

3 Tips to Becoming a Better Critical Thinker

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crit·i·cal think·ing

“Critical thinking is a desire to seek, patience to doubt, fondness to meditate, slowness to assert, readiness to consider, carefulness to dispose and set in order; and hatred for every kind of imposture.”

~ Francis Bacon,
Philosopher (1605)

We Get In Our Own Way



“It’s true because...

- *I believe it.”*
- *I don’t have time to consider other options.”*
- *I have always believed it.”*
- *I want to believe it.”*
- *it is in my selfish interest to believe it.”*
- *it is the only option.”*
- *the other options are stupid.”*
- *we believe it.”*

A Preview...

Control What You Can
Be Proactive
Think Differently



Tip #1: Control What You Can

- Own it.
- Create a plan.
- Get after it.



Aspire to Be A Thinker

Critical Thinkers do THIS

- Acknowledge what they don't know
- See problems as exciting challenges
- Strive to understand
- Use evidence
- Interested in other views & ideas
- Recognize extreme views are seldom correct

UN-Critical Thinkers do THAT

- Pretend they know more than they do
- Controversial issues are threats to ego
- Impatient with complexity
- Judge on first impressions
- Preoccupied with self
- Ignore the need for balance



Ask (open ended) questions.

Tip #2: Be Proactive (So You Don't Have to Be Reactive!)

The Struggle Between
Urgent and Important



I M P O R T A N T	U R G E N T	
	Very	Not
	Very	
	Not	

From The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey



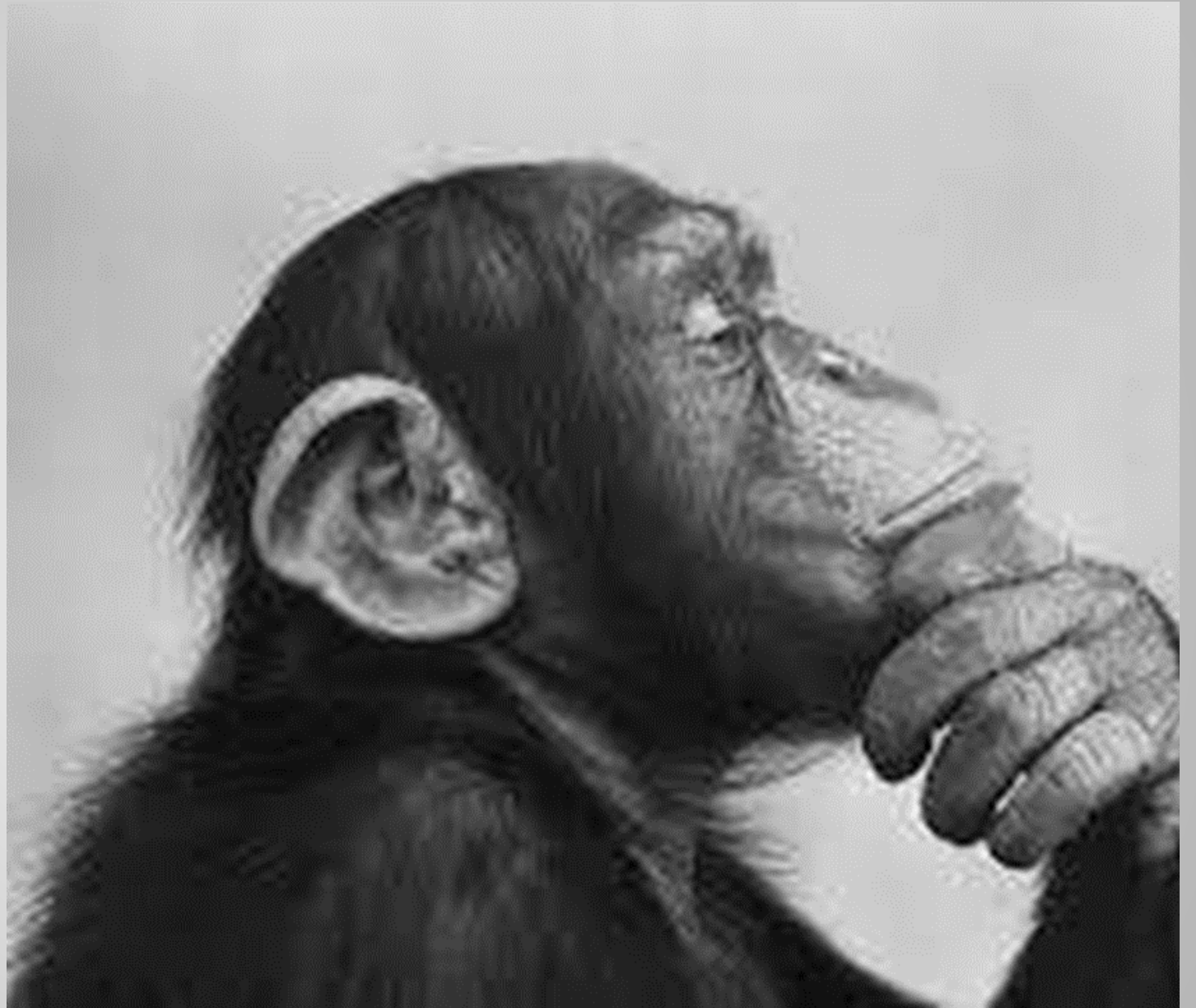
How Can It Be **That** Difficult?

