

# Critical and Strategic Problem Solving

This course introduces innovative techniques to think about and approach problems and challenges in order to realize hidden value and new opportunities. This training addresses the skills, attitudes, traits and behaviors needed to critically evaluate problems, find new answers, uncover new opportunities and make better decisions.

The tools contained in this training are intended to engage participants in expansive thinking, challenge their current views and deliver applicable techniques that they can employ to develop their critical thinking skills.

## Module 1

### The Essentials Characteristics of Critical Thinking

Consider the common characteristics of critical thinkers and how to apply them to daily tasks and thought processes.

- Discuss the role of curiosity in critical thinking
- Recognize the difference between thinking and knowing
- Identify how assumptions, evidence and conclusions can be used to challenge current processes

## Module 2

### How to Challenge Conventional Thinking

The tools and techniques in this module will start conversations that lead to out-of-the-box thinking.

- Discuss questions and statements that could help to propel an inquisitive discussion with a peer
- Identify the impact of assumptions, evidence and solutions on critical thinking
- Recognize the attributes of conventional thinkers and the critical thinkers

## Module 3

### Differentiating Opinions, Perceptions and Beliefs

The discussions in this module encourage thinking outside of personal bias and challenging opinions, perceptions and beliefs.

- Discuss the role of autonomy in critical thinking
- Identify the characteristics of a critical thinker
- Seek advice from others to adjust your perspective on a challenge

## Module 4

### The Impact of Engagement on Diversity and Inclusion

Gather the research that supports the importance of engagement, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

- Identify the unique qualities of diverse individuals in a group setting
- Discuss the link between inclusion and engagement
- Compile a list of skills and individuals that you can begin to include in your projects at work

## Module 5

### An Insightful Approach to Problem Solving

Follow a three-part process in approaching a problem in order to gain an opportunistic outlook and broaden your perspective.

- Recognize how personal values and attitudes impact problem solving and decision making
- Identify a process for analyzing problems and discovering the underlying opportunities
- Define the role of questioning in problem solving

#### Module 6

### Strategically Assembling and Assessing Solutions

Gain creative techniques to include in your next brainstorming session and learn how to create a visual map to communicate and organize a variety of potential solutions.

- Discuss questions that need to be asked to identify root causes
- Identify possible solutions using brainstorming techniques
- Write solutions down using mind mapping tools

#### Module 7

### Thinking Beyond Today

While openness is the central value of critical thinkers, seeing the big picture is consistent among all strategic thinkers.

- Recognize the skill set of strategic thinkers
- Discuss the importance of developing a big-picture perspective
- Discuss the role of mistakes in strategic thinking

#### Module 8

### Making Strategic Decisions

Strategic thinkers are able to look at possibilities in relation to the organization as a whole and gain the buy-in they need to make informed, supported decisions.

- Recognize your own tendencies for fact-based decision making
- Discuss a method for evaluating and prioritizing solutions to make a decision
- Identify a process for gaining team consensus and making a decision

#### Module 9

### Applying Strategic Thinking Tools

The exercises and discussions in this module will unleash creative ideas for overcoming barriers to innovative breakthroughs.

- Discuss strategies for releasing a flow of original ideas
- Recognize how to overcome barriers to strategic thinking
- Identify exercises for breaking free of thinking ruts