



CRITICAL THINKING



Typical is not good enough. The tools portion of most process improvement and collaboration training includes techniques designed for data gathering, data organizing and creativity. Critical thinking is not taught. Some people adapt to this by taking their favorite tool (e.g. fishbone diagram) and using it to fill the gaps. But, when a specialized tool is used for a purpose it was not designed for results suffer and people are forced to struggle. In this way some tools are over-utilized many tools are not used at all.

People who only receive the usual training in collaboration and process improvement techniques will be missing the requisite critical thinking skills. Because of this, their own thinking and the outcome of many of their collaborations with others will be flawed. Symptoms of a need for improved critical thinking include: difficulty with (or avoidance of) complex issues, long meeting times with complaints of lack of progress or going in circles, frustration when attempting to influence others, and failure to agree or develop optimal, highest quality actions.

Critical Thinking. Give people a new and dramatic boost in thinking effectiveness with mastery of a clear, simple, thinking framework with tools that can address any issue. Critical thinking methods are modeled, practiced, and then applied to the real job issues of participants. These thinking methods work for applications of all types including process improvement teams, individuals and any time collaboration and clear thinking are important. Tailored case study packages are available from over a dozen industry packages (e.g. Utility, Pharmaceutical, Automotive, Computer, Financial, Petroleum, Transit, Telecom, Health Care.)

Critical Thinking is the solution to these common barriers to effective action for leaders, teams and individuals:

- Information Overload** - the sheer amount of available information can choke thinking resulting in long delays and poor quality decisions. Learn how to quickly determine what information is needed and what information can be ignored so thinking can be focused on relevant and critical information.
- Jumping To Conclusions** - assuming the cause of a problem can lead to costly mistakes and "Band-Aid" solutions. Learn when and how to verify the true cause of a problem so permanent corrective action can be taken.
- Not Enough Information** - concern over the lack of information can result in extensive delays searching for more and more information. Learn how to use the information already available to identify specifically what new information is critical.
- Poor Communication** - different thinking styles can result in widely different approaches to situations. This workshop provides a common language and a common systematic approach so everyone will understand, participate, and enjoy working together.

Two important characteristics that help define an effective leader are directly addressed in this workshop: **conceptual skills** (including the ability to think systematically) and **judgment** (the ability to make decisions with imperfect data.)

A simple framework for determining **when to involve others** in decision making is presented to optimize a leader's use of time & human resources while assuring necessary support for changes.

OBJECTIVES Upon successful completion of the **Critical Thinking** participants will learn these skills:

- ✓ Identifying specific factual issues and determining priority
- ✓ Gathering relevant information on problems and decisions using logical, focused questions
- ✓ Following a systematic, data based procedure for uncovering the root causes of problems and improving organizational systems
- ✓ Developing well-rounded decisions, balancing creativity with a thorough evaluation of benefits and risks
- ✓ Creating specific implementation plans that anticipate likely problems and develop actions to reduce their threat.