

# Using Critical Thinking to Survive in an Increasingly Complex World

By the end of this workshop you will be able to:

1. Define critical thinking and its importance
2. Describe the importance of careful examination of evidence before making decisions or drawing conclusions
3. Identify the elements of critical thinking
4. How to apply effective critical thinking strategies
5. Further improve critical thinking skills

# What is Critical Thinking?

- Disciplined thinking that is clear, rational, open-minded, and informed by evidence.
- Making reasoned judgments that are logical and well thought out.
- A way of thinking in which you don't simply accept all arguments and conclusions you are exposed to but rather have an attitude involving questioning such arguments and conclusions.

## Traditional Way of Thinking

- Routine
- Habit
- Automatic

## Critical Thinking

- Complex
- Adaptable
- Responsive

# EXERCISE


The power of the mind to command itself and regularly engage in self-analysis will increasingly determine the quality of our work and the quality of our lives.



# Core Skills of a Critical Thinker:

**Curiosity** - the desire to learn more information and seek evidence as well as being open to new ideas.

**Skepticism** - having a healthy questioning attitude about new information that you are exposed to and not blindly believing everything everyone tells you.

**Humility** - the ability to admit that your opinions and ideas are wrong when faced with new convincing evidence that states otherwise.

# Why is Critical Thinking Important?

Someone with critical thinking skills can:

- Understand the logical connections between ideas.
- Identify, construct and evaluate arguments.
- Detect inconsistencies and common mistakes in reasoning.
- Solve problems systematically.
- Identify the relevance and importance of ideas.
- Reflect on the justification of one's own beliefs and values.



# Critical Thinking is More Than Problem Solving

Critical thinking seeks to lead to a decision or draw a conclusion.



# Critical Thinking is NOT Negative Thinking

Critical thinking is positive,  
friendly, and constructive.

# Critical Thinking is Not Creative Thinking

Critical thinking is about making a judgment rather than imagining.



# Critical Thinkers Develop Facts with Questions

- When did it occur?
- Where did it occur?
- Who was there?
- Who else may have relevant information?
- How did it happen?
- Who did or said what? In what order?
- Are there notes, documents, phone messages, emails, video, or other needed evidence?
- Is my source reliable?

# Three Elements of Critical Thinking

1. Fallacies
2. Evidence
3. Reasoning

# Fallacies

- A deceptive, misleading, or false notion or belief
- A misleading or unsound argument
- Erroneous reasoning that render arguments logically unsound

# Water is Deadly!

1. Water can be chemically synthesized by burning rocket fuel!
2. Water is one of the primary ingredients in pesticides!
3. Overconsumption can cause excessive sweating, urination and even death!
4. Water is the leading cause of drowning!!
5. 100% of all people exposed to water will die!!!



# Evidence

To verify categorical/declarative statements and conclusions (which could be fallacious), you must look for evidence. Evidence is information used to make and support a conclusion. It is NOT based on:

