

**Activity 1.4 Product Improvement**

Introduction

Hummers®, iPods®, cell phones, clothes, and video games are just a few products that are familiar to most people. What is it about any of these products that you like? What causes you to want to buy a cell phone or an iPod? Is it the commercials or the appearance of the product? Whatever the reason, design plays a vital role in the creation and marketing of any product.

Equipment

* Paper
* Plain white coffee cup (1 per class) or alternate consumer product
* Pencil

Procedure

This activity is designed to provide an introduction to design. As a team of two, you will brainstorm ways to enhance or change a plain white beverage container so that nearly every consumer would want to purchase it. Remember to apply the rules for brainstorming that were identified in the PowerPoint during this activity. The following list is available to guide your team through this activity:

* Assign a recorder and a speaker for your group.
* Brainstorm for five minutes with your team to identify enhancements or changes that you would make to the item. The recorder will make a list of all ideas mentioned in those five minutes. Changes or enhancements could be anything; you are not limited by cost.
* After five minutes, select ideas to enhance or change the item from the brainstorming list.
* For the next ten minutes, each member of the team should develop and sketch a potential change or enhancement to your product.
* Your team will take five additional minutes to develop a justification for each potential change to the item.
* Your team speaker will present your changes to the class.

Conclusion Questions

1. What factors must be considered when changing or enhancing a design?
2. Why is it important to document the brainstorming process?
3. What is the purpose of sketching your ideas?
4. What effective or ineffective techniques did the group speaker use to communicate your idea to the class?