A Case for Creativity
Separating Ideation from Evaluation

Teresa Lawrence, PhD, PMP, CSM
Communities Care WNY Family Caregivers Respite Pilot Program
Kick-Off Event
10/28/2019

Novel
Temporary Endeavor
Creativity
Project Management
Useful
Unique Deliverable

We are too busy
No thanks!
Program Goals

• Build the skill set, tool set and mind set of creative leadership and project management competencies
• Increase capacity in organizations and strengthen collaborations to identify, develop and realize respite opportunities for family caregivers of the elderly
• Equip participants to lead community respite project proposals
• Position participants to apply and turn-key training on problem solving strategies and project management principles in their organizations, collaborations and with their clients
• Prepare participants to apply the Creative Problem Solving process and related tools to frame, identify, plan, develop and manage innovative solutions

Learner Outcomes

✓ Understand the steps of the Creative Problem (CPS) process
✓ Skillfully apply divergent and convergent thinking tools
✓ Increase team performance and foster a work climate that draws maximum potential from each team member
✓ Exhibit a “projectized” mindset to achieve short-term and mid-term deliverables as part of achieving long-term strategic and project goals, in this case, respite opportunities for family caregivers

Agenda

• Traits of the creative problem solver
• Three types of thinking
• Guidelines
• Application

Teach a little, talk a little, try a little.
Creativity and Creative Problem Solving

Caregivers are faced with the task of finding solutions to new, ongoing, difficult, complex, ambiguous, unexpected and perhaps even, repeat problems.

The challenge: How to problem solve?
The good news: Creativity can be taught!

Anyone can learn to be deliberately creative and arrive at novel and useful solutions... on demand! Yes, that means YOU, too.

Find a partner and together come up with a definition of creativity or innovation.

Take two minutes.

Be ready to share your definition.

Creativity: Arrival at novel and useful solutions

Innovation: Implementation of those solutions
Creative Problem Solvers

- Openness to **Novelty**
  - Being able to entertain ideas that at first seem outlandish and risky.

- Tolerance for **Ambiguity**
  - Being able to deal with uncertainty and to avoid leaping to conclusions.

- Tolerance for **Complexity**
  - Being to stay open and persevere without being overwhelmed by large amounts of information, interrelated and complex issues, and competing issues.

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

To be creative requires three types of thinking:

- **Divergent Thinking**
- **Convergent Thinking**
- **Cognitive Fluidity**
For the Creative Process to be Effective

**Divergent thinking**: Generating varied and original ideas and options, exploring possibilities, free-wheeling, imagination, **IDEATION**

**Convergent thinking**: Developing and evaluating most promising options, focusing, making decisions, **EVALUATION**

---

The more effective **PROBLEM SOLVER** separates **IDEATION** from **EVALUATION**

---

To be creative requires three types of thinking:

**Divergent Thinking**
Diverging

Diverging is a process of generating multiple ideas, solutions and possibilities. In this process, individuals or groups become deliberately creative and open themselves up to breakthrough thinking.

Divergent thinking is a broad search for many diverse and novel alternatives.

Ground Rules for Divergent Thinking

- Defer judgment... All evaluation is ruled out.
- Strive for Quantity... More ideas increases the likelihood of generating/developing useful ideas – think idea quota.
- Build on other ideas... How can ideas be extended or combined?
- Seek novelty... It is easier to tame a wild idea.

Diverge!
A Story about Quantity

So, how many pictures did you take?"
"About three."
"About three?"
"Yes."
"I show the bride and groom about 900."
"They pick about 50."
That’s less than 2% of all the pictures taken.

Think about ideas as wedding photos.

The Thing about Ideas

- Ideas ≠ actions
- Ideas ≠ decisions
- Ideas ≠ conclusions
- Ideas ≠ feelings

Idea Quota: 30 ideas in 30 seconds
What might be all the ways to improve a suitcase?
What’s with the pictures?

