

Brainstorming

There are numerous ways to identify objectives, alternatives, etc., although brainstorming may be the most common method. The main point of brainstorming is to generate as many ideas as possible. Get the right people – it is often useful to get together people of many disciplines/backgrounds. Consider writing down ideas individually first, then reading them out to the group. This helps to avoid group-think and improves creativity.

Every member of the group should contribute; and avoid criticism of individual contributions/intimidation of any group member by more vocal or competitive group members. Because creativity is such an important part of brainstorming, think about the ideal/perfect situation. Push extremes, think about unlikely as well as likely situations, go off on tangents,¹ and build on others' ideas.²

In decision-making, it is common to brainstorm for:

- Objectives
- Alternatives
- Pros and cons of alternatives
- Risk Events - what could go wrong
- Risk Sources - what could cause a Risk Event
- Risk Controls (a kind of Alternative) - what can be done to reduce the likelihood of Risk Sources, the vulnerability of Risk Events to Risk Sources, or the Impact of Risk Events on Objectives

Next: [Screening](#)

¹ Forman, Ernest H. and Mary Ann Selly. Decision by Objectives: How to Convince Others That You Are Right. World Scientific Publishing Company, 2001.

² <https://www.uvm.edu/crs/resources/citizens/decision.htm#F>