

business Forum

Orange County's Quality Printer Since 1973

Volume 2 Issue 1

Smooth Sailing Ahead

Navigating Through Decision-Making Traps



One of the most difficult things you have to do in life is to make choices. Decisions can be hard enough without the extra baggage your mind keeps hidden away to use whenever a major conclusion needs to be reached. These manifestations of decision-making landmines can be the ultimate factor in bad decisions.

Dr. John S. Hammond, co-author of *Smart Choices: A Practical Guide to Making Better Decisions*, believes that there are several different decision-making traps. Among them are the Anchoring Trap, the Sunk-Cost Trap,

the Status-Quo Trap, and the Confirming-Evidence Trap.

• **The Anchoring Trap.**

When you base your decisions on the first information you receive, you are “anchoring.” By placing more weight on the primary information, you tend to ignore the relevancy of data that is presented to you later. You can avoid this by giving proper attention to information that filters in along the decision-making process.

• **The Sunk-Cost Trap.** If you base a decision on the idea that you’ve already put a lot of time and effort into doing something so you’re

not going to give it up, then you are falling for the sunk-cost trap. One way to avoid falling into this trap is to examine why you feel that admitting to this “mistake” upsets you. By getting to the root of your anxiety, you’ll realize that everyone makes mistakes and you may just have to let it go.

• **The Status-Quo Trap.**

When you make decisions based on the biases you carry, you are giving in to the status-quo trap. Believing that something is better simply because that’s the way it’s been done in the past is an easy way to make decisions. Inherent to making a decision that strays away from the status quo is the idea that you will be criticized or that you may regret

your decision. One way to steer clear of this trap is to avoid thinking of the status quo as the only option.

• **The Confirming-Evidence Trap.** When you base your decision on the information you’ve sought out that supports your initial conclusions, then you’ve become a victim of the confirming-evidence trap.

Unfortunately, we’re naturally drawn to ideas that support our subconscious desires. In order to stay out of this trap, you have to be honest with yourself about your motives.

By making yourself aware of the different kinds of decision-making traps, you will be better armed to deal with them when they actually present themselves. ■



Want to know a great way to get your business events advertised? Try using flyers! With a wide variety of fine papers to choose from and inks that come in all colors, at Aljon Graphics, it’s almost too easy to make sure your flyers will be the best in the business. Call us today!

714.773.0738

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Get The Most Out Of
Brainstorming Sessions



Get The Most Out Of Brainstorming Sessions

Guidelines For Effective Idea-Generating



Generating ideas is one of the most important ways to facilitate successful product-development. Using brainstorming brings about a wealth of new ideas and concepts that can lead to being a first-rate company. However, a really fruitful brainstorming session can be hard to come by. Often times there are factors that seem to hinder the creative process. There are ways that you can avoid these barriers, though. By following the basic ground rules for brainstorming, you can take advantage of more effective idea-generating sessions.

- Rule #1: Avoid negative comments. No idea is a bad idea. The main focus of this part of the brainstorming process is to spin out as

many broad ideas and concepts as possible. Avoid critical remarks. Make it clear that all ideas are welcome without comment.

- Rule #2: Freewheel as much as possible. Freewheeling is letting your mind go. The more creative, the better. Going off on tangents is welcomed. Try to encourage the brainstorming participants to let loose their imaginations and think freely. There are several ways to jump-start brainstorming sessions: use word association, free writing, hitchhiking (where one person's ideas are a springboard for another's ideas), or simply an open discussion.

- Rule #3: It's the quantity that matters. The more ideas you come up with, the more you have to choose from.

Appoint a recorder to jot down the ideas as they're tossed around. Write down everything—no matter how vague the concept may seem. A fragile idea could trigger a winning concept in the end. It's important to

Write down everything. A fragile idea could trigger a winning concept in the end.

keep the brainstorming process rolling, so if you get stuck, try a different avenue of thought. Always encourage your participants to examine their ideas from every possible angle. Foster an open, creative environment with phrases like, "Tell me more," or "Great idea! Run with that."

- Rule #4: Put everything together. Try to combine everyone's ideas. Now is the time to narrow down your concepts. If you have concepts that might seem a little too vague or unclear, approach them with a positive edge like, "Is there a way around the disadvantage of ...?" Review each of the ideas. Then, choose the ten ideas that you feel come closest to solving the issue at hand and assign a rank to each of them.

By keeping these simple rules in mind, you can monitor the progress of your brainstorming sessions and in doing so, make them far more effective. ■

FOCUS ON Don Brennan

There is one in every workplace; the charismatic team player that everyone wants to be around. At Aljon Graphics it's DON BRENNAN. Don has been with Aljon full-time for two years in the prepress and press departments and is now moving toward outside sales. Behind his easy laughter and great sense of humor lies years of technical and professional experience.

Don began his career 20 years ago as a pressman. He has a degree in printing from Fullerton College. He has volunteered his time for two semesters to teach press skills with the North Orange County Regional Occupational Program. At the end of the year they asked him to fill a paid teaching position which he accepted and is now a Printing Advisory Committee Member with the R.O.P.

