

BRAVE
BOLD 
BRILLIANT®

20-20
CREATIVE
BRAINSTORMING
MODEL





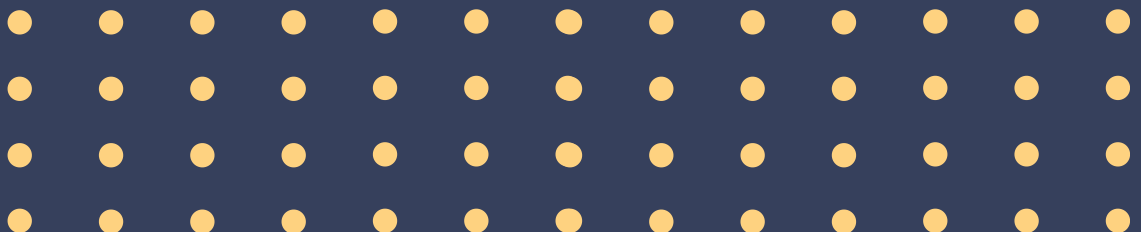
Whenever you're trying to get creative and think about how to solve a problem, find a new way of doing things, introduce a new product or service you need to create the right environment for a safe creative space and conversations to be had. It's then important to ask some key questions to get the creative juices flowing and then to come up with practical proposals. Remember it's important to keep it simple.

The 6 stages to go through in order to have a really productive strategy brainstorm session is as follows:

STEP 1 - PLANNING

A successful strategy session is often made or broken in the planning stages. It's really important to give consideration to the following things:

- What do you want to get out of the session, in terms of output?
- Who should attend?
- What roles do you want the teams involved to perform?
- If you are breaking out into groups, who do you want to have in each group to ensure you get a good mix of skills, knowledge etc and possibly avoid certain people being in the same group where needed
- Do you need someone to moderate the session and if so who should that be? Internal or external?
- What kind of atmosphere do you want to create? Formal, informal or somewhere inbetween?
- Location for the session? In the office or off-site?
- Do you want to combine with a team social afterwards?
- Budget you have to spend depending on the above?
- Who will take responsibility for overall planning and coordination so that everything runs smoothly

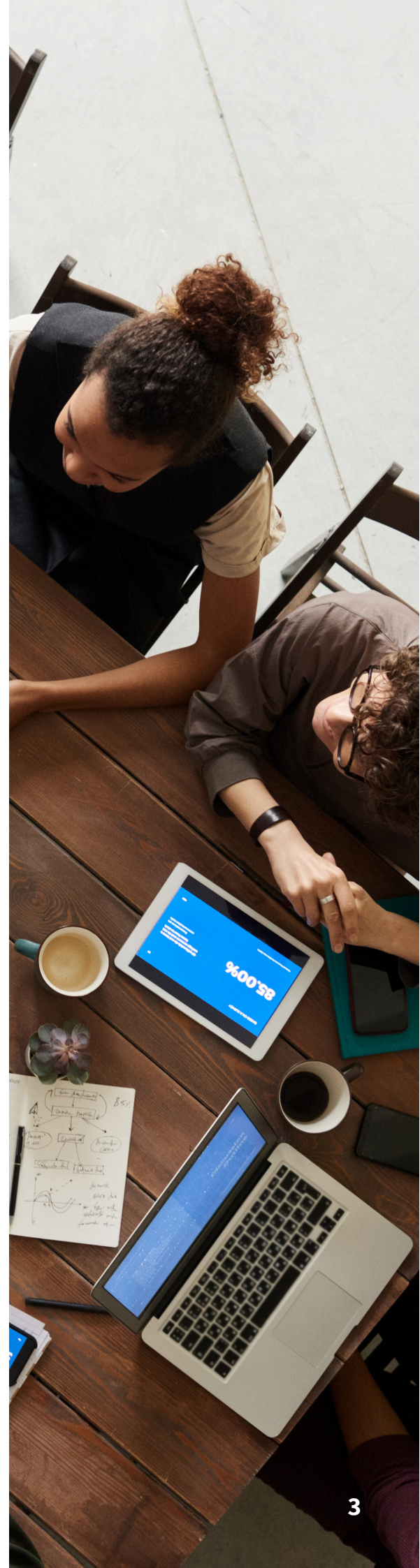


STEP 2 - ENVIRONMENT

Removing all distractions and setting the right environment to be creative is important. This could be as simple as getting a small group of you together over a coffee during a lunchbreak to chat about the challenges, opportunities and ideas you have, or something larger whereby you have a full offsite strategic team away day.

