S.P.R.E.A.D.ng
Creativity
a **Way of Life**
Around Here!

Developing a Creative Thinking Culture & Program
Throughout Your Entire Organization

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Major Point One:
Leaders need to choose to
S.P.R.E.A.D. Creative Thinking
throughout their organizations,
businesses or schools.

Major Point Two:
Creative Thinking skills, tools and
techniques need to be practiced.

Major Point Three:
We each need to warm up our
Creativeness to generate
creativeness on demand when we
require it.

Major Point Four:
There are many creative thinking
tools and techniques that can be
matched to individual and team
thinking styles.

Major Point Five:
There are a minimum of
20 creative thinking traits that
can be continuously enriched and
expanded in all people.

Major Point Six:
Being creative is a personal choice that
we must each choose and can be an
organization-wide choice .

Who? What? Why? When? Where? How?

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Who?   # When?

What?   # Where?

Why?   # How?

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Are You a Crayon Breaker?

Read the following 32 human traits and check or mark the ones you believe are you most of the time. You may choose as many or as few as you want.

If you are NOT sure of the definitions of any of the words, please ask the facilitator.

1. sensitive

2. not motivated by money

3. sense of destiny

4. adaptable

5. tolerant of ambiguity

6. observant

7. perceive world differently

8. see possibilities

9. question asker

10. can synthesize correctly often intuitively

11. able to fantacize

12. flexible

13. fluent

14. imaginative

15. intuitive

16. original

17. ingenious

18. energetic

19. sense of humor

20. self-actualizing

21. self-disciplined

22. self-knowledgeable

23. specific interests

24. divergent thinker

25. curious

26. open-ended

27. independent

28. severely critical

29. non-conforming

30. confident

31. risk taker

32. persistent

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Enrichable & Expandable Skills

Since the early 1950's researchers have been research-ing the teaching of Creative Thinking Skills. One of the leading researchers, E. Paul Torrance, Ph.D., professor emeritus of the University of Georgia, developed a series of tests of creative thinking skills that are used around the world. His tests measure several separate skills that can be developed. Twenty of them that can be developed and applied in any job are listed below.

1. Fluency   - many ideas
2. Flexibility   - different types of ideas
3. Elaboration   - addition of details
4. Originality   - uniqueness
5. Abstractness of approach moving from reality
6. Openness-resisting early closure or completion
7. Change of Context (cross-interpretation)
8. Combination of Ideas/Facts   (Synthesis)
9. Breakthrough from Current Limits
10. Unusual Viewpoint
11. Internal Perspective
12. Humorous Perspective
13. Richness & Colorful Detail
14. Feelings & Emotions
15. Fantasy
16. Movement & Sound   (Sense change)
17. Multiple Idea Combinations
18. Macro Scale Perspective   [seeing from larger view]
19. Provocative Viewpoint
20. Future orientation

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Cr**E8**ℳℊ™**Tools** & **Techniques**

Developing Your Greatest Resource- the creative thinking and creativeness of ALL people that work with and for you is the sixth S.P.R.E.A.D.ng™ approah.

Since BRAINSTORMING was first created by Alex Osborn of BBDO Advertising in the **1930**'s hundreds of

IDEA GENERATING techniques and tools have been created around the world.

These are used best to "break mindset" or paradigms to move your thinking or a group's thinking when you or they feel "blocked" for whatever reason.

Alphabetizing

Attribute Listing

Bionics

Brain Mapping

Brainstorming

Brainwriting

Checklisting

Crawford Slip Method

Excursions

Forced Relationships

Metaphors

Morphological Listing

S.C.A.M.P.E.R.

SUPER Heroes/Heroines

Synectics

Unusual Associations

What If-ing?

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S.P.R.E.A.D.ng Creative Thinking
Throughout Your Workplace

Increasing, expanding, enriching and improving the Creative Thinking
in your workplace can be done in many ways. The following provides a
structure for a systematic approach.

