

Brainstorm. Gather as many good and bad ideas, suggestions, examples, sentences, false starts, etc. as you can. Perhaps some friends can join in. Jot down everything that comes to mind, including material you are sure you will throw out. Be ready to keep adding to the list at odd moments as ideas continue to come to mind.

Talk to your audience, or pretend that you are being interviewed by someone — or by several people, if possible (to give yourself the opportunity of considering a subject from several different points of view). What questions would the other person ask? You might also try to teach the subject to a group or class.

Take a rest and let it all percolate.

Summarize your whole idea.

Tell it to someone in three or four sentences.

Diagram your major points somehow.

Make a tree, outline, or whatever helps you to see a schematic representation of what you have. You may discover the need for more material in some places. Write a first draft.

Then, if possible, put it away. Later, read it aloud or to yourself as if you were someone else. Watch especially for the need to clarify or add more information.

You may find yourself jumping back and forth among these various strategies.

You may find that one works better than another. You may find yourself trying several strategies at once. If so, then you are probably doing something right.

We experience creativity every time a fresh idea pops into our minds. We recognize creative imagination in everything from a pastel painting to a business plan. By trying these ten tips, you will discover some amazing creative abilities that may surprise you.

1. Substitute someone else's perspective for yours. How would a teacher, lawyer, actor, artist, explorer, journalist, psychologist, engineer, homemaker, child, or accountant approach your idea or subject? Don't know? Ask them!
2. Look at your idea through the eyes of a critic. For each idea, make a list of all criticisms that may arise. Try to develop as many solutions as possible for overcoming obstacles or repairing weaknesses in your idea.
3. Connect your idea to other worlds or fields. Look at the worlds of Politics, Art, Science & Medicine, Hollywood, The Ice Age, Astronomy, Astrology, Ballet, Animation, The Army, Asia, Teaching, Music, Europe, and the like. Can you make an analogy, and what ideas can you draw upon from these fields and worlds?
4. Magnify your idea. What can you do to enlarge, expedite, extend, strengthen, exaggerate, dramatize, or improve your idea?
5. Simplify your idea. Can you condense, trim down, compact, minimize, or narrow your idea?

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6. Change your idea. Modify the name, color, sound, shape, form, function, smell, taste, and properties of your idea.

7. Make your idea meet the needs and wants of the masses. Does your idea meet the basic needs and wants of more comfort, money, food, shelter, time, space, convenience, attractiveness, health, and beauty? If not, alter your idea to meet one if not all of these needs and wants.

8. Add more value. What will add more value? Add extra features, durability, safety, thickness, accuracy, guarantees, uses, and freebies.

9. Examine what others have done. Emulate professionals and experts who have had great success with a similar idea or product. Are you facing a problem that has already been solved? Use the past as a tool for experimentation and learning.

10. Flip a coin. When you cannot make a decision, flip a coin. Once the coin falls, use your intuition and gut to make a decision. If you feel comfortable with the result, go with it. If you feel uncomfortable with the coin toss, make the opposite decision.

Kaiser Ideas

- **Follow the Golden Rules**

Focus on quantity of ideas rather than quality, withhold criticism, welcome unusual ideas, and combine and improve on them.

- **Define the Problem—and Stay on Target**

As Ideo's Tom Kelley says, "a brainstormer without a clear problem statement is like a company without a clear strategy." Often the most effective brainstorms look beyond the initial problem (say, medication errors) to focus on its root causes (nurse interruptions, etc.).

- **Space Matters**

You don't have to have a state-of-the-art facility like P&G's Clay Street Project to hold a brainstorm. A basic room with lots of wall space works just fine. Formal conference rooms can be a bit stuffy, but if that's the only option, cover the table with objects or materials that will stimulate creative thinking.

- **Build Your Team**

Research shows that multidisciplinary teams are better problem-solvers, so invite people—aim for six to eight—who will bring a range of skills and perspectives.

- **Learn from the Experts—Then Make Their Methods Your Own**

Jump-start your brainstorming practice by working with an experienced innovation consultancy. Then adapt their methods to work in the context and culture of your company.

- **Practice**

You'll never become a champion brainstormer if you don't practice regularly.

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Classical topics (patterns of argument)

Definition

- How does the dictionary define ____?
- What do I mean by ____?
- What group of things does ____ belong to?
- How is ____ different from other things?
- What parts can ____ be divided into?
- Does ____ mean something now that it didn't years ago? If so, what?
- What other words mean about the same as ____?
- What are some concrete examples of ____?
- When is the meaning of ____ misunderstood?

Comparison/Contrast

- What is ____ similar to? In what ways?
- What is ____ different from? In what ways?
- ____ is superior (inferior) to what? How?
- ____ is most unlike (like) what? How?

Relationship

- What causes ____?
- What are the effects of ____?
- What is the purpose of ____? - What is the consequence of ____?
- What comes before (after) ____?

Testimony

- What have I heard people say about ____?
- What are some facts of statistics about ____?
- Can I quote any proverbs, poems, or sayings about ____?
- Are there any laws about ____?

Circumstance

- Is ____ possible or impossible?
- What qualities, conditions, or circumstances make ____ possible or impossible?
- When did ____ happen previously?
- Who can do ____?
- If ____ starts, what makes it end?
- What would it take for ____ to happen now?
- What would prevent ____ from happening?

