

# Artie Isaac

## Guidelines for Principled Brainstorming

### Get Ready

- ↳ **Create comfort and stimulation.** Serve food and beverages in an inspiring atmosphere.
- ↳ **Travel light.** Schedule two hours, but limit active brainstorming to 90 minutes. (Come back later to continue.)
- ↳ **Pledge confidentiality.** During brainstorming, secrets are revealed. Recognize your ethical obligation to maintain complete and permanent confidentiality. Do not enter the room until you can acknowledge that the stories you hear are not yours to tell. Ever. To anyone. *Beyond brainstorming, this is a milestone in the maturation of a fully-formed adult.*

### Assign Roles

- ↳ **Clients** define the question and (days before the brainstorm) give it to the facilitator. *The clients do not attend the brainstorm. Keep the clients and their fear far away!*
- ↳ **Facilitator** defines the specific challenge and the intended outcome. Facilitator establishes *YES! Space*. Facilitator keeps the conversation rolling in intentional, positive and curious directions. *The facilitator is a warm soul, encouraging and positive — not a slave to the agenda. If necessary, the facilitator ejects bullies.*
- ↳ **Scribe** writes everything in plain view. If the scribe writes something differently from the expressed idea, let the scribe know. Scribe maintains a Parking Lot for ideas that should be discussed another time. *The scribe is detail conscious, writing down everything exactly as stated. The scribe can say, "Wait! Stop! I missed something. What was just said?"*

### Brainstorm

- ↳ **Have fun.** Be playful. Play nice. *This is essential.*
- ↳ **Engage your brain.** Go for lots of ideas. Trust that *quantity* will take care of *quality*.
- ↳ **Think out loud.** Jump into the stream of consciousness. Speak without the usual filter.
- ↳ **Speak plainly.** No jargon.
- ↳ **Suspend judgment.** Ignore the outside reality. Separate idea generation from idea assessment.
- ↳ **Welcome ideas.** All ideas are worth sharing. Create and maintain *YES! Space*.
- ↳ **Listen.** Springboard and tailgate, finding new ideas from each idea — "yes, and..."
- ↳ **Keep moving.** Please, no long stories. Just the headline version. And don't interrupt.
- ↳ **Everyone is creative.** Every once in a while, to ensure that everyone is participating, try taking turns around the table.
- ↳ **Encourage.** Ignore personal authorship. Be an idea *team*.
- ↳ **Conclude without resolution.** Decisions and completion are a job for the clients on another day.

*Don't struggle. Call me.*



**Artie Isaac** accelerates your **collaboration and creativity** with proven methods, humor, insight, and old-fashioned encouragement.

**Visit [Artie Isaac.com](http://ArtieIsaac.com) for brainstorm facilitation and corporate training.**

ArtieIsaac@gmail.com 614-395-3965  
269 North Cassingham Road, Columbus, OH 43209