		Mental	Physical	Emotional	Social
		Provide thinking challenges in meetings as warmups & practise	consider using all of the 5 senses	consider using conscious and unconscious	consider involving all departments
Supporting	**S**				
Promoting	**P**				
Recognizing	**R**				
Encouraging	**E**				
Applying	**A**				
Developing	**D**				

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S.P.R.E.A.D.ng and **Creative Thinking Throughout Organizations, Businesses** and **Schools**

Today more than ever before all organizations, businesses and schools need to . . .
Support, Promote, Recognize, Encourage, Apply and **Develop** the creative thinking skills of every member, employee, student and teacher. When leaders choose to truly **S.P.R.E.A.D. Creative Thinking** they will grow in dimensions never seen before.

Each week thinking of all types can be expanded and enriched if that is the chosen purpose of an organization, business or school. Peter Senge in the Fifth Dimension talked about each organization becoming "Learning Organizations". I am talking about every organization becoming "Teaching and Training Organizations" in which every employee's thinking abilities, specifically creative thinking abilities are expanded and enriched deliberately. Every member, employee, student and teacher can learn to further develop their creative thinking skills through practicing with Creativity Challenges and Creative Thinking Tools and Techniques.

Robert Crawford from the University of Nebraska, Alex Osborn, partner of BBDO and creator of Brainstorming and co-creator of the Osborn-Parnes Creative Problem Solving Process and both the Creative Education Foundation and its annual Creative Problem Solving Institute, E. Paul Torrance, Ph.D., researcher, author and creator of the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking have written about the teaching of creative thinking since the 1930s in the United States with their books published in many languages around the world. In more recent times authors have included: Arthur VanGundy, Michael Michalko, Roger von Oech, James Adams, Doug Hall

to name only a few. Each in their books and through their work have demonstrated repeatedly that creative thinking skills can be expanded and enriched through learning and practicing creative thinking tools and traits.

My work focus since the mid-1970's has been to develop methods for helping people to expand and enrich their creative thinking and creative traits in their workplaces from factories to corporations. As a speaker, workshop leader and consultant I have worked with hundreds of companies and organizations. The following paper and presentation made at the conference is based on my observations and analysis of my experiences since 1976.

One teaching tool I have learned to use is to create acronyms that in themselves explain the goal while each letter of the acronym represents and reinforces key points. The challenge of using acronyms is that they do not translate from one language to another easily. This I have discovered working in various countries around the world since 1977. For the purpose of this paper and presentation I will use two acronyms to explain the structure behind my recommendations to you and your fellow managers or educators.

Perhaps you will be able to translate my key points into words that may form valid acronyms in your language. If they do not then I encourage you to focus on learning the six points of each acronym and the order of each and disregard the American English acronyms that they spell.

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Major Point One:
Leaders need to choose to S.P.R.E.A.D. Creative Thinking throughout their organizations, businesses or schools.

Many books have been written over the past twenty years about leaders and leading and their responsibilities and traits. Among the many that have been discussed I believe that one is a primary one for a leader to truly lead their organization to growth and success. That is providing an environment for the expansion and enrichment of creative thinking in ALL employees.

Based on my reading and studying of many books written about creativity and creative thinking in the workplace added to my professional experiences with many companies I have discovered and created a six factor system for what a leader and an organization needs to focus on for the growth of their people as creative thinkers.

One initial aspect for all leaders is to accept the necessity for ALL employees to become more creative in their jobs at least part of the time, not simply the people who hold traditionally accepted creative jobs. As a general rule I accept that the person who knows a job best, ought to be the person or people who actually do that job on a daily basis. Through the expansion and enrichment of their individual creative thinking abilities and skills they can then be counted on to creatively improve their jobs and work continuously.

My six factors for expanding and enriching creative thinking in ALL employees are:

SUPPORTING, PROMOTING, RECOGNIZING, ENCOURAGING, APPLYING, DEVELOPING.

