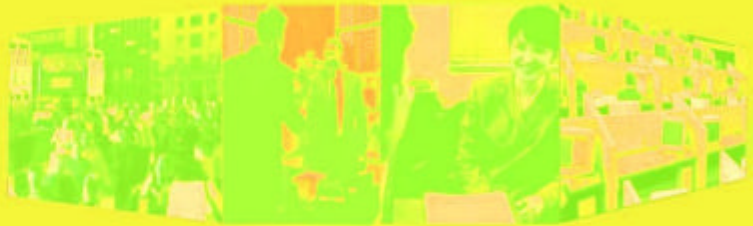


Brian Clegg



Instant
Brainstorming

SAMPLE

*Generate
new ideas
now!*

First published 2006

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Using this book

Why this book?

Brainstorming – having a group session to generate new ideas – is a common enough exercise in business. In fact, the chances are there's one going on somewhere near you right now.

Unfortunately it's probably not a very good brainstorm. Everyone does them – hardly anyone knows how to do them well. This book, written by one of the UK's top experts in business creativity, will help you get brainstorming right, and get real value out of the exercise.

Why instant?

You just don't have time to study a great tome to deal with something as everyday as brainstorming. It has to be quick, and it has to be now.

How the book works

Unlike many of the other books in the *Instant* series, which are designed to provide a resource kit of techniques, *Instant Brainstorming* is here to lead you as quickly as possible through a single process. Because of that it is kept as short and focussed as possible. There is a little information on creativity at the end of the book, but that is an optional extra. The important thing is to get value out of your brainstorming.

What brainstorming is

Idea sourcing

Brainstorming is a term that is much misused – but the intent is simple. It's a way of extracting ideas from a group of people. Brainstorming isn't something you do alone, nor is it purely an inspiration session. It's about producing ideas, collecting them and making something of them.

Back to Osborn

Those who mangle the process of brainstorming – and there are many of them – forget its origins. Brainstorming was devised by Alex Osborn, one of the founders of the hugely successful New York advertising agency BBDO, and the grand old man of modern practical creativity techniques. Where many people go wrong is in thinking that brainstorming is just a matter of throwing up ideas in a group, and doing so without filtering those ideas or criticising them. In fact, Osborn had something very different in mind.

When brainstorming was devised, Osborn imagined using a creativity technique, a means of stimulating new ideas, then using brainstorming to collect and structure the ideas being stimulated by the creativity technique. He never envisaged using the brainstorm without that technique to kickstart the ideas. This is why so many brainstorms fail.

Your role

Any good brainstorming session needs a facilitator – someone to concentrate primarily on the process, though unlike other types of facilitation, there is nothing wrong with a brainstorming facilitator throwing ideas into the pot, as long as he or she shows no favouritism. This book assumes that *you* are going to be the facilitator in the session. It is still useful if you aren't, but you may have to take the facilitator to one side and explain one or two points (which might not make you too popular) if that's case. It might be best to buy a copy of the book for him or her too. (See www.cul.co.uk/titles/instantdownloads.htm for details of our excellent value licences, so you can get copies for everyone.)