



What have you been telling yourself lately? What have you been telling your team lately? We are all familiar with self-fulfilling prophecies, but what if we flipped the script on our summer? Tell your team we CAN have an effective brainstorming session, we CAN accomplish projects while team members pop in and out of vacation. Cheers to productive meetings, motivating team talks, and positive self-talk.

Kristin

IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

- ◆ [How to Brainstorm a List](#)
- ◆ [7 Ways to Promote Your Product or Service on a Panel Discussion](#)
- ◆ [From the Bookshelf: Choose Your Story, Change Your Life](#)
- ◆ [Contact Kristin](#)

HOW TO BRAINSTORM A LIST

“Oh! That’s how to brainstorm a list!” exclaimed a manager at a recent meeting I was facilitating. “All the other meetings I’ve been in, we ‘brainstorm,’ and wander all over the place and never seem to land the plane!”

There’s a reason why brainstorming has gotten such a bad reputation – and it all boils down to the fact that most people don’t know how to brainstorm effectively.

Developed in the late 1930s by [Alex F. Osborn](#) to stimulate his advertising executives’ creativity, brainstorming has a few ground rules that need to be stated up front:

- All ideas are valid
- To pass is okay; we’ll continue until all pass;
- The recorder will quickly capture ideas on an [easel chart](#)/projection so all can see
- Adding other ideas or “hitchhiking” is encouraged
- No praise, no comments, no criticism

That last ground rule is extremely important as you lose steam and [creativity](#) stalls when people evaluate the ideas. Let it roll until all ideas are exhausted (and even then, you may just want to take a break to harness the power of the [third-third](#)). It is only AFTER you have finished brainstorming that you start to evaluate the ideas!

There are three different methods typically used to brainstorm a list in both the in-person and virtual worlds:

1. **Freewheel.** Anyone on the team can call out an idea, with one person capturing the ideas on an easel chart, projecting onto a screen, or sharing your screen/whiteboard.
2. **Round-Robin.** The team leader goes around the table/room for each person to either contribute a new idea, add to, or “hitchhike” on a previous idea. Each person has the option to pass.

3. **Slip.** Each member writes down each of his or her ideas on a separate slip of paper, stickie notes, index cards, chatbox, or a crowdsourcing platform.
4. The ideas are then collected and organized.

If you are in the mood to experiment, you can use some idea starters to kick start the creativity!

The final step to brainstorming a list is to clarify and combine similar ideas. Go through the list and ensure everyone on the team understands each item. Eliminate duplicates and combine ideas that are very similar. If there is disagreement on the team, keep the ideas separate.

It is then, and only then, you move into sorting and evaluating those ideas!

7 WAYS TO PROMOTE YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE ON A PANEL DISCUSSION

A panelist recently asked me, “How do I position my book without being too sales-y or pushy?” Good question, as one of the reasons you want to be on a panel discussion is for visibility, but you don’t want to offend, now do you?

It’s a tough situation, but not uncommon at all. The best thing for you to do is to connect with the panel moderator and share your goal of visibility for your book – or any other product or service you think the audience might be interested in.

As you are sharing your goal(s), also provide a few ideas about what the panel moderator can do to bring your offering to the audience’s attention.

(Note: I am going to be referencing the book, but change “book” out for whatever product or service you want to highlight...)

7 Ways to Promote Your Product or Service at a Panel Discussion

1. Offer to send an advance copy of the book to the panel moderator – they may actually read it and comment about it spontaneously!
2. While introducing you, the panel moderator can weave in the fact that you are the author of a new book – and maybe even hold up the book for all to see!
3. During the panel discussion, the panel moderator can mention a quote from the book and ask you to comment on it.
4. During the closing comments, the panel moderator can share where to find more information about you, your new book, or get in touch with you.
5. You can get in touch with the other panelists and send them an advance copy of the book. They may also read it and comment about it!
6. Bring a copy of the book and put it on the table – but only with permission from the panel moderator and meeting organizer. There may be some policies that prohibit this kind of display.
7. In the virtual world, create a virtual background with the book in the corner.

One final tip – create a short URL and/or QR code for the audience to find out more information easily.

What are some other creative ways to promote your product or service at a panel discussion? I would love to hear what you have seen or tried during conferences, conventions, and meetings.

FROM THE BOOKSHELF: CHOOSE YOUR STORY CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Many of us have long known the power of positive thinking, self-talk, and affirmations. It's easy to say we should be more positive and optimistic, but how do we do that? It's not like a light switch where you can just shift the chatter in your brain. And that's where this month's book comes in. Kindra Hall provides a brilliant path to silence your inner critic in her latest book, [*Choose Your Story, Change Your Life: Silence Your Inner Critic and Rewrite Your Life from the Inside Out*](#).

To be honest, I didn't read this book because I feel like I have a huge "gap" in my life or that my self-talk needed to shift. I just love Kindra. She is a masterful storyteller, and I could listen to her read the yellow pages - because I know she would create some amazing stories to tell! (She's also the author of [*Stories That Stick*](#) and has a weekly video email that I never miss!).

But let's get back to the book.... this book is written in such joyful detail that I could actually picture the people and situations she shares to make each point come alive and believable. Why is this important? Because you can finish each part of the book with tangible takeaways to immediately apply to your life, work, and relationships.

So, here's the structure of the book:

Part 1: Why Stories are so Powerful. This sets the foundation as to where your self-stories come from, how they create your reality, and how rewriting your stories can transform your future.

Part 2: The Self-Storytelling Process and How to Reconstruct Your Inner Voice:

1. Identify your invisible stories with specific trigger words or physical and/or emotional moments
2. Analyze those moments so you can begin to choose a different story.
3. Reauthor a new story that services you. You can choose to write one that replaces your current story, reinterprets it, reroutes it, adopts it from other people in your life, or just flat-out rewrite your new story from scratch.
4. Put your new self-story to work. These new stories are fragile, and it takes practice to systematically, intentionally install these new, chosen, better stories as your inner-narrative default.

Finally, Hall shares specific stories of transformation in these categories: business and career, health and well-being, money and finances, relationships and love, and family and parenting - all told in Kindra-style storytelling.

A great read, and evidently quite timely, since I realized, through reading this book, that I have just entered a new chapter in my life where I get to rewrite my story!