Decide where you will hold the strategy session, whether this will be in a meeting room in the office or offsite, whether you will just have the strategy session itself or also combine with a team building social afterwards. This is where you need to decide location, logistics, the atmosphere you want to create and any other practical considerations.

Wherever you decide to run a strategy session, it's important that there are no distractions and that the team involved is not conflicted and distracted by having to deal with day to day interruptions from their normal work duties, customers or colleagues.



STEP 3 - PREPARATION

The best strategic sessions have structure around them, but give enough flexibility to be able to allow the team to come up with ideas that can be explored freely through the session.

Give some thought to how you want the session/day run with a clear agenda, timeslots, breaks included and logistics required such as flip charts, pens, white boards, video equipment, seating, break out rooms etc

Once you have the running order for the day scoped out, know who's attending and logistics then the next step is to send out instructions to the team attending so that they know what to expect on the day.

It depends how spontaneous you want the session to be, but sometimes it can be useful to give some guidance to those attending on areas you may want them to give thought to in advance of the session/day itself.

Some key questions that you might want the team to consider, which you could send out in advance as part of the briefing document, could include:

1. What's the problem you're trying to solve for the customer?
2. What's working well?
3. What challenges are you facing in the business?
4. What ideas do you have on how you could improve the way you do things?
5. Are there things that you should STOP - START - CONTINUE doing?

Make sure that you get confirmation from everyone that they are able to attend so that you don't have problems with no-shows on the day which could then mess up your groups.





STEP 4 – THE CREATIVE BRAINSTORM FRAMEWORK & PROCESS

There are many ways to run strategy sessions, but this is just one option which you can either apply as a short quick fire version, if running this as part of a shorter session, or could be elongated to allocate more time.

This is what I call the 20-20 creative brainstorm!!!! - Minimum 20 minutes and 20 ideas. You can go for much longer and generate more than 20 ideas, but the minimum should be 20-20.

You get this organised as follows:

- 1.If you have a bigger group, split out into separate break out groups with anything between 4-8 people. Any smaller than 4 people can mean 1-2 people dominate and you don't get as many ideas created. Anything more than 8 people means not everyone might have the chance to input
- 2.The moderator/facilitator needs to explain the process with clear instructions. Allow any clarifying questions to be covered off before the groups start.
- 3.Each group then gets creative and comes up with as many ideas as they can within the allotted time. Remember you need to go for a minimum of 20 ideas in 20 minutes. You can of course go for a longer time frame and more ideas but 20-20 is the minimum.
- 4.Remind the group the example key questions they may want to bear in mind as they discuss and debate:
 - What's the problem you're trying to solve for the customer?
 - What's working well?



- What challenges are you facing in the business?
- What ideas do you have on how you could improve the way you do things?
- Are there things that you should STOP – START – CONTINUE doing?

5. Each group should nominate someone to write up the ideas and also nominate a spokesperson who will present back the findings from the group. This could be one and the same person or it could be two people. Equally depending on the size of the group they may decide to have two spokespeople. The alternative way to capture ideas is that everyone writes their ideas on separate post-it notes that can then be placed on the flip chart where it makes sense

6. When time is up each group then presents their ideas to the wider group. Depending on timings this could be anything from 5-15 minutes and also allow for questions from the wider group

7. The moderator needs to keep time throughout the session so the pace and energy is kept high

You want the energy to be high during these sessions, so make sure that there are plenty of drinks, sweets on the tables. These should be hyper productive but also fun sessions and a great way of bringing the teams together behind a common cause.



