

Welcome

Midwest
Diocese
Webinar
Series



Parish Health Ministry



*Facilitation Skills for
Parish Life*

We will begin at 7:00 PM CST

Today's Topic

Divergent and Convergent Thinking

More Ideas and Better Decisions



Kenneth J. Kovach

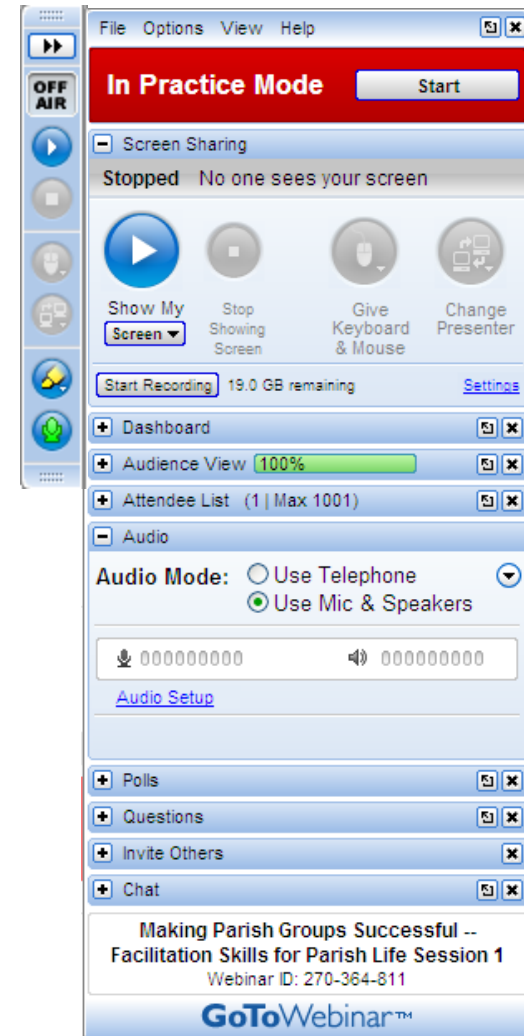
Midwest
Diocese
Webinar



Parish Health Ministry

Housekeeping Items

- Control Panel
 - Hide if annoying!
- Mute Button
- Chat
- Ask questions via question facility
- Slides & archive recording available on line
- Feedback



Our Series Topic

- “Facilitation Skills for Parish Leaders”
- Up to seven sessions
- Your guidance desired on emphasis
- Call or write
 - 513-683-1911
 - parishfacilitator@midwestdiocese.org

Today's Session Leader



Kenneth J. Kovach, Principal, Kenneth J. Kovach company,

- Over 25 years of experience
 - training, coaching, leadership development, critical thinking, problem solving
 - Leading groups to be more effective
- The choirmaster at St Theodosius Cathedral in Cleveland OH
- Graduate of
 - St. Vladimir's Seminary.
 - St. Tikhon's Seminary
 - St. Sergius Academy in Paris.
 - Masters, Case-Western Reserve University
- Some past clients
 - American Red Cross,
 - Catholic Conference on Ethics
 - American Society for Training and Development.



Convergent and Divergent Thinking



**Tools for More Ideas
and Better Decisions**

Kenneth J. Kovach, *Facilitator*


Note...

- We did complete all of this material in the March 9 webinar. We will finish this in our next session.

Facilitation Skills for Parish Life



Learning Objectives



At the completion of this series, participants will be able to:

- Utilize facilitation skills related to parish groups
- Utilize process intervention skills with groups
- Understand and implement group decision-making tools

Series Content

- Welcome and Content Review
- Introduction
- ***Session One:*** The Fundamentals of Facilitation: Facilitator Values and Roles
 - Understanding Group Process
- ***Session Two:*** Meeting Management
 - Process Skills and Intervention
- ***Session Three:*** Divergent Thinking Tools
 - Tips for Improving Creativity

Series Content

- ***Session Four:*** Convergent Thinking Tools
- Effective Group Decision-making
- ***Session Five:*** Intervening to Keep the Group on Track
- ***Session Six:*** Improving Effectiveness of Parish Council Meetings
- ***Session Seven:*** Using Facilitation for a Parish Problem-Solving Meeting

Webinar Thinking Challenge

Our parish has decided to undertake a two-year parish-wide improvement initiative aimed at delivering an overall *increased level of understanding of the Orthodox faith* by its parishioners.

The standard approaches using classes, newsletters, church school, sermons, etc. have proven to be not enough.

We can't just do more of the same things or try harder.

Webinar Thinking Challenge

We need new ideas on “how to” engage more people, provide new delivery methods, cause the learning to be continued and internalized.

Based on your experiences up to this webinar, **what 1 or 2 critical thinking methods** could be used by a group of everyday, untrained parishioners to generate some better approaches to this?

Please type-in your responses!

A few of the answers received during the session – in response to previous question

- (1) Brainstorming (2) painstorming - if you were going to to everything to make it difficult, what would you do? Then do the opposite or remove the problems anticipated
- Lateral thinking techniques a la Edward De Bono, provocations

[illegible]

The “Information” or “Knowledge” Economy



Powered by **human creativity** – the ability to generate new, useful, and meaningful ideas.

Creativity

“The power or quality to create rather than imitate.”

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate
Dictionary

“Every act of creation is first of all an act of destruction.”

Pablo Picasso

“A process that results in novelty, which is accepted as useful, tenable, or satisfying by a significant group of others at some point in time.”

Creativity

- Involves seeing what no one else is seeing !
- Involves thinking what no one else is thinking !
- Involves:
- Thinking fluently,
- Connecting the unconnected,
- Looking at the other side,
- Looking in other worlds !

Creativity – Innovation:

————— What's the difference?

Creativity

- a process of generating ideas starting with someone getting an idea.

Innovation

- a process of nurturing ideas, planning for their use, and implementing them.

Three Key Ingredients of Creativity

Novelty – Creative

action involves doing
something NEW!

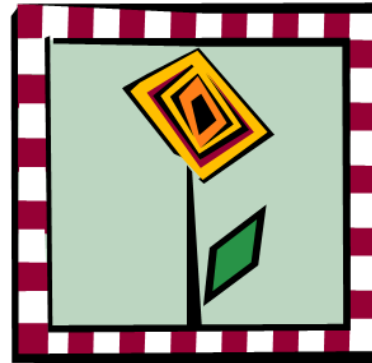
The capacity to
conceive and produce
new ideas



Three Key Ingredients of Creativity

Value – makes people
take notice of creative
work.

e.g. Bringing a new vision
of a flower into tangible
form – using paint,
sculpture, words,
computer animation, etc.

