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BRAIN STORMING AND ITS RELEVANCE IN DECISION MAKING FOR LIBRARY MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Today's time is very much changing as per organizational management and decision making is concern. In an organization like academic libraries and library & information centers, managing, coordinating and balancing documents, staff and users is always a big task, a librarian or a knowledge manager has to think about in order to provide better and satisfactory services. In this paper an effort has been made to bring out basic concept, meaning, application, origin and impact of brainstorming. And how brainstorming can be useful in library and information centers and in delivering their services in this electronic era. Library personnel are expected to provide right information at right time and right place. Brainstorming in this context can play a vital role in doing so. As it is well known an organization is a group of members, stake holder for same objective and purpose. And in this order there are a number of problems which come in day to day work officially or unofficially. It needs a team effort to find out the desired solution by taking in view the various possible aspects of the problem. In this connection, brainstorming plays a significant role to find out the expected solution out of problems prevailing by a group effort. It (Brainstorming) is a method by which solutions to various problems is sought in a positive and creative way. It is absolutely an intellectual and rational group effort.

Brainstorming is a creative methodology invented by Alex Faickney Osborn, who was an advertising manager; in his book Applied Imagination in 1953. In the year 1963 he proposed that by applying brainstorming the organizations productivity can be doubled. During brainstorming process we focus on the given problems and intentionally find as many solutions as possible by applying a number of ideas. So we can say that brainstorming is a group effort during problem solving.

KEYWORDS :*Management Methods, Library & information Centers & services in Digitized & Electronic Era, Brainstorming Methods Etc.*

SHORT PROFILE

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INTRODUCTION :

In the present high speed electronic, digital and information age, the information and knowledge provider, information manager and LIS Profes- sionals and infor- mation scientists & their society is expected to serve the people appropriate to their information need suitable to their work area and profes sion. In an organi- zation like and library and information centers, management of documents, users and library staff is always a big task; the management and authority have to take care of. So that the organizs- ation could deliver their services in a better way and satisfy user needs and expectation.

In this connection, Brainstorming is a well practicable and applicable mana- gerial practice an institution can adopt. Basically, Brainstorming is chain of individual creative method through which an attempt is made to get desired answer for a particular question by accumulating a set of brainstorms impulsively provided by its participants. In simple word, brainstorming can be compared with ideas.

The term Brainstorming was first used by Alex Faickney Osborn in the year 1953 in the book Applied Imagination. According to Osborn, brainstorming is more effective and efficient than working alone individually in order to generating ideas to get solution for the given problems.