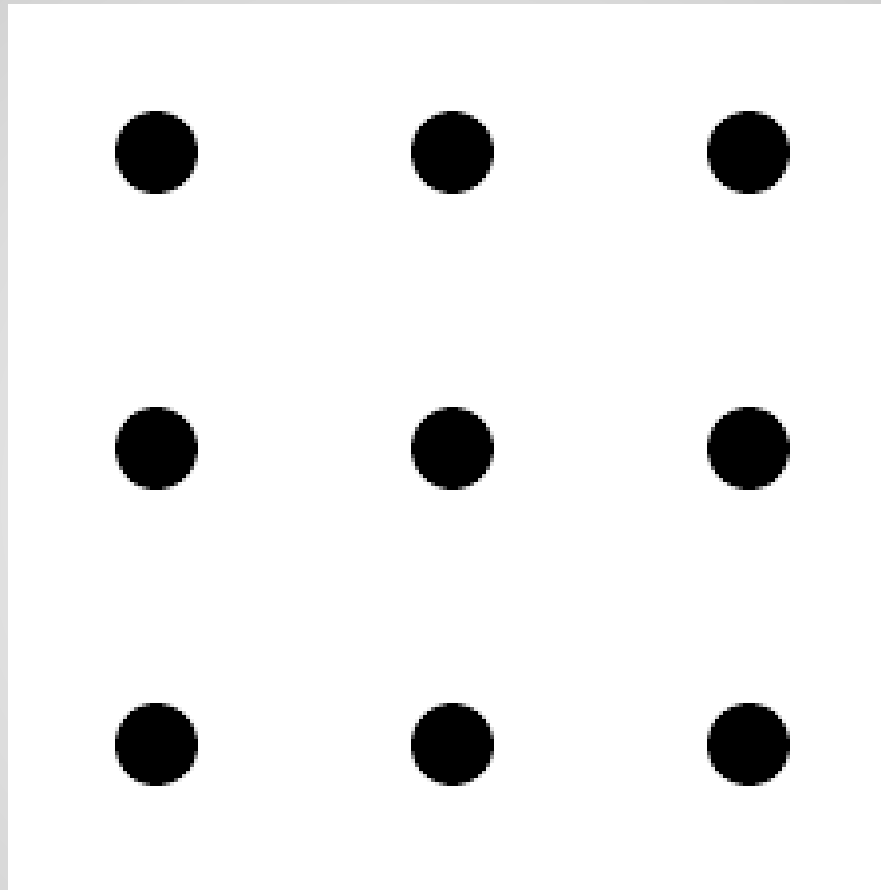


Tip #3: Think Differently

What If???

Bring on the Brainstorm
Hats & Viewpoints





When You Get An Assignment or Project...