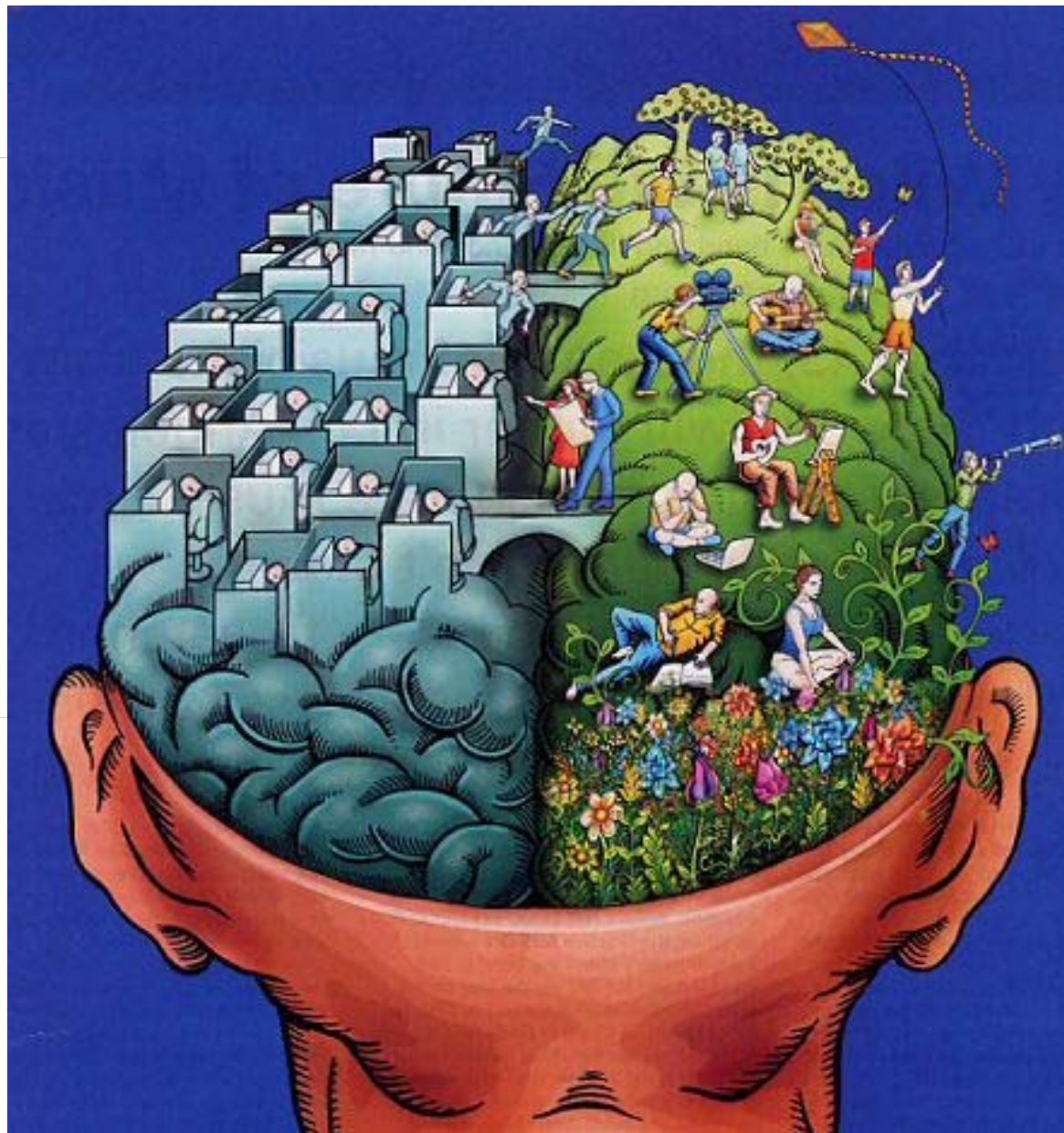


Three Key Ingredients of Creativity

Passion – internal
motivation.

The desire to do
something for
the sheer pleasure of
it rather than for any
prize or compensation.





