



BUSINESS *digest*

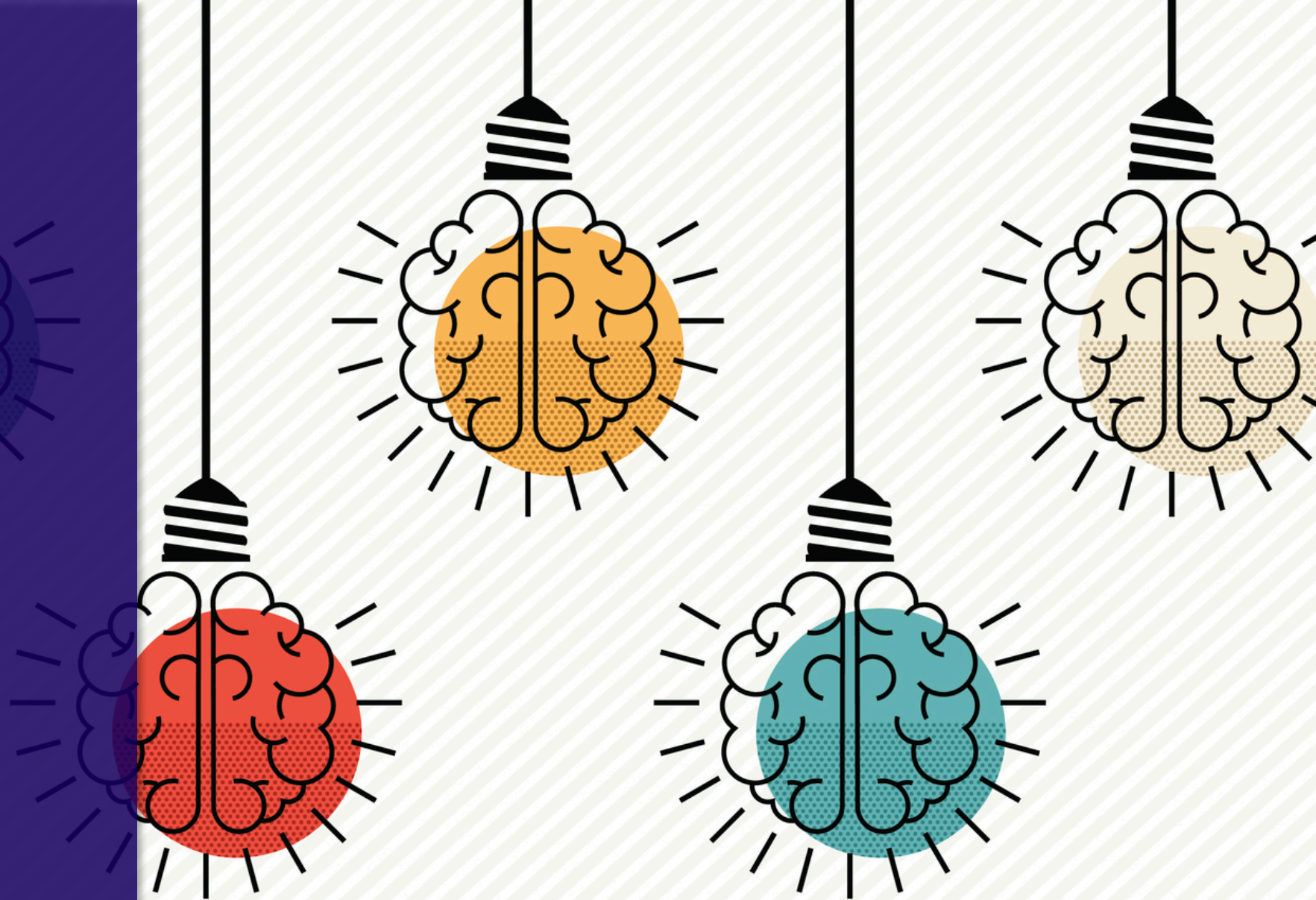
Succeeding at brainstorming

Business Digest's step-by-step guides

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What is the purpose of brainstorming?

Brainstorming is a creative technique that can be used in a wide variety of contexts

1. A good brainstorming session generates a maximum number of ideas in a short amount of time (from 30 minutes to two hours) in order to:
 - Come up with innovative ideas
 - Resolve a problem
 - Define a strategy
2. Since brainstorming is simple to implement, it is used before employing more powerful, complicated tools.



How can you make a success of your brainstorming session?

Create the conditions for success in advance

- **Select participants carefully:** choose between six and ten individuals — motivated volunteers who are keen to work as a unit.
- **Choose the right tools and location:**
 - Find a room where people can move about easily. It should be equipped with:
 - Flipcharts and blank sheets of paper or post-its, together with a place to display them so everyone can refer to them as desired.
 - Collaborative digital tools such as Klaxoon, a digital version of paper-boards and post-its.
- **Switch off all phones and tablets.**



Comment s'assurer de la réussite d'un brainstorming ?

Set clear rules and objectives

- Objective: re-state the key problem-to-be-solved or focus at the beginning of the session.
- Communicate and enforce brainstorming rules:
 - No criticizing
 - No self-censoring
 - Build on the ideas of others
 - Be brief
 - Let your imagination go

Do not hesitate to display the rules
– or remind participants about them
if necessary!



The brainstorming session should continue until everyone's ideas have been exhausted. If possible, do not set a time limit in advance.

What makes up a successful brainstorming session?

Step one: generate what are known as “primary” ideas

1. Start by couching the problem as follows: “What can we do to...?”

- Keep the group under constant high pressure by frequently reminding them about how the problem is framed and by asking follow-up questions: “What else is there?” and “What next?”
- Re-focus the group if it moves too far away from the original problem by re-framing the question.

2. Record all the ideas generated in a way that is accessible to everyone (on the board, digitally, etc.).

3. Make sure that all participants express their views: directly invite any members who are reticent

4. Keep the flow of ideas going:

- Constantly re-raise different aspects of the problem, and encourage links between the ideas raised using key verbs (“How can we lengthen, add, subtract, inverse, reverse, etc.”).

This phase may last from 5 to 30 minutes!

What makes up a successful brainstorming session?



Step two: expand on primary ideas in more detail

1. Start with a quick summary of the ideas that you want to focus on.

- Avoid an over-long summary that would be "reductive": it must feel as though it is a new starting point.

2. Explore selected ideas in more depth: brainstorm each idea more slowly and follow up with questions such as “How does that work?” until:

- The ideas could be quickly grasped by anyone who didn’t take part in the group
- The group has contributed everything it can to exploring the idea in depth

3. The aim is to delve deeper, not to make a selection.

Don’t try to decide at this stage whether one of these in-depth ideas is good or bad or whether there is opposition to it or not.

This phase may last up to 2 hours!

Successful brainstorming
takes careful planning!



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