BRAINSTORMING

A Method for Conducting a Needs Assessment

DESCRIPTION

Consists of gathering ideas from a collective about a specific topic where quantity is prioritized over quality to "get the ball rolling."

TECHNIQUES

1. Silence – the individual participant determines how they want to come up with the idea.
2. Lines of Evolution – participants consider the current form of an idea and how it may change over time.
3. Random Connections – participants make associations to the problem from their experiences.
4. SCAMPERR – Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Purpose, Eliminate, Reverse, Rearrange.

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

- What is the best outcome you can think of for this project?
- What is the worst outcome you can think of for this project?
- How would you manage that negative outcome?

USE WHEN

- You want participants to freely express thoughts as they arise.
- You want to come up with creative ideas and solutions to a problem.

PROS

- It is easy and inexpensive.
- Participants can see their ideas realized.
- It can be done individually or in groups (or both!).
- Participants have an equal chance to contribute.
- Participants are not judged for their contributions.

CONS

- Participants can lose interest if it takes too long.
- It can be overwhelming for some people.
- Participants may feel pressured or influenced by group members.

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