STEP 5 - PRIORITISATION

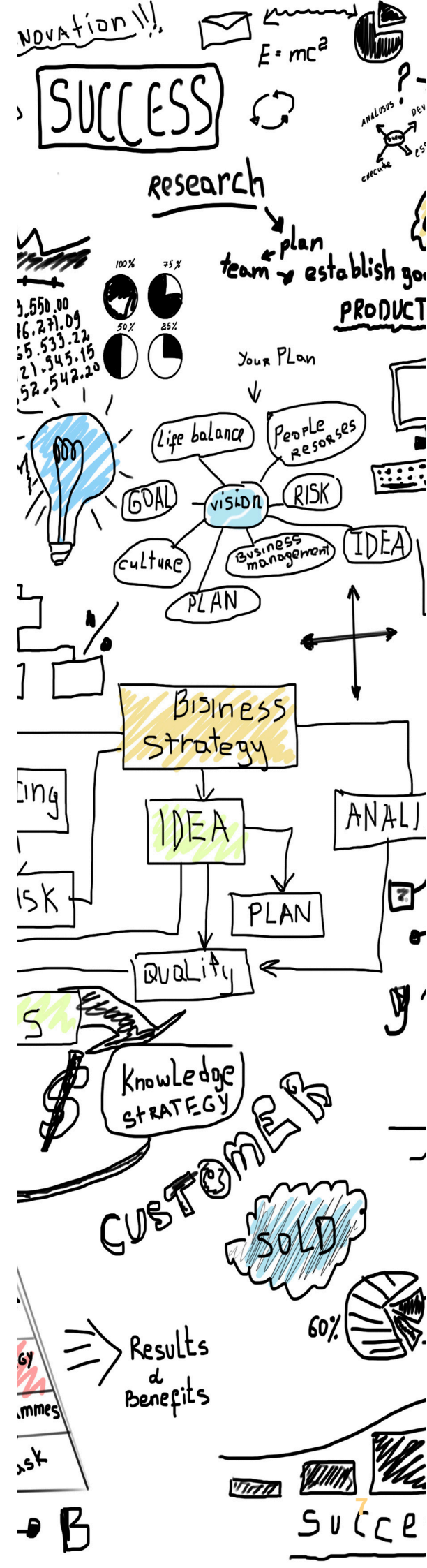
Of all the ideas that you came up with prioritise which would be your top focus areas. Choose a number of areas you want to focus on and take forward, eg top 5. This is critical as remember each group will have come up with a minimum of 20 ideas each. Some of those may be duplicated across the groups so you can put those ones together.

Get all of the ideas that were written up on the flip charts up on the walls around the room. If you have duplication you might want to group some ideas together to get rid of the duplicates.

A great way to prioritise and get input from the whole group is to allocate every person in 5 coloured sticky dots. Everyone then goes around the room reading back the ideas that have been generated and then placing their 5 'votes' next to the ideas they feel are the best.

Once everyone has placed their 'votes' the moderator is then able to review the flip charts and pull out the top 5 ideas that have the highest number of 'votes'.

These are the priorities that will be taken forward.