- *Assumptions*
- *Perception*
- *Emotion*



# Reasoning...

## Inductive or Deductive?

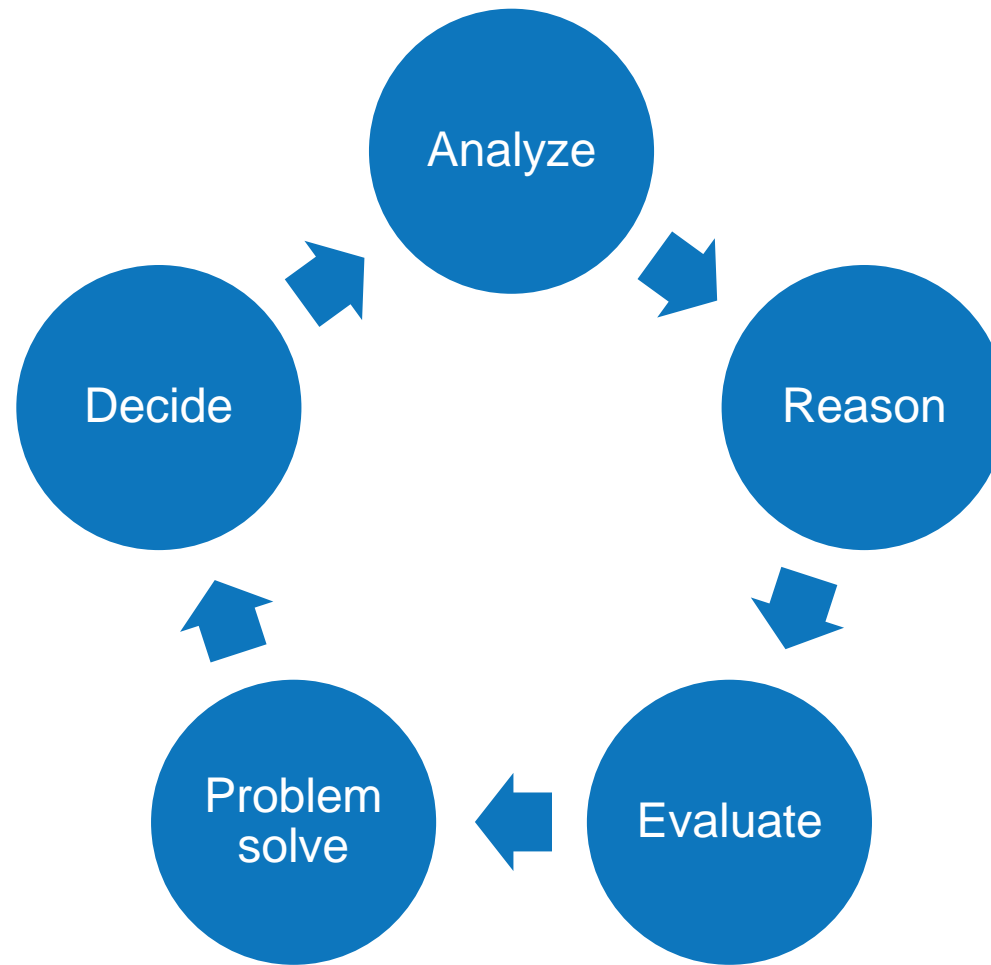
- Inductive Reasoning = bottom-up approach
- Deductive Reasoning = top-down approach

# Critical and Strategic Thinking



Successful professionals think critically, plan strategically, and act decisively.

# Applying Critical Thinking Skills



# EXERCISE – FACT OR OPINION

- My telephone number is difficult to memorize.
- The deepest part of the ocean is 46,813 feet deep.
- Dogs make better pets than turtles.
- Smoking is bad for your health.
- The weather in Tallahassee yesterday was rainy
- The weather in Tallahassee today is pleasant

# Actionable Critical Thinking Skills

1. Interpretation
2. Analysis
3. Inference
4. Evaluation
5. Explanation
6. Self-Regulation

# Interpretation

The ability to understand the information you are presented and being able to communicate the meaning of that information to others.

# Analysis

The ability to connect pieces of information together in order to determine the intended meaning of that information.

# Inference

The ability to understand and recognize what you need in order to determine an accurate conclusion or hypothesis from the information available.



# Evaluation

The ability to determine the credibility of statements or descriptions of a person's experience, judgment or opinion in order to measure the validity of that information.

# Explanation

The ability to restate information while adding clarity and perspective to make it understood by anyone with whom you are sharing it.

# Self-Regulation

Having the awareness of your own thinking abilities and the elements that you are using to find results.

# Other Ways to Improve Your Critical Thinking Skills

1. A Problem a Day
2. Deal With Egocentrism
3. Redefine How You See Things
4. Get In Touch With Your Emotions
5. Analyze Group Influences

# Questions?



# Contact Information

Name: Trish Yahn, Senior Career Consultant  
FL Certified Workforce Development Professional

Email: [Trish.Yahn@careersourcecapitalregion.com](mailto:Trish.Yahn@careersourcecapitalregion.com)

Phone: (850) 617-4603

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/trishyahn>