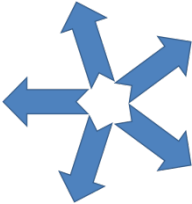# Creative Problem Solving (CPS)

What is Creative Problem Solving?

Creative Problem Solving (CPS) is a structured process for solving problems or finding opportunities, used when you want to go beyond conventional thinking and arrive at creative (novel and useful) solutions.

A primary difference between CPS and other problem-solving processes is the use of both divergent and convergent thinking at each step, and not just when generating ideas.
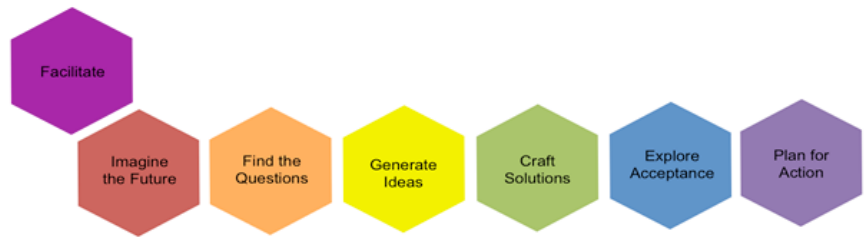
CPS has been in use for more than 60 years. During that time, the names and numbers of stages have evolved, and different practitioners see things somewhat differently – but all are true to the groundbreaking work of Osborn and Parnes. This variation is the work of Paul Reali at OmniSkills, and is influenced by Miller, Vehar, Firestien, Puccio, Murdock, Mance, Van Gundy, and Basadur.

Divergent Thinking Guidelines

- ❖ Defer judgment
- ❖ Strive for quantity
- ❖ Seek wild and unusual
- ❖ Build on other ideas

Convergent Thinking Guidelines

- ❖ Be affirmative
- ❖ Be deliberate
- ❖ Check the objectives
- ❖ Improve ideas
- ❖ Consider novelty

Divergent Thinking Tools

- ❖ Brainstorming
- ❖ Brainwriting
- ❖ SCAMPER
- ❖ Why? What's Stopping You? (Abstraction Ladder)
- ❖ Visual Connections
- ❖ Forced Connections
- ❖ Excursions
- ❖ Word Dance
- ❖ Idea Box

Convergent Thinking Tools

- ❖ Hits
- ❖ Clustering
- ❖ POINt
- ❖ Success Zones
- ❖ Card Sort
- ❖ Evaluation Matrix
- ❖ Paired Comparison Analysis
- ❖ Assisters & Resisters
- ❖ RACI

Roles in a CPS Session

Client	Facilitator	Resource Group
❖ Primary owner of the content ❖ Shares background information ❖ Active member of Resource Group ❖ Provides facilitator with input	❖ CPS process guide ❖ Monitors & directs group process ❖ Makes process decisions ❖ Works on behalf of the client	❖ Supports client ❖ Provides enthusiasm, energy, insight, ideas, fresh perspectives

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Statement Starters

Imagine the Future	Find the Questions	Plan for Action
❖ It would be great if… (IWBGI) ❖ I wish… (IW)	❖ How to… (H2) ❖ How might… (HM) ❖ In what ways might… (IWWM) ❖ What might be all the… (WMBAT)	❖ What I see myself (us) doing is…

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