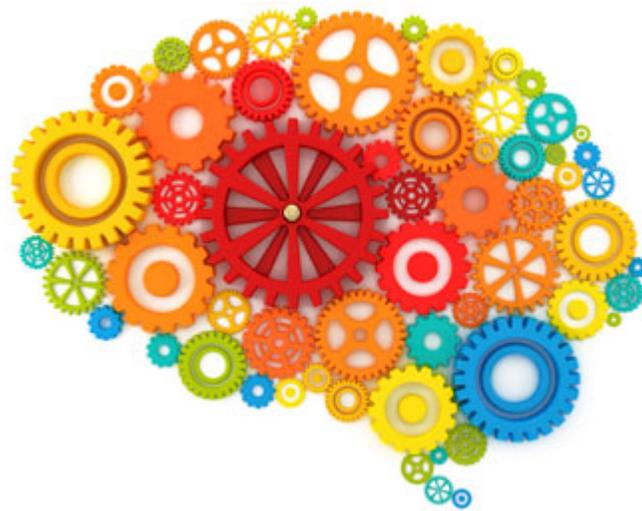


# My Thinking Styles™

## DEVELOPMENT REPORT

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March 30, 2012

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# Become a Better Thinker



Making good decisions, solving problems, and clearly seeing opportunities are all outcomes of effective thinking. Good thinking is empowering—it builds confidence and is part of a healthy, proactive lifestyle. Learning to be a more effective thinker will enable you to truly take charge of your life and make a difference.

This report helps you understand your thinking styles, which are positive habits that contribute to better critical thinking. Knowing your habits helps you become more aware of how you approach, problems and opportunities, evaluate information, make decisions, and take action.

In this report, you will learn how you can leverage your preferred styles, and develop your less preferred ones. You will also learn how to use your thinking styles to build critical thinking skills.

## Understanding Your Thinking Styles

Thinking styles are behaviors—tendencies or positive habits—that have developed over time. Each style contributes, in different ways, to thinking clearly and being proactive.

A few of the positive qualities associated with each style are presented as a quick point of reference. People typically use a few styles frequently and others less so. As you learn about your most and least preferred styles, you'll become more aware of your strengths and how to use them, and how to develop your least preferred style.





Rank	Thinking Style	Snapshot
1	<b>Timely</b>	Timely people can be described as efficient, reliable, and responsive.
2	<b>Analytical</b>	Analytical people can be described as clear-thinking, orderly, and planful.
3	<b>Inquisitive</b>	Inquisitive people can be described as curious, alert, and interested in their surrounding world.
4	<b>Truth Seeking</b>	Truth seekers can be described as independent, tough minded, and skeptical.
5	<b>Open-Minded</b>	Open-minded people can be described as intellectually tolerant and fair minded.
6	<b>Systematic</b>	Systematic people can be described as conceptual, process oriented, and intuitive.
7	<b>Insightful</b>	Insightful people can be described as prudent, humble, and reflective.

**Your thinking styles are listed in order of preference.** The styles at the top of the list are your preferred styles—the ones you use most frequently and comfortably when you are solving problems, making decisions, and thinking through situations. These styles are your strengths. The styles at the bottom of the list are your least preferred styles—the thinking styles that you use less frequently, and probably less comfortably.

# Your Most Preferred Style: Timely



A Timely style means that you can gather information and make decisions without undue delays. You don't typically get caught up in analysis paralysis or procrastination. Instead, you are able to actively search out relevant information and work your way through situations in a timely manner that is neither too cursory nor too slow. You are focused and planful. Timely people can be described as efficient, reliable, and responsive.

## How Your Timely Style Contributes to Effective Thinking

Your results suggest that you

- gather information and make decisions without undue delays;
- actively search out relevant information and work through situations expediently;
- move a decision toward closure and appropriately push for plans;
- effectively handle multiple tasks; and
- have a strong follow-through.

## Personal Reflections

Check the behaviors under How Your Timely Style Contributes to Effective Thinking that you think are most descriptive of you. Where, when, and under what circumstances have you exhibited these behaviors?



### Strengths to Leverage

- Marshall resources to get things done.
- Efficiently work through a problem, opportunity, or project.
- Make a timely decision.
- Take initiative and stick with it.

