

# What Does It Mean to Be *The Idea Expert*™?

By John Storm, BrainStorm Network

***Idea Expert: Someone who knows Ideas... who has 'em, where to find 'em, how to sort 'em, when to keep 'em, what to do with 'em, and why it's so important to get 'em.***

Sometimes people ask me great questions, such as...

***What is an Idea Expert? How do you become one? Why do you call yourself the Idea Expert™?***

Ultimately it's up to my clients and readers to decide if this claim can hold proverbial water. Yet, based on the **EXPERT™** acronym for identifying a valuable expert, here's my rationale for making the claim:

## **EXPERIENCE**

For starters, I grew up in an entrepreneurial family. Our dinner conversation often centered on my Dad's latest "million dollar idea"... usually having nothing to do with his current ventures. It wasn't long before I caught the "idea fever". Over the years, I became adept at finding, evaluating, and implementing ideas as a restaurant manager, Washington DC intern, tutor for a college football team, window washer, minister, and as a salesman for products as diverse as HBO, real estate, health & fitness products, fishing lures and cosmetics.

After college, I joined my family's sporting goods business and invested 14 years submerged in the world of fishing. Our team built the company into a worldwide operation with 3 manufacturing operations, several hundred employees, and a strong consumer brand with thousands of products. I served as janitor, shipping clerk, special projects coordinator, media relations director, sales manager, and marketing director. We lived through a host of tragedies, failures, and successes. It was an incredible training ground for new product development, advertising, marketing, packaging, sourcing, production, exporting, sales management, team building, employee relations, and plain old hard work. I called on everyone from Wal\*Mart, Kmart and Bass Pro Shops to big distributors and little mom and pop shops. The common denominator? Ideas. Planting them. Finding them. Evaluating them. Selling them. Profiting from them. Basically, my life was (and still is)... ***Fishing for Ideas™!***

## **XPERTISE**

Although I've been interested in the field of innovation since adolescence, in recent years I've invested thousands of hours studying, researching and applying multiple theories, concepts, tools, techniques and resources. I have an extensive library which includes hundreds of books in the related fields of creativity, brain/mind research, scientific and business innovations, communication and change. It's been said that if you read 10 non-fiction books on any particular topic, you'll know more than 95% of the population. I'm not sure if "reading" alone is enough to justify a claim to expertise... but it's certainly a strong start.

Over the years I've developed and led numerous workshops and seminars coming from my own experiences and theories. These include a host of Innovation workshops and BrainStorming sessions (what I call ***Next Level BrainStorming™***) for a wide variety of businesses, non-profit organizations, and groups. In addition, I have a large collection of unusual props and thousands of innovative photographs that I've taken. I also spent 10 years leading small groups and teaching weekly in an adult learning environment. I've learned that the ability to ask great questions and be a proactive listener is the key to catalytic learning.

## **PASSION**

Ideas are what I live and breathe. It's just how I'm wired up. I can't help it. Wherever I go, the ideas just flow. At the store. In nearly every conversation. Watching TV. Reading a book. Driving down the road. I'm fascinated with how to make things better. It's why I always have a pen and notebook with me to capture the strange, unique or innovative thought. I find there are few things more satisfying than working with a small team of diverse, motivated people who want to make something happen. I thrive on finding "connections" between diverse industries and ideas. I love to help people generate multiple solutions and teach them new ways to think. In other words, I ***Speak to Spark™*** new ideas and solutions, as well as personal and organizational growth.

## EXCELLENCE

I know of no one else making the claim of being an idea expert, much less ***The Idea Expert***<sup>™</sup>. Obviously there are plenty of people out there with ideas, even great ideas! Yet, ideas are my world – generating them, finding them, evaluating them, and ultimately DOING them. My goal is to exponentially catalyze people’s ability to discover the ideas buried in their brains. I am dedicated to building a world class network of people who help create ***Invironments of Innovation***<sup>™</sup> within their businesses, organizations, churches, families and personal lives. In this process, we will continue to develop innovative systems, concepts, tools, techniques, and products which help people ***Think Differently, Live Innovatively, and Get Results***<sup>™</sup>. These resources will serve to energize an ***Idea Revolution***<sup>™</sup> – helping people to solve their toughest problems, generate inspiring solutions and exciting opportunities, and leverage their God-given intellectual capacity to create a better world.

## RECOGNITION

Ultimately, one’s claim of expertise is judged by the expert’s clients, customers, colleagues, and/or readers. Go to my ***website*** and read the free articles. *Do they spark any new ideas? Do they make you comfortably uncomfortable?* Oftentimes, that’s the goal – to provide an intellectual “prodding” that nudges (or jolts) you out of the ruts, comfort zones, and boxes that hold us back. Check out the Testimonials from workshop participants and clients. Check out my other resources. Read any online reviews, critiques, and rants. Hopefully, you’ll find a few people I’ve stirred up enough to share their thoughts.

If you’re looking for someone to help your organization generate or capture more ideas, ask for my client referral list. Take the time to call references. Ask hard questions like... *What was your ***Return on Ideas***<sup>™</sup> from your investment? What issues were you trying to address? Were you satisfied with the quantity and quality of ideas that were generated during your relationship? What pre-meeting efforts were made to determine the issues and jump-start the idea process? If you have future needs, would you invest time and money in future collaborations?* This will give you a better feel for whether our life/business philosophies and values match up enough to explore future collaborations. Maybe we’re not the right “fit”. That’s okay, as there are certainly other people who can provide good service.

## TRANSFERABILITY

Being an expert in any field demands a high level of transferability. *Can a person’s expertise provide Ideas, Concepts, and Theories, as well as practical Tools and Techniques that are transferable to others?* For one’s expertise to be of great value and useful application, the expert must be able to communicate and share it. Their innovative thinking must produce practical and useful developments which further progress, education, and growth.

My goal is to create practical and useful tools and techniques through original concepts, programs, and terminology such as... ***Carpe Boxem***<sup>™</sup> (***Seize the Box!***), ***Invironments of Innovation***<sup>™</sup>, ***Next Level BrainStorming***<sup>™</sup>, ***Fishing for Ideas***<sup>™</sup>, ***Return on Ideas***<sup>™</sup>, ***Idea Harvest***<sup>™</sup>, ***Innovation Dynamics***<sup>™</sup>, ***The 7 Secrets of Innovation***<sup>™</sup>. These are just a few of the helpful intellectual capital that is available to accomplish our mission of bringing Your ideas to LIFE!<sup>™</sup>

***So... what do you think?*** You be the judge. *Do you need some help in generating, capturing, evaluating, and/or implementing your ideas?* If so, I hope I’m the ***EXPERT***<sup>™</sup> that can be of service. Innovatively yours.

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*John Storm is ***The Idea Expert***<sup>™</sup> whose mission is to bring Your ideas to LIFE!<sup>™</sup> His expertise focuses on helping people discover, evaluate and implement their ideas. You can find other resources at [www.brainstormnetwork.org](http://www.brainstormnetwork.org)*