To be creative requires three types of thinking:

- Divergent Thinking
- Cognitive Fluidity
Cognitive Fluidity

“Let’s get one thing clear right now, shall we? There is no Idea Dump, no Story Central, no Island of the Buried Bestsellers; good story ideas seem to come quite literally from nowhere...two previously unrelated ideas come together and make something new under the sun.”

- Stephen King

Forced Connections

The goal is to force a connection between two totally unrelated things, the prop and the problem, to stimulate thinking and create more ideas. These new ideas are often more novel and unusual.
The Modobag: 150W electric motor; Top speed 8 mph; Rechargeable battery; Six-mile range; GPRS-GSM real-time locator; USB Port to Charge your mobile devices.

Warm Ups

- To briefly train you in the tool we will be using
- To “sanction” the time for speculation
- To create a judgment free zone
- To prep for the “real” work!
Stick'em up Brainstorming

- Make your way over to wall space
- Write your idea on a post-it
- Say your idea out loud so that others in the group can hear it
- Stick your idea on the chart paper
- One idea per post-it

Defer judgment
Strive for quantity
Build on other ideas
Seek novelty

Idea Quota: 30 ideas in 3 minutes

What might be all ways to get a hippo out of a bathtub?
How many ideas?

The Work – The Challenged Caregiver

Reflect on your work and the presentations you saw this morning, recall what you felt, noticed, saw, thought, experienced, identified, remembered about the challenges that caregivers face.

Using Stick'em up Brainstorming...

What might be all the challenges caregivers face?
What might be all the areas they need support?
Defer judgment
Strive for quantity
Build on other ideas
Seek novelty

Idea Quota: 50 ideas in 5 minutes

If you get stuck, look at the pictures.

What might be all the challenges caregivers face?
What might be all the areas they need support?
To be creative requires three types of thinking:

- Divergent Thinking
- Convergent Thinking
- Cognitive Fluidity

Converging

Converging involves the delicate task of judging and making decisions. Done right, fledgling and underdeveloped ideas that might otherwise be overlooked or dismissed stand the chance of being developed into robust and brilliant solutions.

Convergent thinking is a focused affirmative evaluation of alternatives.
Guidelines for Convergent Thinking

• Apply affirmative judgment...Carefully consider the strengths of an idea.
• Be open to novelty...Entertain highly original options that you might otherwise eliminate.
• Be deliberate...Consider what is realistic, useful or that can be improved upon.
• Stay on course...Keep the original goal in mind.

Highlighting: Hits, Cluster, Restate

Highlighting lets you narrow from many to a few good options.
Hits lets you choose ideas that are especially interesting, promising, compelling, intriguing, innovative or on-target.
Clustering organizes your hits into groups, categories or themes.
Restating captures the essence of the cluster.
1. Mark the “Hits”
   - Interesting
   - New insight
   - Workable
   - Solves the problem
   - Promising direction
   - Feels good in your gut

2. Cluster the related “Hits” together

3. Restate the cluster to capture its essence.

Highlighting

Highlight in Action

Hit
Cluster
Restate

Highlight: The Challenged Caregiver

Head back at your station
1. HIT
2. CLUSTER
3. RESTATE
Any themes?

Taking It Home

Interesting  Useful  Intriguing  Potential  Uses  Application

Going Forward

- November 22, 2019
- January 9, 2020
- February 4, 2020
- March 3, 2020
- Makeup date: March 31, 2020

Clarify  Ideate  Develop  Implement
Identifying the challenge  Brainstorming Ideas  Bridging Talent/Tools  Giving Ideas legs

The FourSight Model (2003)
Final Tip – Creativity Etiquette

It is considered a crime against nature to diverge and converge at the same time.

Mission Accomplished!

• Traits of the creative problem solver
• Three types of thinking
• Guidelines
• Application

Teach a little, talk a little, try a little.

Until We Meet Again!

Teresa Lawrence, PhD, PMP, CSM
teresa@internationaldeliverables.com
(716) 536.4848
NYS WBE

Bringing Processes to Life and Projects to Completion