

BRAIN WRITING

This activity provides an alternative to traditional brainstorming for generating new ideas. It is a great activity for quiet groups or when you want to avoid "group think" in idea generation. Ideas are generated by asking people to write down their ideas rather than presenting them verbally.



30 minutes



Groups of 4-6 (can have multiple groups)



- Extra-large index cards
- Pens

Source: Adapted from Media Lab Amsterdam

DEBRIEF *(following the activity)*

- How was this different than traditional brainstorming, or brainstorming on post-it notes?
- What was the hardest part of the activity?
- What was the easiest part of the activity?
- Did seeing others' perspectives change the ideas you generated in subsequent rounds?

WHAT TO DO



1. Organize attendees into groups.
2. Ask each group to define a problem that it will tackle through "brain writing."
3. Each participant should "write" three solutions in two minutes, recording their ideas on an index card.
4. After two minutes, participants will pass their card to the person to the left.
5. Have the next participant build on the existing ideas by writing their own new ideas underneath the original solutions. Allow three minutes for this part of the exercise.
6. The process should be repeated as many times as there are people around the table, allowing an additional minute each time - so four minutes for the next person, five for the one after that, etc.
7. Once complete, the group should review the ideas that were generated and discuss which ones they could pursue further.