In my ongoing study of businesses and organizations I observed examples of each of these. Rarely have I seen organizations that have deliberate functioning systems including all six or that focus specifically on the expansion and enrichment of creative thinking throughout their organizations. In some organizations I have discovered organizational philosophies or guiding principles that included the importance of creative thinking and creativity yet I have not discovered any examples of companies that knowingly in a systematic fashion have created programs for the growth of creativity and creative thinking in more than a few employees or one or two departments or factory locations.

David Tanner in his excellent book,
TOTAL CREATIVITY, talks about the excellent work he and his fellow members of the internal OZ Group at DuPont did at their company. It is the closest to a more complete effort I have come across in over 25 years.

Jerry Hirschberg in his book: THE CREATIVITY PRIORITY and Andy Law in his book: THE CREATIVE COMPANY both talk about how they established their businesses based on philosophies of business that focused on the need for creativity. In neither case have they established programs for generating creativity in ALL of their employees. In many other books that have been printed since Alex Osborn's books: Applied Imagination, Your Creative Power and Wake Up Your Mind; all published initially in the 1950s much has been discussed about the development of creative thinking but not about a system, a learning system. That is the focus of this paper and presentation.

The **S.P.R.E.A.D.**ng System consists of 6 aspects, factors or emphases that can be applied simultaneously in varying degrees to expand and enrich creative thinking in ALL employees. Eventually such a system will become self developing and then a **way of working** or a **way of living**.

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SUPPORTING

Leaders need to show complete, open and honest Support of the creative thinking of their employees. Posters, signs, articles in company newsletters or other publications, speeches at regular or annual meetings all are ways a leader can support the creative thinking. These are only a beginning to a list of potential an infinite collection of ways leaders from the CEO to the front line supervisor can show, tell, imply that they support creative thinking in their employees.

PROMOTING

Like showing Support leaders need to also completely, openly and honestly Promote the creative thinking of their employees. Banners, posters or signs again, contests and verbal statements can all be ways a leader can Promote their employees' creative thinking.

RECOGNIZING

Supporting and Promoting creative thinking alone can make a major difference in helping employees want to be creative in their daily work. When leaders deliberately Recognize individual and group or team creatively publicly they further extend its generation. Rewards, awards, prizes, public recognition, newspaper articles, television announcements, plagues, trophies, money are all ways leaders can Recognize the creative thinking of their employees.

ENCOURAGING

Supporting, Promoting and Recognizing creative thinking are all ways leaders can indicate that they encourage their employees to be creative. I believe that there are additional ways that leaders can encourage their employees: personal thanks, letters or notes to the employees, inviting the employees to present examples of their creative thinking to other employees, customers, or in other forums such as meetings in the company or professional association meetings or conferences or conventions.

APPLYING

This is the approach I have seen most companies use because they expected their employees to be creative because it was necessary in their work. Most of the time this approach was implied subliminally or subconsciously and not overtly or deliberately. I suggest that leaders write creative thinking skills and creative thinking into all job descriptions and add creative thinking skills and creative thinking to the list of ways employees are evaluated and measured on a regular basis: weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually.

DEVELOPING

Consciously developing, teaching or training creative thinking skills, tools or techniques in the workplace is an approach I have seen in many companies over my 25 years of observations and in most of the reading I have done. The problem has been that the developing, etc. was done sporadically or only in isolated situations or locations with limited numbers of people or departments and not throughout entire companies. When it has been offered it has generally been an extra and not a specific part of the daily or regular activities of the business or organization.

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Major Point Two:
Creative Thinking skills, tools and techniques
need to be practiced.

Since first becoming aware of creative thinking
skills, tools and techniques I have discovered
through my own experiences, the experiences of
my clients and through reviewing studies by
others that these each need to be practiced. They
need to be practiced to become more effective as
all other intellectual and physical human skills.
The goal of practice is to develop an instinctive
knowledge level so that we use them automatically
when they are needed.

