

KILL THE ELEPHANT

There are many ways in which we interfere with someone's ability to think creatively. Doubt, fear, playing the devil's advocate, or being a "naysayer" can deflate a team's energy during idea brainstorming. The Kill the Elephant exercise is an opportunity to acknowledge all of the "elephants" in a room and bury negative thinking at the inception of a project's ideation process. This is an activity that would be conducted prior to a separate brainstorming session.



15-30 minutes



Groups of 4-8 (can have multiple groups)



- Flipchart paper
- Post-it notes
- Markers/pens
- Tombstone Image
- Dots for dot voting

Source: Adapted from Gamestorming

DEBRIEF *(following the activity)*

- What were the challenges that prevented teams from pushing ideas forward?
- What would happen if we removed these barriers for teams?
- How could you apply this exercise to work that you do?

WHAT TO DO



1. Decide on an upcoming project you would like to focus on.
2. Prepare separate flipchart sheets for each of the questions below. Post them around the room prior to starting, along with one image of a tombstone.
3. Before entering any brainstorm, have members answer as many of the following questions as they can about the chosen project. Ask each person to write their answer to each question on individual post-it notes.
 - What do I dislike?
 - What will go wrong?
 - How will this end in disaster?
 - What are my fears?
 - What are my qualms?
 - What are the risks?
 - What are my concerns?
 - What makes me roll my eyes?
 - What am I sick of hearing?
4. Ask participants to post their answers under the appropriate questions around the room.
5. Ask the team to vote on their top three answers for each question by dot voting (provide each participant with three dots to vote)
6. Now, place the top three elephants on the tombstone image. This provides the team with an opportunity to voice unaddressed issues.