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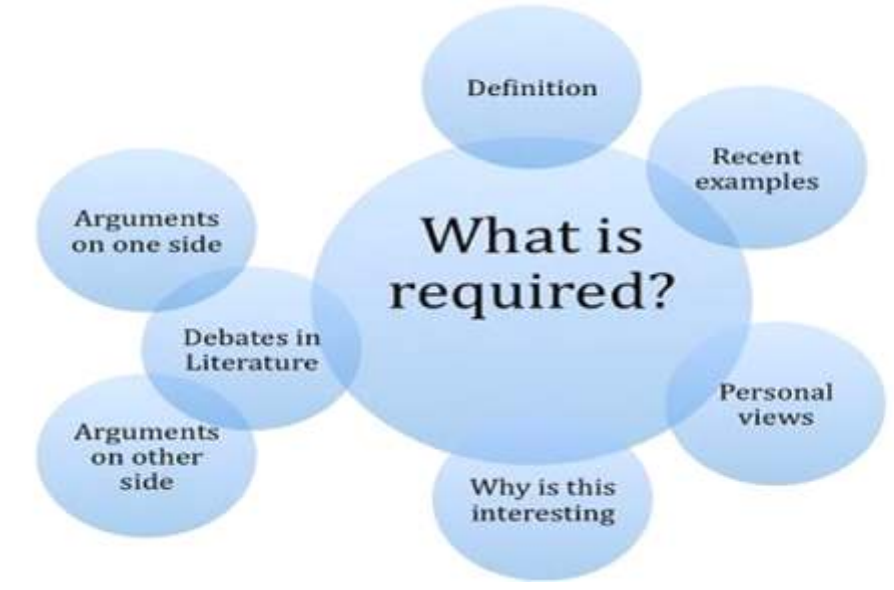
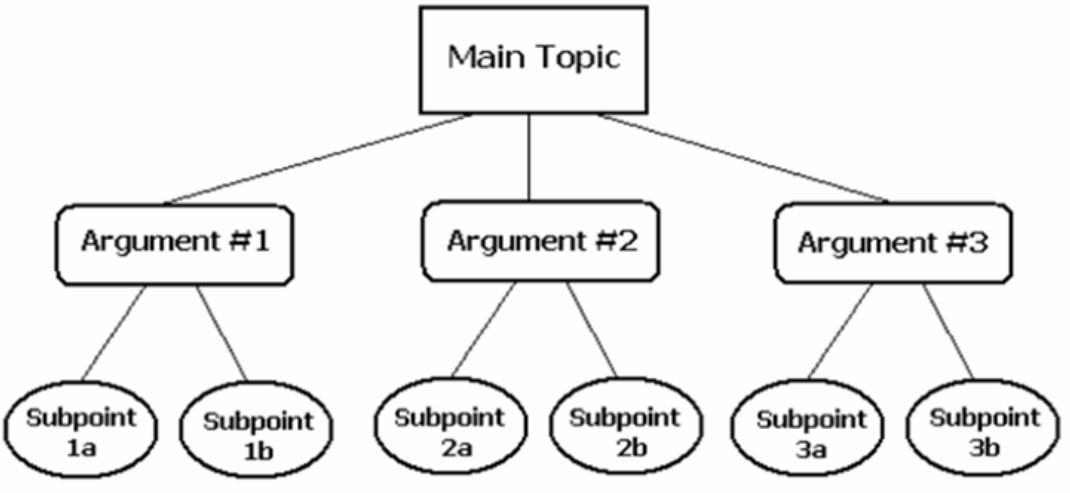
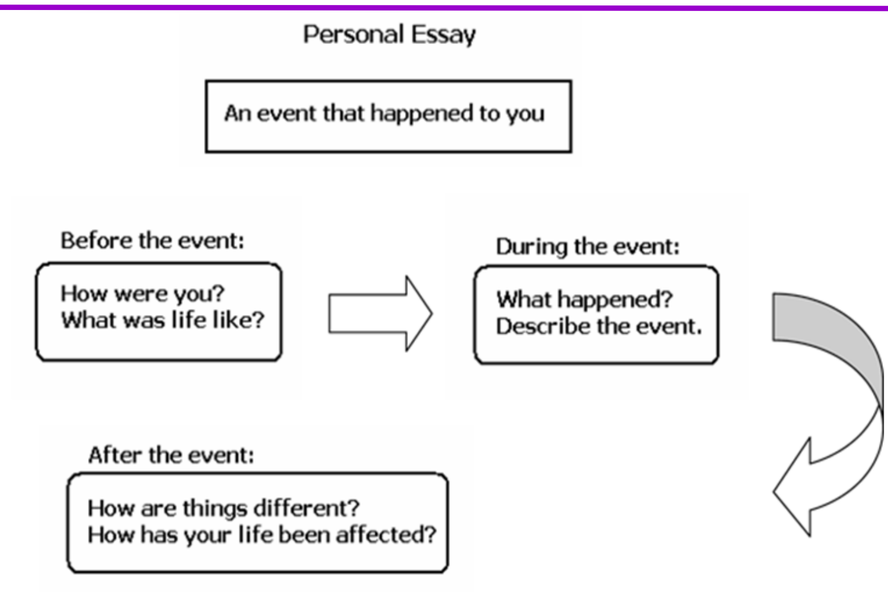
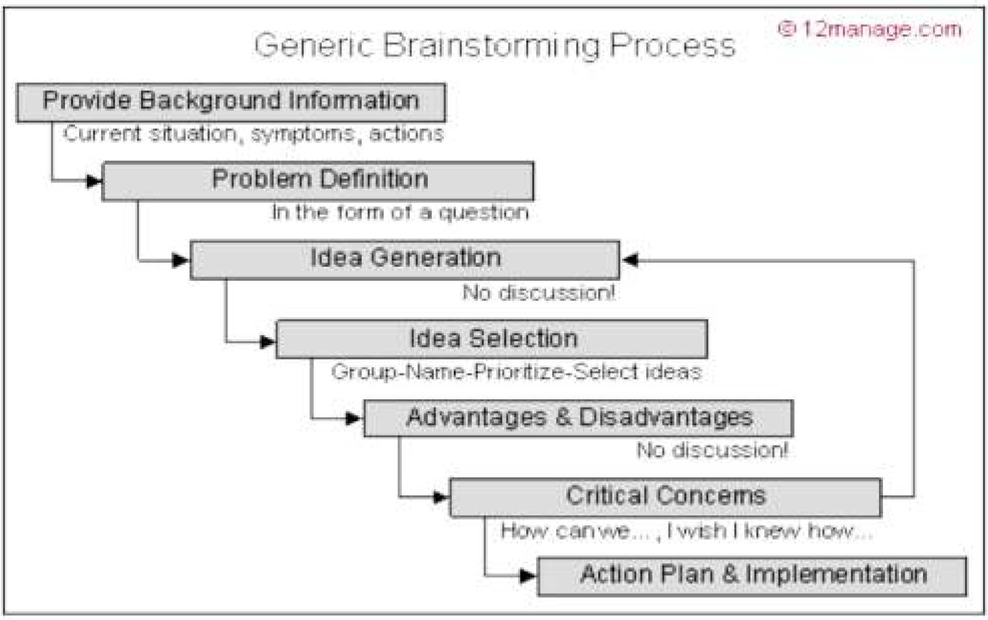

