

Establishing a Center for Creative Studies in Singapore:

A Business Proposal.

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Establishing a Center for Creative Studies in Singapore:

A Business Proposal

An Abstract and Reflections of a Project

in

Creative Studies

by

Hector Ramos

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science

May 2005

State of New York

College of Buffalo State College

International Center for Studies in Creativity

## **Abstract**

This project is about the design and development of a business proposal to establish a center of creative studies (and a creative consultancy) in Singapore. A brief background is given about the political and psychological context in order to better understand business opportunities in Singapore. The proposal includes an executive summary, description of services offered, a competitive analysis and some aspects of a potential marketing strategy. Apart from this proposal, other relevant products have been added such as an introductory presentation to creativity using PowerPoint, a paper examining the roles and potential business opportunities of a CPS consultant, and a short summary of 11 reasons why a company should engage the services of a CPS consultant.

Buffalo State College  
State University of New York  
Creative Studies Department

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A Business Proposal

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Date of Approval:

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the faculty at the International Center for Studies in Creativity. You have been a true source of inspiration and perspiration for me. And I am very thankful to my wife, Suzanna, who has helped me in many ways, some of which I do not always appreciate. Hideki (Muneyoshi) and Steve (Gareau) have also been great help in encouraging (and distracting) me: thank U! Thank you David (Gonzalez) for your wise advice and merciful behavior (sorry if this sentence is a fragment). Finally, I would like to mention and thank YOU, the reader, for picking up this particular project. I hope that it will be at least the beginning of a more scientific and systematic formulation of how to apply inquiry and action, which happens to be one of the initiatives of Buffalo State College at the strategic level.

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project is first to be able to apply all the knowledge and skills learned following a 15-month master's degree in Buffalo on Creative Studies and Change Leadership. Secondly, I chose to develop a proposal for the establishment of a center for creative studies that will bring value to companies and institutions in Singapore. It is also the purpose of this project to use Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to generate ideas and solutions for the strategic marketing of the center. Since this type of service (creativity and innovation) already exists in Singapore the final purpose of the project is the differentiation or positioning of a creativity center in terms of philosophy and approach.

### **Description**

This project is about the design and development of a business proposal regarding the establishment of a center for creative studies in Singapore. It gives a political and economic background about the importance of creativity and innovation in Singapore. It focuses mainly on the services offered, market analysis of competition, and the marketing strategy.

## **Rationale for selection**

The main reason for the selection of this project is my desire to bring theory and practice together and to be able to apply abstract concepts in creativity to the design of a business proposal. In addition to this, the demand in Singapore for services in the field of creativity and innovation provides an excellent political and economic framework for this project. Singapore is at the cross-roads of major changes. On the one hand there is an influential government that is trying to force a change in the entrepreneurial attitude of Singaporeans to incorporate greater amounts of creativity, innovation and risk-taking (MNC International, 2005). On the other hand and according to a recent survey (Financial Times, 2005) the citizens are still reluctant to risk-taking and creativity (Appendix 9). This project bridges the gap of valuing consultancy in creativity and creative thinking from a cross-cultural business perspective. The distance between academia and practice in the world of creativity may be greater than it looks. For instance, how many graduates of ICSC find themselves qualified to work in the field of creativity as professionals? The explanation may not be in the content and skills being taught but from the perception of the value of applied creativity. I found it interesting (if not necessary) to start looking into the value of offering services in this field from the point of view of a critical consumer. Finally, we need to look into the client's perspective who would likely measure the service provided in terms of outcomes (a specific problem or challenge that the consultant will have to address). The prospective client/investor/employer may be asking you: "Now that you have a



Master's Degree in Creative Studies, what is in IT for me?" I hope that this project may be a starting point to answer that question.

### **What this project adds creatively**

This project will provide me and other students with points to consider in order to design a business proposal or a business plan of intangible services (especially creativity consultancy). It may also provide us a starting point to all of us (students of creativity) to continue to build up the value of this type of services. It would be useful to be proficient at measuring and communicating value if we want to develop a consultancy business in creativity and especially in Creative Problem Solving.

## **PERTINENT LITERATURE**

### **Narrative Introduction**

The approach adopted for this project has been multi-faceted. The main areas included in the research have been a study of the Singaporean context (Appendix 9), a study of companies offering services related to creativity (Appendix 7), sources dealing with business and strategic marketing plans, the work of a very experienced consultant (A. Weiss, 2004) and the approach adopted by CPS practitioners (Johnston, B & Bate, D, 2003)

## **Selected bibliography and how it supports the project**

Financial Times, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005. London, England. Singapore needs to think outside the box: The island state depends on having a flexible and entrepreneurial workforce, but a survey finds much to be desired among the leadership of corporations. (20).

This article has given me key insights into the psychological climate that any company will face entering the Singaporean market. Singaporean leaders appear to be authoritative and reactive and reluctant to take risks. The business proposal takes all this data into consideration.

The Edge. March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Management: The innovation challenge. Singapore

This article also gives background information on the psychological framework of Singaporeans that has helped me design the proposal.

MNC International. Singapore must reinvent itself to become a more creative society: SM Goh. March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

This article conveys the importance of creativity for the development of the Singaporean economy. Politicians are willing to go to great lengths to explain this.

Wong P. K. Kiese, M. Singh, A and Wong, F. (2003) *The pattern of innovation in Singapore's manufacturing sector*. Singapore Management Review, Singapore

This article studies the results of Singapore's first national innovation system survey. It shows that larger companies engage in more innovative behaviors, innovation activity is related to sales volume, sales growth, employment growth, and internationalization. It also shows the insufficient collaboration between firms and the public R & D sector, deficiencies in the availability of scientific and technical manpower and innovation-supporting services and adverse societal attitudes to failure. This is all very useful information in order to target the market sector that

shows more potential in terms of investment in creativity and innovation. It has also helped me consider in what ways the proposal can be framed to address the concerns of potential investors that consider failure as a stigma.

Jeffrey A. Timmons, Stephen Spinelli, Andrew Zacharakis.(2004). *Business plans that work: a guide for small business*. McGraw Hill. New York

This book has helped me consider the many aspects that still need to be consider to develop and refine the proposal into a business plan.

Johnston, R and Bate, D. (2003). *The power of strategy innovation*. Amacom. New York.

This source has served as a motivator to pursue this project. It emotionally pushed me to start looking into concrete applications of creative thinking skills.

Markel, M. (2004) *Technical Communication*. Bedford/St. Martin's. Boston. MA

This source has helped me think about the different fundamental guidelines to consider when drafting a proposal, from the necessary data to the scope of the proposal.

Ronald A. Nykiel.(2003) *Marketing your business: a guide to developing a strategic marketing plan*. Best Business Books. New York

This book has helped me visualize the different aspects of a strategic marketing plan. The product does not reflect all the categories recommended in the book. However it has influenced the idea generation.

Weiss, A. (2001). *The ultimate consultant*. Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer. San Francisco, California.

This source has been a source of inspiration. Some of the concepts influenced my marketing strategy.

Retseptor, G. (2005). 40 Inventive principles in marketing sales and advertising. AVX Israel.

This article has provided the material for an online brainstorming session. That session produced a series of ideas that have influenced the marketing strategy and also has proven to me the powerful combination of the 40 inventive principles of Triz with brainstorming.

Berg, Deanna. Outovation Pte Ltd. [www.outovation.com](http://www.outovation.com).

This website offers creativity consultancy services including training. The workshops are divided into 17 categories. Some of these workshops are explained in detail. This website has helped me understand how creativity consultancy services need to be phrased in a way that is attractive and compelling to the prospective buyer.

<http://www.triz-journal.com/>.

This website offers a great amount of resources and articles on the applications of TRIZ.

Websites from companies offering services in the area of creativity and innovation:

1. Gary Lim Consultancy - <http://www.garylim.com/>
2. Dr Yew Kam Keong  
<http://www.mindbloom.net/2ChiefMindUnzipper/2ChiefMindUnzipper2.htm>
3. Joy of Learning - <http://www.jolc.com/>
4. Good life coaching - <http://www.goodlifecoaching.com/>
5. Nu Quest Management - <http://www.nuquest.com.sg/home/index.shtml>
6. Marketing Institute of Singapore - <http://www.mis.org.sg/>
7. Management Development Institute of Singapore -  
<http://www.mdis.edu.sg/main.htm>
8. Innovation @ e-sqcentre.com - <http://www.e-sqcentre.com/>
9. Family Works - <http://www.familyworks.com.sg/>

## **PROCESS PLAN**

### **Introduction**

If you take the time to see the concept paper for this project you will realize that the objective to create an 8-part business plan was eventually reduced to a 4-part business proposal. The design of a complete business plan to be implemented in Singapore would have required greater financial and time investment. The time-table below is therefore a drastic correction to the concept paper. However, if you happen to excel at implementation and (do not require much content/process clarification) you may be able to replicate this project in one third of the time. This is how the proposal was put together:

February:

The draft, development and definition of the concept paper took longer than expected. This was due to an “over-ambitious” project idea concerning writing a book or three chapters of a book. As it turned out even the current format of the concept paper was too complex to execute.

