

Brainwriting...this is a team exercise to develop new and creative ideas.

Keep in mind that quantity of ideas breeds quality...yes it's true! Creative people have many ideas most of which are useless but, the more ideas a person generates the more likely a creative "good" one will appear (think Edison... over a thousand patents and one very good one...the light bulb!). This technique is called Brainwriting and can be used with your team.

Basic guidelines for brainwriting:

- 1.** First, discuss the problem to clarify it. Write the problem in a location visible to all group members.
- 2.** Distribute index card to each participant and instruct them to silently write their idea on the cards, one idea per card. Whereas group brainstorming involves participants shouting ideas out loud, brainwriting has people writing down ideas. (Important because it ensures that the loudest voices don't prevail - loud does not necessarily equal creative.)
- 3.** As participants complete their cards, they pass them silently to the person on the right.
- 4.** Tell the group members to read the cards they passed and to regard them as "stimulation" cards. Write down any new ideas inspired by the "stimulation" cards on blank cards and pas them to the person on the right. Within a few minutes, several idea cards will be rotating around the table.
- 5.** After twenty to thirty minutes, collect all cards and have the group members tape them to a wall. The cards should be arranged into columns according to different categories of ideas, with a title card above each column. Eliminate duplicates.
- 6.** Evaluate the ideas by giving each participant a packet of self-sticking dots and have them place the dots on their preferred ideas. They can allocate the dots in a any manner desired, placing them all on one idea, one each on five different ideas, or any other combination.

Key points:

Idea generation is silent.
Ideas are created spontaneously in parallel.

This technique was developed by the Batelle Institute in Frankfurt from a method attributed to Richard Feynman, the famous physicist.