

Critical Thinking

Session starts at
10am



HELLO!

I am **Karen Maher**

I am an experienced HR consultant and workforce development specialist originally from the North East of England.

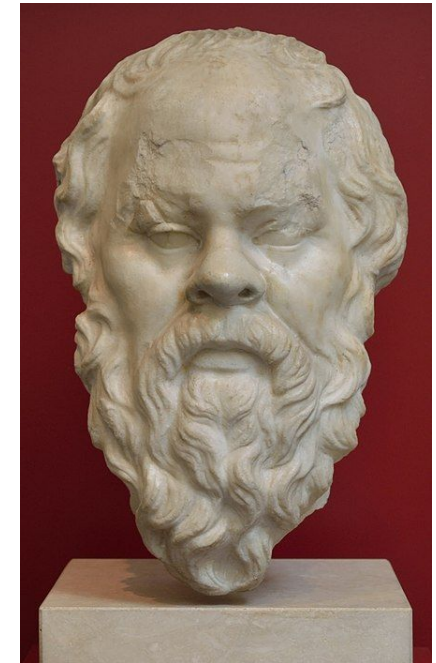
I specialise in coaching, mentoring, mediation as well as training design and delivery. I am also qualified to administer and deliver psychometric tests including EQi2 (Emotional Intelligence) and MBTI (Personality Types).



What is Critical Thinking?

Socrates advocated

"seeking evidence, closely examining reasoning and assumptions, analyzing basic concepts, and tracing out implications not only of what is said but of what is done as well."

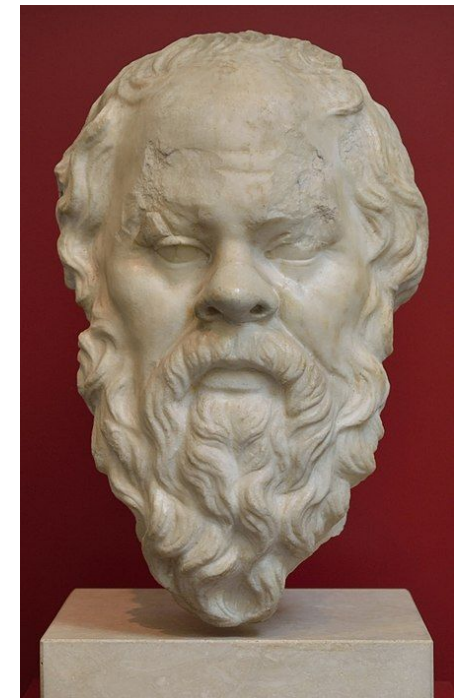


Chiarini, Andrea; Found, Pauline; Rich, Nicholas (2015). *Understanding the Lean Enterprise: Strategies, Methodologies, and Principles for a More Responsive Organization*. Cham: Springer. p. 132.

What is Critical Thinking?

Critical thinking is the **process** of careful, systematic analyse of problems to find viable solutions.

It involves **identifying several possible solutions** and then **logically evaluating each one, comparing** them to one another **on their merits**, and then **selecting** the most promising.

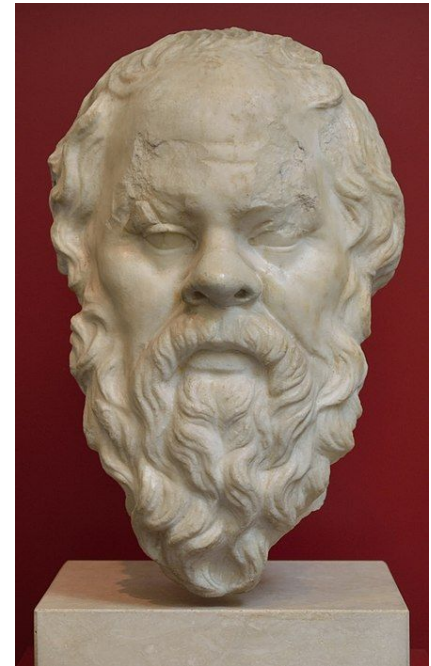


What is Critical Thinking?

