic Brainstorming*, this tool more consistently builds synergy among team members' ideas.

One disadvantage might be the high temporal effort required by individuals. With large groups or a flood of input, the work might get confusing and difficult to come to agreement on.

When to Use Brainwriting

Brainwriting can be used to help solve almost any problem. The process is used often in marketing, design, and creative fields, but it's also gaining popularity in other areas.

Any time that you would traditionally use brainstorming to solve a problem, you could use brainwriting instead.

Other Points

Although brainstorming is the most common technique for generating ideas in a group, brainwriting can be much more effective, because it involves all participants on an equal basis. Both introverts and extroverts can participate, and you can produce more ideas in less time.

The Notebook Method can easily be adapted for use on any computer network/intranet system. In fact, using this technology allows people to share information in real time, and at a distance. It makes it possible for team members to build on each others ideas and detect patterns among their ideas as they are generated.

click the link below for a video demo of how it works -

[Video Demonstration](#)

source of the brainwriting information – [PS2 encyclopedia](#)

Enjoy unleashing your creative potential !!!

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About Noemi Bangel

Noemi Bangel (Guyer) - Management and Sales trainer @ Gustav Kaser Australia. I have been delivering Trainings for organisations and individuals since January 2001. I love to work together with companies to develop their people and achieve outstanding results. I enjoyed every training day i have delivered during these years (about 1000 in total), and really hope that the people i have had the privilege of working with have enjoyed not only the training, but what they have been able to do with the knowledge and tools they have received. The idea of this blog has come from requests by participants to have us be "more in touch", if you have ideas, feedback or need further information, please feel free to email me personally. Wishing you lots of success and hope to see you at a training soon.

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