March:

I started researching sources on “how to write a business plan” and articles regarding creativity in Singapore. At the end I selected two sources out of twenty.

April:

I carried out two brainstorming exercises to generate ideas for the marketing strategy. The preparation and actual sessions took over seven hours. I also started researching companies in Singapore that offered consultancy services, training or facilitation related to creativity or innovation. Some of the companies and services offered can be found in Appendix 7. In addition to this, I started a search for relevant consultants to obtain feedback on the business proposal. Out of thirty-eight potential contributors ten agreed to cooperate. Out of those only six contributors finally gave feedback. Most of the writing and rewriting including the feedback was done in April.

May: The first week of May I re-organized the appendices and clarified some important points in both the write-up and the product.

## **OUTCOMES**

### **Introduction**

The main purpose of the project was to design a business proposal. However, three other products have been revised and added to the project as they are relevant to its implementation. A PowerPoint presentation will be used to introduce the subject of creativity to potential investors. An article written about CPS consultancy will provide a framework to offer a description of the services and business perspectives that any investor would consider prior to making any decision about investing in this company. Finally, I have included the essential information that could be part of a brochure or questionnaire to engage potential clients: 11 reasons why you should apply CPS to your business. This document would allow any executive to identify the areas where they can use Creative Problem Solving in their organizations. It can also be used as a starting point for discussion or explanation about the strengths of the CPS process.

## **KEY LEARNINGS**

### **Introduction**

My original learning goals were to:

- a) Learn and understand how to design an excellent business plan
- b) Value the training of creativity and creative thinking and
- c) Learn how to communicate effectively this value to the Singaporean market.

I am satisfied I have achieved all of them even though to different degrees. The opportunity to look into the business application of creativity and creative thinking processes has generated many insights about how to communicate this value to different markets.

Apart from these goals and insights I have learned much more about the importance of challenging your objectives, which led to the redefinition of my main outcome from a business plan to a business proposal. I have also learned about the usefulness of applying creativity and CPS concepts and tools to the process. And finally I have discovered and broken through the idea that I am always alone in my business endeavors. In other words, there are many people out there willing to give you key insights, valuable feedback and even try to help you jumpstart your business by sending some referred clients your way.

### **Content**

The insights mentioned below are some of most important key learnings from the whole project:

1) Phrase your services in terms of business outcomes (what benefit is the client obtaining from your services). The client must be able to relate to those outcomes so he/she will be asking you: how are you going to achieve them? That question opens the door for a succinct and in context explanation of the process (if necessary).



2) Look into the semantics that are selling your business. Words carry a lot of connotations. For instance, in some local American markets using the word 'creativity' will not get you very far. In Singapore instead, there is a fascination for 'innovation' and still a lot of ignorance about creativity processes. Therefore it is useful to use words that carry a lot of positive meaning.

3) Do not limit your market when designing your business plan. What are your strengths? What is your area of expertise? Try to leverage on them as you combine them in your service offerings.

4) Explore different possibilities. Is there any service or certification out there that you might obtain in order to complement and add depth and creativity your service offerings? For instance, there seems to be a certain demand about Emotional Intelligence in Singapore. Emotional Intelligence could be applied to applied creativity in business and leadership workshops which are popular in Singapore.

5) Do not oversell 'novelty'. Many companies are more interested in efficient ways to use creativity than in changing their systems. In other words, in as much as you can provide greater 'usefulness' to the increase of options for the client, you will experience greater buy in from him. Aim first for usefulness, then novelty.

6) In terms of increasing the content and value of the business proposal, I recommend placing emphasis on the marketing strategy of the business as this can bring clarity to your overall positioning of the business. It is to develop applications, products and services that are ‘market- driven’ rather than ‘product-driven.’ For instance, a company may be looking for a certain type of application or challenge and it would be up to me to find out what is the best tool and technique to facilitate the client in order to achieve his/her objective.

7) I also learned that there could be other psychological instruments, such as the 5 Factor Model and Symlog that could be very useful to connect or integrate to creative training.

8) From the creativity related field I found that TRIZ could be one of the most useful tools to employ in product development.

*What did I do in this project that worked well?*

I managed to find useful information regarding:

- a) how to design a business plan.
- b) the status of creativity and innovation in Singapore
- c) creativity and innovation related companies working in Singapore

I found many resources regarding point a). The challenge was to converge and select the most useful sources. Using the library’s online resources I managed to find enough data regarding b) and c).

Every activity that included external help worked well. I gathered a group to use a tool called Visually Identifying Relationships in order to come up with ideas that were both novel and useful. A different group helped me look at the strategic marketing proposal from another view using online brainstorming.

The feedback obtained from contributors in Singapore helped me view the competitive landscape differently (there are more companies involved in creativity than I had originally expected) and reconsider many aspects about the services provided, i.e. there is potential for Emotional Intelligence.

Finally, I am extremely satisfied with the quality of ideas. I believe that there are many concepts that could work extremely well and would jumpstart the business. However, they need to be refined and applied considering the financial and cultural environment in Singapore. There may be a need to look into the regional opportunities in order to secure financing.

In a nutshell, this project helped me gather many useful insights regarding the content, meaning and purpose of business in the field of creativity.

*What did I do in this project that did not work well? What would I do differently next time?*

The scope of the concept paper was too broad. I gave so much time to thinking about doing something meaningful and I did not realize how difficult it would be to realize it. I did not have a clear idea of the obstacles I would find in the implementation. These obstacles are very much connected in this case to data gathering. For instance, I thought there were only about five to ten companies offering this type of service in Singapore. I had the chance to discover that there could be from one hundred to one hundred and fifty companies involved in

providing creativity and innovation consultancy from one of my feedback contributors.

The content of the business proposal is still heavily influence by academic thought and remains in many cases at an abstract level. I will spend more time looking for concrete examples, illustrations etc, in order to give a more clear idea to the potential investor in the near future. Finally, I would like to use CPS more explicitly next time to explore the problem and direct the research in the right direction. Only considering the major issues around this project and creating problem statements could have opened new possibilities and added greater clarity and precision to the project.

### **Process**

The process used to create this product involved ‘process’ and ‘content’ research:

- a) Process. I looked for the most useful sources regarding ‘how to write an excellent business plan’ and ‘how to design a successful marketing strategy’. Then, I looked for consultants who would volunteer to give feedback. Finally, I facilitated two ideation sessions. In the first session three participants generated different options regarding “how to market a center for studies in creativity in Singapore?” using the tool Visually Identifying Relationships (VIR). In the second session I facilitated the same number of participants to generate ideas using some of the inventive principles of TRIZ (Theory of Inventive Problem Solving) (Appendix 6).

b) Content. I found relevant information regarding the political, business and psychological climate affecting creativity and innovation in Singapore. Then I found companies that offer services in creativity and innovation.

*What did I do in this project that worked well?*

The research strategy to find information about creativity and innovation in Singapore led me to find out and master all the available resources and search engines in the online library of Buffalo State College.

The selection of consultants to obtain feedback was successful and it can be improved to include more consultants and a greater variety of perspectives. Eleven consultants offered to help. From that group only 6 professionals finally sent feedback, and only 3 had been working in the field of creativity and innovation (Appendix 2). One of the consultants has many years of experience in training and consulting in creativity in Singapore. She gave expert advice. The use of the ideation tool 'brainwriting' worked extremely well when combined with innovative principles from TRIZ. This is an area to be explored.

*What did I do in this project that did not work well? What would I do differently next time?*

Given the time limit it would have been more useful to select and use only one source of information regarding business plan formats than trying to compile information from 20 sources and converge on the best of the best format (the

reader will be glad to know that I have added no extra appendix for those sources).

In order to better select and involve the most qualified feedback contributors it would have been more useful to contact them only through networking with creativity consultants (recommendations from friends working in the field) rather than sending ‘cold’ emails at random and expect people to be extra generous with their time (particularly in Singapore). Moreover, it would have been more useful immediately request feedback from the eleven professionals that volunteered.

On a separate front, I would use brainstorming with post-its and VIR together next time to generate many more novel and useful ideas. I found an initial purge of ideas would have been useful, before utilizing a highly novelty-driven divergent tool.