What is required?
Definition
Recent examples
Personal views
Why is this interesting
Arguments on other side
Debates in Literature
Arguments on one side


Main Topic
Argument #1
Argument #2
Argument #3
Subpoint 1a
Subpoint 1b
Subpoint 2a
Subpoint 2b
Subpoint 3a
Subpoint 3b


Personal Essay
An event that happened to you
Before the event:
How were you?
What was life like?
During the event:
What happened?
Describe the event.
After the event:
How are things different?
How has your life been affected?


Generic Brainstorming Process
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Provide Background Information
Current situation, symptoms, actions
Problem Definition
In the form of a question
Idea Generation
No discussion!
Idea Selection
Group-Name-Prioritize-Select ideas
Advantages & Disadvantages
No discussion!
Critical Concerns
How can we... , I wish I knew how...
Action Plan & Implementation


IDEAS
PEOPLE
INNOVATION
PROCESS
FOCUS
GET
GIVE
PROVIDE
MAKE
RISKS
THINK
SPACE
ENVIRONMENT
REWARD
TIME
TAKE
CREATIVE
THINKING
CREATE
FUN
ENCOURAGE
DIFFERENT
STAFF

Origin:

Concept of Brainstorming was an individual effort of an advertising manager Alex Faickeney Osborn. He started developing mechanism for creative problem solving in the year 1939. Osborn was very much disappointed because of worker's inability to cultivate positive viewpoint individually for advertisement drive. In this order, he started introducing combined-thinking meet and explored a valid change in the quality & quantity of thought generated by workers. And finally he brought these all outputs in the book Applied Imagination in the year 1953.

Methodology what Osborn applied:

Osborn provided that there is two rules which impart to "ideative efficacy" these are:

1. Defer judgment and 2. Reach for quantity. On the basis of these two rules, he generalized four methods for brainstorming, with intention to minimize social inhibition among group members, provoke idea creation and enhance overall creativity of the group.

1. Concentrate on quantity: this method is for to increase divergent productivity which target to provide problem solving by the maxim quantity gives quality. The thought is that the more the number of idea created the more the possibility of having a radical and effective solution.

2.Reserve criticism: while in brainstorming, idea generated should not be criticized instead it must be withheld for later discussion. Group member should aim to add or extend to ideas and reserve criticism for a later required phase of the method.

By doing so, group member will be free to propose new ideas.

3. Accept unusual ideas: group members should include unusual ideas for having adequate and long set of ideas. New ideas can be formulated by looking in new context and withholding assumptions. In this way we can have better solutions by practicing this new way of thinking.

4. Accumulate and improve ideas: good ideas can be joined to make one better idea, as indicated by the slogan "1+1=3". It is assumed to encourage the building of ideas by the method of association.

Application of Brainstorming:

Osborn suggests that brainstorming should be addressed for a particular question or set of questions. During addressing various sessions he found that multiple questions were not efficient and effective. Next he says problem should be oriented to idea generation not towards coming on judgment.

Application of brainstorming in Library and information science and services:

Brainstorming can be applied in various planning and development activities of libraries

and information centers. Some of these include:

1. Library personnel management
2. Financial management
3. Various decision making activities
4. Recruitment/Training
5. Annual Reports
6. Library statistics
7. During providing various library services to users
8. Promotion of library activity and extension services.
9. In classification/cataloguing activities of books and other forms of documents
10. During structure of library building and other infrastructures.

Brainstorming groups

While Osborn was conducting his study he made two groups of experts and novices of all total 12 participants. Group members were promoted to give unusual and open answers. What ideas were found were not criticized and argued. The participants generally gave ideas that were meant for generation of solution but not for coming on conclusion as per situation. Conclusion was reserved for later time to be come with.

Some points of brainstorming insufficiency

As per Diehl and Stroebe, brainstorming was not so much effective and efficient in idea generation as it was vocal about it. They put forward three methods in their support.

They were: 1. free riding, 2. Evaluation apprehension and 3.Blocking. Apart from it there are few other methods which also criticize brainstorming methods is: 1. Social matching effect and 2. Illusion of group productivity.