Left Hemisphere

language

computation

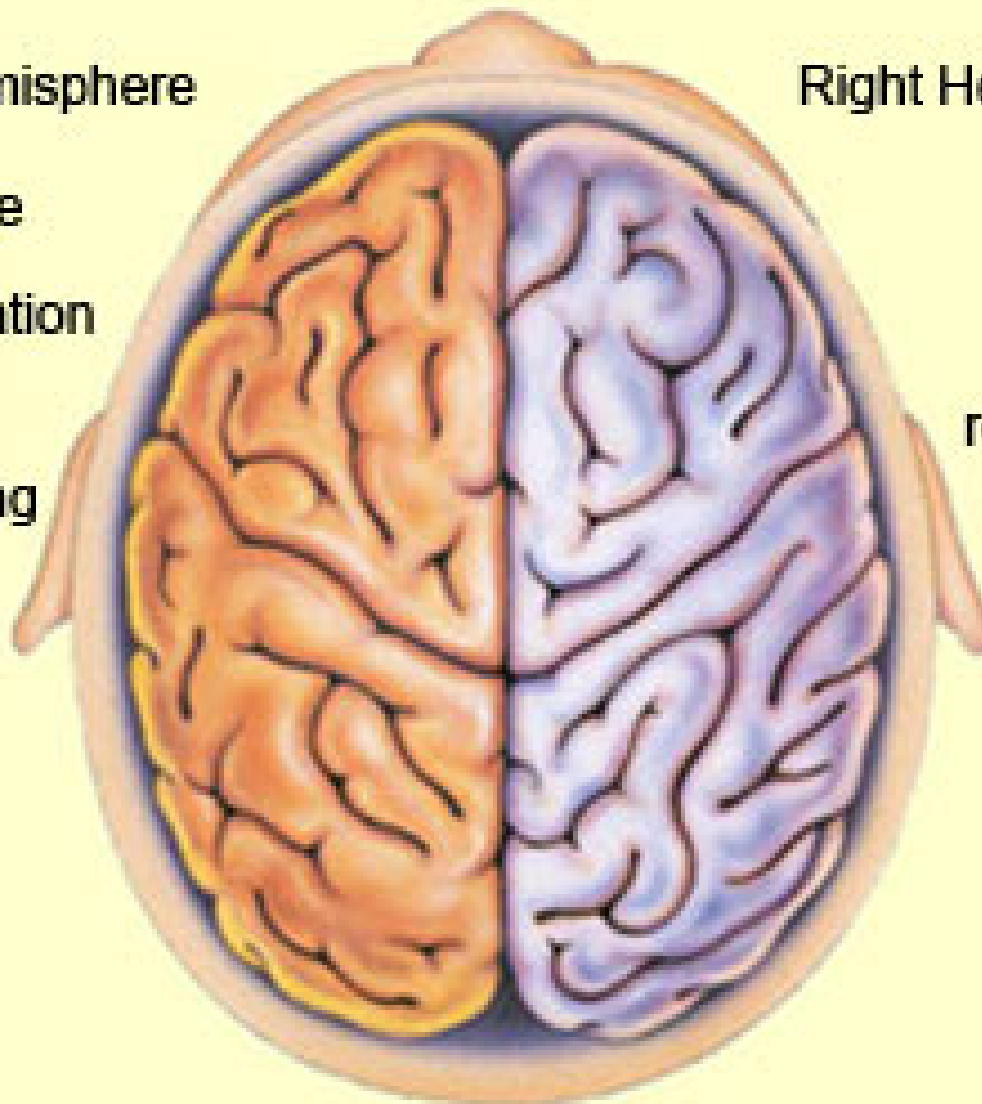
logical
reasoning

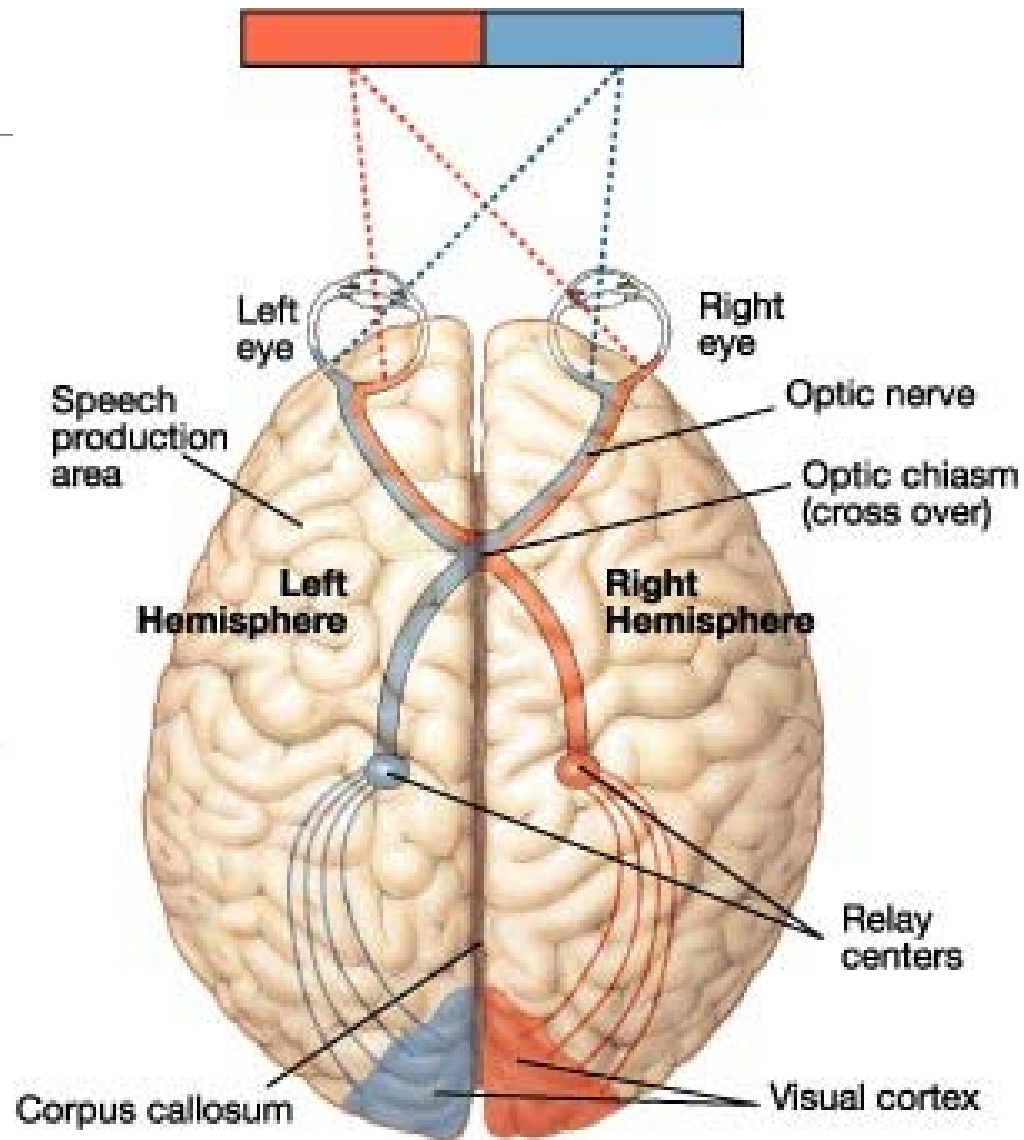
Right Hemisphere

spatial
reasoning

face
recognition

music



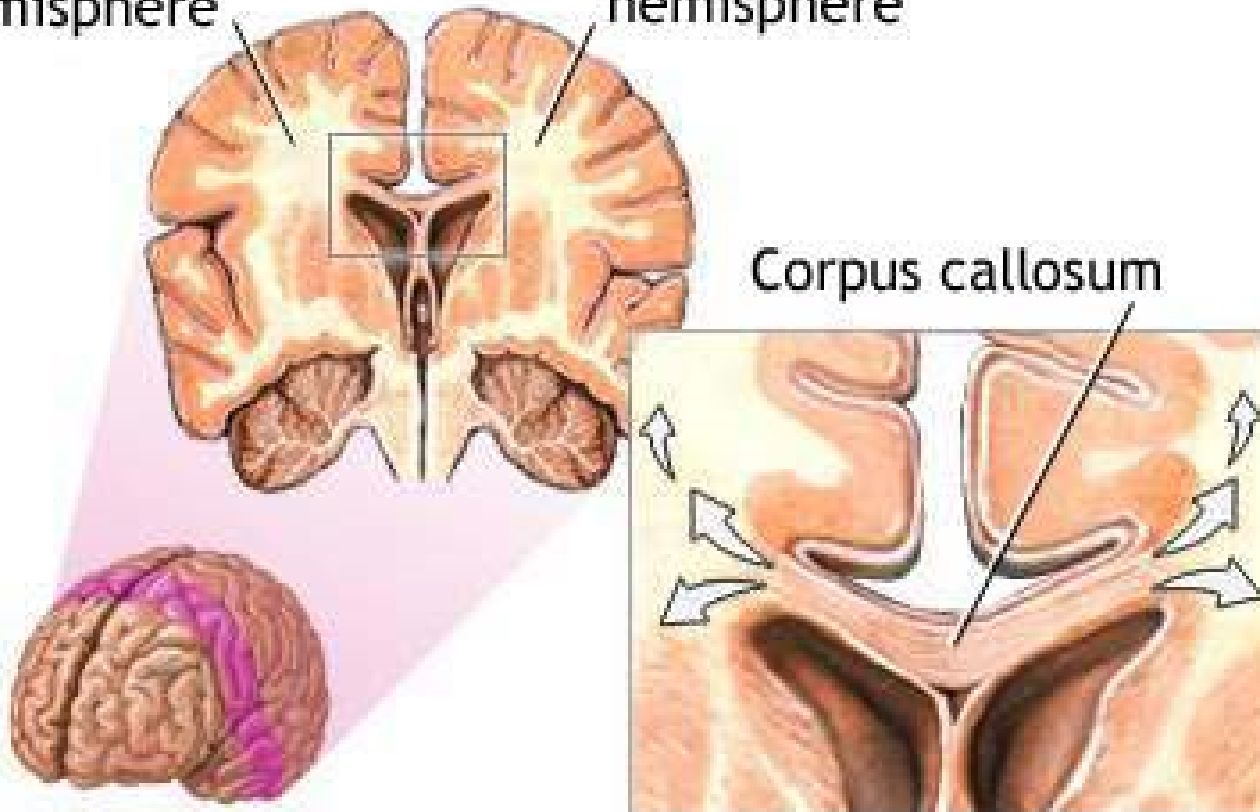


Right hemisphere

Left hemisphere

Corpus callosum

Brain



Look at the spinning woman and if she is turning **right** your right side of your brain is working. If she is turning **left** your left side of your brain is working. If she turns both ways for you then you have a 160 or better IQ.





The most essential tool you need — for group facilitation!



Convergent and Divergent Thinking

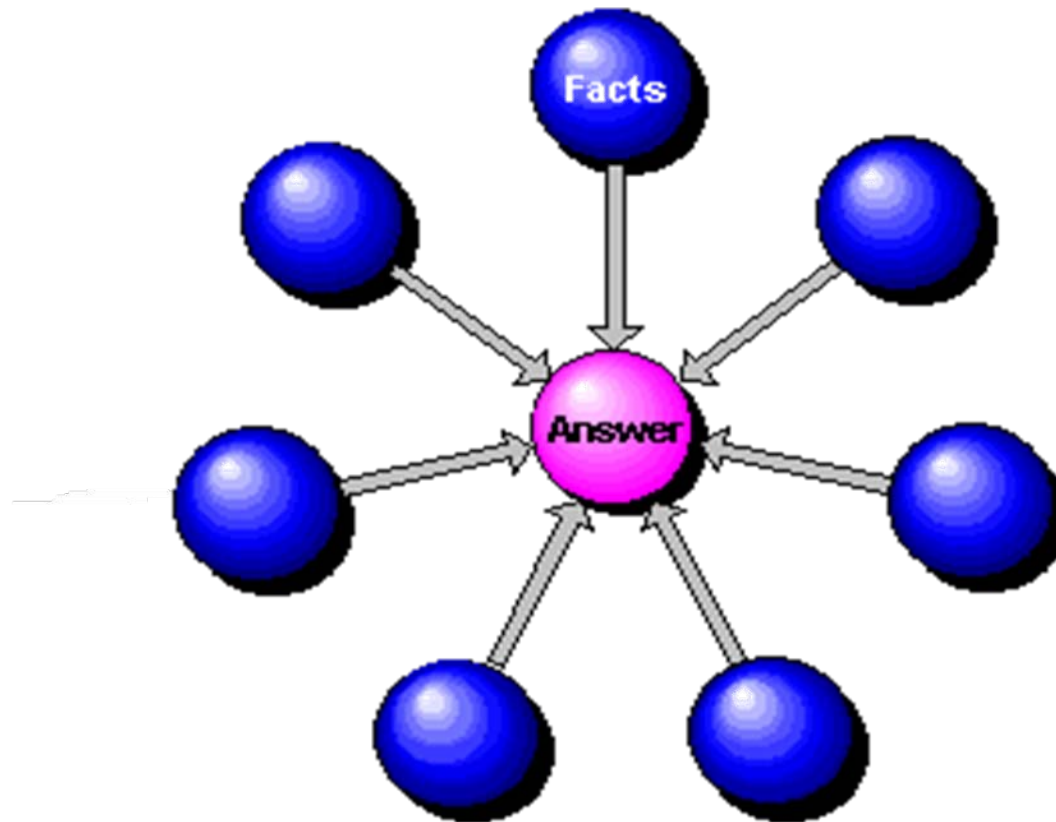
Convergent Thinking

- An individual starts with several possible ideas or answers and
- Then comes to a single point on just one best answer or idea.