STEP 6

CREATING A 1 PAGE PROPOSAL

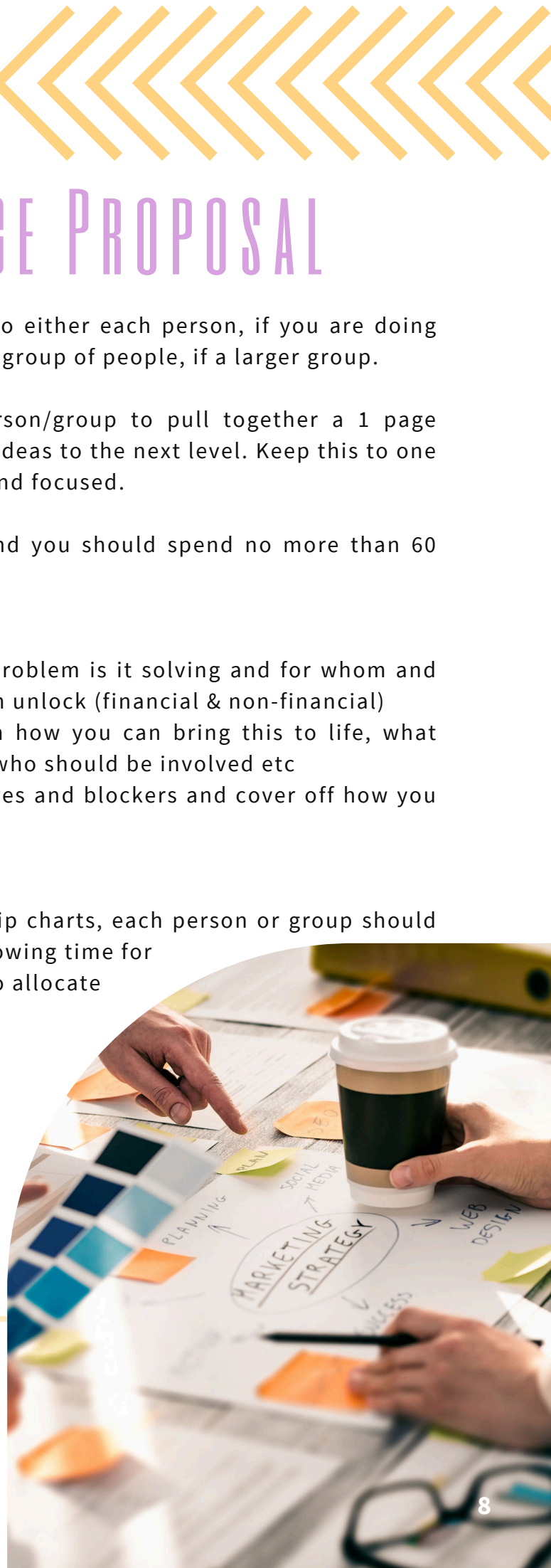
Of the 5 top ideas, assign one of these to either each person, if you are doing this in a small group, or to each breakout group of people, if a larger group.

The next stage here is to get each person/group to pull together a 1 page proposal that develops each of the top 5 ideas to the next level. Keep this to one page, no more so that it's sharp punchy and focused.

This should incorporate the following and you should spend no more than 60 minutes on this:

1. What – description of the idea
2. Why – why is it important and what problem is it solving and for whom and what are the benefits that the idea can unlock (financial & non-financial)
3. How – practical recommendations on how you can bring this to life, what resources and support you will need, who should be involved etc
4. What If – pick out any issues, objectives and blockers and cover off how you can overcome those objections
5. When – timeframe for delivery

Once the one pagers are written up on flip charts, each person or group should then present back to the wider group, allowing time for questions and answers. You might want to allocate 10-15 minutes to each person/group.





STEP 7 – WORKING PARTIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Once you have your top 5 one page proposals, it's then all about how you take those priority initiatives to turn them into action and ultimately results for the business.

It's important at this stage that the leader with overall accountability gives the authority to proceed, gives clear guidelines on expectations, timeframes, allocates necessary resources as well as budgets, if required.

One way to do this is to allocate responsibility to an individual person who then brings in the resources needed to implement the project, or you could also get the groups from the strategy session to work together after the session on an ongoing basis.



STEP 8 - WATCH OUTS

The worst thing that can happen is that you have all these great ideas generated during the session/day, the whole team comes away buzzing with excitement and then nothing happens.

Therefore the role of the leader is critical in ensuring the ideas are implemented and the results maximised for the business.

This is also a great way to develop talent in your business, giving additional responsibility for these key strategic projects and raising the profile of those individuals across the business.

I would also recommend a formal feedback loop, eg where each group presents back progress every week/month/quarter as appropriate, either to the original group or to their department heads or even to the Board if these are highly strategic and important projects that justify that level of focus and exposure.

The great thing about this process is that it can be applied at as high a level as you like. The creative brainstorm process could be applied to specific operational challenges or to the bigger strategic opportunities and problems faced by the business.

It works in a small group environment or across a whole division or leadership team.

Super simple, but highly effective.

So now it's your turn to go out and get creative!!!

It's time to be BRAVE, BOLD & BRILLIANT!!!



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