

timeinspace
Missy Anapolsky

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming = little (or big!) storms in the brain

Brainstorming is an expressive, problem-solving activity that promotes idea generation, helps the designer think about and work through complicated design problems, and encourages creative expression. It is based on free association and uses a written record of verbalized ideas to help reveal direction(s) towards a solution(s). Every thought and idea is valuable and worth recording. There are no right or wrong answers, and there are no limitations to the process.

Start by making lists of everything that relates to your subject. Using words is more time-efficient than drawing because you can write a word much quicker than drawing an idea. Keep an open mind to all ideas and let the words flow without censoring or judgement. Make word associations; use a dictionary and/or thesaurus to help facilitate your creative thinking.

Another effective method is verbal diagramming or "mind mapping." Place a key word in the middle of a piece of paper and branch out in all directions as you write down other ideas that occur and are related to the initial word. You can get this process going by asking yourself questions: why? when? who? how? what? This approach lets you picture the structure of your thinking.

If you feel stumped, and the ideas are not coming easily after spending a lot of time working on a problem, take a break. Divert to another activity to give your mind time to process all the information you have gathered. You will return with a fresh eye.

Once you feel you have enough material to work from, begin the visualization process by making thumbnail sketches. Thumbnails are small rough sketches of a preliminary design idea (also called a concept). Try to generate as many of these as possible because every communication problem has an infinite number of solutions. Your first ideas will probably be your most obvious ones. Get those out and keep going! Continue until it becomes increasingly difficult to think of any others.

- Practice freewriting.
- Create mind maps.
- Write down lists of thought and ideas.
- Build visual inspiration boards.

Finding unique solutions requires patience and hard work.

*Sometimes the seas are calm
And that is wonderful.
Sometimes the seas are not calm
And that's the way it is.*

RABBI NATHAN SEAGULL