

Brainstorming with MindGenius

Brainstorming with MindGenius is simple and straightforward. All it requires is a meeting room with computer projection capability, or a whiteboard, plus a PC with MindGenius installed. As long as you have basic keyboard skills you will be able to use MindGenius.

The fundamental difference between traditional brainstorming and brainstorming with MindGenius is the fact you can work together with your attendees to analyse the information gathered, rather than the facilitator needing to analyse the information individually after the brainstorming session. This leads to a rounded and comprehensive analysis of the data rather than an individual viewpoint.

Remember, before you use MindGenius for the first time; view the MindGenius “getting started” video to learn about the basic features you will need to get underway.

Before your brainstorming session

Facilitator preparation

Although brainstorming purists might suggest that brainstorming sessions should have no structure, in reality it is better to have a framework in mind to ensure you cover what you need to. Brainstorming sessions may fail if boundaries are not set. Review the MindGenius Brainstorming **Questions** for inspiration and take a look at the **templates** available for different methods such as **SWOT Analysis** or **6M**.

Then use MindGenius to gather information on:

- **facts and figures, ensuring they are quantified and not assumed**
- **the logistics of holding the brainstorming session**
- **identifying what needs to be covered and a framework to enable the session to flow smoothly**
- **identifying prompting techniques in anticipation of poor response**
- **the current situation and setting the scene for participants**

Capturing information is as simple as typing words and then hitting return using the **Type and Return** feature.

Things to consider before your exercise

- **Do your attendees know what is expected of them?**
- **What are the opportunities and problems?**
- **Have you defined the problem area or opportunity you want to create ideas for?**
- **What would be your ideal outcome?**
- **What effect would your ideal outcome have?**

During the brainstorming session

When you conduct a brainstorming session with MindGenius, you'll notice a real difference. You will be able to capture information quickly and jump backwards and forwards at ease in order to generate debate and seek clarification.

You do not need to worry about the order of the ideas at this point, as MindGenius will allow you to easily re-order them later using the **Drag and Drop** functionality. Drag and Drop allows you to group together relevant information, create links and associations and develop understanding.

Map explorer allows you to use your framework to keep the session on track and maintain momentum. MindGenius also gives you the flexibility to change direction, methodology or tactics to accommodate different viewpoints and manage disruptive tangents.

Of course, there is still skill required on the part of the facilitator to direct the session and ensure the correct questioning is used to keep it flowing but MindGenius can also help you with the questioning process through its **Questions Tool**.

Group Ideas and begin to understand

This is where traditional brainstorming finishes: you gather large amounts of relevant data but do nothing within the session to make sense of it and the facilitator is left to try and analyse disparate data post brainstorming.

With MindGenius you can work with your attendees to achieve true collaboration on the information gathered, collate and group information and reach a common understanding, and consensus during the session, meaning everyone plays a part in the analysis and solution. This means a rounded view on the data can be achieved.

Use **categories** and **resources** to link information and gain better understanding of the issue or what needs done and use the power of the application to view **category or resource centric representation** of your brainstorming session to aid decision making.

Identify Actions and Communicate

If you wish, and if required, you can also start to **allocate actions and resources** within your brainstorming session. Actions can then be **exported to MS Outlook** task lists. When people return to their desks, their task lists will be waiting for them and everyone will be immediately clear on what they have to do. The ability to create an action and resource plan as a group helps to gain buy in from your attendees and to ensure there is no loss of momentum in getting actions started.

Post brainstorming

MindGenius gives you the ability to get on and immediately start to investigate any new ideas, or sort any problems you have identified without the need to type up data or comprehend scribbled handwriting.

You can also **export your thinking to MS Office** packages to share with colleagues, or to reuse your thinking in other pieces of work.

What next?

MindGenius transforms brainstorming from an idealistic methodology to a practical application that accelerates understanding, decision-making, actions and conclusions.

Get started with your brainstorming exercise by either selecting a brainstorming template and associated questioning or a blank map.