



Brainstorming

LEADER SHEETS- "On the go" guides for effective student leadership!

How does your group or organization use brainstorming? Do you ever use it? Did you ever sit in a meeting and wonder how to liven up the ideas? Do you do the same programs the same way every year even though you have new, motivated members? Brainstorming in a group, small or large, can yield more ideas in short period of time than you probably ever thought possible. You can use it for just about anything: program ideas, problem solving, group goals, publicity. And all you need are members to participate and a really fast writer to keep track of it all (use a chalk board or poster paper on the wall so everyone can see!)

First: Make sure the rules are set.

1. No criticism, evaluation, or judgment of any idea. No defending an idea, either.
2. No limit on "crazy ideas" no matter how impossible they might seem.
3. At first quantity is better than quality.
4. Piggy backing, or building on another person's idea is allowed. It works!
5. Enjoy momentary silence. Sometimes, it revitalizes thoughts.
6. Just call out. No hand raising. And, repetitions are okay!

Get all those ideas up there in a certain time limit. Then, go back and decide which ideas to use, and how. Sometimes, that "crazy idea" ends up turning into something wonderful!

Another way to brainstorm:

1. Give everyone in the group 5-10 sticky notes. (Use those freebie giveaway ones to conserve costs.)
2. Tell them to individually write one idea per sticky note.
3. Then, in smaller groups of 5 or so, organize the sticky notes into like groups. (So, if person A and person B both wrote "A CANDY SALE," those get grouped together along with person C's suggestion of "SELL CANDY APPLES.")
4. Make decisions based on what emerges.

Use the ideas to your advantage.

1. If the group broke up into smaller groups, be sure to share with each other.
2. Decide which ideas to implement (Bill Clinton speaking next Wednesday night can probably be thrown out at this point!)
3. Be sure to utilize the ideas. Why are you brainstorming if you are not going to do anything with the ideas generated?