For most people, the left side of the brain is the logical, analytical, practical side that is especially good for *convergent thinking*.

Convergent thinking

_____ - science and technology(?)



Convergent Thinking

This is perhaps the more predominant style of thinking in contemporary technological society.

- In convergent thought, we locate a problem at the "center" of our focus and then gather peripheral resources to bear down on the problem.
- So then our resources "converge" on the problem. Often times with convergent thinking, there is a single best solution that is sought.

Convergent Thinking

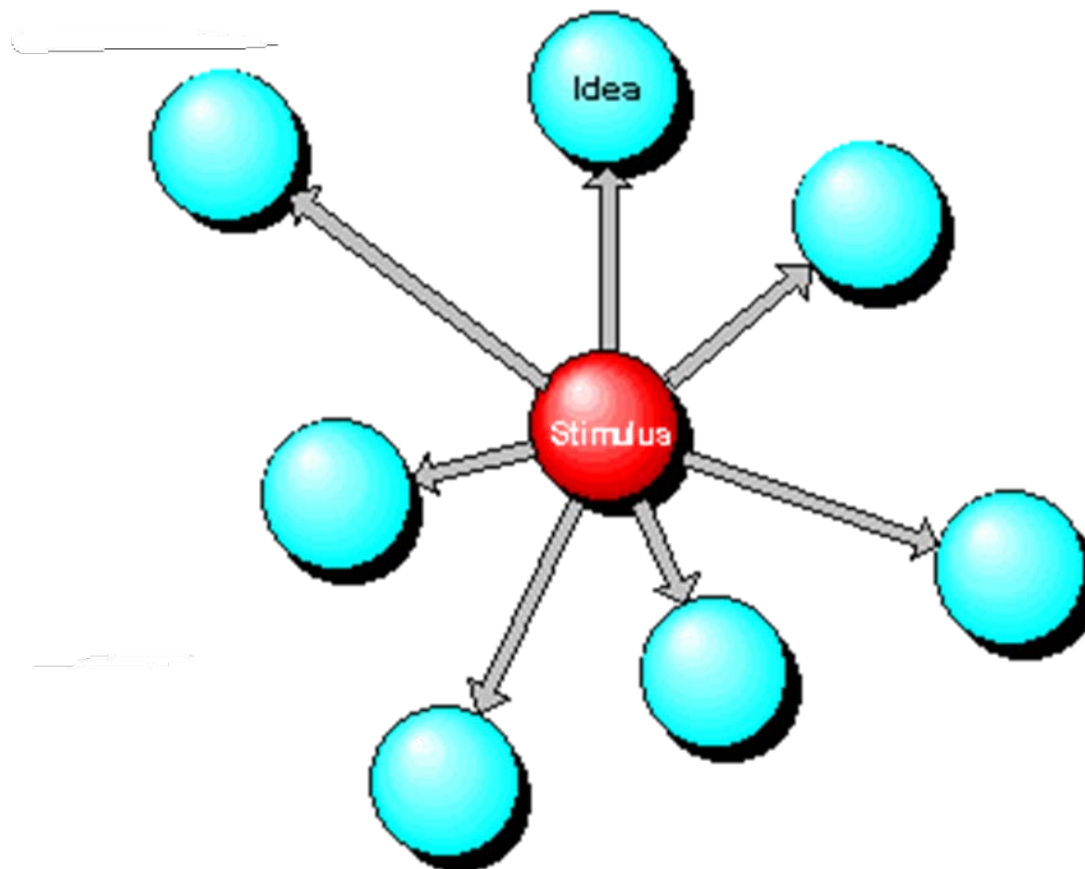
- An example of convergent thinking might involve taking a multiple choice test in which there is a single "correct" answer. The test-taker brings knowledge from outside of the problem (perhaps learned in a course) and converges it all onto the problem in order to choose the correct answer.