Psychological/social/physical environment: I would look into not trying to undertake too many projects at the same time next time. While being able to research and study other subjects to make connections (i.e. TRIZ and ‘Brainwriting’) it could have been easier for me to focus my efforts and schedule writing differently. For instance, I would have written two sections in the first two weeks and asked for feedback in such a way that the proposal would have gone through three or four rounds of feedback instead of one round. Different contributors would have constantly received improved versions of the proposal.

Apart from the many leadership initiatives from other classes, papers to be written, conferences to be organized etc that affect focus, it would have been useful to find ways to keep motivation (and action) high. Even though I have

used a couple of tools for this project, I would try to use a facilitator next time to try to connect the whole CPS process to the development of the proposal to sell CPS consultancy. I would like to make a special effort to explore data gathering in depth. It is extremely important to know what data you have, what data you need and how likely you are to obtain that data before starting a project. Finally, I would have an implementation plan for the project. For example, investors are always willing to know how much the investment is going to be, how much they are likely to benefit from it and what their exit point is.

### **Conclusion**

This project has made me more aware than ever of the creative process. On the one hand, when you explore the possibilities facing you, for instance, you can ask yourself the questions “what, when, where, who, how and why” you will challenge yourself to uncover assumptions and rules that we tend to make for ourselves. For instance, I had it in my mind to come up with a complete business plan. When I realized that it was too complicated I thought about writing a business proposal. It took me a “whack on the side of the ego” to readjust. So planning and adjusting are realities of the creative process that are not always easy to accept cognitively or emotionally.

It also very difficult to define conceptual learning points from the project as the learning comes from different activities: course work, reading, conversations, application of principles in leadership initiatives... However, the

project has allowed me to open my mind to accept creative business ideas from people outside the Buffalo community. In short, this project has given more openness to my thinking.

What I see myself doing next is refining the business proposal and implementing some of the ideas in order to create testimonials, case studies and stories to build marketing material and adapt guidelines and tools to the Singaporean context. Once I have enough business data, financial data, and refined agreements with consultants that will be participating in the venture I would like to insert the proposal into a business plan, have it evaluated by more feedback contributors and start looking for potential investors.



## REFERENCES

Johnston, R and Bate, D. (2003). *The power of strategy innovation*. Amacom. New York.

Weiss, A. (2001). *The ultimate consultant*. Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer. San Francisco, California.

### Newspapers articles

Financial Times, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Singapore needs to think outside the box: The island state depends on having a flexible and entrepreneurial workforce, but a survey finds much to be desired among the leadership of corporations. Pg 20. London, England.

MNC International. Singapore must reinvent itself to become a more creative society: SM Goh. March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

The Edge. March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Management: The innovation challenge. Singapore

# Appendix A

## Business Proposal

# **BUSINESS PROPOSAL**

## **Services and products, competitive analysis and a marketing proposal for The Innovation House Pte Ltd**

### Executive Summary

Singapore's leadership has explicitly expressed an interest in enhancing the creativity and innovation aspects of Singaporean businesses and product/service offerings. This innovation would be the basis for greater economic expansion, mainly based on exports. Senior Minister Goh Chock Tong has recently reiterated political reforms that would allow greater diversity in the political sphere, indicating the degree of the government's commitment to a more creative and innovative Singapore. A more concrete example is found in those government agencies that are co-financing initiatives with companies that seek to bring innovative ideas to market. The Information Development Authority offers the "Innovation Development Scheme" (IDS) to fund up to 50% of the development costs for innovative software ideas.

Given the current political and economic situation in Singapore, the company proposed here i.e. House of Innovation (HI) would offer consultancy and training services in the fields of creativity and Creative Problem Solving to assist companies improve their decision-making, operations and product development processes by introducing creativity-related assessment tools (Foursight, Emotional Intelligence, etc) and methodologies (Creative Problem Solving, Accelerated Learning, Emotional Intelligence, etc). These services would be provided at the company's premises through the use of smart rooms or at clients' locations. Apart from the corporate market, an additional market targeted would be public education (trainers, educators and students). This proposal would present an overview the proposed company including:

- a) services to be offered
- b) a competitive analysis
- c) a marketing strategy

## DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

### A. Services

Singapore offers a great opportunity to provide consultancy services in many areas. House of Innovation could potentially bring together experts in many different fields. The company could provide eight different types of services:

1. Creative thinking skills training. This type of training includes an introduction to creativity and creative thinking, different blocks to creativity, creative thinking tools and application of creative thinking skills.
2. Facilitation of problem solving. Facilitators would use Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to assist clients to find new and creative solutions to their challenges.
3. Team building training. House of Innovation would offer companies the ability to profile teams regarding their creative preferences, through the use of instruments such as FourSight (see page 12) and the Myers-Briggs Type Inventory. HI would use Creative Problem Solving and team building activities including (guided discussions using dialogue principles) to develop greater team performance.
4. Strategic business development. The company would provide consultants and targeted resource groups to clients for strategic development. Clients would be able to identify new products, markets, and business models through Creative Problem Solving methods and tools.
5. House of Innovation would also provide the following types of training, teaching, facilitation, and coaching services:
  - a. Executive coaching
  - b. Career development
  - c. Emotional Intelligence training
  - d. Accelerated Learning courses for trainers and educators

All of these services would be marketed as part of facilitation and training programs that target:

- Process improvement
- New product development
- Strategic Planning
- Defining a vision and mission
- Promotion development
- Team-building interventions
- Improved decision-making
- Creative Problem Solving
- Creativity in Human Resources
- Creativity in Sales
- Creativity in Marketing
- Creativity in Business Development
- Creative study skills and career development

## B. Markets

Three main markets have been identified:

- 1) Small and medium companies that constitute 50% of the workforce in Singapore
- 2) Multinational and Singaporean conglomerates that have their own training departments and programs
- 3) Students intending to pursue university studies or studying at a university or polytechnic in Singapore.

HI would have three main aspects:

1. Place: A Creativity Center that includes rooms that provide a creative climate. This “creative” room/space could be used also for training and facilitation.
2. Services: A group of consultants would provide the services as mentioned above.
3. Products: The company would also serve as a resource center for books related to creativity and innovation. Some of these items would also be for sale i.e. resources on Creative Problem Solving, emotional intelligence, etc

## **POSITIONING: IDENTIFYING A COMPETITIVE EDGE IN A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT**

The number of companies offering similar *specialized* types of consulting services in the area of creative thinking is still small in Singapore and there is great room for development. The difficulty of communicating, marketing and selling intangible services that are “process” based (creative thinking process) instead of expertise-based (traditional consultancies) may have contributed partially to the slow development of the industry. The difficulty in obtaining quick and practical results or measuring effectiveness of creative thinking as well as the reticence by many Singaporean businessmen to consider investing in creativity or innovation consultancy services, may have also been a contributing factor.

HI is distinguishing its product and service offerings in the following manner:

- An experienced group of consultants. These consultants have each more than ten years experience in the area of creativity consulting.
- The company would provide FourSight profiling which would greatly enhance training in Creative Problem Solving.
- HI would provide Accelerated Learning training in order to enhance client’s effectiveness in the design and delivery of training. Results would be measured and published where possible.
- The company would provide training in Emotional Intelligence. This would complement and enhance the cognitive processes of teams in problem solving.
- HI would pursue a relationship with the government’s Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board to obtain the relevant certifications and endorsement to increase the credibility of the services offered to the Singaporean Consumer.

## **MARKETING STRATEGY**

### **A useful definition of marketing**

The following ideas have been grouped according to the conventional categories of product, promotion and place. This selection explores the different means of conveying value to a targeted audience.

### **52 ideas for the rapid growth of the House of Innovation**

#### **PLACE**

This section would include the type of organizations, companies and institutions targeted to be clients or means to market creativity services.

1. The company would provide 'introduction to creative thinking' sessions to business associations, for instance, Singaporean Manufacturing Association, the American, British, French, and Australian etc. business associations
2. HI would make presentations to targeted companies to start building clientele. Companies to be approached would be in the sectors that require greater novelty in their business models, or companies that undergo higher rates of change.
3. Networking would be one of the main pillars of the marketing strategy. This could be carried out by attending relevant events and creating events such as business breakfast sessions to present and have interaction with potential and targeted clients. This type of networking could be done across industries but with an emphasis on industries that are closely interrelated, for instance printing and publishing. Moreover, the networking could be targeted to meet potential investors and leaders in different industries as well as professionals with high level of influence.
4. The company would co-operate with consultants in related services that offer complementary services with the aim of create a consulting group that can brainstorm on breakthrough marketing strategies for rapid growth.
5. The company would leverage the existing network of professionals interested in the field of creativity in Spain to provide creativity workshops and build up the international portfolio.