It is a broad skill that can be applied in many different situations.

Everyone thinks constantly but it is difficult to think critically all the time

It is an intentional process to use when we have problems or decisions to make



What is Critical Thinking?

Deliberately analysing information to make better judgements and decisions using:



Barriers to Critical Thinking

- Egocentric Thinking
- Social Conditioning
- Biased Experiences
- Arrogance and Intolerance
- Schedule Pressures
- Group Think
- The Drone Mentality



Barriers to Critical Thinking

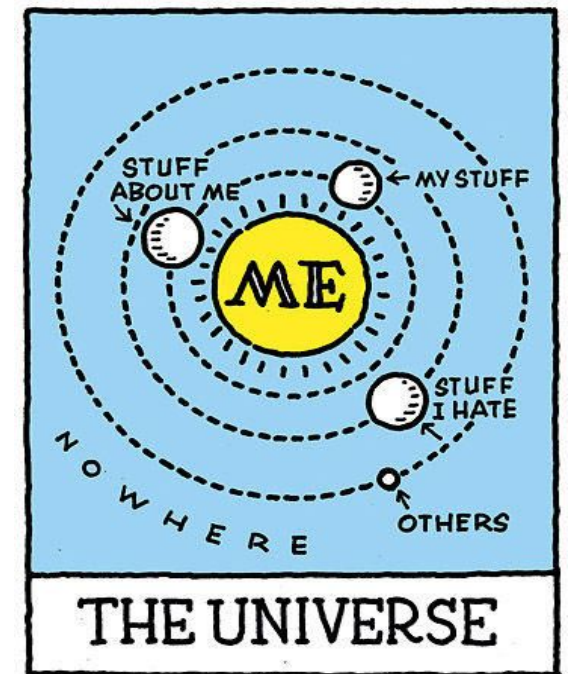
Egocentric Thinking

Egocentric thinking is viewing everything in relation to oneself.

It is difficult for many people to identify this characteristic within themselves. The egocentric person is usually unaware of his or her thinking patterns.

There are many successful people who are egocentric thinkers. They are closed minded to the thoughts and ideas of others. This damages their critical thinking abilities.

Open minded thinking is one of the fundamental critical thinking skills.



Barriers to Critical Thinking

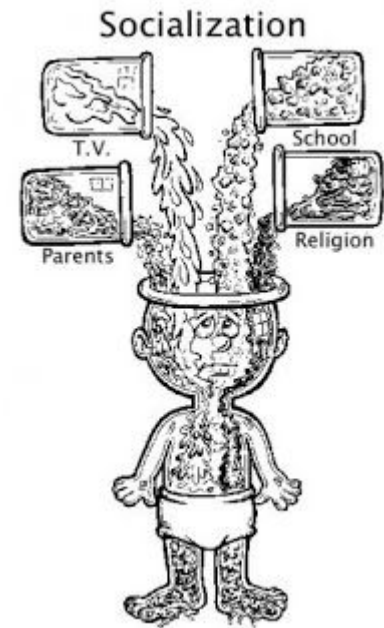
Social Conditioning

Each of us is unique. Age, IQ, race, genes, gender, culture, family, friends, and other factors effect on how we view the world.

Critical thinking is hindered when people are viewed from biased conditioning without learning the needs, and desires of others.

Open minded critical thinking can enable you to listen, learn and empathise.

Critical thinkers try to understand their own biases to help clarify thinking help guide them towards conclusions that are **rational, unbiased, logical and fair**



Barriers to Critical Thinking

Biased Experiences

Biased experiences are a relative of egocentric thinking. Although experience is a wonderful teacher, if it is filtered through a biased or distorted view, that is how it is remembered.

Think of your last bad customer experience – what happened, how did this affect you?

Critical thinkers create an open mind and ask themselves the question, “Am I thinking logically and rationally?”



Barriers to Critical Thinking

Arrogance and Intolerance

Arrogance and intolerance should be recognised for what they are and kept to a minimum.



