

BRAINSTORMING 101 HOW TO

CHEAT SHEET

You can gather more new food and beverage products ideas than you thought possible. If you are having trouble coming up with new product ideas and concepts, try brainstorming. It is a powerful idea generation tool that can quickly create for you a pool of ideas to springboard forward from. You need a lot of ideas in the beginning, so you can analyze down to the best options for your situation and goals. The following steps will help you pull off a great brainstorming event.

STEP #1 GATHER A BRAINSTORM GROUP

You will need to gather together family, friends, and staff to get your brainstorming event rolling. Get them comfortable with a pen, paper and plenty of snacks and beverages. Get them comfortable, relaxed as it opens the conduits to new ideas and possibilities.

STEP #2 SET THE GROUP PARAMETERS

The purpose is to generate as many ideas as possible, so no ideas at this point are bad ideas, the more you can generate and the crazier the better. No judging, analysis or ridiculing is allowed. Just capture them all (everything) on paper. I guarantee that you will be surprised at how big of a list this type of exercise can quickly generate for you, likely many more than you anticipated. Speed of ideas is what you want.

STEP #3 CONTEXT OF THE BRAINSTORM

What do you want to brainstorm? (An example of a brainstorming context statement: If it were possible, then how would we add value to his squash?)

STEP #4 WARM THEM UP

Share the question with your group; if it were possible, how would we add value to his squash? Then give the participants 2-3 minutes to write down as many answers to the question as they can. You will find that some people will only have a couple ideas and others will have a lot. Ask how many ideas each go on their own and take note.

STEP #5 BRAINSTORMING

You're going to capture these brainstorming ideas on a new piece of paper, a flip chart or white board. Ask participants one at a time to give you one of their ideas and chart them. Move quickly, no time is allowed for explanations, write fast and keep moving. Keep going around the group until all the ideas on participant's sheets are gone.

STEP #6 BRAINSTORMING

Now ask if there are any new ideas they have come up with and write those down, as well. Next you get really crazy and get them to try and stretch their imaginations, see what happens if they combine one of ideas with another to come up with something totally new? Remember there are no limits. If you can get people bouncing ideas off one another it will create new synergies and take you to new places and levels that no one individual would go on their own. Encourage them to think "outside of the box", around the edge of the box, deeper inside the box than they looked before, and ask them if there is another box, they should be looking for ideas. Get them to stretch their imaginations to new levels.

STEP #7 BRAINSTORMING

What you will be left if you keep pushing is a big long list of potential ideas for new products. Yes, some are going to be crazy, and some are going to be lame, and a few gems are going to shine. That is what you are looking for the gem that can be polished up and could become your next new shining star product.