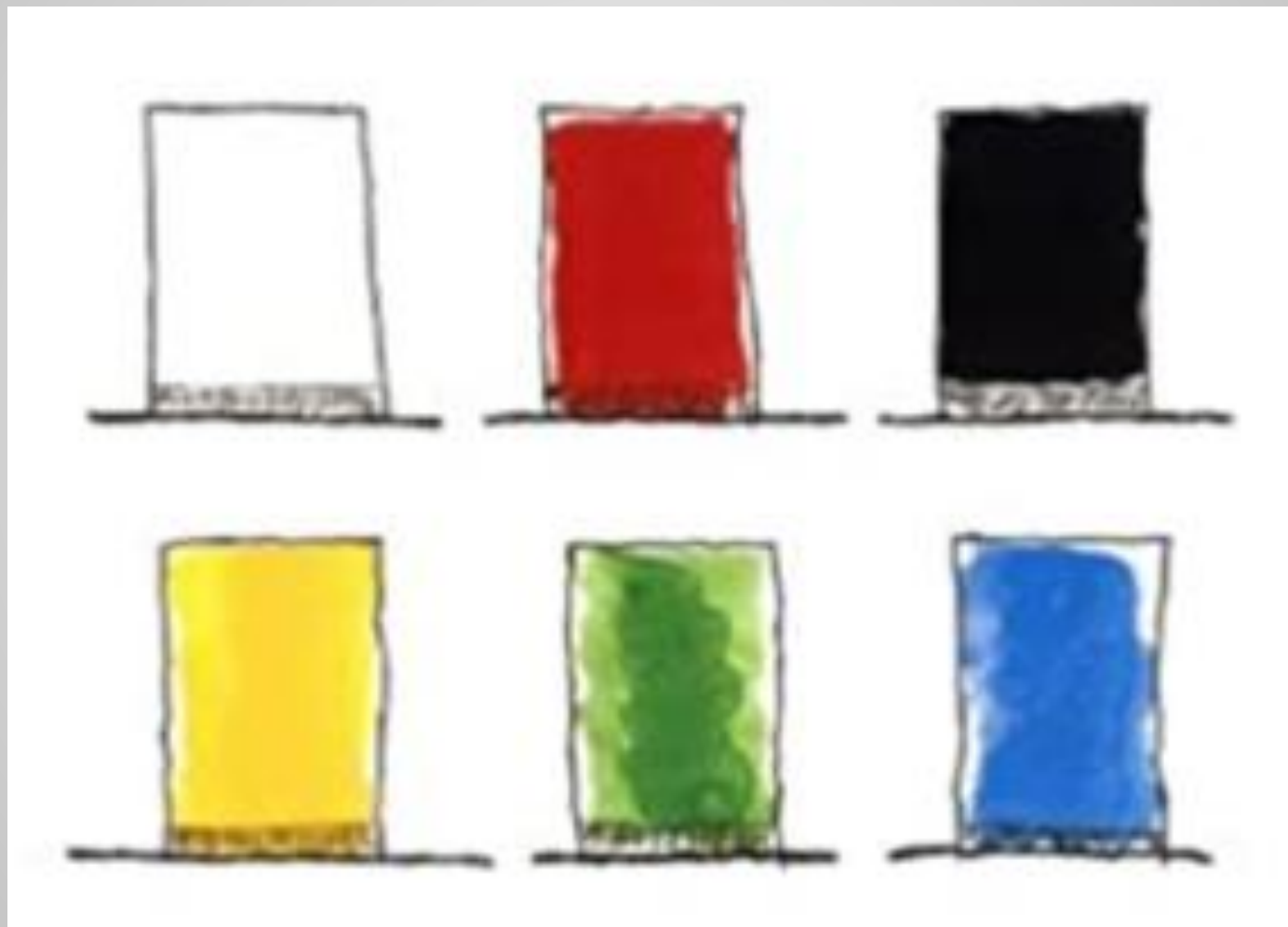
- Anything missing?
- How do you handle that?
- How can you be proactive?

Tool: Six Thinking Hats

by Edward De Bono



Focus > Deep Dive > Move On





Critical Thinking

1-day Intro

1.5-day Hybrid

2-day Deep Dive

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“Better to go slowly in the RIGHT direction rather than quickly in the WRONG direction.”

Critical vs. Uncritical Thinkers

What Critical Thinkers do	What UN-Critical Thinkers do
Honest with self, acknowledge what they don't know, recognize their limitations	Pretend they know more than they do, ignore their limitations, and assume their views are error-free
Regard problems and controversial issues as exciting challenges	Regard problems and controversial issues as nuisances or threats to their ego
Strive to understand, keep curiosity alive, remain patient with complexity, and ready to invest time to overcome confusion	Impatient with complexity and would rather remain confused than make the effort to understand
Base judgments on evidence rather than personal preferences, deferring judgment when evidence is insufficient, and revise judgment when new evidence reveals error	Base judgments on first impressions and gut reactions, unconcerned about amount or quality of evidence and cling steadfast to their views
Interested in other people's ideas and willing to read and listen attentively, even when they disagree with the other person	Preoccupied with themselves and their own opinion and tend to think, "How can I refute this?"
Recognize that extreme views are seldom correct, so they practice fairmindedness, and seek a balanced view	Ignore the need for balance and give preference to views that support their established views