

The Creative Process and the Four-Position Paradigm

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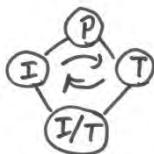
We can diagram the creative process by using a four position paradigm to identify essential factors used in creating and responding to any kind of creative work. As we examine or produce a work, whether it is a written article, a painting, a musical selection, a sculpture, a tattoo, a corporate logo, a television commercial, or even a building to display other creative works, we can recognize four essential elements as well as the various combinations of these elements. These aspects draw attention both to consideration of our own creative process and to examination of the efforts of others.



Typically, the process begins with some purpose, which we can designate with a "P" in the uppermost circle. In the academic realm, we would consider a purpose of educating, informing, or persuading to be valid motivations for producing some work, while self-expression or entertainment would be considered "less academic" if no application to the lives of the audience seems evident.

In order to accomplish the intended purpose, the creative artist would begin with some idea, which we would identify with an "I" in the left middle circle. This would be expressed through some technique, which we would designate by a "T" in the right middle circle. The terminology for these factors may vary depending on the particular discipline. Thus, instead of idea/technique, the terms content/form or substance/style may be used. Regardless of the terminology, the concepts are still the same.

This interaction of idea and technique centered on a central purpose gives us a basic triangular building block. The organization of the elements of idea and technique deserve our consideration as much as does any specific idea or technique itself.



The final movement comes when we flip the triangle over. The result is the completed four-position paradigm forged by the integration of idea and technique. This resulting relationship produces the created work: the "IT" of the process. In the final evaluation, we consider how much this resultant created work reflects the intended original purpose and how each of the four individually and collectively contribute to the work's "value."