# Your Second Preferred Style: Analytical



An Analytical style means that you like to anticipate consequences and identify strengths and weaknesses in plans. You are quick to think about if-then scenarios and how they might play out. You like to study situations and think about pros and cons. If something doesn't fit in a situation or an important detail is missing, you are likely to notice. You are comfortable studying situations and concentrating on the pieces and how they logically fit together. You are likely to sort through facts and analyze information that is received, rather than just accepting it at face value. Analytical people can be described as clear-thinking, orderly and planful.



## Strengths to Leverage

- Plan and manage projects and events.
- Assure quality.
- Engineer or re-engineer processes, practices, places.
- Create order from disorder.

## How Your Analytical Style Contributes to Effective Thinking

Your results suggest that you

- clarify confusing situations;
- observe details others might miss;
- evaluate and refine plans, identify missing steps;
- carefully evaluate information and methodically weigh alternatives when making decisions; and
- clarify the problem and sort out cause-and-effect when solving problems.

## Personal Reflections

Check the behaviors under How Your Analytical Style Contributes to Effective Thinking that you think are most descriptive of you. Where, when, and under what circumstances have you exhibited these behaviors?

# Your Least Preferred Style: Insightful



Insightful people are able to step back and reflect so that they can gain perspective on a situation or problem. They are likely to stand firm on tough issues, if the evidence supports the position, and they will follow through despite obstacles. They tend to see beyond the immediate and seek clarity. They are capable of being honest with themselves and set a high standard for themselves. Insightful people can be described as prudent, humble, and reflective.

## Benefits of an Insightful Style

Developing an Insightful thinking style can help you

- take time to reflect and size up the situation;
- maintain perspective, even in difficult situations;
- accurately assess personal strengths and weaknesses;
- follow through despite obstacles; and
- maintain a consistent position on issues.

## Developing an Insightful Style

The key to developing an Insightful style is learning to gain perspective, so that you can get a clearer understanding of the issue, problem or opportunity.

- Practice the skill of "Stop and Think," which involves stepping back and clarifying your goal or purpose before you engage in information gathering or problem solving.
- When faced with a problem or decision, clearly define what you want to accomplish and why. This step will help you remain firm in the face of pressure or conflict.
- Determine what lies within your area of responsibility and what is outside of your control. Be prepared to accept responsibility for all decisions and actions within your sphere of control.
- Deepen your self-awareness. Use self-assessment tools, seek feedback from a mentor or experienced others who will give you honest, constructive feedback.

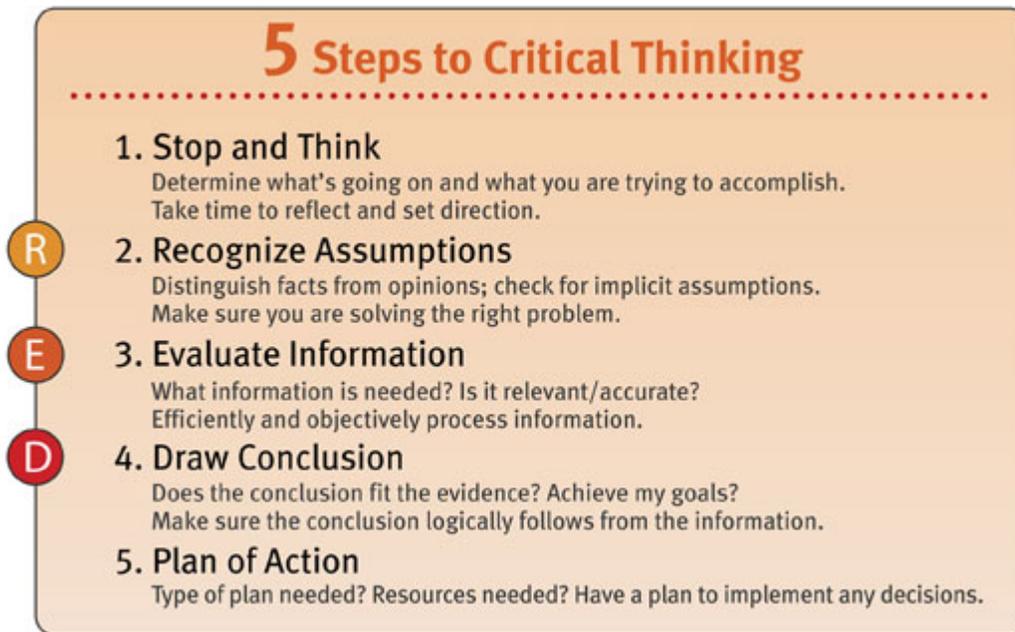
## Personal Reflections

Read the development suggestions above and check the ones that seem most useful to you. Where, when, and under what circumstances could you employ these suggestions?