1. Free Riding: sometimes group member may feel that their ideas will be less important when combined with the others in the group. Instead, Diehl and Stroebe highlighted, even when individuals worked alone they produced lesser ideas if told that their output would be judged in a group with others than if told that their output would be assessed individually.
2. Evaluation apprehension: this was determined to happen only in case of individual assessment. If the assumption of collective evaluation in place, real-time judgment of ideas, ostensibly an inclusion of evaluation apprehension, failed to induce significant variance.
3. Blocking: blocking means the situation in which only one member may speak his/her ideas in a group at a given time. Diehl and Stroebe assessed that the question whether this effect could minimize idea-generation, as ideas suppressed long enough to listen to another participant's ideas might be forgotten. Their research validated their hypothesis.
4. Social matching effect: it says about the tendency of members in a group to match the level of productivity by others in a group. When one or more participants think that they are adding more to the brainstorming process than others, they express a nature to decrease their aid to the team's lower level as it is seen over contribution is more result-oriented than under contribution.
5. Illusion of group productivity: sometimes participants over estimate their productivity, a mindset known as the illusion of group productivity. Since participants hardly have objective parameters to determine how good they are doing, they can only assume about the group's effectiveness. Group members working on collaborative assignments are likely to feel that their group is more productive than others. Next to this, participants overestimate their own contributions to the group. In one case, participants who were asked to generate ideas in a brainstorming session were asked to estimate how many ideas they individually gave. They claimed to present 36% of the ideas on average, where they actually only contributed about 25% of the ideas.

Brainstorming and incentives:

Some case studies showed that incentives can augment brainstorming processes. In these case studies, group members were parted into three conditions. In condition I, a flat fee was paid to all group members. In condition II, members were given points for every unique thought of their own, and subjects were paid for the points that they acquired. In condition III, subjects were paid based on the impact that their idea had on the group; it was measured by

counting the number of group ideas derived from the specific subject's ideas. And output was: condition III outperformed condition II and condition II outperformed condition I at a statistically significant level for most parameters. The outcome was those group members were eager to work far longer to achieve unique results in the expectation of compensation.

Criticism of brainstorming:

A number of researches has criticized Osborn's claim that group brainstorming can give more ideas than individuals working alone. Instead Diehl and Stroebe demonstrated the opposite words: they said group brainstorming together provide lesser ideas than individuals working alone. Their outputs were based on a review of 22 studies, 18 of which supported their results.

Variations in Brainstorming

There are some types and variation of brainstorming. These are

1. Nominal group technique :

This is a type of brainstorming which promote all group members to have an equal idea in the process. Nominal group technique is also used to prepare ranked list of ideas.

2.Group passing technique: every member in a rounded group writes down an idea, and then passes the piece of paper to the next person, which contribute some thoughts. It is continued until everyone gets their original piece of paper back. In this way, there is possibility that the group will have extensively elaborated on each idea.

3.Team idea mapping method: this works on the process called association. It increases collaboration and maximizes the quantity of ideas, and is framed such that all members can participate and no idea is rejected.

4.Electronic brainstorming : This is computerized form of the manual brainstorming technique typically done by an electronic meeting system (EMS) but simpler forms can also be done via email and may be based on browsing or use peer-to-peer software.

5.Directed brainstorming: This is a form of electronic brainstorming. It is done manually or in computerized way. Directed brainstorming is applied when the solution space is already known before the session. If known, this parameter may be used to constrain the idea generation method intentionally. Here solution space indicates a set of criteria for evaluating a good idea.

6.Guided brainstorming: Guided brainstorming is a time set out to brainstorm either individually or as a collective group for a particular subject under the restraints of context and time. This kind of brainstorming carries off all cause for conflict and restrains conversation while provoking critical and creative thinking in an involvement, balanced environment. Here creative ideas consistently emerge.

7.Individual brainstorming: This is the use of brainstorming individually. It peculiarly involves free writing, free speaking, and word association and drawing a mind map, which is a visual note taking technique in which participants diagram their thoughts.

8.Question brainstorming: It is brainstorming of the questions, rather to come up with instant answer and short term solution. Apparently this method should not check participation as there is no need to give solutions. Answer of the question form the framework for constructing future action plans. Once the questions list is prepared it would be important to prioritize them to get the best solution in an orderly way. "Questorming" is another phrase for this mode of inquiry.

CONCLUSION:

in the current age of information explosion and knowledge society brainstorming especially in context of library and information science and services, is helpful in decision making, library service and maintaining its quality. It is an inclusive effort of the team to get a common solution of a particular problem to get its desired goal and objective. Although some scholar has criticized that brainstorming is not very much efficient and effective but as per

Osborn it is a good tool for best decision making.

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