

BRAINSTORMING FOR A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

Determining the topic and goal for your program is an important task for the team. Your goal should be to decide upon something that will meet the majority of the needs of the group. Brainstorming can be a useful tool in this process.

Objective: When conducting a brainstorming session, you want to provide an environment that is supportive to the participants. Below are some simple guidelines to assist in the session.

Checklist:

_____ **Explain the purpose of the meeting.**

- “We are here to decide on a topic for our service program this semester.”

_____ **Establish rules.**

- All ideas are welcome.
- Respect others as they are speaking.
- Allow everyone to have an opportunity to speak. Explain that only constructive criticism of another’s ideas will be permitted.

_____ **Set parameters.**

- How long will the meeting last?
- What is the process for recognizing suggestions?

_____ **Be creative.**

- This is the time to allow your wildest imagination to come to the forefront.

_____ **Focus on quantity not quality.**

- In a brainstorming session, the intent is to have as many ideas as possible. Therefore, no idea is a bad one.

_____ **Combine and Modify Ideas**

- After compiling a list of ideas, the group will review them and determine which ones are the most plausible for the upcoming event.

_____ **Avoid using killer phrases.**

- “That wouldn’t work.”
- “They wouldn’t like that idea.”
- “This may sound silly, but…”
- “This may not work, but…”

_____ **Write all suggestions on newsprint or a blackboard.**

- This illustrates that all of the ideas are considered valuable.

_____ **Redefine the list.**

- Narrow the list to match the program objectives.

_____ **Come to consensus.**

- Plan for implementing the program.

Adapted from a model used at The College of New Jersey