



Brainstorming

As a risk management tool in radiotherapy



Brainstorming

- A group or individual creativity technique by which efforts are made to find a conclusion for a specific problem by gathering a list of ideas spontaneously by its member(s)

- [Wikipedia](#)



Brainstorming

- A conference technique by which a group attempts to find a solution for a specific problem by amassing all the ideas spontaneously generated by its members
- Brainstorming is more effective than individuals working alone in generating ideas
 - Alex Faickney Osborn, advertising executive 1953



Brainstorming techniques

- **Nominal group**

- Participants write their ideas down anonymously and hand them to the facilitator
- The ideas are presented to the group who then vote
- The top ranked ideas can then be reconsidered or agreed for recommendation



Brainstorming techniques

- **Group passing**
 - Small groups
 - Each participant writes down a single idea and passes the paper to the next person who adds some thoughts
 - The ideas are thereby elaborated extensively



Brainstorming techniques

- **Team idea mapping**
 - Initial topic is well defined
 - Participants brainstorm individually and then merge all ideas onto one large map
 - Sharing of ideas clarifies issues or misunderstandings and enables prioritisation



Brainstorming techniques

- **Directed**

- Can be manual or computer generated
- A set of criteria for evaluating a good idea is provided prior to the session
- Each participant generates one response
- Responses are randomly shared between other participants who then 'improve' the idea within the criteria defined
- Can be several circulations before final agreement



Brainstorming techniques

- **Guided**

- Groups or individuals are asked to consider the topic from different perspectives and for pre-defined periods of time
- The ideas generated are then ranked for further brainstorming
- An action list is drawn up



Brainstorming techniques

- Individual
 - Brainstorming alone
 - Free writing
 - Free speaking
 - Word association
 - Mind mapping



Brainstorming techniques

- Question
 - Asking questions rather than generating ideas
 - The answers to the questions form the framework for the construction of future action plans



Brainstorming

- Suitable for radiotherapy when all members of the interdisciplinary team participate
 - Bring the different professional perspectives, knowledge and skills
 - Supports involvement of the full team
 - Should bring a cohesiveness between the individual members
 - Select the technique most suited to your staff



Brainstorming

- Focus on a problem
 - Generating as many solutions as possible
 - Generating new ideas and associations
 - Not making judgments – later stage



Brainstorming – the process

- Write down the incident to be discussed
 - Give all the participants time to read it carefully and to formulate initial thoughts
- ‘open’ the floor to discussion
 - Guide the process by recording and grouping the ideas
 - Can be anonymous (written) or open (oral)



Brainstorming – the process

- Don't come to the group with preconceived ideas or prejudices
- Remain focused throughout – don't get side tracked
- Where comments could generate new ideas – open the floor to further discussion



Brainstorming – the process

- Refine and consolidate the ideas and represent to the group
 - Focus the discussion now on the specific points elicited



Brainstorming – the challenges

- **Blocking**

- In an open forum participants may ‘forget’ or dismiss their own idea/s if they are taken by one from another participant

- **Unequal participation**

- Dominant personality
- Reticent participants
- ‘Group thinking’



Brainstorming - pitfalls

- Don't intervene – suppresses ideas and inhibits the participants
- Never dismiss or criticise ideas
- Ensure that all participants understand the ground rules before you start



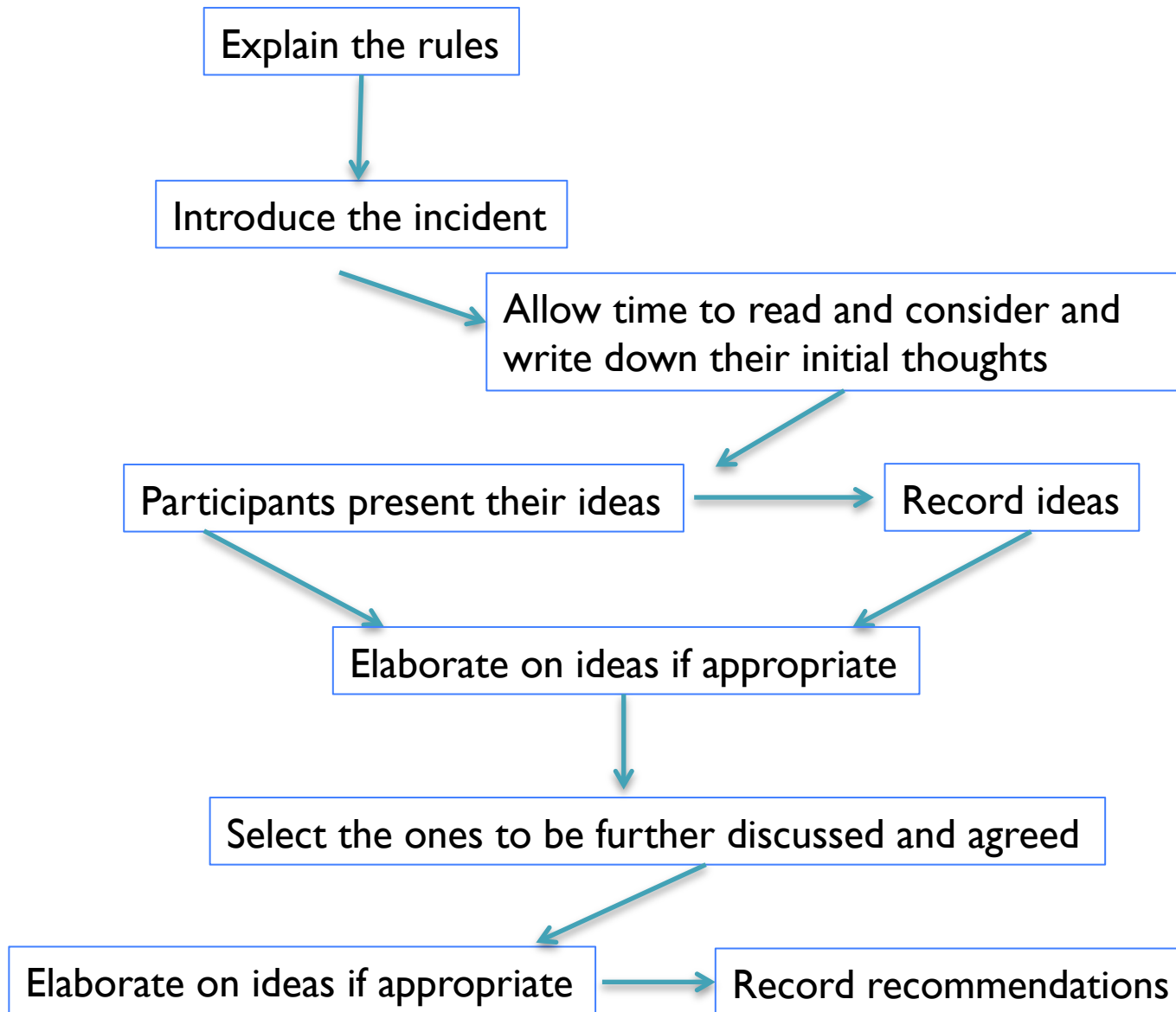
Brainstorming - pitfalls

- As the co-ordinator don't get distracted by one idea – wait until the process has been completed as it requires your full attention and involvement
- Leave the editing until the process is complete and you are producing your final report and recommendations



Brainstorming – the process

- For this exercise the discussion should focus on implementing change based on the findings of the incident analysis
- Prepare a report on your recommendations and proposals for implementation





References

- <http://www.forbes.com/2010/04/20/brainstorming-ideation-ideas-leadership-managing-innovation.html>
- **Wikipedia**