

# BRIERCREST

LE 641 Creative Problem & Polarity Management  
Spring/Summer 2016

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Course Dates: This course will be offered in the Lower Mainland BC, at the PAOC SONRISE Church located 5588 188<sup>th</sup> Street, Surrey B.C. June 23- 28 as follows

Lower Mainland BC

Part one June 23-24/16 weekend break & part two June 27-28/16

3 Credit Hours

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to help students understand the perspectives, procedures, and processes needed for problem solving, polarity management and vision-setting. Emphasis is given to strategic and creative processes applied to a problem or polarity issue, but these processes are also readily adaptable to numerous leadership/management settings. Problem solving will be presented as one of three strategic planning approaches using a problem reengineering design.

## COURSE INTEGRATION

This course is designed to teach the leadership process of problem based planning as an opportunity and skill set that compliments clean or white page strategic planning. The course is designed to set students up well for the action research course expected of all leadership/management degree students. The course is enriched with Biblical and theological integration as we exegete biblical problems and how they were solved and as we delve into some controversies in history as well.

## COURSE TEXTS

McGoff, Chris. *The Primes: How Any Group Can Solve Any Problem*. New Jersey: Wiley & Sons, 2012. ISBN 978-1-118-17327-5.

Dan Roam. *The Back of A Napkin: Solving Problems & Selling Ideas with Pictures*. Expanded edition. Toronto: Penguin, 2009. ISBN 978-1-59184-306-1.

Roy Oswald & Barry Johnson. *Managing Polarities In Congregations: Eight Keys for Thriving Faith Communities*. Herndon, Virginia: Alban Institute, 2010. ISBN 978-1-56699-390-6.

**Prather, Charles. *Manager's Guide To Fostering Innovation and Creativity in Teams*. Toronto: McGraw Hill, 2010. ISBN 978-0-07-162797-9.**

Gray, Dave Sunni Brown & James Macanufo. *Game Storming: A Playbook for Innovators, Rulebreakers, & Changemakers*. Sebastopol, CA.: O'Reilly, 2010. ISBN 978-0-596-80417-6. OR David Stracker, *Rapid Problem Solving with Post-it Notes*. DA CAPO Press, 1977. ISBN 13:978-1-55561-142-2.

**Stanley, Andy. *Visioneering*. Colorado Spring: Multnomah Press, 1999. ISBN 1-57673538-9.**

Course texts are available both at the [Briercrest Bookstore](#) and the online [Textbook Store](#).

Students are expected to refer Briercrest Seminary's Format and Style Guides and *Guide for Writing Research Papers*, available as PDF documents here: [Important Documents](#).

Some Suggested Preparatory and/or Optional Reading:

Ascough, Richard S., and Sandy Colton. *Passionate Visionary: Leadership Lessons from the postle Paul*. Ottawa: Novalis, 2005. [ISBN 2-89507-566-2]

Heath, Chip & Dan. *Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work*. Toronto:Random House, 2013. ISBN 978-0-307-36113-4.

Martin, Roger. *The Opposable Mind: How Successful Leaders Win Through Integrative Thinking*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2007. ISBN 13-978-1-4221-892-4.

Schwartz, Barry. *The Paradox of Choice: How The Culture of Abundance Robs us of Satisfaction*. New York: Haper, 2004. ISBN 10-0-06-000569-6.

Brussee, Warren. *All About Six Sigma*. Toronto: McGraw Hill, 2006. [ISBN: 0-07-145372-5]

Collins, Dave. *Vision That Works: Turning Your Churches Vision into Action*. Pickering, ON.: Castle Quay Books, 2008. ISBN 978-1-894860-38-3

Engel, Herbert. *Handbook of Creative Learning Exercises*. 2nd Edition. Amhurst, Mass.: HRD Press, 1994. [ISBN 0-87425-239-3]

Harvard Business Essentials. *Strategy: Create and Implement the Best Strategy for your Business*. Boston: Harvard Business Press, 2005. [ISBN 978-1-59139-632-8]

Hawkins, Greg, and Cally Parkinson. *Reveal: Where Are You?* Barrington, IL: Willow Creek 2007. [ISBN 13-978-074419234-6]

Howes, Brue. *Six Sigma: The Essentials of the most Powerful Improvement Methodology in the Business World*. Toronto: McGraw Hill, 2006. [ISBN 0-07-143008-3]

