

Creativity and Creative Problem Solving

There are many approaches to creativity and creative problem solving. Although many of us are used to “just being creative, it is a good idea to formally understand how we are creative. A formal understanding of creativity allows us to master our own creativity. It gives us a starting point when we are lost, and guidance past the creative roadblocks.

There is no optimal way to be creative, but several groups have attempted to model the creative process. Here are a few of those models

Alex Osborne wrote *How To Become More Creative* and *Applied Imagination* in the 1950s. These works created the foundation for modern brainstorming,

Alex Osborne's Seven-Step Model for Creative Thinking (Brainstorming)

1. **Orientation:** Point out the problem
2. **Preparation:** Gather data
3. **Analysis:** Breaking down problem
4. **Ideation:** Stock pile alternatives (brainstorm)
5. **Incubation:** Evaluate ideas
6. **Synthesis:** Create from gathered pieces
7. **Evaluation:** Judging the results

In 1981, a Kohberg and Bagnall introduced a model that has remained popular:

Universal Traveler Model The Seven Universal Stages of Creative Problem-Solving

1. **Accept the situation:** As a challenge
2. **Analyze:** Research the problem
3. **Define:** Identify the key issues and goals
4. **Ideate:** Generate options
5. **Select:** Choose among options
6. **Implement:** Give form to the idea
7. **Evaluate:** Review and plan again

Resources:

Directed Creativity Cycle, Paul E. Plsek & Associates, Inc, 1997, Paul E. Plsek & Associates
Models for the Creative Process, Paul E. Plsek, 1997.
Versions of CPS, Scott G. Isaksen, 2000, The Creative Problem Solving Group.