



BETTER BRAINSTORMING

A Supplement to

THE QUEST FOR CREATIVE INSPIRATION

By Bob Kodzis

Besides defining the overall goal of the brainstorming session, ground rules should be designed to inspire and control specific behaviors. We want to liberate spirits while controlling focus. Some ground rules that have worked very well for me include:

- *Everyone participates – no wall flowers*
- *What happens in this room stays in this room unless the group agrees otherwise - just like Las Vegas, only without the sleaze.*
- *Full Focus – no beepers, phones, PDAs or lengthy side conversations*
- *Check your ego at the door*
- *No criticism of ideas*
- *Go for volume*
- *Write it down – lose no ideas*
- *Build on someone else's idea*
- *Watch your body language – actions speak louder than words*
- *Play*
- *Make us laugh*
- *Take nothing personally*

Enforcement of the ground rules is critical. Without it, your ground rules will have all the value of a balloon without its skin. In contrast, too much enforcement can kill the spirit of the participants. Find the balance that works for your group.