

Critical Thinking

Days: 1

Audience: This course is appropriate for all employee levels

Description: The ability to reason through problems and to present arguments in a logical, compelling way has become a key skill for survival in today's world. This workshop will give you some practical tools and hands-on experience with critical thinking and problem-solving.

Course Objectives: This workshop will teach participants how to:

- Define critical and non-critical thinking
- Identify your critical thinking style(s), including areas of strength and improvement
- Describe other thinking styles, including left/right brain thinking and whole-brain thinking
- Work through the critical thinking process to build or analyze arguments
- Develop and evaluate explanations
- Improve key critical thinking skills, including active listening and questioning
- Use analytical thought systems and creative thinking techniques
- Prepare and present powerful arguments

OUTLINE:

LESSON 1: COURSE OVERVIEW

The instructor will spend the first part of the day getting to know participants and discussing what will take place during the workshop. Students will also have an opportunity to identify their personal learning objectives.

LESSON 2: UNDERSTANDING CRITICAL THINKING

The first session of the course will look at what critical thinking is, some characteristics of critical thinkers, and key critical thinking skills. Participants will also explore ways to develop their critical thinking skills.

LESSON 3: WHERE DO OTHER TYPES OF THINKING FIT IN?

Next, participants will look at left- and right-brain and whole-brain thinking.

LESSON 4: PITFALLS TO REASONED DECISION-MAKING

This session will look at some of the barriers to good decision-making and explore how to get around them.

LESSON 5: THE CRITICAL THINKING PROCESS

Participants will delve into the seven-phase critical thinking model. They will also learn about the standards of critical thinking that serve as the foundation for this model. Participants will then practice the process through a case study.

LESSON 6: A CRITICAL THINKER'S SKILL SET

This session will give participants skills necessary for critical thinking: asking questions, probing, and active listening.

LESSON 7: CREATING EXPLANATIONS

Another important part of critical thinking is being able to clearly explain why something is a particular way. This session will help participants build that skill.

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LESSON 8: DEALING WITH ASSUMPTIONS

Although assumptions can help us get through our everyday lives, they can be a major impediment to critical thinking. In this session, participants will discuss how to reduce the number of assumptions that they rely on.

LESSON 9: COMMON SENSE

This session will explore a frequently overlooked thinking tool: common sense.

LESSON 10: CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THOUGHT SYSTEMS

Next, participants will look at some analytical and inventive thought systems, including De Bono's thinking hats and brainstorming.

LESSON 11: POWERFUL ARGUMENTS IN PRACTICE

This final session will give participants some tips on preparing and presenting a powerful, logical argument. Participants will also have an opportunity to prepare and present a critical thinking presentation, and to evaluate others' presentations with the skills that they have learned.

WORKSHOP WRAP UP

Participants will have an opportunity to ask final questions, complete a training satisfaction survey, and fill out an action plan.