6. The company would look to create strong relationships with other educational institutions interested in teaching creativity. It would seek to explore different venues of cooperation and research in different topics such as: cross-cultural creativity, creativity and leadership and advance creative thinking skills through thinking tool design and development.
7. Accelerated learning strategies would be marketed through partnerships with relevant retail outlets: aromatherapy, cooking ware, musical instruments, music records, fitness centers and foreign language schools.
8. HI would seek to work in close contact with educational institutions and seek ways to incorporate creative thinking in the curriculum of their business studies.
9. The company would explore the relationship between different media such as TV, radio, newspaper/magazine, internet and the education field to provide a cross-cultural creative thinking education course.

## **PROMOTION**

This section provides all types of activities designed to promote the services. Some activities would be carried out pro bono for the help of institutions and organizations with social interests. Other activities would include conferences and participating in relevant trade fairs.

10. Using pro-bono work (facilitation, teaching creativity and consulting on Accelerated Learning design for training materials) through relevant non-profit organizations. This would be used to demonstrate and document the process and increase its validation in the Singaporean context. Voluntary work would be used to maximize networking opportunities. Much of the pro bono facilitation and teaching would be carried out through interested organizations and churches already in the network of HI. These churches and organizations would go beyond Singapore to Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines and Australia.
11. The company would support the Singapore Affiliate of the American Creativity Association and sponsor events for the promotion of creativity in Singapore.
12. Pro-bono sessions would be offered also to some companies that have special real life situations. These cases would be used as testimonials and case studies (including stories) would be built on those cases for marketing purposes.



13. The company would seek to integrate the staff closely in one or more social programs and explore in what ways it can have a positive influence in certain social programs.
14. The company would organize a creativity conference in Phuket, Thailand and target thirty professionals regionally to exchange views on the development on creativity in South East Asia. The conference would have the objectives of exploring company alliances creatively, team building, Creative Problem Solving and cross-cultural issues.
15. The House of Innovation would seek to establish relationships with local publishing companies such as trade magazines in order to publish regularly and provide the companies workshops on creative thinking.
16. House of Innovation would seek to use word of mouth and referral as foundational marketing strategy. Pro-bono work would help to achieve this goal. However, there would be an effort to create events and provide facilitation/creative thinking workshops to companies at their regional meetings, or companies that invite regional managers.
17. The company would seek to participate in any regional trade fair, seminar or relevant event in the areas of creativity, facilitation, innovation or any other related field.

## **PRODUCT**

This section would include the type of marketing products (content and media), styles... to be used to best convey the company's services.

18. The company would carry out research to write on 'creative thinking' and seek to be published in the national newspapers. The contact would leverage on its existing network of contacts in local newspapers to identify other related topics that could be of interest, for instance, successful use of creative thinking skills for university students.
19. Use bold, new and exciting ideas: any type of printed material should incorporate the words: innovation, strategy, novelty, break-through thinking and any other type of bold and exciting words that are used in the Singaporean context without falling into clichés.

20. Make sense out of complexity: the use of diagrams making complex decision-making procedures simple or mindmaps that bring together different complex elements in strategy design and making it understandable.
21. Helping people overcome difficulties: it is important to emphasize the human element of the services provided. The answer to the often asked question “what is in it for me?” should have a process, content and human aspect.
22. Design DVD’s and VHS tapes that can be sent to clients: successful Creative Problem Solving sessions would be taped showcasing the creative problem process and tools. This would be done in a way that is both inspiring and cheerful.
23. The company would also use multimedia CD’s including audio and powerpoint presentations with sound and interactive features (for samples of this technology see [www.articulate.com](http://www.articulate.com)).
24. Use of two think-tanks for the design of marketing material. Professionals with over 20 years experience in different industries would be selected to form part of a think-tank for Creative Problem Solving sessions and for the design of marketing material that is industry focused.
25. Hiring of bright college interns from business schools. There would be projects assigned to college interns regarding niche marketing of creativity consultancy services. These students would be able to learn, understand and master the Creative Problem Solving process.
26. Accelerated learning techniques would be used to teach creativity to students. These techniques would be documented in brochures and CD’s to target teachers and schools to provide Accelerated Learning workshops.
27. The company would create a training room that would have a creative ambiance with the use of posters and other visuals, aromatherapy, music... to be used in marketing materials.
28. The company would seek to create a long lasting relationship with students through activities, further workshops, certifications and a resource center. The company would engage in excellent customer relationship management by keeping an ongoing evaluation and Creative Problem Solving philosophy for the development and fine-tuning of the service offering and marketing strategy.
29. A strong mission statement would be formulated such as “The House of Innovation: The targeted catalyst your strategy improvement” or “The House of Innovation: Changing mindsets though creative thinking strategies.”

30. The company would identify strong sales people or sales consultants in the sales of intangibles that could be hired temporarily.
31. The company would create a website that would leverage the most interactive possibilities available in the internet. House of Innovation would provide advanced flash presentations (for samples of this technology see [www.articulate.com](http://www.articulate.com)), articles, a newsletter containing other relevant information using this media. Task appraisals would be done online through the use of online telephony and interactive questionnaires. A suitable internet marketing strategy would be prepared to increase regional, American and European clientele.
32. The company would provide and leverage other existing certification programs worldwide. Certification on Emotional Intelligence, Accelerated Learning and other relevant developmental skills would be marketed regionally.
33. House of Innovation would seek to cooperate with other educational institutions regionally for the development of “applied creative thinking” programs that can be modified to suit national and industrial cultural issues.
34. The company would seek to represent talented professionals in the creativity field that have not had prior experience with delivery in Asia.
35. House of Innovation would seek to work along professional coaches in order to provide a more beneficial service to clients seeking to incorporate more creativity in their work processes.
36. The marketing materials would explain how different aspects of perception, problem finding, solution finding, implementation acceptance and decision making are critical for the development of any business giving examples of each part of the process.
37. The marketing materials targeted at students would focus on personal development: “how to make the most of your studies”, “how to prepare to enter the business world through Creative Problem Solving”, “how to break your own thinking and negative belief patterns, increase your self-awareness and self-esteem.” The materials would explain clearly the importance of the alignment of values, motivation and expertise for faster growth.
38. The marketing materials would also showcase new product development. The products developed by students would be documented and there would be presentations to prospective investors regarding the proposed innovations. The company would help students through the innovation process.

39. The company would produce a specific brochures relating to the creative company-supplier relationship: ways to enhance your cooperation while retaining independence.
40. The company would produce a specific brochure about the company-customer relationship: how to engage your customers to become your product development team.
41. The company would endeavour to train a group of consultants in creative thinking in order to further develop the market and validate the process.
42. House of Innovation would seek to establish relationships with other non-related consultancies regionally and invite them to be part of a regional think-tank. Consultancies in other industries would provide the expertise for cross industry ideation and solution finding.
43. The design of new marketing materials would be influenced by event and industry sectors. For instance, “creative thinking: new solutions for the tourism industry in Asia” would be the focus of a brochure, letter and article regarding the potential in the industry for innovative business models and tourist offerings.
44. House of Innovation would seek to invite guest speakers that have shown greater achievement in the field of creativity from the region, United States, Africa and Europe to lecture and work in Singapore or to participate in group discussion through video conferencing. These special events would be offered to students and members of the HI Resource Center at a discounted rate.
45. All these marketing strategies would be modified to include the sale of products: books, audio and video tapes, DVD’s and CD’s, memberships, educational programs and other relevant products. These products would be sold on behalf of the company’s principals overseas such as products on Emotional Intelligence as well as Innovation House products (recordings of sessions, presentations of thinking tools, interviews...)
46. The company would form and select cross-cultural a team to brainstorm on how best to market to different ethnic groups in Singapore. Another cross-cultural team would be formed online to brainstorm on similar issues for the internet applications of the educational programs.
47. Competition. The two most creative marketing ideas-strategies contest. The company would offer a \$ 1,000 prize to the successful candidates. This competition would be publicized in the national newspaper. House of Innovation

- would try to engage educational institutions such as Ngee Ann Polytechnic and Nanyang Polytechnic to encourage students to apply. The company would procure coverage from the media regarding this event.
48. House of Innovation would provide a continuous learning platform to students through further certifications in relevant topics, offering talks from invited speakers, refreshing courses, access to the resource center...
    - Games. The students would have to invent a “creativity game” as part of their project work for the semester. This group work would be marketed to relevant companies and investment would be done in prototyping.
  49. Mailing. Traditional methods of mailing would be used to market events, resource center and facilitation opportunities depending on the quality of the mailing list.
  50. Cross-industry marketing. The marketing focus team would be in charge of targeting industries that would benefit from a cross-industry local and regional approach to marketing.
  51. The company would introduce a Creative Problem Solving competition that could be offered in schools with the cooperation of the media. This would entail training in Creative Problem Solving, in a fun and practical way to introduce CPS in schools.

