Idea-Spurring Questions
to take an old idea and make it new!

ADAPT?
What else is like this?
What other ideas does this suggest?

MODIFY?
Change meaning?
Change shape, form?

MAGNIFY?
What to add?
Greater frequency?

MINIMIZE?
What to subtract?
Make smaller, less of?
Less frequent?

PUT TO OTHER USES?
New ways to use it?
Other uses if modified?

SUBSTITUTE?
Who/what else instead?
Other place/time?

REARRANGE?
Other layout?
Other sequence of events?

REVERSE?
Opposite?
Turn it backward?
Turn it upside down?

COMBINE?
Combine purposes?
Combine ideas?

Source: Bristol-Myers Public Relations

are available on the following topics:

• Advising Groups
• Agendas
• Assertiveness
• Brainstorming
• Co-Sponsorship with Other Groups
• Communication
• Community Service
• Conflict Resolution
• Constitution/Bylaws
• Delegation
• Difficult Members
• Elections
• Ethics
• Evaluation Series
  Group Performance
  Individual Performance
  Meeting Evaluation
  Program/Event Evaluation
• Financial Series
  Budgeting Organization Money
  Corporate Sponsorship
  Fundraising
• Getting Involved
• Goal Setting
• Group Dynamics
• Icebreakers
• Marketing Your Leadership Skills
• Meetings
• Minutes from Meetings
• Motivation
• Newsletters
• Officer Transition
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• Program Planning
• Public Speaking
• Publicizing Events
• Recognition
• Recruiting Volunteers
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• Starting an Organization
• Stress Management
• Team Building
• Time Management
• University Events

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SILC staff offers programs and consultation in these and other areas of personal and organizational leadership.

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BRAINSTORMING

A process whereby a group pools their collective thoughts and ideas to formulate a list of ideas and suggestions about a project, promotion, problem, or program.

The Ground Rules for Brainstorming

In setting up a brainstorming session for your group, here are some ground rules that should be explained to all participants before you begin. Remember: **Spontaneity and outrageous ideas often yield the best solutions!**

- All participants and ideas hold equal weight.
- Ideas are placed on a blackboard or flipchart, visible to everyone.
- A time limit is determined.
- **One specific problem or issue** is dealt with at a time.
- Quantity (lots of ideas) about the problem or issue is the goal.
- Everyone is encouraged to speak often.
- Piggy-backing (building on one another's ideas) is encouraged.
- Quality of ideas is not important.
- Negative and critical remarks are not allowed.

Narrowing Down the Possibilities

Now that you have a surplus of ideas, it's important to examine your list and pick the best solution.

Step 1: **Combine** two or more ideas to make a great idea and improve on the rough thoughts thrown out in the brainstorming session.

Step 2: **Discard** ideas which are impractical, impossible, not feasible, or illegal.

Step 3: **Choose** the three best ideas by having everyone vote for three ideas and taking the top three vote getters.

Step 4: **Examine** each of your top three ideas. Discuss all their possibilities, potential, and problems. Keep in mind your monetary and human resources and the time you have to complete the proposed project or solve the problem.

Step 5: **Pick** the strongest one out of your top three, and go with it.

Brainstorming is needed for executive/officer meetings, problem-solving meetings, and meetings to explore possible courses of action. It is very useful in encouraging suggestions, gaining participation by group members, and training members.

Adapted from: Bristol-Myers, A Pocket Guide for Brainstorming Sessions
Gibbs, J.R., Platts, G., & Miller, L., Dynamics of Participative Groups