His hobbies are as diverse as his character. He is exploring growing grapes and winemaking



Don Brennan

to add a personal vintage to his collection.

His passion for music has led him to entertaining where he plays guitar with the band "The Naked Eye". He can be seen in coffee shops around Orange

County, and will more than happily give his upcoming event schedule.

Don commutes from Chino where he and his wife Pam have lived for 10 years.

Part of his personal philosophy includes; *If you look for it, there is something you have in common with everyone you meet.*

Kevin Hearne

More Amazing Stories From Your Business Printer

- In Nebraska, the state legislature has stipulated that in any establishment that sells beer or wine, a large pot of hot soup must be seen cooking on the premises.
- On an average day, the Rolling Stones' hit song, "Satisfaction," is played on the radio 302 times.
- One serving of figs (about four to five Mission figs) provides 7 percent of the daily-recommended level of potassium and 6 percent of calcium and iron. As for fiber, one serving offers 20 percent of the recommended intake.
- Sensations sent from the skin travel at varying speeds, at times relaying information to the brain as fast as 230 feet per second.
- The first toothbrush with bristles was developed in China in 1498. Bristles were taken from hogs at first, and later from horses.
- Triskaidekaphobia is the fear of the number 13.
- At our printing firm, we have the friendliest staff in the area. Our professionally-trained employees always have smiles on their faces and they're more than happy to help you with any of your printing needs. When you want service by the best, stop by Aljon Graphics.

A Crash Course in Passport Preparation

Planning Ahead For Foreign Travel

When you're planning a trip to a destination abroad for business or pleasure, it's necessary to have a passport handy. If you're unsure of the best approach to ensure that your passport will arrive before your departure, here are some guidelines to follow:

- In the United States, apply for your passport at a courthouse or postal office. In Canada, apply for your passport at a passport office or a postal office.
 - Apply in person. If you are 13 or older; if you lost your passport or it was stolen; or if your passport was issued over 12 years ago, you need to apply in person.
 - Bring essential identification. When applying for a passport in the United States, be ready to present at least two forms of identification: one which verifies citizenship

such as a previous passport or a certified birth certificate; and one which provides proof of identity such as a valid driver's license or government identification. Do not bring your social security card. It is not an acceptable form of identification. When applying for a passport in Canada, be ready to provide original evidence of Canadian citizenship, any previous Canadian passport, certificate of identity, or refugee travel document issued to you in the last 5 years.

- Bring two 2" x 2" passport photos. The pictures can be in color or black and white. They should be full face with a plain

white or off-white background.

- Bring the correct application fee. In the United States, the fee ranges from \$40 - \$160, depending on the reason for your application. In Canada, the fee starts at \$60 (Canadian dollars).

- Check with the nearest embassy of the countries that you plan to visit to find out their entry requirements.

With your passport in hand, you'll be ready to plan your trip. Bon voyage! ■



A Rainbow of Opportunity!



Does your printing work to its full potential? If it doesn't, why not try adding some color? At our printing firm, we can restore brilliance to your printed materials with a variety of rich hues. So, when you want polished printing, call the color experts at Aljon Graphics. We look forward to helping you.



714.773.0738

562.694.3144

Fax: 562.691.0453

Email: aljongrfix@aljongraphics.com

Your needs anticipated; your expectations exceeded!



B R A I N B I T E S

Tidbits Of Information You Can Chew On

Get Cultured

When you make meeting plans in another city, it's important to familiarize yourself with the local culture or you may run into a few problems. In order to avoid off-site planning glitches, do a little research before setting your schedule.

In a city like Los Angeles, California, morning and evening rush hour traffic can virtually cause the city to come to a standstill. It would be better to schedule your meetings in the afternoon in order to avoid being stood up or having your meeting participants stuck in traffic.

Another factor in planning a meeting is being aware of the type of weather the city experiences during certain months of the year. In Atlanta, Georgia,

humidity reaches an all-time high during the summer months, soaring well beyond a comfortable level. And, in the Mid-Western states, the unpredictable winter weather makes travel a bit difficult.

By educating yourself on local customs, culture, and weather before scheduling an out-of-town event, you can sidestep many planning problems before they head your way. ■

Be A Card-Shark!

Do you use your business cards to their full potential? If not, you should. Business cards are an important way to market your company and your services. Why not put the following techniques to the test and see what they can do for your company?

- Print your business cards in a format that fits into a Rolodex. You'd be surprised how much more effective this can be. Printing business cards so they slip easily into a Rolodex may just save them from being tossed into the circular file!

- Put messages on your cards that vary from time to time. Try getting a little creative with your business cards. Using this technique might give you the edge you've been looking for.

- Try a fold-over business card. Put your traditional information (name, logo, etc.) on the front, and on the inside, list the products or services you offer.

- Drop your busi-

ness card in restaurant fishbowl drawings. Getting your name out to the public, no matter where you bring it, could get you business you didn't expect. Sometimes you have to steer into uncharted waters to uncover the treasure.

- Put your picture on your business cards. By giving your potential clients a face to put with your name, it gives you the opportunity to make a personal connection.

Using your business cards as a targeted marketing tool may be the key to opening many doors for your company. Go ahead and give these ideas a try.