Major Point Three:
We each need to warm up our
Creativeness to generate
creativeness on demand when we require it.

As with athletes, singers, dancers and other
entertainers who need to warm up prior to
performing or competing, we typically need to
warm up our Creativeness when we are attempt-
ing to be creative on demand. This is especially
true when we have many pressures and stressors
in our lives at the time. Warm up exercises can be
intellectual, physical, emotional, social or psycho-
logical. The key behind each of them is help us to
focus more on being creative and less distracted
by external influences. The intellectual can con-
sist of word or graphic puzzles, idea generating,
imagining, or simply using a mix of intellectual
skills or our senses in unusual and focused ways.
The emotional can consist of relaxation exercises,
meditation, simple

physical exercises such as stretching or walking.
The emotional can consist of releasing exercises
such as writing down all external pressures or challenges
on a large sheet of paper and deliberately destroying it or
focusing on happy and good memories and goals for the
future. The social can consist of doing a series of supportive
exercises with others. The psychological can consist of a
simple exercise of writing two lists: good aspects versus chal-
lenging aspects of our lives. The general thread of all warm-
up exercises is to direct and focus our efforts: intellectually,
physically, emotionally, socially and psychologically on being
creative for a specific purpose.

Major Point Four:
There are many creative thinking tools and
techniques that can be matched to individual and team
thinking styles.

My experiences with varied forms of personality, think-
ing style, communication style and behavior instru-
ments has convinced me of the importance of matching
specific creative thinking tools and
techniques to individual preferences and strengths
based on our uniquenesses. My doctoral research was
designed to examine the significance and potential ben-
eficial effects of matching teaching style, learning style
and type of creative thinking tool and technique. The
results showed that such matches enhanced the results.
Since 1983 I have continuously discovered matching
results when matching or deliberately mis-matching
creative thinking tools and techniques
with participants' thinking style preferences
or strengths.

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Using a basic questionnaire, **M.I.N.D. Design**™, that I designed based on the results of a study I did with several different instruments I have discovered that we can increase the potential results of creative thinking production by matching creative thinking tools and techniques using a minimum of four preferences:

1) preference for the use of logic and rational thinking,
2) preference for highly imaginative and exploratory thinking,
3) preference for highly interactive, supportive, feeling based group thinking and

Major Point Five:
There are a minimum of 20 creative thinking traits that can be continuously enriched and expanded in all people.

The research of E. Paul Torrance, Ph.D. since the early 1950s using a mixture of experiments and his internationally renown TTCT (Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking) has produced a list of 20 creative thinking traits that may be measured, taught, coached and counseled in individuals and groups. My ongoing work with a mixture of people from varied occupations has also indicated that we can individually or in teams or organizations enhance and expand these 20 traits to further enrich our natural or existing creative thinking. The 20 traits are…

fluency   generating many ideas
flexibility   generating many different types of ideas
elaboration   generating additional details
originality   focusing on the generation of unique, novel, new ideas

abstractness of approach
openness or resistance to early closure
        or resolution
change of context
combination of ideas
breakthrough of current limits (known or unknown)
unusual viewpoints
internal perspective
humorous perspective
richness & colorfulness of detail
feelings and emotions/empathy
fantasy
movement & sound—sense addition or change
multiple idea combination
macro/micro scale perspective
provocative viewpoints
future or past orientation

Major Point Six:
Being creative is a personal choice that we must each choose.

My ongoing study of creativeness in people has shown me through the research of many people, plus my own work and personal experiences have continued to show the importance of personal choice in the ability for any one to be creative on demand when wanted and/or needed whether for pleasure or work.

Being Creative on Demand is a choice.
It is the result of knowing ourselves and others. We can continually increase our creative thinking skills through practice and application. As leaders or managers, teachers or counselors, parents, friends we each can make a difference in the creative thinking of our selves and others.

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