Convergent and Divergent Thinking

Divergent Thinking

- An individual starts with one idea
- Then diverges into several different ideas.

For most people, the right side of the brain is the nonverbal., emotional, intuitive side that is especially good for *divergent thinking*.



Divergent thinking
- arts and humanities(?)

Divergent Thinking

- Divergent thinking involves some stimulus, which can take the form of a problem, and we can locate this at the center, as we did with convergent thinking above. However, the procedure is different.
- Rather than gathering information and converging it on the central problem, we branch off (diverge) and shoot for novel ideas, new perspectives and creativity.
- Instead of a single correct answer, there may be a whole host of possibilities.

Divergent Thinking

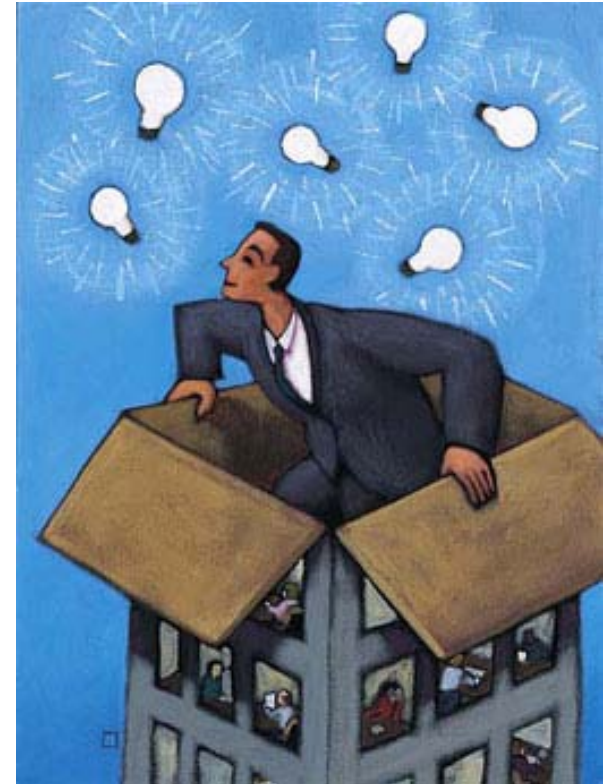
- An example of using divergent thinking might involve taking an open-ended test that asks how many uses one can imagine for various (often mundane) objects. What can you do with a pencil? A string? A rock?

Out-of-the-Box Thinking

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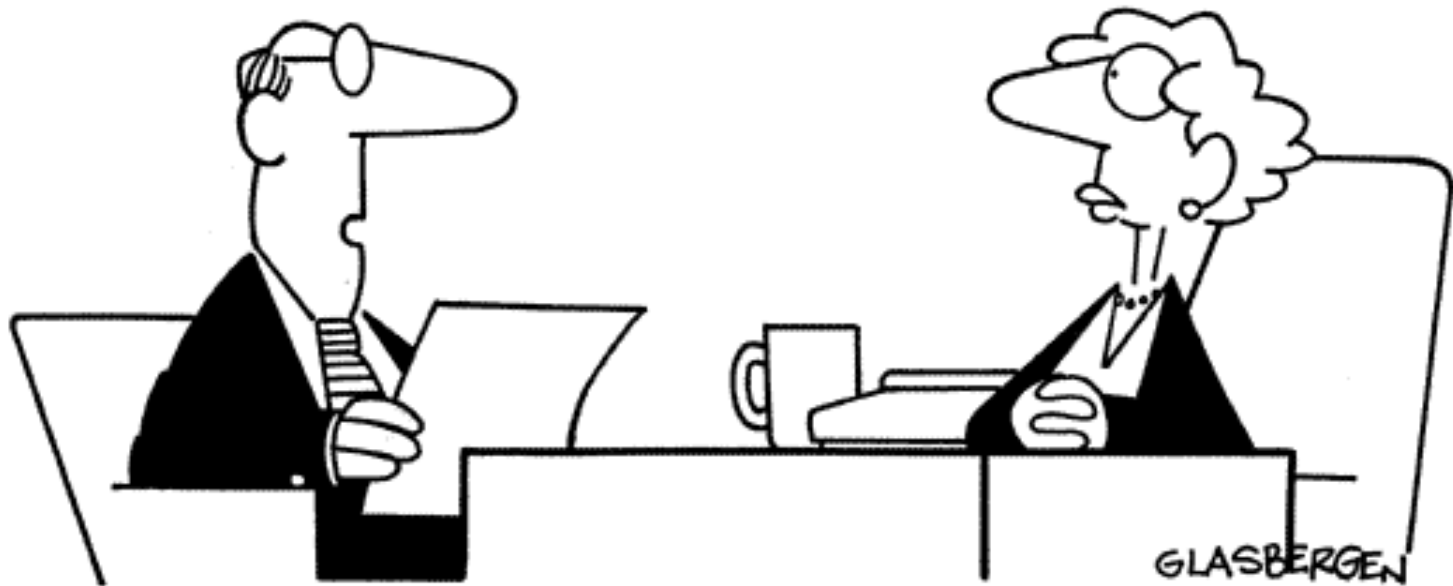


"...and this is where we train our employees to think out of the box."



Out-of-the-Box Thinking

Copyright 2001 by Randy Glasbergen.
www.glasbergen.com



“My team is having trouble thinking outside the box. We can’t agree on the size of the box, what materials the box should be constructed from, a reasonable budget for the box, or our first choice of box vendors.”

Out-of-the-Box Thinking Exercise

- Four of you are lost in the woods and need to cross a large river.
- The river is slow, but deep and wide - and none of you swim.
- All you have is the natural materials around you and a 9-feet by 9-feet heavy plastic tarp.
- How many ways can you come up with to safely cross the river?