Groseschel, Craig. *It: How Churches and Leaders Can Get It and Keep It*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008. [ISBN 978-0-310-28682-0]

Leonard, Dorothy, and Walter Swap. *When Sparks Fly: Igniting Creativity in Groups*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999. [ISBN 0-87584-865-6]

Michalko, Michael. *Thinkertoys: A Handbook of Creative-thinking Techniques*(2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Toronto: The Speed Press, 2006. [ISBN 13: 978-1-58008-773-5]

Silberman, Mel, and Karen Lawson. *101 Ways to Make Training Active*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1995. [ISBN 0-88390-475-6]

Van Gundy, Arthur, ed. *101 Great Games and Activities*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1998. [ISBN 0-7879-4138-7]

Van Gundy, Arthur. *101 activities for teaching creative Problem Solving*. San Francisco: John Wiley, 2005. [ISBN 0-7879-7402-1]

Whitney, Diana, and Amanda Trosten-Bloom. *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry: A Practical Guide to Positive Change*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2003. [ISBN 1-57675-226-7]

*Students are expected to refer Briercrest Seminary's Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <http://briercrest.ca/current/seminary/academics/important-documents/>.*

*These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <http://briercrest.ca/bookstore>.*

*Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (<https://briercrest.instructure.com>; cf. <http://briercrest.ca/online/canvas>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.*

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

### Cognitive

1. The student shall understand the problem solving, visioning and polarity management processes to the extent where it will be natural to follow the steps instinctively.
2. The student shall become aware of the historical development of problem solving, visioning and polarity management perspectives.

3. The student shall master the principles behind the techniques, tools and instruments used in problem solving, visioneering, and polarity management.
4. The student shall integrate the biblical concepts, examples and principles relevant to the visioneering, problem solving and polarity management processes.
5. The student shall understand the distinctions, principles and strategies important to the improvement of visioneering, problem solving, and polarity management memory, understanding, analysis, creativity and synthesis.
6. The student shall be able to distinguish between problem thinking (backward focus), opportunity finding (forward thinking) and group facilitation skills.

#### **Affective**

1. The student shall appreciate the visioneering, problem solving, and polarity management sequences to the extent where they will become an instinctive practice in her/his personal, group and institutional practices.
2. The student shall value the techniques, instruments and tools of visioneering, problem solving and polarity management to the extent where he/she practices them in personal, group and institutional experiences.
3. The student shall commit her/himself to eliminate the “gap” between the current condition and the desired condition in every possible way.
4. The student shall prize the skills of visioneering, problem solving, and polarity management sufficiently to commit her/himself to lifelong development of the same.
5. The student shall acknowledge the central place of godly wisdom, sought in humility, in the group facilitation, visioneering, problem solving, and polarity management processes for a Christian.

#### **Skills**

1. The student shall become competent at using several group facilitation, visioneering, problem solving and polarity management processes instinctively.

2. **The student shall become equipped to use the tools, techniques and strategies of problem solving, visioneering, and polarity management.**
3. **The student shall extend her/his basic skills in thinking necessary for understanding the problem or polarity generating creative solution or management alternatives, actually deciding on the best solutions, designing a vision and an action plan for the necessary change to bring resolve or polarity management.**