“When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years.”

Mark Twain

Barriers to Critical Thinking

Time Pressures

Time pressures can be an enemy of critical thinking. They can lead to:

- Cutting corners - leading to mistakes and poor decision making.
- Undue stress - leading to mistakes and bad decision making.
- Procrastination - from not knowing how or where to start.

This can lead to even more stress and cutting corners. A vicious circle begins.

Think of a time when you had some excessive pressures from tight deadlines.

- Were any mistakes made?
- Did it cost time, energy and money to fix ?
- If more focused time had been invested up front to do the task correctly, would the results have been better?



TIME PRESSURE

Barriers to Critical Thinking

Group Think

There are three reasons it can be difficult to escape this mentality.

1. The group think mentality is present every day. Radio, television and the Internet all reflect the current so called norm of thinking. Opinions are stated as fact by self-proclaimed experts. Unfortunately, many people don't question what they hear, nor do they question the source of information before repeating it.
2. The problems of the world are complex. For the non-critical thinker the world is a much simpler place to live.
3. The drive for acceptance from others is a strong motivating factor. Thinking outside the group can be uncomfortable.



“When everyone thinks alike, no one thinks very much.”

Barriers to Critical Thinking

The Drone Mentality

The drone mentality is a pattern of not paying attention to the world, people or surroundings.

Symptoms include:

- working through daily tasks without thinking,
- shying away from new challenges or problems.

Without a conscious effort it is easy to lose critical thinking skills. There are some serious problems to not paying attention to what goes on. Being on automatic pilot can cost dearly.

Ask yourself :

- **Does this make sense?**
- **If so, why?**
- **If not, why not?**

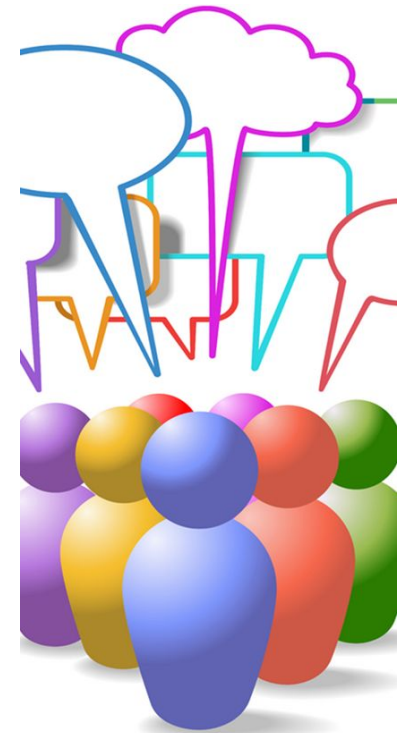


Overcoming Barriers

To avoid the critical thinking barriers become aware of them, then make a conscious effort to avoid them.

Critical thinkers continually question their thinking and ideas as well as the thinking and ideas of others.

Any other ideas to help overcome barriers to critical thinking?



Your Critical Thinking Style

Teams are usually put together based on ‘**doing roles**’
– their experiences, skills and competencies

But another aspect to consider is aligning how they **think**

What’s the **focus** of their thinking?