Out-of-the-Box Thinking Exercise

- You are trapped in a large plywood box, nailed tightly together from the outside.
- You have the clothes you're wearing, plus whatever is in your pockets.
- You also have a ski pole, a piece of paper and a pencil.
- How many ways can you think of to get out of the box?

Thinking Outside the Box



“It doesn’t work to urge people to think outside the box without giving them the tools to climb out.

- Laurie Dunnivant, Founding Fellow
3M Innovation University

Combine Convergent Thinking with Divergent Thinking

Engage in *divergent thinking* in order to **generate** many novel ideas, and then to **evaluate** these ideas by using *convergent thinking*.

The fertile imagination of divergent thinking is tempered by the selective critique of convergent thinking.

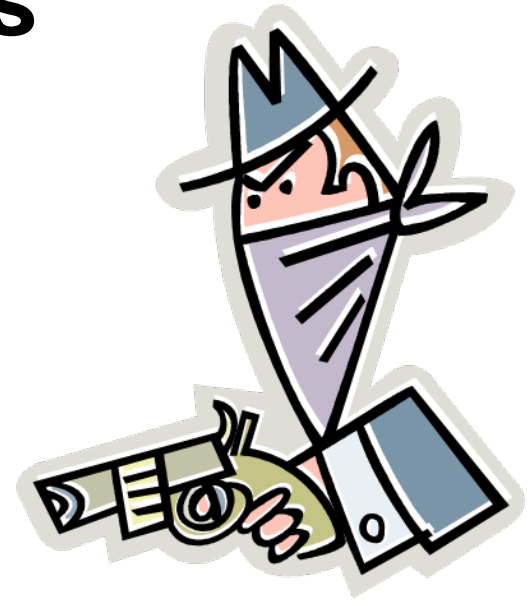
Killer Phrases

- A good idea, but....
- Against company policy.
- All right in theory.
- Be practical.
- Costs too much.
- Don't start anything yet.
- It needs more study.
- It's not budgeted.
- It's not good enough.
- It's not part of your job.
- Let's make a survey first.
- Let's sit on it for a while.
- That's not our problem.



MORE Killer Phrases

- The boss won't go for it.
- The old timers won't use it.
- Too hard to administer.
- Let's discuss it.
- Let's form a committee.
- We've never done it that way.
- Who else has tried it?
- We have been doing it this way for a long time and it works.
- Why hasn't someone else suggested it before if it's such a good idea?



TRADITIONAL PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS



Step One: *Describing The Problem*

In this step we describe the problem or challenge, usually through words, in as much detail as possible.

Step Two: *Clarifying The Problem*

In this step we obtain clarity and focus about the problem we have described. We establish a particular scope for clarifying the problem.

Step Three: *Analyzing The Problem*

In this step we focus on “judging” the information, facts, figures and feelings that we have collected. We are looking for the single, most fundamental, contributing factor to the situation needing a solution and/or decision.


Step Four: *Generating Options For Solutions*

In this step we generate the options in order to choose those that best solve the problem or address the situation.



Step Five: *Selecting the Best Solution*

In this step you review the pros and cons of each option and decide the solution(s) we want to implement.



Key Issues with Traditional Problem-Solving Approach

A “problem” is basically

- a dilemma with no apparent way out;
- an undesirable situation without a solution;
- a question that you can't currently answer.

It's not just that things are different from the way you ideally like them to be – it's that you can't fix them no matter what you do?

Key Issues with Traditional Approaches

In our “traditional” approach we often fail to understand the **anatomy** of the problem.

- **Incomplete communication** - conversations have broken down or not even started so that full understanding is lacking.
- **Unknowns** — information is missing.
- **Inaccurate information** - some of the known information is wrong.
- **Confusion** - people find themselves in a mental fog, stressed, overwhelmed by stimuli and choices.
- **Hidden emotions** – emerging feelings tend to come out as you examine the situation.
- **Different viewpoints** – you and others have conflicting ideas.
- **Changing impressions** - as you explore the situation, ideas, feelings and explanations change, sometimes radically.

REFRAMING REALITY





ATTEN-BREAKING TOOLS



SQUARE Watermelon?



Yes, SQUARE Watermelons



SENSORY PROBLEM-SOLVING

VERBAL: How would you describe the situation in words?

VISUAL: What do you see happening?

AUDITORY: What do you hear?

EMOTIONAL: How do you feel?

____ S C R E A M ©

SCREAM is based on the thought that

- everything new is some **addition** or **modification** of something that already exists.

You use the SIX VERB checklist to help you think of changes you can make to an existing program or service or product.

S C R E A M ©

SIX VERBS to systematically stimulate ideas

s - Substitute — components, materials, people

c - Combine - mix, combine with other components

R - Reverse - turn inside out or upside down

E - Eliminate - remove elements, simplify, reduce
to core functionality

A - Adapt - alter, change function, use part of
another component

M - Magnify - increase in scale, shape, attributes

Changing Personas ©

“Seeing through another person’s eyes”

Your Task:

1. Select one “persona” from the list that follows.
2. Get yourself into the role played by that “persona”— according to your thinking.

Changing Personas ©

“Seeing through another person’s eyes”

List of “Personas”

- An extraterrestrial
- Mother Theresa
- A firefighter
- Al Capone
- A scientist
- General Patton
- Mayor of a city
- Abraham Lincoln
- An orchestra conductor
- OR choose your own favorite “real” or “fantasy” persona

Changing Personas ©

“Seeing through another person’s eyes”

3. REMEMBER: Keep in character. What does your “persona” think about the topic?
4. Enter into a dialogue about “BEING CHALLENGED” with the person next to you - from the perspective of the “persona” you have selected.



Idea Collection Processes



Brainstorming

- **Using our brains to generate a “storm” of ideas**
- If you consciously take advantage of your natural thinking processes by gathering your brain's energies into a "storm," you can transform these energies into written words or diagrams that will lead to lively, vibrant writing.