**COURSE OUTLINE AND CONTENT**

Time	Topics of Discussion	Teaching/Learning Strategies	Supporting Assignments
½ day	<p><b>UNIT I: The Possibility of Visioneering in a real problem filled life</b></p> <p>A. Concept of Vision</p> <p>B. Concept of Forward Thinking</p> <p>C. History and theoretical foundations of the Visioneering Priority</p> <p>D. Philosophy of Visioneering (Personal, Biblical, etc.)</p> <p>E. Psychology of Visioneering (Vision Killing - Vision Fueling)</p> <p>F. Principles of Visioneering (Vision – Courage – Determination – Accountability)</p> <p>G. Processes of Visioneering</p> <p>H. Relationship Between Visioneering &amp; Problem Solving</p> <p>I. The Gospel of John 9 approach to Problem Solving</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the concept of vision.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate the concept of forward thinking.</li> <li>3. Present a grid on the leadership sequence toward vision.</li> <li>4. Present the foundations of visioneering.</li> <li>5. Demonstrate the psychology of visioneering.</li> <li>6. Develop the principles of visioneering.</li> <li>7. Design &amp; experiment with a visioneering process (Gather – Develop – Cast – Re-cast).</li> <li>8. Watch Bill Hybels’ or Andy Stanley on video on Visioneering.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Read &amp; be ready to report on the Stanley textbook.</li> <li>b. Reflect on how a visioneering process might deal with one of your three presenting problems (pre-course assignment).</li> <li>c. Reflect on the vision killers you have experienced on your path of life (people, perspectives, positions).</li> <li>d. Report/demonstration on one of the recommended readings.</li> </ol>
½ day	<p><b>UNIT II: The Probability of Problem/polarity management while Visioneering</b></p> <p>A. Concept of Problem Solving</p> <p>B. Perspectives on Problem Solving</p> <p>C. Proposals on Solution Friendly Problems (opportunity Finding)</p> <p>D. Styles of Problem Solving</p> <p>E. Principles of Problem Solving</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the concept of problem solving.</li> <li>2. Review historical, philosophical, sociological perspectives on problem solving.</li> <li>3. Present several ways of finding and stating problems to make</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Be ready to discuss the ROAM &amp; McGOFF textbooks in class.</li> <li>b. Skim read the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes &amp; Philippians for clues on solution friendly problems.</li> <li>c. Reflect on your style of problem</li> </ol>

Time	Topics of Discussion	Teaching/Learning Strategies	Supporting Assignments
	F. Change the Name of the Problem Game G. Processes of Problem Management H. Developing Process Expertise I. The ACTS 1-3 problem Solving preparation journey. J. Managing Unsolvable Problems/Polarities	them solution friendly. 4. Experiment with styles of problem solving. 5. Brainstorm for principles of problem solving. 6. Create prompts/primers to problem solving 7. Introduce a number of problem solving processes.	solving. d. Course pack review of Bergquist & Phillips e. Recall how you learned the hardest skill for you to learn and identify possible transfer to problem solving expertise. f. Was the Acts 15 case a problem to solve or a polarity to manage?
Day 2	<b>UNIT III: Problem/polarity Situation Analysis With Vision</b> A. Recognize the Problem/polarities B. Separate the Problems/polarities C. Define the Givens (Reasons/Cause-Effect, etc.) D. Establish Priorities E. Establish Targets/Priorities F. Identify the Possibilities (Resources) G. Select a Path for Problem Resolution/polarity management H. Vision Enriched Analysis I. The Science & Role of Action Research I. The Acts 6 Problem Solving journey J. The action research approach	1. Develop a problem statement together. 2. Demonstrate the problem separation. 3. Illustrate cause-effect and rationale development. 4. Illustrate the role and reality of priorities. 5. Explain and apply target setting and objective setting 6. Illustrate problem to possibility shifts. 7. Assign decision on problem resolution pathway. 8. Vision while Analyzing? 9. Action Research as a continuous problem management approach	a. Prepare to discuss process sections of all textbooks. b. Be ready to work your problem(s). c. Work out a problem tentative analysis statement for class group discussion. d. Read and prepare to use Van Gundy distributed tools. e. Plan to dialogue about the creative ideas included in Van Gundy f. Prepare so you can use the ideas from the Prather textbook & either Straker or Gray, et al textbooks g. Reflections on Action Research readings sent by softcopy

