

## Critical Thinking and Creative Problem Solving - 3 Days

### Making Better Decisions

*Course 284 Overview*

- You Will Learn How To**
- Make better decisions through critical thinking and creative problem solving
  - Adapt to different thinking styles in group and team environments
  - Recognize and remove barriers to individual and group creativity to foster an innovative work environment
  - Systematically analyze a target problem
  - Present your ideas clearly and concisely for maximum stakeholder buy-in
  - Transform your creativity into practical business solutions
- Course Benefits** Successful organizations recognize that critical thinking and creative solutions to problems significantly enhance business potential. Today's decision makers must use a variety of thinking styles, methodologies and creative processes. In this course, you develop your skills as a critical thinker and problem solver. You learn to leverage your personal thinking preferences using tools and techniques based on cutting-edge technologies.
- Who Should Attend** Individuals at any level of an organization who want to apply creativity and critical thinking skills to their decision-making process.
- Workshop Course** Through a series of interactive small-group workshops, you gain practical decision-making skills using critical thinking and creative problem-solving techniques. Workshops include:
- Profiling your personal thinking style and the styles of others
  - Identifying personal and team roadblocks to success
  - Analyzing left- and right-brain characteristics
  - Leading through speaking in another style
  - Applying logical methodologies to transform a range of creative options into supportable decisions
  - Preparing a framework to present your decision
  - Developing your personal decision-making toolkit

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#### Course 284 Outline

#### Introduction

- Balancing people, processes and tools for optimal decisions
- Business drivers that demand creative problem solving
- Deciphering critical thinking

#### Leveraging Personal Thinking Styles The Herrmann Brain Dominance

##### Instrument (HBDI)

- MacLean's Triune Brain Theory
- Assessing your preferred approach to thinking
- Leveraging whole-brain thinking
- Identifying left/right-brain dominance

#### Analyzing personal preferences

- Identifying your own natural brain dominance
- Determining nondominant approaches

#### Managing thinking preferences

- Avoiding quadrant bias
- Bridging opposing styles
- Predicting coworker profiles

#### Unleashing Your Creativity

##### The creative environment

- Setting the creative stage
- The power of positive communication
- Identifying elements that stimulate creativity
- Eliminating barriers to innovation

#### Group creative thinking

- Brainstorming options
- Challenging assumptions
- Dispelling personal and corporate myths

#### The iterative mind

- Moving between quadrants
- Valuing nondominant preferences
- Stretching outside your personal style

#### Recording the creative process

- Drawing mind maps
- Chart writing

#### Solving Problems Using Analysis and Prioritization

##### Systematic approaches to problem solving

- Defining criteria

- Focusing on outcomes
- Leveraging left-brain thinkers
- Applying questioning techniques
- Deconstructing problems using stair-step techniques

#### Analyzing the creative process

- Identifying business-critical ideas
- Categorizing, prioritizing and purging

#### Avoiding analysis paralysis

- Overcoming the "It won't work here" mentality
- The Five Monkeys Syndrome or "But we've always done it this way"
- Analyzing for outcomes, not solutions

#### Applying analysis models

- Situation assessment
- Decision analysis
- Problem evaluation

#### Translating Creativity and Analysis into Practical Application

##### Organizational politics

- Recognizing the workplace culture
- Maintaining outcome-focused goals

#### The influence of decision-making styles

- Recognizing your own blind spots
- Self-awareness and self-regulation
- Forming a coalition with style opposites

#### Deploying your decision

- Clearly expressing analysis results
- Ensuring organizational benefit
- Guaranteeing maximum buy-in

#### Putting It All Together

##### Integrating your solution into the business

- Creating a whole-brain presentation
- Strengthening your nondominant position
- Adjusting communication to thinking styles
- Transforming confrontation into communication

#### Continuing your development

- Conducting self-checks
- Being persistent: a key trait of successful creatives
- Mapping thinking skills to your business

#### Your Personal Decision-Making Toolkit

- Your personal thinking style
- Your stakeholders' styles
- Flexing to colleagues' styles
- Committing to your Personal Action Plan
- Checklists for success