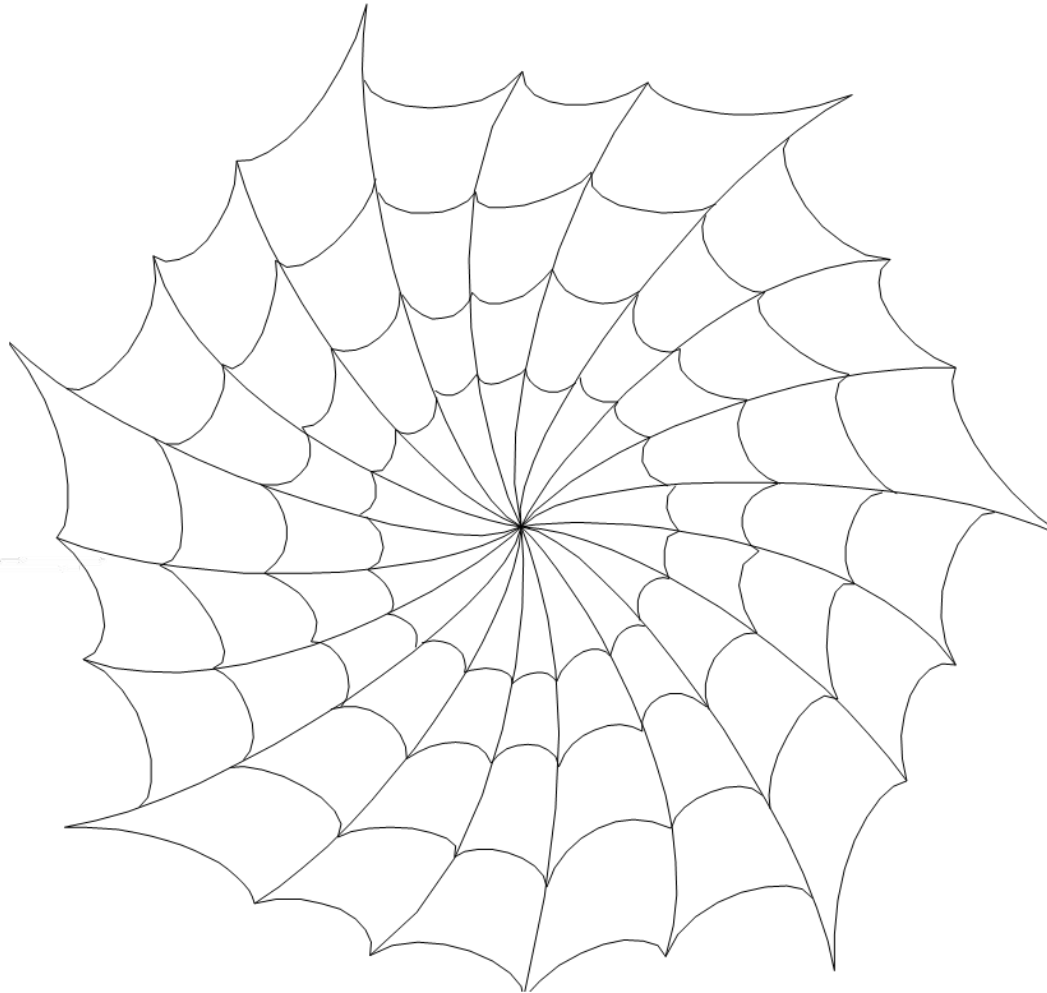


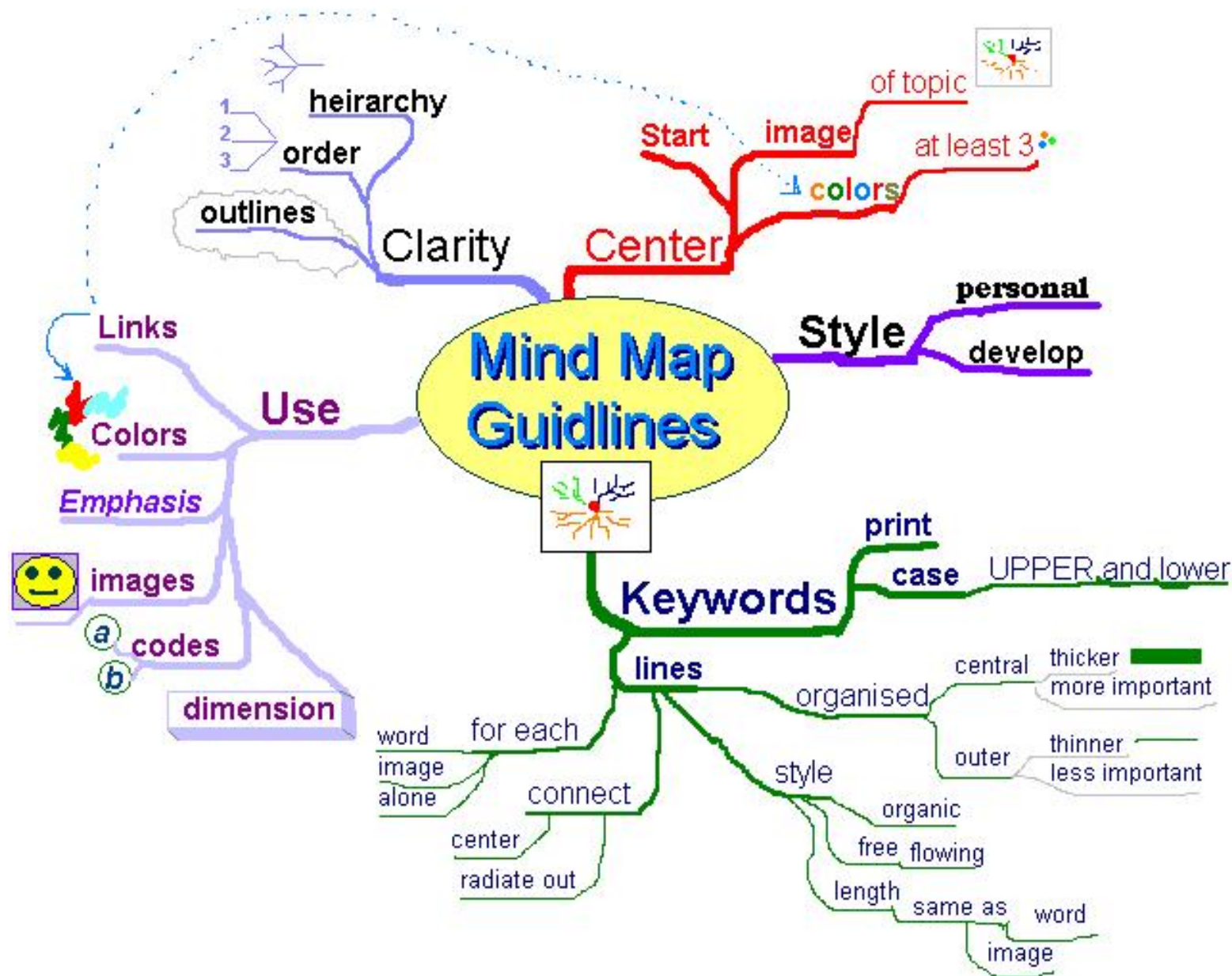
Brainstorming

Brainstorming techniques include:

- Freewriting
- Breaking down the topic into levels
- Listing/bulleting
- 3 Perspectives
- Cubing
- Similes
- Clustering/mapping/webbing
- Relationship between the parts
- Journalistic questions
- Thinking outside the box
- Using charts or shapes

Mind Mapping = Webbing





Mind Mapping Guidelines

- Start with an image or key word(s) in the center of the worksheet.
- Use images throughout your Mind Map.
- Words should be printed.
- Printed words should be on lines *and* each should be connected to other lines.