## WHAT IS FOURSIGHT?

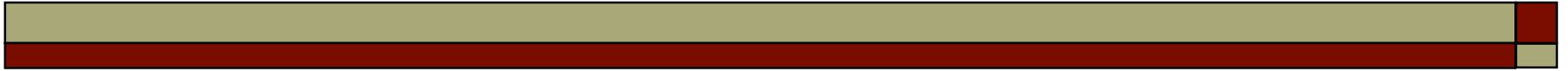
FourSight is a leading assessment tool for developing innovation in the workplace. The 37-question test is a highly researched, field-tested and validated assessment. It offers individuals, groups and organizations a simple, striking look at exactly where they excel and breakdown in the four distinct phases of the breakthrough thinking process. Are you a Clarifier? An Ideator? A Developer? An Implementer? Some combination of the above? It makes a big difference when you face a new challenge that calls for a creative solution. Teams, students and whole organizations are using FourSight to approach their next challenge with the awareness and innovation tools they need to get better results.

FourSight helps teams get desired results. Team members can use FourSight tools to:

- + Improve collaboration
- + Leverage differences
- + Reduce stress
- + Hone critical and creative thinking skills
- + Achieve breakthrough results

## Appendix B

Feedback received from  
consultants and other professionals



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Appendix C  
Creativity and Innovation:  
PowerPoint Presentation



# CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

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Creative Problem Solving in Business



# AGENDA

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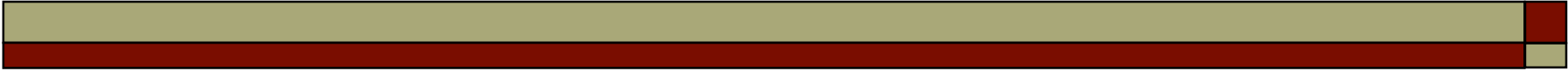
- Definition of Creativity and Innovation
- Value of CPS in Business
- Exercise



# Creativity and Innovation

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- Creativity: the production of new and useful ideas (Amabile, 1996)
- Innovation: The application of ideas to business in a significant way. The practical use of inventions.



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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"*Creativity* is thinking up new things. *Innovation* is doing new things."

— Theodore Levitt

"Innovation is the process of turning ideas into manufacturable and marketable form."

— Watts Humprey

"The *innovation point* is the pivotal moment when talented and motivated people seek the opportunity to act on their ideas and dreams."

— W. Arthur Porter

# Creativity and Innovation

- Exploration: Perception (seeing what “is not” there)
- 

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due to copyright restrictions]

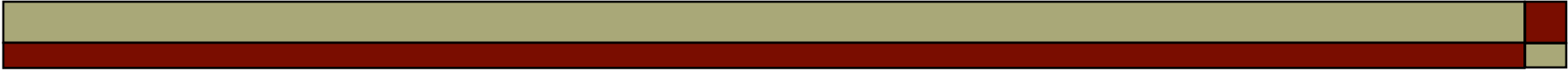
# Creativity and Innovation

## □ Exploration: Perception (perspective)

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due to copyright restrictions]

"To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, requires creative imagination and marks real advance in science."

— Albert Einstein



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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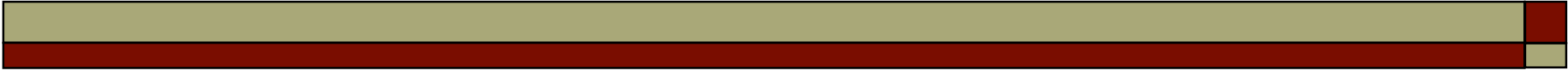
## Problem Exploration

Objective:

- Find the **real issue** using guidelines.
- Better understand the problem and its parameters (paradigm).
- Uncover implicit assumptions.

Tools: Ladder of abstraction, reversal, semantic fields, brainstorming, purposeful word association...

Example: Bethesda World Harvest Int'l Church



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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## **EXAMPLES OF ASSUMPTIONS:**

"What use could the company make of an electric toy?"

— Western Union, when it turned down rights to the telephone in 1878

"The horse is here today, but the automobile is only a novelty - a fad."

— President of Michigan Savings Bank advising against investing in the Ford Motor Company

"Everything that can be invented has been invented."

— Charles H. Duell, Director of US Patent Office 1899

"Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?"


— Harry M. Warner, Warner Bros Pictures, 1927



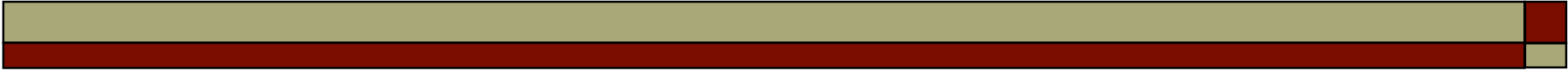
# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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- Idea generation: Imagination \_ Logic



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due to copyright restrictions]



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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## **Idea generation** (divergence):

- The search for alternatives
- Quantity leads to quality
- Novelty in new paradigms  
can turn the impossible into a  
reality

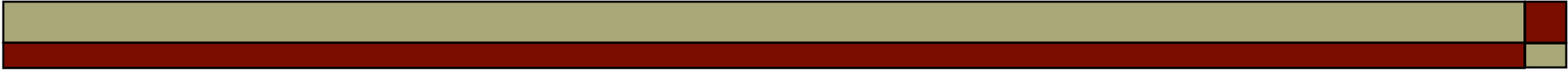
“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”  
— Albert Einstein

# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

"The best way to have a good idea is to have a lot of ideas."  
— Dr. Linus Pauling



Idea generation at  
Shabach Realty



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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## **Solution selection (convergence):**

- ❑ Analytical assessment of the suitability of the idea
- ❑ Selection guidelines

Tools are used to assess, sort, investigate and select solutions

Example: Evaluation matrix including criteria selection

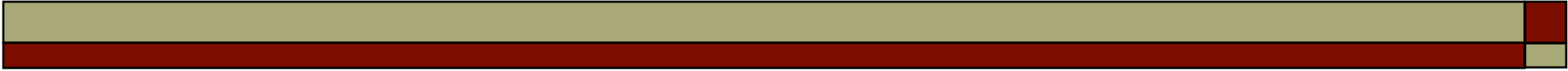
# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

"The uncreative mind can spot wrong answers, but it takes a very creative mind to spot wrong questions."

— Anthony Jay



Shabach Realty: Ideas on post-it notes are explored and assessed



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

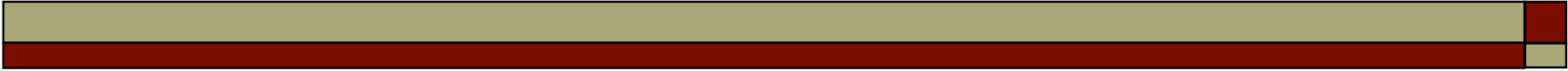
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## **Application:**

- strengthening of solution
- implementation plan

Tools: an array of tools to fine tune solutions & planning.

Example: Marketing through an event on magic for children



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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## **CPS Rules:**

Deferrrrrrring judgment

Different types of judgment  
(Self-judgment, judgment of other,  
group-think)

How to eliminate negative judgment:

- Knowledge
- The importance of being wrong

"Replace *either/or* thinking  
with *plus* thinking."

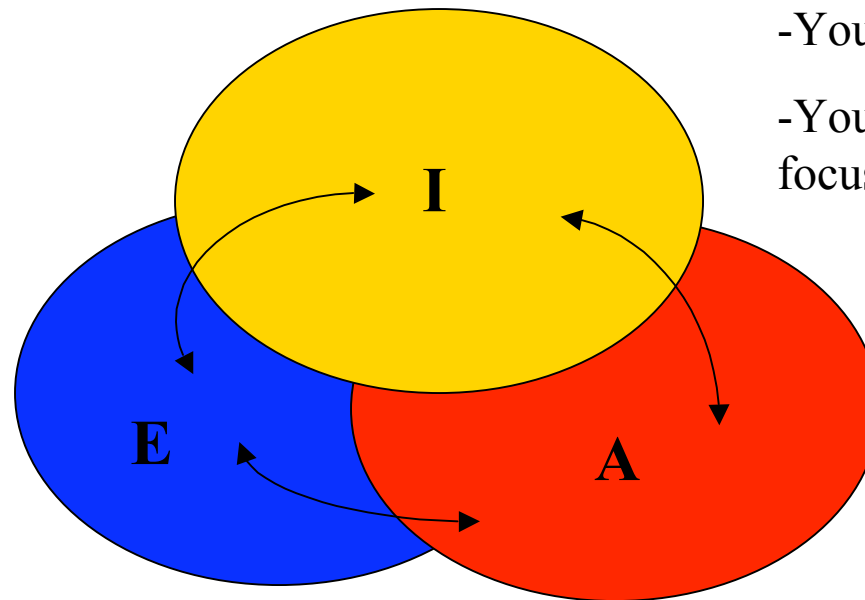
— Craig Hickman

# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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## **Flexible proven framework:**

Exploration, Ideation, Application



-You can start at any point

-You can have a triple- point focus

It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer.  
-- Albert Einstein





# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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## **CPS Framework:**

Team dynamics

It contributes to the creative climate: challenge, dynamism, trust, risk-taking, openness, freedom, leverage on expertise and synergize talents in a group.

