

The Creative Problem Solving (CPS) Model

This model has its roots in work by Alex Osborne and Sidney Parnes, both pioneering leaders in the field of creativity. Osborne fathered the concept of brainstorming in the late 1940's and founded the Creative Education Foundation (CEF) in Buffalo, New York. Parnes led the CEF for many years and formalized Osborne's concepts of a multi-stage (six) CPS Model. Built around the basic tool of brainstorming, the Parnes-Osborne model heavily emphasizes a continuously repeating and complementing cycle of diverge-converge-diverge-converge. Graduates of the School for Innovators are trained in leading 30, 45 and 60-minute CPS sessions – short models that focus primarily on Problem-Finding, Idea-Finding and Action-Finding

Stages of the CPS Model

1. **Mess-Finding** (Looking at the “mess” of interrelated issues, challenges, problems, and opportunities to find an area on which to focus).
2. **Fact-Finding** (exploring knowns, unknowns, issues, challenges, missing or needed information to expand understanding of the mess).
3. **Problem-Finding** (Discovering a suitably “fuzzy” problem, rife with opportunity or need for unusual and novel solutions and approaches).
4. **Idea-Finding** (Generating a large number of diverse and novel ideas relating to the problem).
5. **Solution-Finding** (Converging on a subset of ideas, synthesizing and refining them into potentially useful solutions, and exploring barriers and approaches to acceptance).
6. **Action-Finding** (Generating and refining potential action steps to move the solutions through acceptance and into implementation).

Mess-Finding

