

HACKATHONS

- Have an innovation hackathon. TIME REQUIRED: 3 Hours max. || MATERIALS: Post its (real or virtual) or note cards, or really, just a way to write down ideas for each team.
- Sounds funky, but in reality, all a 'hackathon' does is gather a bunch of ideas around a problem. So, you throw out a problem that you need ideas on - how can we generate more funds, how can we get our clients to get more tech savvy, how can we deliver our programs more effectively.. Whatever it is.....put it as an overarching question on the screen and everyone works alone or in teams of 2-3 and they generate ideas.
- Give a time limit, of, say, 20 or 30 minutes. Then you go through those ideas and see which ones has potential and discuss it further.
- MAKE IT VERY CLEAR THAT THEY CAN GO AS CRAZY AS THEY WANT...If nothing else, it will generate some laughs! (and we all need that more so now!!)
- Don't give too many instructions.
- If you are doing this virtually, and you do not have enough to split into breakrooms, do it individually. Throw out ideas one by one and moderator can scribble it on the whiteboard (or each speaker can get access to the whiteboard- whichever is easier). RECORD THE SESSIONS IF YOU WANT; but most important, KEEP IT ACCESSIBLE!!
- Take screen grabs or somehow document the ideas and examine later if they have true potential. Take it from there. This is also a good team-bonding exercise.
- Bring in a few outside voices if possible- stakeholders, innovation consultants, board members or even clients / users of your product/service to the mix.
- SOME OF YOU MAY ALREADY BE DOING THIS!! IF YOU ARE, GREAT.... NOW FIND A WAY TO MAKE SURE IT BECOMES PART OF YOUR ORG. CULTURE!!