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Professor: Okay. So as I discussed about the brainstorming session that, what is the difference between group discussion, panel discussion and brainstorming session? And now we will have the session on the, brainstorming session. I will demonstrate that is how the brainstorming session is to be held. So my students, they will introduce themselves and they will demonstrate the brainstorming session. So I will start first with Rohit.

Student: Hello! Good morning everybody, my name is Rohit Kumar Pandey. I have completed my mechanical engineering from KITS Ramtek, Nagpur University. I also have 28 months of work experience at Tata Consultancy Services Ltd, I am currently pursuing my MBA from DoMS, IIT Roorkee. As a part of my live project I did my internship at thinkingfree.com, I am also doing a live project at Divyang Ek Umeed which works towards the inclusiveness of physically disabled people.

Student: My name is Jivesh Agrawal, I did my mechanical engineering from YMCA Institute of Engineering, Faridabad. After that I worked in TCS as a systems engineer, but during my TCS working I also opened a start-up named the B2cab Services. Currently I am pursuing MBA from Department of Management Studies, IIT Roorkee. I also worked on an assignment on technology management on the topic 'Is your company ready for digital future?'

Professor: Very good.

Student: Good morning everyone, my name is Nivesh Dhote and I have completed my electrical engineering from Samrat Ashok Technological Institute, Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh. Currently I am pursuing my MBA from Department of Management Studies, IIT Roorkee. Prior to that I have served TCS for 15 months as an EIS developer at their Nagpur facility, and I am KPMG Six Sigma certified and I have just done my winter internship at Seco Tools India Limited, Pune.

Professor: Good.

Student: Hello everyone, I am Abhishek Soni, I did my mechanical engineering from Medi-Caps Institute of Technology, Indore, Madhya Pradesh followed by I have a work experience of 52 months at Infosys Ltd in Mysore as well as in Pune. Currently I am pursuing my MBA in Department of Management Studies, IIT Roorkee and here I am acting as a placement coordinator. I am also satisfied in Lean Six Sigma which is offered by KPMG.

Professor: Now all these four participants they will demonstrate about the brainstorming session.

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Student: Hello everyone. Today we are here to have a brainstorming session over the topic, 'How to increase the sales team efficiency?' So within this we will be having the factors which are affecting the sales team efficiency as well as we will be giving some suggestions and we will be discussing the suggestions, how to improve the sales efficiency? So within

this session each one of us will be taking 2 minutes time as a group so to jot down all the points and the factors and then we will have a final discussion over the same and then we will give the final conclusion what can be the better thing for the sales efficiency.

Team, I think we can start the same. So we will be discussing the same, I will be acting as a participant as well as the moderator for the session. Yeah so, any factors or suggestions that are coming to your mind?

Student: I think the factors that are most important for sales guys is the internal knowledge in which field they are working.

Student: Core domain and product knowledge.

Student: Domain knowledge and particularly the product knowledge, which product they are selling and all those new technologies which are coming up in that domain.

Student: Ok.

Student: New technologies in the domain.

Student: Ok.

Student: According to me there is one factor, competitive analysis. Means you should know the…sales team should know the competitors, how they are working and accordingly make the sales pitch.

Student: Understanding the competitors' offerings and sales techniques.

Student: One point in the this, competitors' knowledge, like there should be…there are 2 categories; one is points of parity and one is points of differentiation, so I think salesperson should be aware of both of them. And points of differentiation.

Student: Ok.

Student: And the target should be realistic.

Student: Yeah. Points of parity and points of difference.

Student: Yeah.

Student: In my opinion the salesperson should have the knowledge of the demography and knowledge about customers.

Student: In which location they are targeting their products.

Student: Yeah.

Student: That is a good point. I think one more thing like the target should be realistic like sales people should not be given unrealistic targets in practical. I mean those should be achievable. I will include my points here.

Student: Salesperson should have also knowledge about the customers which they are focusing on.

Student: Apart from demographics and customers he should also know the customer behaviour. So we do market research….

Student: …based on that.

Student: Yeah. So salesperson should know that thing and accordingly he can plan the sales pitch so that he can…

Student: Understanding customers' behaviour.

Student: I will also like to add some points. Salesperson should have better incentives, if they have better incentives they will be motivated. So to increase their motivation factor they should have better incentives schemes.

Student: This incentive should be monetary as well as appreciation is also included in that.

Student: Correct.

Student: Sometimes appreciation does a good job.

Student: And also a good team leader, so team leader motivates the sales people, so that point can also be included.

Student: I mean the complete team should be given awards or the letter of appreciation.

Student: Like rewarding the best performer and best achiever.

Student: Yeah.

