1. TRADITIONAL: Send out background information before the meeting and ask participants to come prepared with ideas. A facilitator or scribe records these ideas as participants call them out during the meeting. If the group is large, you may want to use two scribes to record ideas so ideas aren’t slowed down because they can’t be recorded quickly enough. At the end of the brainstorming session, always have the scribe(s) report back to the group to confirm accuracy and clarify any misconceptions.

2. ROUND ROBIN: Go around the table and ask each person to call out an idea. Let participants know ahead of time that they have the “right” to say “pass” to keep the momentum going. It is important to have a “scribe,” someone who is recording the ideas as they are generated. At the conclusion of the Round Robin exercise, the scribe should recap the ideas of the group to confirm they’ve been accurately recorded.

3. POST-IT NOTES: Have participants write ideas on post-it notes. The rule is to limit one idea per post-it note. Then have participants post their notes on a wall. The next step is done in silence: participants look at each post-it note and begin grouping like ideas together. After you see how many “groups” of ideas there are, divide the participants in to that many groups to have them refine the ideas and present back to everyone present.

4. BRAIN-WRITING: To exploit new technology, companies use email for brainstorming. The person desiring ideas initiates the email with explicit guidelines, including a deadline for responding. There are two techniques used in brain-writing:
   A. CHAIN LETTER: This technique requires a listing of participants whose names are listed in order on the first email. The first person lists her ideas and then sends it to the next person who adds his ideas before sending it on. The last person on the list is the person who began the email. Using this technique allows participants to build on the previous persons ideas and avoids duplication. However, it takes longer to make the circuit of names.
   B. MASS DISTRIBUTION: The initiator sends out the request to everyone at the same time. The instructions could be to reply to the sender only. That person collects the ideas and prepares a final report. The instructions might request that you hit the “reply all” button so everyone sees all the ideas generated. While this may be duplicative, it does allow others to benefit from reading other ideas on which they may want to build. In this technique, the instructions usually identify a cut-off time so participants know when to stop building on others’ ideas.

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