

## **Brainstorming Sessions Offer Opportunities for Creative Problem-Solving**

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For all the excellent work of our schools in teaching the skills in areas such as of writing and arithmetic, there is one area that we do not teach at all: creativity. Even from a college perspective there are no full courses centered on brainstorming and creative thinking.

So, when the time comes to try to think outside that proverbial box, most people don't know where to start to how to use that skill set which is so essential to marketing. Here are some tips to make your brainstorming sessions most effective and beneficial - and uncomplicated – for everyone.

- Identify the problem or common goal. Without knowing what you are trying to accomplish, no one can succeed in developing ideas or solutions. State in one sentence the objective or problem you need to solve.
- Collect the relevant facts. Keep a file on the facts of your business problem, competition information and/or economic factors. Then, before you begin a brainstorming session, share the information with everyone so they also understand the underlying concerns.
- Leverage existing ideas. Not every idea has to be something brand new. What have you or another organization done in the past and how can you leverage it or make it bigger or more effective?
- Think about it. After the ideas have been processed, take a couple days for everyone to sleep on them and reconvene the group to see if additional suggestions come to the forefront.

Creativity is only as good as you allow it. Encourage all members of your organization – even those not involved with the specific project – to participate. You'll be surprised how the combined efforts can create better ideas and outcomes.