Student: One point I would like to add is they should have good leave schemes also. As they are away from their family, for most of the time they have to travel from different cities. So they should have good leave schemes so that they can be with their family, this will also increase the motivational factor.

Student: I think one more point which is very important with sales is lead generation and lead generation should be segment wise.

Student: Segmented lead generation.

Student: So proper segmenting of customers should be done.

Student: Have you written training part?

Student: Yeah. Training, I think it is not here.

Student: I think proper training should be given just like sales negotiation, customer service skills. So after selling the product the sales team should have that motivation to serve them again if he faces any problem. So proper training on sales team for customer service, et cetera.

Student: I guess the communication part will also come in the training which plays a very crucial role for sales pitching.

Student: Even I think technology can be a major boon in terms of sales.

Student: Yes.

Student: Like better advertisement. If suppose…Consumer should be, I mean customer should be better aware of the product.

Student: For that I think integration of marketing and sales is important, what marketing company is doing and what sales, we have combine.

Student: Yeah.

Student: This is an important point, integration of sales and marketing. Even I mean marketing will cover the advertisements as well, like they should be more informative in limited space of time period, like advertisements, they cover just 60 to 90 seconds but they give more information about the products.

Student: One more thing is like they should have better forecasting techniques.

Student: Correct, to reduce inventory stock like production, everything we can plan properly, it is a very valid point.

Student: In practical, sales target should be based on forecasting, it should not be a constant thing like sales target is constant, it should be a flexible target.

Student: Yes. Because in our country sales may depend on festival season also, they may rise, so not fixed. We have better forecasting of sales forecasting.

Student: I think should they be trained on that I mean the sales people?

Student: I think that should be the work of back-end.

Student: I think other teams comes into picture, they should be given data, so accordingly they can plan their target, the sales team.

Student: Ok.

Student: And also they should also identify leaders within their team.

Student: Ok.

Student: Like there are many sales people who are leaders also.

Student: Good performers.

Student: So you can give the higher positions in the team, they can promote them.

Student: Their leaders should come from within their team.

Student: Good team leaders.

Student: They should be aware about the USP of their product.

Student: I think domain knowledge will cover about everything, what their features will be and offerings.

Student: And customer feedback.

Student: Yes, even that is very important.

Student: For further…

Student: Correct, correct, customer feedback and reviews.

Student: Also there should be policies for on time reimbursement, like if a salesperson has to go to different city, so most of the time gets consumed in reimbursing the previous bills. The process should be small and convenient, so it will save his time.

Student: Okay.

Student: That we can include in some better incentives schemes.

Student: Exactly, that is what I was…Yeah, better incentives scheme.

Student: And on time reimbursement.

Student: Yes, on time reimbursement.

Student: Okay, on time reimbursement.

Student: It is one major problem with sales guy is transportation problem.

Student: So like they should be assigned area where they need not have to travel too much.

Student: We can do this route optimization for this.

Student: Exactly.

Student: I think customer needs is also covered, understanding customers' needs. Okay, customer behaviour.

Student: Customer behaviour is covered.

Student: I think customer database also we can use efficiently. Suppose we are targeting some particular segment of people or customers, so if we have their database, our sales pitch will be accordingly decided, like in what way, I mean it will be more relevant to customer behaviour. Suppose he is more oriented towards the travel. I mean, we are having a database that customer is more oriented towards travelling, so we can pitch accordingly, give our offerings and products. So anyway it will be covered.

Student: His favourite timings we should also know. His favourite timings, when he want to listen, like we are going and he is not there.

Student: I think it is a broad term; it can cover all the aspects.

Student: I think we can go for suggestions now.

Student: So like how to implement these suggestions?

Student: Out of these I think we can segregate the most important points.

Student: Correct. I think demographics, what particular area we are targeting. So I will just highlight. Any others?

Student: Domain knowledge.

Student: Domain knowledge is a crucial point.

Student: Integration of sales and marketing.

Student: Integration of sales and marketing.

Student: Better forecasting.

Student: Yes. Which one? This one.

Student: Realistic targets are there.

Student: Understanding customers' behaviour.

Student: Yeah, customer behaviour. I think more or less it is important only, but anyways still we can highlight.

Student: Competitor's knowledge.

Student: Yes. Competitor's offerings.

Student: Customer feedback.

Student: Reimbursement also we can take like because we have to have solution for that.

Student: Yeah, reimbursement.

Student: Training is also important, but we have to…

Student: Consider it that it is already imparted.

Student: Yeah.

Student: Yeah, but it should be recurring, product will change, features will change.

Student: Yes.

Student: So whatever solution we are getting, means we can improve the training part.

Student: Yes.

