

Notes:

Brainstorming

Key Learning Points

1. Describe the importance of Brainstorming.
2. Explain how to Brainstorm.
3. Utilize Brainstorming in improvement projects.

What is Brainstorming?

Brainstorming is a proven way of generating many ideas on a topic. This tool helps encourage every team member to participate and contribute ideas during team meetings.

Judging is Not Permitted

No idea may be evaluated, whether they seem unusually good, silly, or irrational. A non-judgmental environment is essential for innovative thinking.

The Emphasis is on Quantity

The goal of brainstorming is to generate as many new ideas as possible within a short time (usually 30-45 minutes). This approach discourages analytical or critical thinking, which tends to curb the free flow of ideas.

Far-out Ideas are Encouraged

Ideas may be unconventional, imaginative, or even outrageous.

Hitchhike on Teammates Ideas

One innovative idea often triggers others. Participants are encouraged to expand or modify their teammates' ideas or to produce new ideas by association.

Steps to Conduct Brainstorming

How to Conduct:

1. Review and discuss topic to ensure participants understand objective.
2. Record each contribution, even when there is duplication.
3. Use speakers own words.
4. Don't fatigue the group, ensure there is still excitement at conclusion.
5. A session is usually 30-40 minutes long.

Post Brainstorming Session:

- Clarify ideas.
- Group similar ideas.
- Develop criteria for evaluating ideas.
- Evaluate ideas in systematic manner and select those to be acted upon.

Rules:

- Make contributions in turn.
- Contribute only one idea during each turn.
- "Pass" when you do not have an idea (you will have another opportunity on your next turn).
- Do not provide explanations for your ideas.

When Should Brainstorming Be Used?

Although Brainstorming can be used in any step of continuous improvement, there are four main times to use it:

- When nominating projects
- When formulating theories
- When evaluating alternative remedies
- When identifying resistance to proposed remedies

Important Points

Can be used at several points during improvement process, including:

Notes:

- When nominating projects
- When developing theories about possible causes of problems.
- When identifying potential solutions.
- When identifying potential resistance to solutions.

When brainstorming, be sure to define the topic. Brainstorming statements must be carefully phrased to be:

- Specific
- Broad
- Unbiased

Pitfalls to Avoid

Pitfalls and Problems

- Brainstorming is not a substitute for data.
- The inability of a group to suspend judgement and analysis until the list of ideas is complete.
- The dominance of one or a few individuals in presenting ideas.

Avoiding Pitfalls and Problems

Information must be developed to determine which problem is most serious, which theory is really correct, what solution will work best, or how a particular obstacle can best be overcome.

Notes: