

PRELUDE

"Everyone needs critical thinking"

Critical thinking is the ability to objectively analyze information and draw a rational conclusion. It also involves gathering information on a subject and determining which pieces of information apply to the subject and which do not, based on deductive reasoning. The ability to think critically helps people in both their personal and professional lives and is valued by most employers.

We all encounter opportunities in our daily lives to engage problems and decisions using strong critical thinking. Everyone needs to think ahead, to plan and to problem solve. In fact, strong thinking is the common denominator of success throughout the world. It's easy to find examples of critical thinking skills being applied, everyday, in everyday life.

Critical thinking skills are a valuable asset for an employee, as employers typically appreciate candidates who can correctly assess a situation and come up with a logical resolution. Time is a valuable resource for most managers, and an employee able to make correct decisions without supervision will save both that manager and the whole company much valuable time.

IMPORTANCE OF CRITICAL THINKING

There are six main skills you can develop to successfully analyze facts and situations and come up with logical conclusions:

1. Analytical thinking

Being able to properly analyze information is the most important aspect of critical thinking. This implies gathering information and interpreting it, but also skeptically evaluating data. When researching a work topic, analytical thinking helps you separate the information that applies to your situation from that which doesn't.

2. Good communication

Whether you use it for gathering information or convincing others that your conclusions are correct, good communication is crucial in the critical thinking process. Getting people to share their ideas and information with you and showing your critical thinking are components of

success. If you're making a work-related decision, proper communication with your coworkers will help you gather the information you need to make the right choice.

3. Creative thinking

Being able to discover certain patterns of information and make abstract connections between seemingly unrelated data will improve your critical thinking. When analyzing a work procedure or process, you can creatively come up with ways to make it faster and more efficient. Creativity is a skill that can be strengthened over time and is valuable in every position, experience level and industry.

4. Open-mindedness

Previous education and life experiences leave their mark on a person's ability to objectively evaluate certain situations. By acknowledging these biases, you can improve your critical thinking and overall decision process. For example, if you plan to conduct a meeting in a certain way and your partner suggests using a different strategy, you could hear them out and adjust your approach based on their input.

5. Ability to solve problems

The ability to correctly analyze a problem and work on implementing a solution is another valuable skill. For example, if your restaurant's waitstaff needs to improve service speeds, you could consider reassigning some of their duties to bussers or other kitchen personnel so the servers can deliver food more quickly.

6. Asking thoughtful questions

In both private and professional situations, asking the right questions is a crucial step in formulating correct conclusions.

Open-ended questions

Asking open-ended questions can help the person you're speaking to provide you with relevant and necessary information. These are questions that don't allow a simple "yes" or "no" answer, requiring the person who receives the question to elaborate on the answer.

Outcome-based questions

When you feel like another person's experience and skills could help you work more effectively, consider asking outcome-based questions. Asking someone how they would act

in a certain hypothetical situation will give you an insight into their own critical thinking skills and help you see things you hadn't thought about before.

Reflective questions

You can gain insight by asking a person to reflect and evaluate an experience and explain their thought processes during that time. This can help you develop your critical thinking by providing you real-world examples.

Structural questions

An easy way to understand something is to ask how something works. Any working system results from a long process of trial and error and properly understanding the steps that needed to be taken for a positive result could help you be more efficient in your own endeavors.

CRITICAL THINKING ILLUSTRATIONS PRACTICES IN OUR EVERYDAY LIFE

1. A person trying to interpret an angry friend's needs, expressed through a rush of emotion and snide comments, to give that friend some help and support.
2. A manager trying to be as objective as possible when settling a dispute by summarizing the alternatives, with fairness to all sides to a disagreement.
3. A team of scientists working with great precision through a complex experiment in an effort to gather and analyze data.
4. A creative writer organizing ideas for the plot of a story and attending to the complex motivations and personalities of the fictional characters.
5. A person running a small business trying to anticipate the possible economic and human consequences of various ways to increase sales or reduce costs.
6. A master sergeant and a captain working out the tactical plans for a dangerous military mission.
7. A soccer coach working during halftime on new tactics for attacking the weaknesses of the other team when the match resumes.

8. A student confidently and correctly explaining exactly to his or her peers the methodology used to reach a particular conclusion, or why and how a certain methodology or standard of proof was applied.
9. An educator using clever questioning to guide a student to new insights.
10. Police detectives, crime scene analysts, lawyers, judges, and juries systematically investigating, interrogating, examining, and evaluating the evidence as they seek justice.
11. A policy analyst reviewing alternative drafts of product safety legislation while determining how to frame the law to benefit the most people at the least cost.
12. An applicant preparing for a job interview thinking about how to explain his or her particular skills and experiences in a way that will be relevant and of value to the prospective employer.
13. Parents anticipating the costs of sending their young child to college, analyzing the family's projected income, and budgeting projected household expenses in an effort to put aside some money for that child's future education.
14. A financial planner anticipating the impact of new income tax legislation on a client's future tax liabilities.
15. A first responder coming upon the scene of an accident and quickly analyzing the situation, evaluating priorities, and inferring what actions to take in what order.

VALUABLE CRITICAL THINKING EXAMPLES IN ORGANIZATION

A company is a sum of the decisions taken by its management and employees. Applying critical thinking in work situations will improve your performance and the company's chances of succeeding.

1. Promoting a teamwork approach to problem-solving

Any department within a company is a team and effective collaboration is important to its success. When developing a strategy, logically analyze all the team members' input and offer constructive criticism, while also presenting your own view on the situation.

2. Self-evaluating your contributions to company goals

If your company is trying to reach a target, show critical thinking by evaluating your contribution and discovering ways to improve your performance. For example, you could list all the ways you are contributing and their impact on the overall progress. After doing that, you can think of prioritizing certain current activities, but also adding new ones that you think will help.

3. Practicing self-reflection

Analyzing your own thought process when making certain decisions should help you improve how you process information. This can mean asking yourself why you acted a certain way in a situation or evaluating a decision to find ways you can improve.

4. Making informed decisions

Through time and effort, you can improve your decision-making process by evaluating all available information. It can be tempting to quickly judge a situation and move on to something else, but applying critical thinking will usually result in a more satisfactory outcome. Consider preparing lists of pros and cons, either mentally or on paper, and critically evaluate things from someone else's perspective.

5. Using your time wisely

Deciding how you use your time is another example of critical thinking. Continually evaluating how you spend your time can help you discover tasks and activities that may change how you prioritize your duties. For example, if you're allocating a lot of time to an activity that has a low return, such as administrative tasks or internal reporting, you might consider re-prioritizing your schedule to spend more time on high-return tasks.

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SUBJECT: INTRODUCTION TO LOGIC & REASONING

THANK YOU