Student: We can suggest solution like a platform which is accessible to each and every salesperson from anyplace.

Student: Correct.

Student: Training also, he can access the trainee from that same platform.

Student: For training, he should not go to the headquarters.

Student: Yes.

Student: Yes, so common platform for easy access to trainings.

Student: I think we can have an app in which all the items.

Student: Yes, app based, correct. App based. Yeah.

Student: In app also we can also include the reimbursement part like they can be just the….

Student: A print out and like scan the bill….

Student: …and upload it.

Student: I think the app will be having same features.

Student: Yes.

Student: He will put it there.

Student: It can be credited immediately I think.

Student: Which one?

Student: By scanning the bill that you got, so he can get the reimbursement in ASAP.

Student: As soon as possible the team confirms.

Student: Yes.

Student: And also the customer behaviour.

Student: I think this forecasting thing can also be covered in app only.

Student: Yes.

Student: They will just have by this month initial of every month that this month we are having target of this thing.

Student: Yes, so they will be given I think dataset of the forecasting that these things are there.

Student: Correct.

Student: And how you can predict that next month what will be the…

Student: Yes, sales target or what will be the predictions for the next month.

Student: Yes. Customer behaviour and competitor offerings also we can just have from the application.

Student: Ok.

Student: Like we can just look for, there will be a database, so they will have access to it and they can just see how is the customer behaviour, what is the competitor offering, they can have better knowledge about the product based on that.

Student: This thing, product comparison we can give like on Flipkart or something, they give product comparison. So we can give like that only, they can filter also which product they want to check.

Student: I think the same thing Policybazaar.com gives; it gives all the premiums of different policies that companies offer, so that kind of platform also you can develop there.

Student: For the sales part we can have the virtual learning.

Student: Which one?

Student: For sales training we can go for virtual learning.

Student: Ok.

Student: Videos will be there from the leaders or product knowledge, like most of the companies are nowadays going for virtual learning.

Student: Ok.

Student: And one more thing the app can cover is they do not have to come to their head office for daily attendance, they can just punch it from their app, so this will increase their efficiency.

Student: And even travel time may reduce.

Student: Their travel time will significantly reduce.

Student: Punching attendance through app. But will it be any like disadvantage people might misuse?

Student: There can be some disadvantage but like if a person has to go from location A to location B, we can go to location B where he has to report.

Student: Okay. And from there?

Student: The app can identify his location. And then GPS punch.

Student: If GPS is enabled, it will show where he is.

Student: Actually we can have pre-planned their appointments.

Student: Exactly.

Student: The leader will know the route.

Student: Leader will know that he is having the appointment, so by tracking his GPS he can know that he is there at the customer place and he is doing his work.

Student: The attendance has to be approved by the leader only, so that can be a good point.

Student: Yeah, so in that case we can use attendance.

Student: I think we can have customer…

Student: The targets can be covered, herein demand forecasting also it can be covered. Customer, what you were saying?

Student: Customer profile, means what type of customers, so they can be segregated.

Student: If any past data about the customer is available, we should give him.

Student: Ok.

Student: About his likings, disliking.

Student: Customer data, we can use efficiently.

Student: All product data should be available on his own app.

Student: Product data.

Student: Yeah, the same thing, domain knowledge here.

Student: When the person is going for B2B sales, so he should be knowing the negotiation terms, so MOU knowledge that what offerings the company will give and what offerings from the company they will get, that details also the sales person should know. So that detail should be also there accordingly.

Student: Ok, so like…

Student: Relevant data, we can just write.

Student: Okay. Technology…. Anyways we are using the technology based apps.

Student: Yes.

Student: So I guess mostly the points are covered in our application.

Student: Correct.

Student: Yeah.

Student: Even like virtual learnings, so what I was thinking, pitching can be done virtually. Suppose it is a remote area, so we can do pitching via emails or we can have some online meetings at which location, suppose we will not be able to meet any of the customers directly or like and we need pitching should be done as quick as possible, so in that case we can…

Student: We can do this virtually.

Student: Exactly.

Student: We can use, efficient use of technology we can do that.

Student: Also whatever customers they are meeting, so they can take feedback directly from the app.

Student: Ok, customer feedback.

Student: On that app only. So they will also have the database, proper database whatever the responses they get from the customer.

Student: Feedback, customer feedback on app.

Student: Yes.

Student: This can be through customer data, sales timing covered here, virtual learning.

Student: Yeah.

Student: This is also covered I think, sales training is also covered.

Student: Yeah, sales training is covered here.

Student: Virtual and everything is covered.

Student: And….

Student: For route optimization, I think they should be given….what appointments are there that route should be given through GPS, so that we can also do.