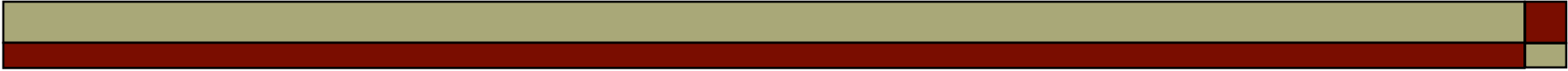
# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?



Creating a Climate for CPS

West Valley Central

New York



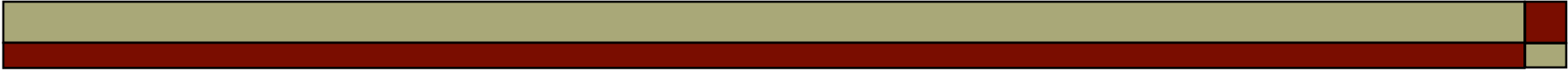
# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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**CPS Framework:** It contributes to the development of leadership.

Connections to the Leadership Style Inventory measure:

Encourage the heart, modeling the way, enabling others to act, challenge the process, inspiring a shared vision.



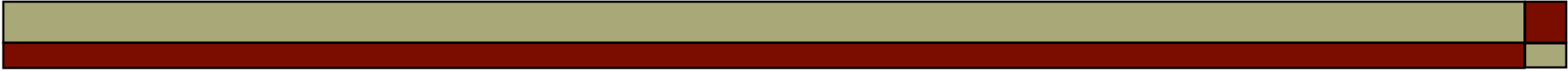
# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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Flexible system compatible with the use of relevant measures and other tools:

Myers-Briggs Temperament Inventory, Foursight, Leadership Practices Inventory

TRIZ. Product development processes based on patented inventions



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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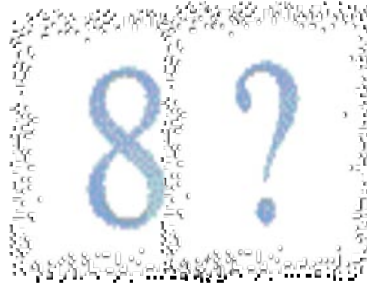
Where to apply CPS:

- Business Development
- Marketing
- Business Strategy
- Product Development
- Operations: Performance Improvement
- Development of Human Resources and Leadership
- Challenges facing the company that require a paradigm shift or a novel approach

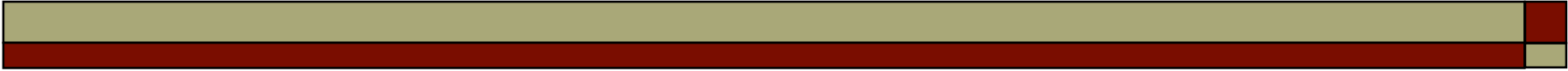
# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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Paradigm shift:  
What is half of



A



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

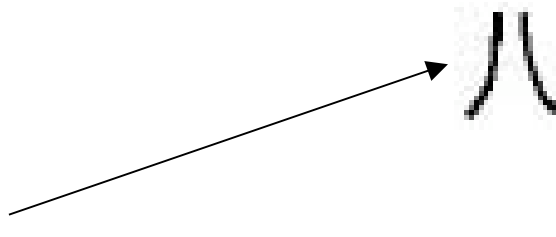
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Tamil 8



A diagram consisting of a horizontal black bar at the top. An arrow points from the text 'Tamil 8' below to the center of this bar.

Chinese 8



A diagram consisting of a stylized Chinese character '八' (eight). An arrow points from the text 'Chinese 8' below to the character.



# Why is it important to apply Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to Business?

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"It's easy to come up with new ideas; the hard part is letting go of what worked for you two years ago, but will soon be out of date."  
— Roger von Oech

“The essential part of creativity is not being afraid to fail.”  
— Edwin H. Land

You cannot solve the problem with the same kind of thinking that has created the problem.  
-- Albert Einstein

"To have a great idea, have a lot of them."  
— Thomas Edison

“Creative thinking is not a talent, it is a skill that can be learnt. It empowers people by adding strength to their natural abilities which improves teamwork, productivity and where appropriate profits.”  
— Edward de Bono

## Appendix D

11 Reasons why you should apply  
Creative Problem Solving (CPS) to  
your business (a brochure)

# 11 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD APPLY CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING (CPS) TO YOUR BUSINESS<sup>1</sup>

- 1) You can enable your executive and managers to bring innovative processes into the company in any department, from product development to marketing and operations.
- 2) Your business development department will be able to optimize resources to develop new strategies (and new markets) and leverage on existing products by using strategic thinking tools.
- 3) Your employees will improve their decision making skills by using collectively, or own their own suitable analytical methods and techniques.
- 4) It provides a clear, eclectic, flexible and simple framework to apply creative thinking skills and tools. It provides a comprehensive view of the problem solving process. Your company can incorporate any proprietary thinking tool in the process.
- 5) Your company will save time and money by solving the **root cause** of problems instead of dealing with symptoms.
- 6) Your executives will be able to develop their thinking skills, visually and dimensionally to improve visionary, strategic and tactical thinking.
- 7) Your employees will be able to assess the potential advantages and benefits of product and system improvement proposals and strengthen them objectively.
- 8) CPS will allow you to have productive teamwork (synergy between departments' strengths) and lead to an improved decision-making process, great openness and increase intrinsic motivation in your staff (lower turnover).
- 9) You will develop the potential and talents of your employees and their leadership abilities.
- 10) You can enhance communication and collaboration within the company and with suppliers and customers with a better understanding of the creative styles of each employee.
- 11) Your company can leverage on more efficient cooperation between clients (or customers) on one side and suppliers on the other.

# Appendix E

## CPS in perspective: professional services (unpublished paper)

## **CPS in perspective: Professional Services**

This paper seeks to explore and understand the value of Creative Problem Solving (CPS) in business, how it relates to the field of consultancy and some opportunities open to any CPS practitioner for future development. The approach will be not only of defining the most valuable aspects but to suggest some of the ways to convey this meaning to the client.

### **CPS: The need to redefine oneself**

Unfortunately the label “Creative Problem Solving” has not made justice to itself since the model does not only solve current “problems” but also present and future challenges. This is not semantic frivolity. In the minds of businessmen around the world problems and opportunities or challenges are distinct issues. Moreover, the word ‘creativity’ does not have the same impact as ‘innovation’ in the mind of the executive even though creativity is the backbone of innovation and creativity consultants have facilitated innovation processes in companies. It is the duty of the consultant to give a brief introduction to the concepts to enlarge the definition of creativity in the mind of the client, which is likely to be influenced by some sort of bias, e.g. this is related to art or unimportant and irrelevant.

### **CPS: a simple, flexible, eclectic, holistic and transferable process**

CPS tackles its task from a four-pronged approach. First, it involves a simple three stage model: *exploration, ideation and implementation*. The consultant will have to decide what the most suitable starting point in the process is. However, the understanding of these three parts is very useful in working out the problem as they interrelate. For instance, ideas produced at the ideation stage can give you an idea of the nature of the problem (exploration phase) or about potential obstacles to the application of the solution

(implementation phase). After spending two sessions with a client of mine involved in real estate exploring the problem (marketing real estate) we started the ideation phase. At the end of the session the client finally found out the main approach he wanted to give to his ideation: building trust with customers giving a ‘family feeling’ to the business. The eclecticism of the system is shown as it allows the flexibility to use over 200 different thinking tools to *diverge and converge*.

Second, CPS introduces the basic thinking principles of divergence and convergence. The search for alternatives, being one of the main characteristics of creative thinking, contributes to make the best out of the three stages as group members come up with different ideas following certain *guidelines*. In convergence, the client or the group select ideas using tools to sort and assess them to find the best ones also following certain *guidelines*.