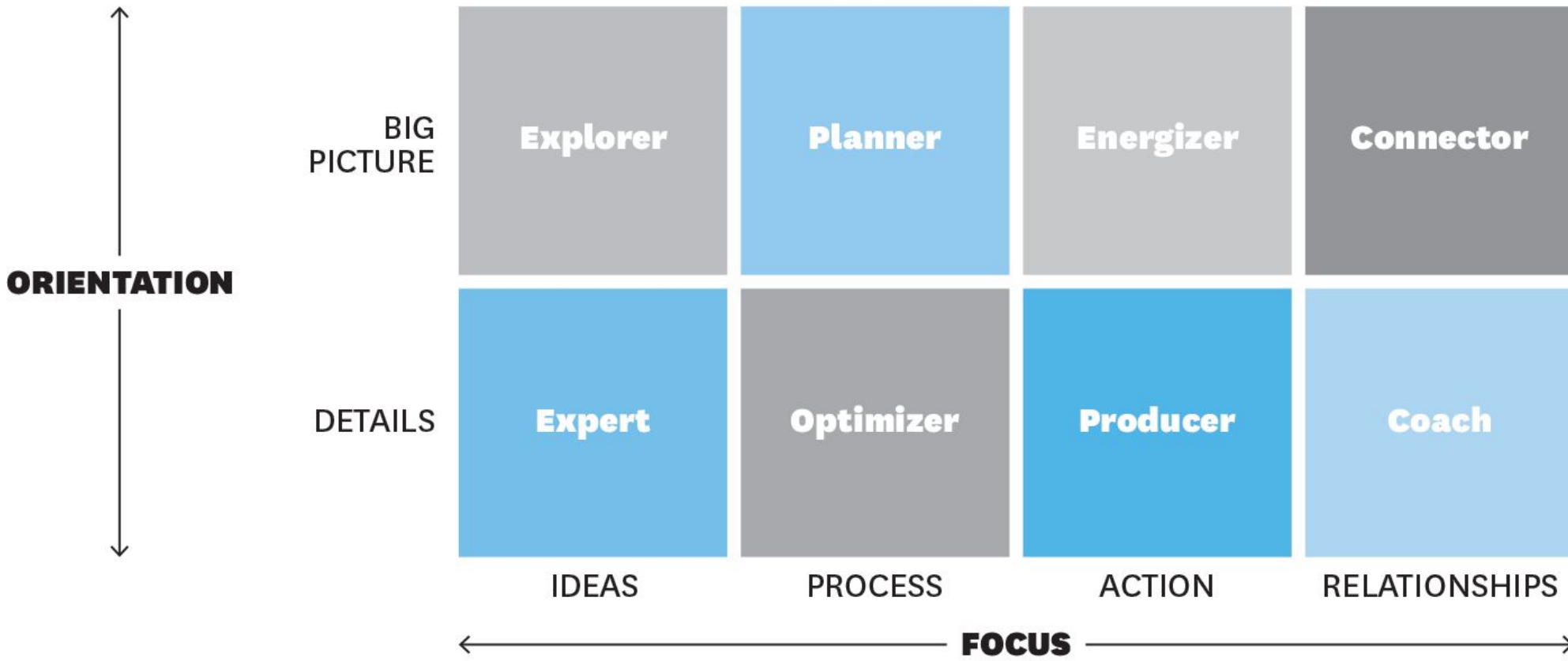
- ideas, processes, relationships, action

What is the **orientation** of their thinking?

- strategic, operational, big picture or details



Your Critical Thinking Style



Bonchek and Steele (2015) "What Kind Of Thinker Are You?"

Your Critical Thinking Style

- Which style(s) do you favour most?
- Which styles are present in your team?
- Which styles do you think are missing?
- Which style is most prevalent in your organisation?

When you know your thinking style, you know what energises you, why certain types of problems are challenging or boring, and what you can do to improve in areas that are important to reaching your goals.



Your Critical Thinking Style

BIG PICTURE	DETAIL
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explorer thinking is about generating creative ideas.• Planner thinking is about designing effective systems.• Energizer thinking is about mobilizing people into action.• Connector thinking is about building and strengthening relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expert thinking is about achieving objectivity and insight.• Optimizer thinking is about improving productivity and efficiency.• Producer thinking is about achieving completion and momentum.• Coach thinking is about cultivating people and potential.

Basic Rules for Making Decisions

1. **Be less certain** – don't be overly confident about each step of the decision making process. Once you accept that you're overconfident, you can revisit the logic of your decision
2. **Ask "how often does this happen?"** - This rule, known as the base rate, comes up a lot in the research on prediction, but it can be helpful for the judgment side of decision making too.
3. **Use basic probability** - Improving your ability here will help you with the first two rules. You'll be able to better express your uncertainty and to numerically think about "How often does this usually happen?"