Student: I think we should give him his daily plan two days earlier, like he can plan his day also like that.

Student: Ok.

Student: At which point he has to go.

Student: Actually that will increase cost.

Student: Or one day advance, prior so that he will be knowing tomorrow what all tasks he is going to do. We can use that route optimisation thing in that way.

Student: We can also include the demography part. Understanding, we plan the demography better.

Student: Exactly.

Student: One small dashboard we can give, how much target is left, how much he has completed.

Student: Yeah, many companies used to do this. Target reports.

Student: He can see it per day.

Student: Yeah, monthly targets are this much and you have achieved this much, so he can plan accordingly.

Student: Yes.

Student: And suppose he will be exceeding his target, so whatever incentives he will get, or he will be lagging the target, so how frequently he should work more or stretch more to fulfil all those things?

Student: Yeah.

Student: I think these are the few points, I think they will cover most of the things.

Student: So finally we can I think conclude.

Student: So based on the current brainstorming session that we have, these are the few suggestions that we came across which can increase the sales efficiency. So I hope by implementing all those things we can have good results by the sales team.

Professor: So as you have seen that is how this brainstorming session is held and it has been started, then we have to give them the time to think about. The purpose of this particular brainstorming session was that is how to stimulate the minds of the participants and whenever we are talking about the creativity, innovation, design thinking and the expertise, so even the expert people they are supposed to get some stimulus so that they can share their experience, their expertise with rest of the team members very smoothly.

Basically whenever we are having the brainstorming session, we have to also ensure that is the participants those who are into the brainstorming session they should get a link, they should get a particular topic, they should get a particular direction. A trainer has to give a direction and then ask them to talk about that particular session.

Now here the capturing of idea is very very important, and in that case if like here you must have seen that is they are writing on the board and then summarising all the thought process into that particular board. At the end one must be very sure that is the baby should not be thrown with the bathwater. It means that whatever the ideas or the solutions they have provided for a particular problem like in the sales in this case, so that particular solution that has to be captured, that has to be noted down and when we are concluding the solution of that particular problem then we have to make the list.

And not only the list of the solutions, we have to also give the weightage to the solutions like we have done in the case studies also. So we take a particular issue when the brainstorming session is done, so there will be lots of solutions but which one is the best solution? Which one is the best idea given by the expertise?

As you have seen that we have demonstrated with the help of writing on the board, getting that particular list listed that is this solution may work, this solution may not work, and the trainees those before whom this particular brainstorming session will be held in your training program, that time they should also learn that is how methodically that we have to conduct the brainstorming session. So right from giving the problem what trainer has to do? Trainer has to prepare a particular problem and then give that particular problem for the discussion and let them come out and never stop.

As you have seen that we have not interfered even once because whatever idea comes, the idea may be practically possible or it may not be possible but we should not stop them by saying that this idea is not practically possible, no you are thinking something different, no let them think.

It is a think tank exercise, it is developing and channelizing the brain exercise, so let them think, let them make the application of their brain, let them understand that is whatever they want to say they can say and then express their opinion very freely. And when they express their opinions very freely and the trainer that he should ensure that is all the ideas are properly and carefully are weighted because many times even very innovative idea may not

be practically possible but may link to the another solution. So we should not stop them, we have to encourage them to participate more and more, we have to respect their expertise, we have to also see that is they are having the full flexibility and adoptability while explaining their ideas.

And whenever this convener like here Abhishek has done, all this particular exercise we will list down, we will talk about that, we will find out on the basis of the organisation's internal strengths and external weaknesses also, external threats also and therefore in that case you can apply for the cross metrics also that is what is internal, what is external, what is your strengths and weakness, what are your opportunities and threats. And then on the basis of that, on the basis of the brainstorming sessions, on the basis of the opinions, on the basis of the suggestions, we can conclude that this particular problem can be solved in this way.

And not only this, we can use this particular training session for providing the consultancy by providing the solutions to the problems and invite the experts from the group of the trainees only, see their profile, understand what expertise do they have, that expertise has to be invited, one trainee can be made the convener and he will be anchoring the whole of brainstorming process, then he list it down and all this process will be followed and we will get the benefit of the brainstorming session. Now here what we have done?

In the group discussion the difference as I already also mentioned that is here we have not taken the trainees on the basis of just as participants. There may be number of participants but here we are talking about participants those who are having expertise in that particular area.

So when we are framing the problem as a trainer, we should keep in mind the expertise of the trainee. I am sure that when these types of sessions when you will held in your training program then definitely the trainees will learn not only how to conduct the brainstorming session as a technique and tool for the training program, but they will also suggest that is how to make the best use of the brainstorming session, thank you.