

# Critical Thinking Overview

Critical Thinking is the ability to interrogate information (presentations, documentations, etc.) and critically assess if the information is adequately addressing the information needs of the group or topic.

This is something we do all the time when making choices in life and requires us to weigh up information carefully. The act of bringing these skills out more overtly during deliberative processes may help you to think more broadly about the information or topic and become less entrenched in your personal view.

One possible way to do this is to share what critical thinking skills are and to focus on one skill area to start with and then later try other skills until all the essential thinking skills are practised.

These are the key critical thinking skills and some questions that might relate to each. There are many more questions you could ask. These are just to get you started.

## Key Thinking Skills and Questions:



### CLARITY

When a statement is vague or fuzzy we can't tell if it's accurate or relevant.

**We should ask for clarification:**  
**Can you elaborate? Can you give me an example?**



### DEPTH

Statements lack depth when they fail to deal with the complexities of the issue.

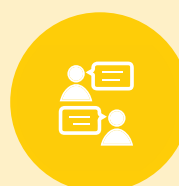
**Ask: Does that address the complexity of this issue/problem?**



### ACCURACY

A statement can be clear but inaccurate.

**Check for accuracy: Is that really true? How can we verify that?**



### BREADTH

An argument that considers only one viewpoint but ignores other perspectives lacks breadth.

**Ask: What others points of view might we be missing?**



### RELEVANCE

A statement can be clear, accurate, precise but irrelevant to the issue.

**Ask: How is that related to this issue?**



### LOGIC

When the combination of thoughts is mutually supporting and makes sense in combination, the thinking is logical.

**Ask: How is it possible to be both X and Y? Isn't there a contradiction there?**

Statements need to pass the above checklist to be defined as good thinking.

Source: <http://digitalsplashmedia.com/2010/01/critical-thinking-explanatory-video/>