

635 Brainwriting

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	FACILITATORS	CATEGORY	DURATION	LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY
3-6	none	Ideate	30min for 6 participants	Simple

Description

The 635 Brainwriting is an ideation technique invented in the 1960s as a response to the limitations of brainstorming. Brainstorming method, as a very popular ideation technique, asks the participants to discuss around one core issue and generate ideas verbally. However, it is very common that participants don't contribute equally to the discussion due to various reasons: some participants are shy to express ideas, some are dominating verbally, etc. In contrast, the 635 Brainwriting requires the participants to write down their ideas. With 6 participants each writing down 3 ideas in 5 minutes, this process is repeated 6 times until all ideas have been reviewed.

Materials

- ▶ Pens
- ▶ worksheets like the one below, one each participant

	Idea 1	Idea 2	Idea 3
Participant 1			
Participant 2			
Participant 3			
Participant 4			
Participant 5			
Participant 6			

Table 1: A 635 worksheet

Preparation

Normally, this method is designed for 6 participants. Therefore, 6 worksheets with 6 rows and 3 columns representing 6 participants and 3 ideas. Ideally, the participants would sit around to pass around the worksheets very easily.

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Clarifying the research topic and rules

Since no one should be allowed to speak during the process, it is crucial that everyone understands the research question and the 635 method before actually implementing the method.

2. Generating Ideas

In the first round, each participant generates 3 ideas in 5 minutes regarding the topic. It is acceptable that these ideas are vague and general.

3. Passing around the worksheets

After the initial round, each worksheet is passed on to the person next to the initial owner. After passing around, 3 more ideas should be created in this round. The participants should be able to see the previous three ideas and they can further develop the ideas or start new ideas.

4. Repeat the Process

This process of creating 3 ideas in 5 minutes will be repeated until all ideas have been reviewed, which means 6 rounds for 6 participants. In the end, 108 ideas will be created and written down on paper.

Remarks, Tips, Limitations

- ▶ Considering the team chemistry, brainstorming may be a better option
- ▶ Time pressure is a double edged sword and should be considered
- ▶ Sometimes it is challenging to formulate ideas in a written way

References

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