Time	Topics of Discussion	Teaching/Learning Strategies	Supporting Assignments
Day 3 & 4	<p><b>UNIT IV: Problem/polarity Alternatives That Promote Vision Toward Resolution (Generating and Deciding)</b></p> <p>A. Tools/Strategies/Skills to Generate Alternatives            B. Group Facilitation Skill Development            C. Gathering Alternatives            D. Assessing the Alternatives            E. Proposing the Alternatives            F. Designing the Alternatives            G. Selecting the Best Alternative(s)            H. Inspiring Vision in Process            I. The Acts 15 problem Solving journey</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Group presentations applying chosen &amp; class assigned solution generating systems.</li> <li>2. Engage in intensive group work to generate alternatives.</li> <li>3. Private assessment &amp; defense of alternatives to group.</li> <li>4. After group assessment and debate, write a problem solution proposal to test on your group (&amp; to the class as chosen randomly).</li> <li>5. Have the group analyze the solution proposal and then design the proposal(s) more fully.</li> <li>6. Select the best alternative with group consultation.</li> <li>7. Planned Celebration of progress at end of the day.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Be ready to apply all problem generating, selecting and assessing tools.</li> <li>b. Be ready for a long day and evening of work.</li> <li>c. Anticipate evening preparation</li> <li>d. Identify break-through points all day as you work together.</li> <li>e. At the end of the day you should have a tight proposal.</li> <li>f. Prepare to demonstrate the use of the processes in the creativity textbooks.</li> <li>g. Be prepared to use the Van Gundy processes in the book and in the course pack.</li> <li>h. Reading reports as time permits.</li> </ol>
Day 5	<p><b>UNIT V: Problem/polarity Actionalizing</b></p> <p>A. Plan for Implementation            B. Re-set the Priorities            C. Re-ignite the Vision            D. Release the Action            E. Review the Progress            F. Refine the Plan</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentation &amp; review of action plans.</li> <li>2. Illustrate the re-statement of targets.</li> <li>3. Build a link to vision casting &amp; problem solving.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Be ready to ask for class group and/or class help to complete the process.</li> <li>b. Prepare to ask final process questions.</li> <li>c. Sketch out the full plan to see if</li> </ol>

Time	Topics of Discussion	Teaching/Learning Strategies	Supporting Assignments
	G. Re-cast the Vision H. The Acts of the Apostles Problem/vision journey by way of executive summary report I. Light from the Four Disciplines of Execution	4. Schedule for action release & monitoring. 5. Establishing a progress report plan. 6. Building contingencies 7. Demonstrate re-casting of vision (planning & action) 8. Watch and Reflect together of the implications of “vision drift” after watching the Caldwell, <i>Turning Vision Into Reality</i>	you have any gaps, and gain help to close the gap. d. Reflect on and make some personal commitments on the use the processes applied this week throughout life. e. Be ready to present your recommended reading insights.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Pre-Course Assignments:

- 1) Each student will be responsible to read all of the assigned textbooks in advance of the course and provide an integrative 7-10 page paper on the readings to include the following:
  - a) Summary of memorable insights
  - b) Book values – a set of reasons why each book should be read and by whom.
  - c) Book limitations – a set of statements about how each book could be improved (if you or an expert as sharp as you) were to write on the same subject.
  - d) Book application to real life setting(s).
  - e) Integrative comparison and contrast of the key concepts and ideas presented in the books.

**Due:** For our first day together

**Value:** 25%

**Basis of Grade:** Written work and oral presentation when the books are discussed

### 2) Mini-Case

Prepare a report on three problems or polarities you have (one of which they will apply the group facilitation, visioning and problem solving process to during the class). The problems should be presented as a mini-case and so presented that they could be used as a case study and potentially as your program final research project as well.

In clarifying each of the problems the student should attempt to articulate the following for each:

- a) A problem statement
- b) Apparent rationale for this being a problem and for why the writer sees a resolution as highly important.
- c) Contextualization of the problem
- d) Possible approaches and alternatives to resolution of the problem
- e) Estimated success levels in resolution path proposed
- f) Best Case potential outcomes

**Due:** Prior to or on the First day of part one of the class in your context

**Value:** 25%

**Basis:** Clarity and completeness of the case.

### *Mid-Course Assignments:*

- 3) In class group process work.

**This is a course on “community” problem solving and thus will entail a good deal of to the presentation/demonstration referred to in item A.2 above:**

**Each student will be an active participant in discussion, presenting their problem/polarity, leading their group and/or the class so that they gain help toward a clear vision and direction on how best to resolve their chosen problem.**

**Due: Daily in class and as distributed throughout the week.**

**Value: 25%**

**Basis: Quality of their conversations and leadership of chosen/assigned solution processes.**

**Please expect evening group work. Just think, your course assignments will be 90 % completed by the last day of class!!! Please expect to work on your projects on your own or as a team(depending on class size)**

*Post-Course Assignments:*

**4) Each student will present a refined solution pathway paper in which all the primary steps in their chosen visioning and problem solving process/polarity management process have been applied to their chosen problem.**

**Due: August 26/16**

**Value: 25%**

#### **SEMINARY CALENDAR**

**Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar:  
<http://briercrest.ca/current/seminary/academics/seminary-calendar/>.**

#### *Attendance Policy*

**Students are expected to attend 100% of each modular they register. If this is impossible, arrangements must be made with the course professor. A maximum of 1 full day of class can be foregone. Students should request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit if additional time is missed.**

#### *Course Schedules*

**Classes begin at 9:00 a.m.-4:30 pm on each day in each given context, with a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the experience.**

#### *Assignment Submission*

**All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For**

additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the [academic calendar](#).