Contrastive features

- How is ____ different from things similar to it?
- How has ____ been different for me?

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Variation

- How much can ____ change and still be itself?
- How is ____ changing?
- How much does ____ change from day to day?
- What are the different varieties of ____?

Distribution

- Where and when does ____ take place?
- What is the larger thing of which ____ is a part?
- What is the function of ____ in this larger thing?

Cubing (considering a subject from six points of view)

1. *Describe* it (colors, shapes, sizes, etc.)
2. *Compare* it (What is it similar to?)
3. *Associate* it (What does it make you think of?)
4. *Analyze* it (Tell how it's made)
5. *Apply* it (What can you do with it? How can it be used?)
6. *Argue* for or against it

Make an analogy

Choose an activity from column A to explain it by describing it in terms of an activity from column B (or vice-versa).

playing cards	writing essays
changing a tire	making peace
selling	growing up
walking	growing old
sailing	rising in the world
skiing	studying
plowing	meditating
launching rockets	swindling
running for office	teaching
hunting	learning
Russian roulette	failing
brushing teeth	quarreling

Rest and incubate.

(Adapted from Linda Flower's Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing, Gregory and Elizabeth Cowan's Writing, and Gordon Rohman and Albert Wlecke's Prewriting.)

A **mind map** is a diagram used to represent words, ideas, tasks, or other items linked to and arranged around a central key word or idea. Mind maps are used to generate, visualize, structure, and classify ideas, and as an aid in study, organization, problem solving, decision making, and writing. Mind maps can be used for:-

- Problem Solving
- Outline / Framework Design
- Anonymous collaboration.
- Marriage of words and visuals.
- Individual expression of creativity.
- Condensing material into a concise and memorable format

To make notes on a subject using a Mind Map, draw it in the following way:

1. Write the title of the subject you're exploring in the center of the page, and draw a circle around it. This is shown by the circle marked 1 in Figure 1, above.
2. As you come across major subdivisions or subheadings of the topic (or important facts that relate to the subject) draw lines out from this circle. Label these lines with these subdivisions or subheadings. These are shown by the lines marked 2 in Figure 1.
3. As you "burrow" into the subject and uncover another level of information (further subheadings, or individual facts) belonging to the subheadings above, draw these as lines linked to the subheading lines. These are shown by the lines marked 3 in Figure 1.
4. Finally, for individual facts or ideas, draw lines out from the appropriate heading line and label them. These are shown by the lines marked 4 in Figure 1.

As you come across new information, link it in to the Mind Map appropriately.

A complete Mind Map may have main topic lines radiating in all directions from the center. Sub-topics and facts will branch off these, like branches and twigs from the trunk of a tree. You do not need to worry about the structure produced, as this will evolve as you develop your mind map.

Mind Mapping is an extremely effective method of taking notes. Mind Maps show not only facts, but also the overall structure of a subject and the relative importance of individual parts of it. They help you to associate ideas and make connections that you might not otherwise make.

7 Steps to Making a Mind Map

1. Start in the CENTRE of a blank page turned sideways. Why? Because starting in the centre gives your Brain freedom to spread out in all directions and to express itself more freely and naturally.
2. Use an IMAGE or PICTURE for your central idea. Why? Because an image *is* worth a thousand words and helps you use your Imagination. A central image is more interesting, keeps you focussed, helps you concentrate, and gives your Brain more of a buzz!
3. Use COLOURS throughout. Why? Because colours are as exciting to your Brain as are images. Colour adds extra vibrancy and life to your Mind Map, adds tremendous energy to your Creative Thinking, and is fun!
4. CONNECT your MAIN BRANCHES to the central image and connect your second- and third-level branches to the first and second levels, etc. Why? Because your Brain works by *association*. It likes to link two (or three, or four) things together. If you connect the branches, you will understand and remember a lot more easily.
5. Make your branches CURVED rather than straight-lined. Why? Because having nothing but straight lines is *boring* to your Brain.
6. Use ONE KEY WORD PER LINE. Why? Because single key words give your Mind Map more power and flexibility.



7. Use IMAGES throughout. Why? Because each image, like the central image, is also worth a thousand words. So if you have only 10 images in your Mind Map, it's already the equal of 10,000 words of notes!

Originated in the late 1960s by Tony Buzan Mind Maps are now used by millions of people around the world - from the very young to the very old - whenever they wish to use their minds more effectively. Find out all about Mind Mapping by reading the Ultimate Book of Mind Maps or attend a training session on Mind Mapping with Tony Buzan. For all of Tony Buzan's books [click here](#) and all Training Courses with Tony, [click here](#).

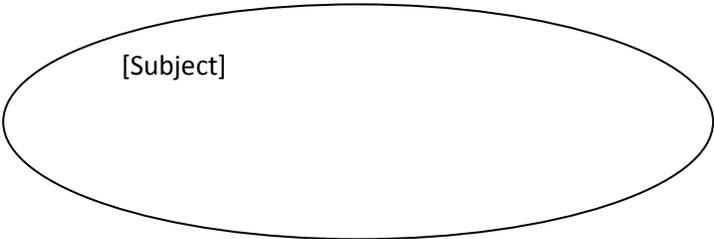
Mind Map Job Aid

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Purpose of document _____

Who is the audience? _____

Where will you find more information? _____



[Subject]