The three rules together are more powerful than any of them alone.



Evaluating Risk

Evaluating risk is an essential critical thinking skill.

For example – the introduction of new legislation

Organisations must assess the potential impacts of new legislation on the way they work and how the new law will affect their clients.

This requires critical thinking skills such as analysis, creativity (imagining different scenarios arising from the legislation) and problem-solving (finding a way to work with the new legislation).

What happened in your organisation when GDPR was introduced in 2018?



Identifying a problem

1. Defining the problem.
2. Determining the reasons for the problem.
3. Determining the underlying conditions that give rise to the reasons for the problem.
4. Designing a solution.
5. Implementing the solution.
6. Evaluating the success of your solution



Identifying a problem

– Some tools

- The Five Whys
- Mind Mapping
- Brainstorming
- Fishbone diagram
- Pareto Analysis



Using Visual Thinking

Visual thinking can help organise our ideas, and see connections we haven't seen before. Even when we think that we have everything perfectly reasoned logically in our heads, visual thinking can be an important last step to seeing all the possibilities, and not to focus blindly on the most obvious.

- Post its
- Whiteboards
- Flowcharts
- Flashcards
- Doodles
- Roadmaps



Using visual thinking in the workplace can help to organise information better, and stimulate creativity.

Different Perspectives

Be inclusive

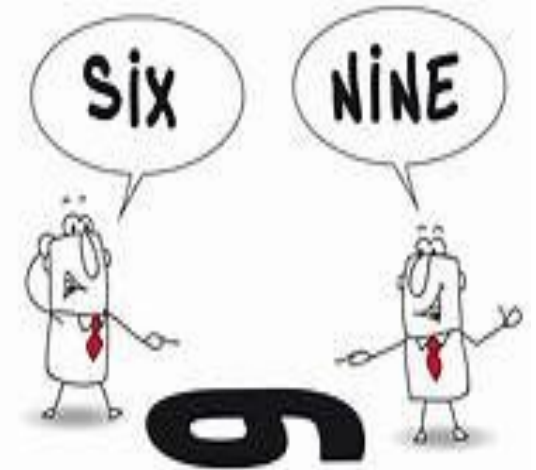
Consider other perspectives that are different from your own. When comparing opposing perspectives, we may discover similarities.

Be interactive

Studies have shown empathy does not come about by just imagining what the person is going through. We need to interact with the person by asking and listening to find out their concerns and circumstances.

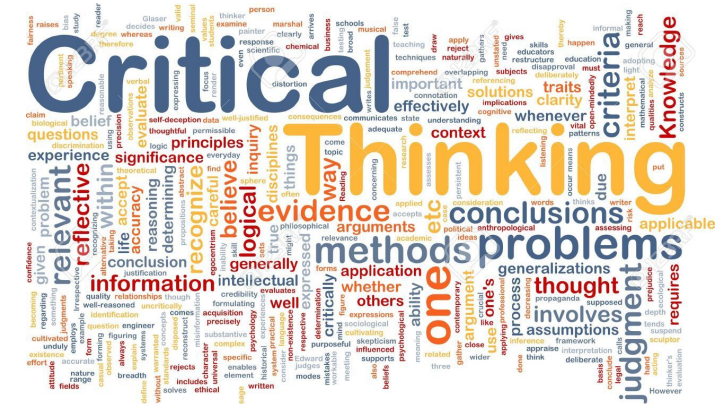
Balance subjectivity and objectivity

To empathise with another person's perspective involves emotions and subjectivity. But empathy must be accompanied by some detachment to maintain objectivity in evaluating issues and perspectives. Detachment means the ability to step back to see the bigger picture,



Summary

- What is critical thinking?
- Barriers to critical thinking
- Overcoming those barriers
- Identifying your style
- Making stronger decisions
- Evaluating risk
- Identifying a problem- some tools
- Using visual tools
- Different perspectives



Summary & Recap

Q&A



**GOOD BYE &
GOOD LUCK!**





dcm THE
LEARNING
EXPERTS