#### *Return of Graded Assignments*

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit a complaint in writing to the Academic Dean of the Seminary. If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

#### *Academic Honesty*

Students are accountable to perform each task according to principles of academic honesty. Please refer to pages 24-26 in the [academic calendar](#) for more information.

#### *Academic Accommodations*

Any student with a disability, injury, or illness who may need academic accommodations should discuss them with the course instructor after contacting the Student Success Centre in person (Room 116), by telephone (1-306-756-3354) or by email ([studentsuccesscentre@briercrest.ca](mailto:studentsuccesscentre@briercrest.ca)).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### ENDURING BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

Adams, James L. *Conceptual Blockbusting*. San Francisco, CA: W.H. Freeman, 1974.

Altier, William J. *The Thinking Managers Toolbox*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Anderson, J. R. *Languages, Memory and Thought*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Cognitive Psychology and Its Implications*. San Francisco, CA: W.H. Freeman, 1980.

Arnold, John. *The Complete Problem Solver*. Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Cognitive Skills and Their Acquisition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1981.

Barna, George. *The Power of Vision*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1992.

Bellezza, F.S. *Improve Your Memory Skills*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1982.

Bouchard, T.J. "What Ever Happened to Brainstorming?" *Journal of Creative Behaviour* IL: 1971 (p. 182-189).

Bransford, John, and Barry Stein. *The Ideal Problem Solver*. New York: W. H. Freeman, 1984.

Brody, Ralph. *Problem Solving: Concepts and Methods for Community Organizations*. New York: Human Science Press, 1988.

Davis, G.A., and J.A. Scott. *Training Creative Thinking*. Huntington, NY: Krieger, 1978.

Fryar, Maridell, and David A. Thomas. *Successful Problem Solving*. Skokie, IL: National Textbook Co., 1979.

Hamel, Gary, and C.K. Prahalad. *Competing for the Future*. Boston: Harvard Business Press, 1994.

Hayes, J.R. *The Complete Problem Solver*. Philadelphia, PA: Franklin Institute Press, 1981.

Heirs, Ben. *The Professional Decision Thinker*. New York: Dodd Mead, 1986.

Kaufman, Roger, and Fenwick W. English. *Needs Assessment: Concept and Application*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology, 1979.

Kaye, Harvey. *Decision Power*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1992.

Klatzky, R.L. *Human Memory: Structure and Process*. 2nd ed. San Francisco, CA: W.H. Freeman, 1982.

Leonard, Dorothy and Walter Swap. *When Sparks Fly: Igniting Group Creativity*. Boston: Harvard Business Press, 1999.

Maier, Norman R. F. *Problem Solving Discussions and Conferences: Leadership Methods and Skills*. Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1963.

Mayer, Richard E. *Thinking, Problem Solving, Cognition*. New York, NY: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1983.

Newell, A., and H.A. Simon. *Human Problem Solving*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1972.

Robinson, Haddon. *Decision Making By the Book*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1991.

Tuma, D.T., and F. Reif, eds. *Problem Solving and Education: Issues in Teaching and Learning*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1980.

Van Gundy, Arthur. *Brain Boosters for Business Advantage*. Toronto: Pfeiffer, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Techniques of Structured Problem Solving*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1981.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Managing Group Creativity: A Modular Approach to Problem Solving*. New York: AMACOM, 1984.

von Oech, Roger. *A Kick in the Seat of the Pants*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Whack on the Side of the Head*. New York, NY: Warner Books, 1983.

Watzlawick, P., J.H. Weakland, and R. Fisch. *Changing Principles in Problem Formation and Problem Resolution*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1974.

Weiss, W.H. *The Supervisor's Problem Solver*. New York, NY: AMACOM, 1982.

Whimbley, A., and R. Lockhead. *Problem Solving and Comprehension*. Philadelphia, PA: Franklin Institute Press, 1982.