# Build Your Five Critical Thinking Skills



The following 5-step model shows the key skills for proficient critical thinking. A comprehensive description of the model is available in the book *Now You're Thinking!* To learn more, go to [NowURThinking.com](http://NowURThinking.com).



## How Thinking Styles Support Critical Thinking

Thinking styles—positive habits—help people develop these critical thinking skills. Using your most preferred thinking styles will make it easier to develop some of these skills, while others might be more challenging for you to master, given your least preferred style.

### Your Most Preferred Style: Timely

**Timely:** the tendency to be efficient and initiate action facilitates the ability to develop and execute a *Plan of Action*. A preference for putting resources and plans together and in motion is a common prerequisite for being able to do so skillfully.

### Your Second Preferred Style: Analytical

**Analytical:** the tendency to notice details and seek clarity contributes to the ability to *Recognize Assumptions* and a preference for methodically organizing information contributes to the ability to *Evaluate Information*.

### Your Least Preferred Style: Insightful

**Insightful:** the tendency to step back and reflect is particularly important in developing the ability to *Stop and Think*. Gaining perspective facilitates subsequent steps (*Evaluate Information* and *Draw Conclusions*) by maintaining focus on core goals. Practicing the suggestions for developing an Insightful style will serve as a foundation for developing these skills.

## Next Steps



Critical thinking is all about taking charge of your thinking and owning your life. As you develop your own criteria and standards for analyzing situations, people, problems and opportunities, you are proactively managing your world, and increasing your odds of making a positive difference in it.

As with any personal development program it is important to practice each day to develop your skill. Every day you will face multiple decisions, problems, and opportunities. Pay attention to the styles you use in each situation.

- Is it the best style, given the situation, or are you locked into the same style regardless of the situation? Are you following the five-step model of thinking?
- Which steps come easily for you and which steps are more challenging? Why?

## Learn More

Critical thinking is a specialized skill. Everyone thinks, but not everyone uses a disciplined approach or does it equally well. Below are several applied books that will give you a deeper understanding of how to exercise critical thinking, strategic thinking, and good judgment.

Chartrand, J., Emery, S., Hall, R., Ishikawa, H., & Maketa, J. (2011).  
*Now You're Thinking!* Upper Saddle River, NJ: FT Press.

A primer on critical thinking that uses an inspiring story as a case study to teach a five-step model of effective thinking. Seven thinking styles that facilitate thinking are introduced and an overview of how feelings, dreams, and thinking combine to guide behavior is offered.

Gebelein, S. H., Nelson-Neuhaus, K. J., Skube, C. J., Lee, D. G., Stevens, L. A., Hellervik, L. W., & Davis, B. L. (2004).  
*Successful Manager's Handbook*. Minneapolis, MN: Personnel Decisions International.

A one-volume library filled with practical ideas and suggestions you can use immediately on the job. An excellent resource when you have to get your team up to speed or want to prepare for the next level in your career. The entire first section, Thought Leadership, is devoted to critical thinking.

Gebelein, S. H., Lee, D. G., Nelson-Neuhaus, K. J., & Sloan, E. B. (1999).  
*Successful Executive's Handbook*. Minneapolis, MN: Personnel Decisions International.

An essential tool for executives and aspiring executives that draws from more than 30 years of research and work with executives around the world. It provides business-relevant strategies for improving on-the-job performance and mentoring others. The Thinking and Strategic Management chapters address the critical thinking issues encountered by leaders.

Lombardo, M. & Eichinger, R. (2009).  
*FYI For Your Improvement: A Guide for Development and Coaching*. Minneapolis, MN: Lominger International.

An easy-to-use development tool that features a chapter of actionable tips for each of 67 Leadership Architect® competencies, 19 career stagers and stoppers, and 7 global focus areas. Topics related to critical thinking include strategic skills, making complex decisions, and creating new and different opportunities.