



Generating Ideas

There are unlimited activity options for neighborhood organizations. The following are suggested ways of generating ideas that will assure participation of everyone!

Brainstorming

This is the best way to generate as many creative ideas as possible. It encourages people to invent new possibilities without concern for practicality or appropriateness. It is often the seed for that new, great plan of action!

1. Have participants state all their ideas that might be possible solutions to your particular problem. These do not have to be well thought out or standard ideas. Anything goes!
2. Write each idea on a blackboard or large piece of paper posted at the front of the room.
3. Don't discuss the idea. That comes later.
4. Don't judge the idea. All ideas are welcome, even those that seem crazy or impossible.
5. The wilder the better. Be really creative. Sometimes the best idea comes from the most outlandish.
6. After all ideas are stated, go back and discuss each idea. Don't dismiss ideas without discussing their merits.
7. Prioritize ideas, then analyze.

The Slip Technique

Give everyone 5-8 slips of paper. Have them write their ideas on these slips. Collect the slips and sort them into piles based on frequency of occurrence, feasibility or category. Write the ideas on your blackboard or poster paper. Discuss these ideas. Feel free to be creative with the ideas proposed.

Round Robin

Often, very creative, thinking people are too shy to offer an opinion. The best ideas never emerge unless encouraged by the group. A round robin encourages participation from all members.

Whenever a question arises or you want to generate new ideas, each person is asked to give an opinion. Go around the room and have all members offer suggestions. This provides quiet members with an opportunity to participate and prevents the more vocal individuals from dominating the group. Encourage new ideas, and never criticize a suggestion.

Again, as in brainstorming, all ideas—no matter how silly they seem—are welcome. After each member has a chance to speak, discuss the pros and cons of all ideas proposed.