Thirdly, CPS offers *guidelines* that have been proven to enhance creativity for both divergence and convergence processes (Parnes, 1986). These concepts need to be explained carefully to the client. For example differing judgment includes more than criticizing someone else’s ideas. It is also about self-criticism and even about judging our judgments (Ray, 1986). This principle is also used in other models such as the McKinsey problem solving method. It is not only a matter of judgment but also of “leaving the preconceptions and prejudices at the door” (Rasiel, 1999). Linking CPS practices to other reputable models will also help the client understand and build credibility. The principle of “going for quantity” also needs to be explained in the light of Alex Osborn’s research in his book *Applied Imagination* (1963) and supplemented by other research in the field (Parnes, 1986 and Bassadur, 1982). Clients are not usually looking for a research paper full of references and theory but they will ask directly or pose an implicit demand for some sort of **external validation**. This external validation should be composed of:

- 1) A clear and well defined explanation of terms and some data to show that the point has been researched and proven.
- 2) A quote from popular researchers that they know (conceptual testimonial).

- 3) Examples of how this method has been used successfully by companies in the same industry or related fields.
- 4) A testimonial from past customers (usually senior management is preferred) about their satisfaction using the process (experiential testimonial).

The client will then require some sort of internal validation. This is a process that can start at the presentation with some practical examples to prove your point so the client has a hands-on experience with parts of the process. The internal validation will continue throughout the whole process where the client needs to understand and see the value of what is happening. They need to buy in the process not only at the end but during the different stages.

A consultant can use the CPS framework to use a series of *thinking tools* that will be effective in divergence and convergence depending on the stage of the process, the type of the problem and maybe even the composition of the group. For instance, an experienced consultant will try low risk tools first to build up trust and check with the client about the suitability and novelty of ideas. If the CPS consultant presents the **brainstorming** tool it would be important for him to distinguish between what it is and what is commonly understood: the use of a process involving invitational stems (statement starters), recording of ideas, timing idea generation, guidelines, a facilitator... instead of just “discussing ideas.”

Finally, the CPS consultant should stress the **transferable** nature of the methodology as the company trainers could well learn the skills and facilitate and train employees in different departments.

### **CPS and exploring the problem: paradigm stretching vs. paradigm breaking**

This structured approach may not be familiar to the client since the conventional practice to approach a problem is to discuss solutions. It is therefore essential to explain the importance of exploring the problem. This stage is used by famous thinkers: quoting them about problem exploration, e.g. *“We can’t solve problems using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”* (A. Einstein) could be useful. Since some other systems and companies also make use of this stage in one way or another it could help develop the understanding to compare it or connect it in a purposeful way. For instance, in the McKinsey method ‘framing the problem’ is specially designed to the business problem ‘susceptible to rigorous-based analysis’ (Rasiel, 2001).

Moreover, giving examples on how redefining the problem has been useful to companies will help the client understand the value of CPS. The aim is to explain and illustrate that “the aim is to find the root cause of the problem – not necessarily the one that is immediately apparent” (Johnston, 2001, Ohmae 2001). The participants will therefore enhance their creative thinking skills by “seeing what no one else is seeing” (Michalko, 2001).

Once the problem has been explored the consultant will be able to assess the confines of the paradigms where the company is working and discuss with the client the approach that he wants to take. The consultant needs to make it clear that CPS can be used both to bring novelty within the business paradigm and can be used to uncover new ones. For instance Bob Johnston and Doug Bate in their book *The Power of Strategy Innovation* propose a CPS-based model that deals not with solving current problems of the company but finding new ways to:

- a) shift a corporation’s business strategy in order to create new value for both the customer and the corporation.
- b) apply innovative thinking to the business model.
- c) increase your competitive advantage. (Johnston, 2003)



**CPS and ideation: connecting imagination to logic (a careful selection of multiple and varied options)**

The use of the power of imagination for innovation is one of the most important selling points of CPS. The issue of the meaning of novelty and usefulness will be defined by the client, so it is important to find out the paradigmatic parameters that the client would like to use in order to generate focused ideas. This may not curtail the novelty of the ideas but determine the type of novelty that the client requires. In terms of tools, it is not as important for a consultant to know tens of tools as much as to be an expert in using and training participants about the tools. Some of the high-level risk tools may need not only training, but also the adequate atmosphere. The consultant may be able to do this by leading the group through some process related exercises. For instance, one consultant expert, Dr Andrei Aleinikov spends the first full day out of a four-day program only creating the psychological climate to introduce the tools. The participants get to know and practice tools only when there is a psychological climate characterized by openness and trust. This knowledge about group dynamics is essential for the CPS consultant to have a successful session and it is part of the value he provides. In a way CPS contributes to *team-building*.

The value behind CPS ideation stage is that groups that have received CPS training produce significantly more ideas than untrained groups (Firestein, 1987). This is a confirmation of the research included by Osborn (developer of the brainstorming technique) in his pioneering book *Applied Imagination*, where he states that groups that produce more ideas also come up with better ideas (Osborn, 1963). It also confirms the research carried by Parnes a decade later in the “Creative Studies Project” where he shows an improvement in divergent production in 13 out of 14 tests administered to the students (Parnes, 1987) as well as an improvement in the convergent production (ideas assessment and selection). This research provides external validation to the value of CPS consultancy for the improvement of idea generation in quality and quantity as well as idea selection, that is, specific value for the client that is looking for innovation.

## **The usefulness of creativity measures to CPS Consultants**

An underestimated tool that can build value to CPS consultants is the FourSight measure of cognitive styles. By defining these preferences from a CPS perspective the measure corroborates a type of thinking process. In other words, the research behind FourSight validates indirectly CPS as it is based on the natural thinking preferences of people. What CPS does is to add order and value to a process that is already being used in different ways. On the one hand participants taking FourSight will get greater understanding on the CPS process. On the other hand they will be less judgmental on themselves once they find their preferences and would look at any area of weakness (clarification, ideation, development or implementation) as an area for improvement.

The application of other measures by the consultant will add to his understanding of the group and the group itself will benefit of a different level of awareness. Measures such as Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or Kirton's Adaption-Innovation Inventory (KAI) could be helpful in this regard (as far as it concerns creativity). Other measures regarding creativity or leadership could be useful depending on the client's needs.

## **Some useful tips for CPS Consultants**

- 1) Being open and honest. In the minds of many consultants is the question "how to avoid having to say 'I don't know' and make people believe that I know what I am talking about." Some other people have called this technique 'smoking the client.' However, being honest pays off. If you know what you know and your client knows that and appreciates that then admitting sometimes that you have not a clue may build your credibility. Ethan M. Rasiel, ex-McKinsey staff, admits that behaving that way will be less costly than bluffing (Rasiel, 1999). To begin with the clarity of objectives, the reasons for the exercises and the method used will give the group confidence that the consultant know what he is doing. Talking about the breadth and width of the discipline of creativity will help the group see questions in context. And finally, referring some questions to the group or asking

- the group for help to problem solve the questions may be of help to illustrate the practical application of the model to the session itself (Grossman, 1982).
- 2) Modeling the behavior you are asking for. (Grossman, 1982) In what ways can you apply principles taught in the course to the process itself? For instance, if you teach “Deferred judgment” do you defer judgment yourself? And if you catch yourself being self-critical can you bring it up as an example of a block to creativity? The process of internalizing or integrating knowledge is helped not only by exposition and practical exercises but also by observing a behavior that follows these principles.
  - 3) Enhance and assess self-empowerment. Self-empowerment will happen as the result of internal validation. This is the “ability or willingness of participants to pick up a concept and integrate it internally without the crutch of external validation.” It is about the learner’s attitude to apply the concept. The participant awareness and responsibility is shifted from the instructor to himself providing an increase in motivation and curiosity, important factors in the creative process (Harriman, 2003). To be able to notice and record the application by students of key concepts will provide the consultant with excellent data (that may be used in later marketing) regarding the effects of the training he provides.
  - 4) Be aware of learning differences. Participants process information differently. It is therefore useful to note the learning styles of participants and provide venues for them to enhance learning. A prior assessment using the PEPS test or any other suitable measure (*Participant’s Survey Form by Ned Herrmann*) would be helpful for the participants. (Grossman, 1982)
  - 5) Excel at interaction. One of the ways the consultant acting as a facilitator can increase interaction is by working with a co-facilitator. This would help to read the group better, provide more useful answers, a different point of view, greater

openness and a better assessment method so that the training can be refined more accurately even as it is taking place. (Grossman, 1982)

- 6) Learn from experienced consultants. Mick Cope in his book “The Seven Cs of Consulting: Your complete blueprint for any consultancy assignment” gives a detailed workable plan about the consultancy business. It includes the client, clarify, create, change, confirm, continue and close (Cope, 2003). Alan Weiss also provides an excellent view of the elements that make an expert consultant including very valuable tips on how to contact, contract and build relationships with the significant buyers (Weiss, 2001). The same author provides other insights about consultancy in his book “*Million Dollar Consulting: The Professional’s Guide to Growing a Practice*” differentiating on the value of consultancy: content, expertise, knowledge, behavior and special skills. (Weiss, 2002). A creativity consultant would belong to the behavior category. Weiss explains this giving a different perspective on this type of consultancy.