Mind Mapping Guidelines

- Use one word or short phrase per line.
- Use colors for “levels of thinking” around the central idea because they enhance memory and keep the eyes focused.
- The mind should be left as “free” as possible – suspending judgment on all ideas, words, even where they belong!

Nominal Group Technique (NGT)

- A possible **alternative to brainstorming** is NGT. This technique is a structured variation of small group discussion methods. The process prevents the domination of discussion by a single person, encourages the more passive group members to participate, and results in a set of prioritized solutions or recommendations.
- The steps to follow in NGT are:
 1. Divide the people present into small groups of 5 or 6 members, preferably seated around a table.
 2. State an open-ended question ("What are some ways we could encourage participants to car pool?").
 3. Have each person spend several minutes in silence individually brainstorming all the possible ideas and jot these ideas down.

Nominal Group Technique (NGT)

4. Have the groups, collect the ideas by sharing them *round-robin fashion* (one response per person each time), while all are recorded in key term, on a flipchart. No criticism is allowed, but clarification in response to questions is encouraged.
5. Have each person evaluate the ideas and individually and anonymously vote for the best ones (for example, the best idea gets 5 points, next best 4 points, etc).
6. Share votes within the group and tabulate. A group report is prepared, showing the ideas receiving the most points.
7. Allow time for brief group presentations on their solutions.

Focused Thinking Techniques

WELCOME TO THE
HALL OF MIRRORS



Let's stop here to pause and *reflect!*

Focused Thinking Techniques

Focused thinking frameworks

- play a vital role in structuring the approach to problem solving, opportunity exploring, and creatively organizing one's thoughts around a subject or issue.

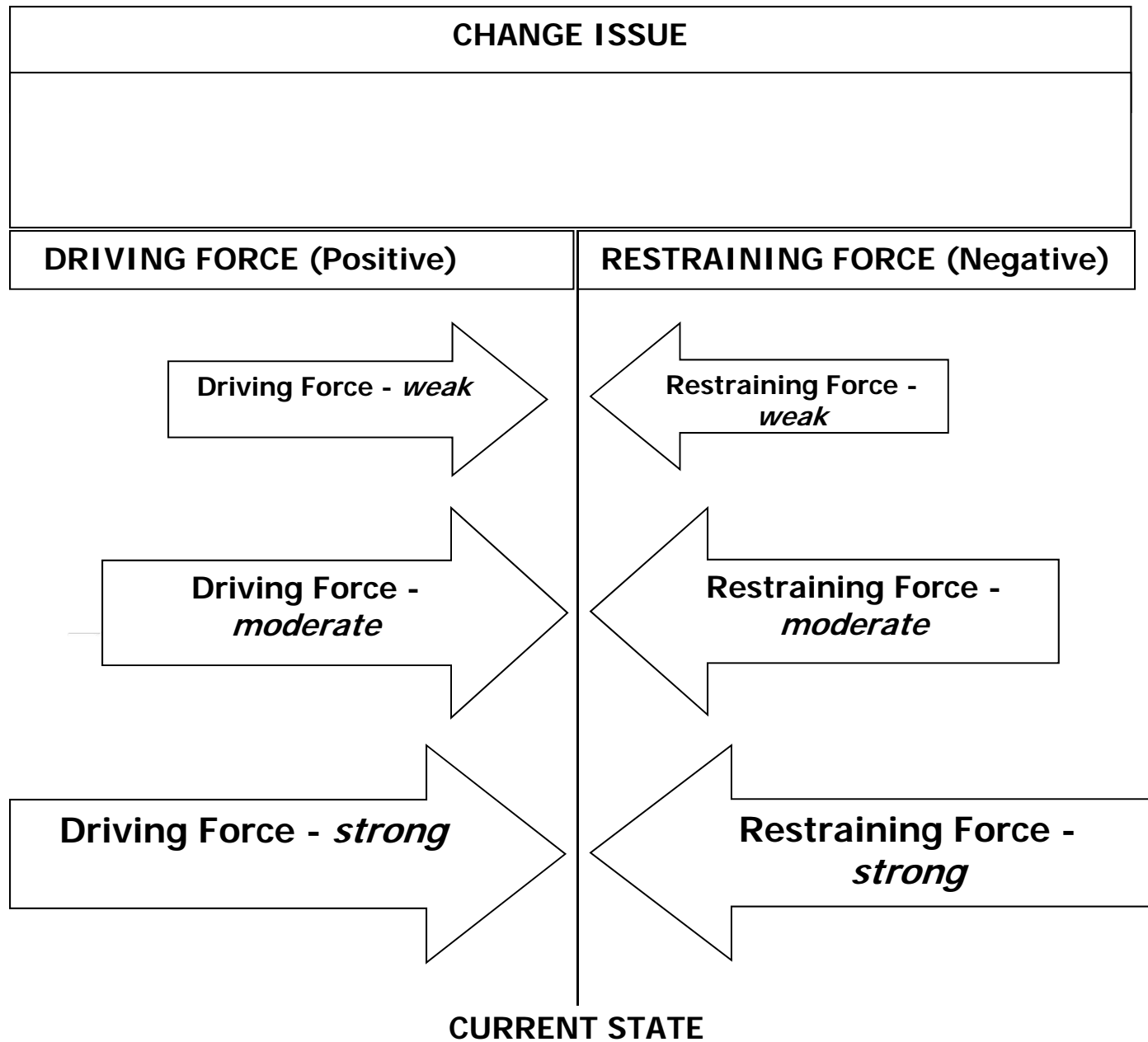
Focused Thinking Techniques

When thinking about ideas it is important to consider the following:

- What *information* do we have?
- What do we *feel* about the idea?
- What *caution* does the idea stimulate?

Focused Thinking Techniques

- What are the *benefits* of the idea?
- What could we do to *piggy-back* / *extend* the idea?
- Have we *managed our thinking* about the idea from many perspectives?



LIKE, DISLIKE, INTERESTING

- What three things do you **LIKE** about this idea?
- What do you **DISLIKE** about this idea?
- What things **INTEREST** you about this idea?

Voting with Dots Technique

With this technique you use **sticky colored dots** to identify the most important items from a List and establish priorities.

1. Hand out between 3 and 5 dots to each member of the group.
 2. The number to use depends on the group size, the number of items and the number you would like to focus on out of the group. (More items > more dots, more to select > more dots, etc.)
- The rules are simple: **there are none** in that a group member can use all dots on one item, spread out the dots or not use any of them.
 - Instruct the group members to stick their dots onto the flip chart sheets on which you have listed the items from some form of brainstorming.
 - You have a relatively quick graphic image of the group's interests and preferences.

Webinar Thinking Challenge

We need new ideas on “how to” engage more people, provide new delivery methods, cause the learning to be continued and internalized.

What 2 or 3 divergent thinking methods could be used by a group of everyday, untrained parishioners to generate some better approaches to this?

YOU – can be the facilitator of a creative process in your parish!

