



DEVELOPING YOUR CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS



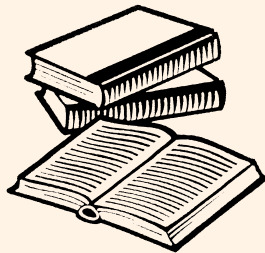
Critical thinking is vital to your education, career, and life. It involves taking in information, analyzing it, looking at it from different perspectives, and making good, logical decisions. This makes you more valuable as an employee, as employers want people who can think outside of the box, communicate effectively, come up with creative ideas and solutions. It also helps you navigate difficult situations and make sound decisions in both your personal and professional life. Below are some ways to develop and grow your critical thinking skills.

1

Identify

Identify the problem or situation and get a clear picture of who or what is being influenced by it, and what factors are causing it. Getting to the root of the issue can help you then identify potential solutions.

- Who is being benefited or harmed by this?
- What are the possible reasons this situation is happening?
- What can be done to change the results of this problem?



3

Draw Inferences

This is the ability to draw conclusions based on the information presented. It is making an educated guess using the facts available.

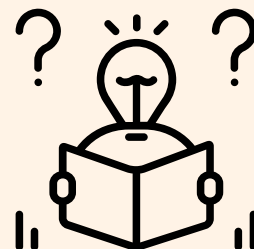
- Have I gathered and read all of the relevant information?
- Have I jumped to conclusions, or have I based my decision on solid evidence?
- Do I need to change my way of thinking about this situation?
Have I considered all of the potential perspectives?

2

Researching

Do your own independent research. Evaluate where the information is coming from and if it is factual, credible, and objective. Be aware of the potential biases present, and of your own biases.

- What are the different perspectives?
- Does the source ignore or leave out information that does not support its beliefs? Does it use specific language intended to sway the audience?
- Where can we get more information?
- What information is relevant?



4

Be Curious and Creative

Don't take everything at face value. Ask open-ended questions and then invest time in answering those questions. Look at things from different angles. Think outside the box and be willing to challenge the traditional ways of solving a problem.

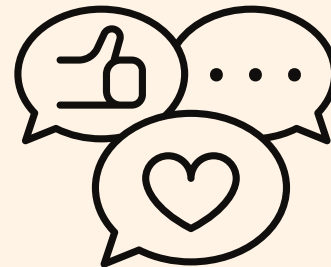
- Why have things been this way for so long?
- How does this benefit or harm us and others?
- What can be done to make a positive change?
- What has already been tried, and what was the outcome?
- What might prevent this idea from working?

**6**

Seek Feedback

Continually seek feedback from others in order to identify areas where you can improve. Embrace a growth mindset and be willing to listen to constructive criticism without taking it personally.

- What are my strengths?
- How can I improve my performance or communication?
- What actions or efforts would you like to see me make in the future?
- What suggestions do you have so I can be the best that I can be?

**5**

Active Listening

This is giving the person who is talking your focused attention and working to gain an understanding of their perspective. This helps you gain valuable insights, which can help you make a well-informed decision.

- What is the main message they are trying to convey?
- What emotions are they expressing?
- Am I interpreting their message correctly?
- What questions do I have about what they are saying?
- What steps can I take to respond to the speaker's message effectively?

Erstad, Will. "6 Critical Thinking Skills You Need to Master Now." *Rasmussen University*, 2018, <https://www.rasmussen.edu/student-experience/college-life/critical-thinking-skills-to-master-now/>

"What are Critical Thinking Skills?" *TradesmanSkills*, n.d. <https://tradesmanskills.com/what-are-critical-thinking-skills/>