### **Areas for development for CPS Consultants**

#### **Building climate, building teams**

A very important aspect to improve success and therefore value in the application of CPS is to create the right climate and build teams. Any professional development in those areas will help the CPS consultant to create a conducive climate for innovation and affect the working process of the group. This climate can automatically allow new employees to express their creative talents and become part of a group in a shorter time than with conventional methods. It will also foster behavioral changes as employees adapt to a new creative culture.

#### **Connecting to related fields**

The study of other subjects such as motivation, curiosity, fear, judgment, risk, paradigms... can be beneficial to give the client a greater understanding and also to be able to modify and custom-make tools for clients according to the consultant’s view of

the psychological framework. Finding out paradigms could help the consultant as he could understand together with the client the low-risk and high-risk paradigms. Any question that challenges the paradigm according to the client will produce novel ideas. Paradigm finding is therefore a tool in the hands of the consultant to stimulate creativity.

### **Connecting to consultants**

Since the field of behavioral consultancy is so wide, it would be helpful for the CPS consultant to cooperate with other consultants in related fields to provide a more comprehensive service. For instance, there are many profiling instruments in the Human Resource service industry. Some of them could complement creativity sessions as they tackle behavioral issues from different viewpoints.

### **Connecting to business**

The CPS consultant's connection to the company can be done at different levels. Many times very satisfied participants or customers may want to refer your business to others if you have developed a strong relationship, or they will be contacting you if they need further training or facilitation. This is proof of your value.

Apart from that level a consultant can help a business by answering this question:

How can businesses, suppliers and customers work together more efficiently?

A working process that can bring together executives from different businesses in order to improve their working relationship is bound to improve their effectiveness. In this way the CPS consultant could provide sessions with customers and executives from a company in order to understand the value of the product of that company and any further improvements that could be very much in demand from the customers. Such a think-tank system has been the practice for companies such as E-Bay. Or the consultant could bring a series of suppliers together for a session with the client. Suppliers would then be helping each other to better service their clients.

### **Connecting to cultures, diversity in groups**

Another area where the CPS consultant can help develop business is to understand different cultural thinking and creative methods and values. In this way he could benefit

from a multi-cultural group perspective to solve certain problems. Some multinationals face problems dealing with cultural issues, especially implementing directives from the headquarters. In any case companies would also appreciate diversified idea generation to tackle their problems more creatively.

## **Conclusion**

There is not much question about the very good value that Creative Problem Solving can provide a company. The difficulty lies in how to communicate this value to the client in a way that is useful and relevant for him. Any such attempt has to take into consideration the possible negative connotations of words such as: consultant, creativity, problem and brainstorming. Words such as expert, innovation, challenge, strategy and ideation may be received more warmly.

The communication of value is done through **external** (research, testimonials, quotations...) as well as **internal** (client's use) validation. The CPS consultant should in as much as he can get the client involved **experientially** in something **relevant** to his business. The client could therefore get a taste of the consultancy. The value of CPS is so wide that if fully explained can be a bit overwhelming to the client. It is the skill of the consultant to find out the value that the client is seeking to see in how many ways he can use CPS to meet that need.

Finally the CPS consultant can enhance value by developing his skills including certification in complementary disciplines or areas (from business strategy to emotional intelligence) and working with other consultants.

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## Appendix F

Brainwriting online applying two  
Triz Inventive Principles. 40  
Inventive Principles in Marketing,  
Sales and Advertising

Appendix G  
Concept Paper

# **BUSINESS PLAN: A CENTER FOR STUDIES IN CREATIVITY IN SINGAPORE**

**Name:** Hector Ramos  
2005

**Date Submitted:** February 16<sup>th</sup>,

## **Project Type:**

Develop a skill: Write a Business Plan to establish a Center for Studies in Creativity

## **What Is This Project About?**

I will create a business plan that will help launch a center for studies in creativity in the Singapore market. This business plan will address for potential investors the value of a center for studies in creativity. These benefits will include the application of creative thinking in business for executives and the cultural adaptation of the creativity problem solving model to the Singaporean culture.

## **Rationale for Choice:**

I feel passionate about creativity, creative thinking, business and cultural environments. This business plan will also help any person interested in creativity understand how these factors related to each other.

Creating a business plan and getting feedback for it from the business world will validate both the language and the content of the proposal for the center for studies in creativity.

Singapore has a great demand for educational services regarding creativity and innovation. Moreover, there is an appropriate investment climate in Singapore to make this plan feasible. Finally, the variety of ethnic groups in Singapore will help validate the business plan from different cultural perspectives.

## **What Will be the Tangible Product(s) or Outcomes?**

The final product will be a business plan to establish a center for studies in creativity in Singapore.

## **What Criteria Will You Use To Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Achievement?**

The most powerful criteria will be to find an investor. At a minimum however, the business people in Singapore will provide feedback assessing the quality of the product. Apart from that, I would assess the achievement as effective if I can communicate clearly the value and benefits of the proposal.

## **Who Will Be Involved or Influenced; What Will Your Role Be?**

I will be preparing the first draft for the business plan. Business people from Singapore and expatriates living in Singapore will be providing feedback on the project.

## **When Will This Project Take Place?**

This project will take place from February to April 2005.

## **Where Will This Project Occur?**

Most of the work will be done in Buffalo, NY. However, I will have individuals such as businessmen and creativity professionals participating in the project by submitting feedback from Singapore and from other parts in the USA.

## **Why Is It Important to Do This?**

This project will give a new perspective regarding the business of teaching creativity and creative thinking skills. Professionals in different countries and potential students will have the opportunity to assess the business value of 'teaching creativity.'

## **Personal Learning Goals:**

- I want to learn how to design an excellent business plan.
- I want to better understand the value that teaching creativity and creative thinking can bring to individuals and companies.
- I want to learn how to effectively communicate the value of teaching creativity and creative thinking to the Singaporean market.

## **How Do You Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes?**

- I will do research concerning business plans
- I will receive feedback from qualified businessmen and women as well as consultants in the field of creativity.

## **Evaluation:**

Evaluation will be on-going through constant feedback from individuals in Singapore and in the USA. I will have also a self-evaluation to assess to what extent I have achieved my goals. The criteria used will include clarity of business plan, analysis of feedback and improvement in my understanding of the value of teaching creativity and creative thinking.

## **Prepare Project Timeline:**

- February:
  - Design and development of business plan. The following areas will be addressed during the month of February.
    - a) Executive summary
    - b) Company/Opportunity Summary
      - Basic need and company solution
      - Value Proposition
    - c) Services offered
      - Benefits
      - Competitive advantages & positioning
    - d) Target market
    - e) Marketing
    - f) Operations
    - g) Finance
    - h) Promoters/Management
- March
  - Solicit feedback and make adjustments as necessary.
  - Meet with professionals of creativity and businessmen.
  - Writing and revising business plan as needed.
- April

- Prepare the final draft and documentation
- □ May
  - Hand in Draft (May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005)
  - Hand in Final Draft (May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005)

## **Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:**

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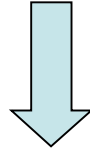
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## Appendix H

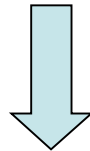
A presentation on the philosophy and purpose of the House of Innovation

HOUSE OF INNOVATION



THINK-TANK

(various consultants thinking together)



CONTINUOUS CREATIVE THINKING AND LEARNING FOR  
TARGETED BUSINESS BREAKTHROUGH

(continuous investment in upgrading of skills and problem solving  
for targeting most suitable business that can get most out of the  
process)



# Guidelines to present creative thinking and make it USEFUL and IMPORTANT for your client

- 1. Make it experiential
- 2. Include some aspects of emotional development apart from cognitive tools and principles.
- 3. Connect the content to their culture
- 4. Present in context: examples that are relevant to the client
- 5. Make it personal

Why is it USEFUL and IMPORTANT for your client to apply Creative Thinking to his business?

- 1. He can clarify different overlapping issues facing the company
- 2. He can FIND the DATA he needs to solve the problem
- 3. He can improve the Root Cause Analysis of the company
- 4. He can identify many and varied solutions to a problem
- 5. He can improve his decision-making process
- 6. He can enhance his implementation process
- 7. He can develop team-building