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COURSE BROCHURE

Critical Thinking Training Course for Leaders and Professionals

13 – 17 September 2027
Vienna

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Ref: 1311_49217 **Date:** 13 – 17 September 2027 **Location:** Vienna **Fees:** 5900 GBP

Critical Thinking is a 1-week training course for leaders, analysts and professionals who make judgement calls on incomplete information, and who leave with a Reasoned Recommendation Brief that sets out a claim, its evidence, the alternatives tested and the residual doubts. Organisations are flooded with dashboards, opinions and generated text, so the ability to separate sound reasoning from persuasive noise now shapes the quality of every decision. Jupiter Prime Training runs this course on Critical Thinking.

Why Critical Thinking Matters Now

Abundant data, automated summaries and fast-moving social commentary give decision makers more inputs than ever, yet much of it is partial, selectively framed or simply wrong. Boards and regulators ask leaders to show how a conclusion was reached, not only what it is, and teams expect reasons rather than instructions. Organisations whose people question assumptions and weigh evidence avoid costly misjudgements and defend their choices with confidence; those that act on first impressions repeat errors and lose credibility. The course draws on the Paul-Elder framework of elements and standards of reasoning, the Toulmin model of argument, dual-process theory of fast and slow thinking, and the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses ACH.

Who Gains Most from Critical Thinking

- Leaders who approve proposals and must probe the reasoning behind them
- Analysts who turn data and reports into conclusions for decision makers
- Advisers who brief executives on options and their consequences
- Project and programme sponsors who weigh competing business cases
- Specialists who investigate incidents, complaints or performance problems

Strategy, finance, audit and policy units gain most when several colleagues attend together and adopt a shared standard for how recommendations are argued and challenged.

Critical Thinking Capabilities

Participants dissect real arguments, reports and proposals drawn from public administration and energy companies, and practise reasoning aloud under questioning.

- Assess the structure of an argument by separating claim, grounds, warrant and qualifiers — for leaders approving recommendations
- Test evidence for relevance, sufficiency and source reliability — for analysts preparing briefings
- Weigh competing explanations using the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses — for investigators and reviewers
- Apply debiasing techniques such as pre-mortems and reference-class forecasting — for committees making high-stakes choices
- Build an assumption register that exposes what a plan takes for granted — for sponsors approving investments
- Communicate a reasoned recommendation that states confidence and residual doubt — for executives deciding under uncertainty

Key Critical Thinking Terms

- Argument — a claim supported by reasons and evidence, intended to persuade a rational audience that the claim is justified.
- Warrant — the often unstated principle that links the evidence offered to the conclusion drawn from it.
- Cognitive bias — a systematic pattern of error in judgement, such as confirmation or anchoring, that distorts how information is weighed.
- Logical fallacy — a flaw in reasoning, such as a false dilemma or appeal to authority, that makes an argument invalid.
- Pre-mortem — a technique where a group imagines a decision has failed and works backwards to identify likely causes.
- Confidence level — an explicit statement of how strongly the evidence supports a conclusion, from low to high.

Critical Thinking Day by Day

Day 1: Reasoning in a Noisy Information Environment

- Paul-Elder Elements of Reasoning — Mapping Purpose, Question, Assumptions and Implications
- Intellectual Standards Checklist — Judging Clarity, Accuracy, Relevance and Depth
- Fast and Slow Thinking — Recognising When Intuition Needs Checking
- Information Overload Triage — Deciding Which Inputs Deserve Scrutiny
- Personal Reasoning Profile — Identifying Habitual Shortcuts and Blind Spots

Day 2: Dissecting Arguments

- Toulmin Argument Model — Separating Claim, Grounds, Warrant and Rebuttal
- Argument Mapping — Visualising Reasons and Objections Behind a Proposal
- Deductive and Inductive Reasoning — Choosing the Right Test of Validity
- Common Logical Fallacies — Spotting False Dilemmas, Strawmen and Circular Logic
- Socratic Questioning — Probing Proposals Without Creating Defensiveness

Day 3: Evaluating Evidence and Sources

- Evidence Hierarchy — Ranking Anecdote, Survey, Experiment and Systematic Review
- Source Reliability Grading — Assessing Origin, Motive and Track Record
- Correlation and Causation Tests — Avoiding Misleading Statistical Conclusions
- Chart and Dashboard Scrutiny — Detecting Distorted Scales and Selective Framing
- Generated Content Verification — Checking Automated Summaries Against Primary Data

Day 4: Biases, Assumptions and Alternatives

- Cognitive Bias Catalogue — Confirmation, Anchoring, Availability and Sunk Cost
- Assumption Register — Exposing and Rating What a Plan Takes for Granted
- Analysis of Competing Hypotheses — Testing Explanations Against the Evidence
- Pre-Mortem and Red Team Review — Stress-Testing Preferred Options
- Reference-Class Forecasting — Correcting Optimism With Outside Views

Day 5: Practising the Reasoned Recommendation Brief

- Case Argument Map — Applying Toulmin to a Live Business Proposal
- Evidence Audit — Grading Sources Behind the Recommendation
- Red Team Challenge Session — Defending Reasoning Under Peer Questioning
- Confidence and Uncertainty Statement — Expressing How Strongly Evidence Supports the Claim
- Reasoned Recommendation Brief — Presenting Claim, Evidence, Alternatives and Residual Doubt

Applying Critical Thinking After the Course

- Run a pre-mortem on the next significant team decision before it is approved and record the risks identified.
- Rewrite one upcoming recommendation in the brief format with an argument map and an explicit confidence level.

Critical Thinking Questions FAQ

What is critical thinking, and why does it matter now?

Critical thinking is the disciplined analysis of arguments, evidence and assumptions before reaching a judgement. It matters now because leaders face more data, opinions and automated content than ever, and decisions built on unexamined reasoning are increasingly costly and visible.

Which roles gain most from critical thinking training?

Leaders who approve proposals, analysts who build conclusions from data, and advisers who brief executives gain most. Anyone who must explain how a judgement was reached, not only what it is, benefits from structured reasoning methods.

How does critical thinking training differ from a creative problem-solving course?

It focuses on evaluating reasoning: testing arguments, evidence and assumptions for soundness. A creative problem-solving course concentrates on generating new ideas and options, whereas this course examines whether the ideas on the table are well founded.

What do you bring back from critical thinking training?

You bring back a recommendation brief for a real decision, showing its argument map, graded evidence, alternatives considered and a clear confidence statement, plus a personal checklist of the biases you are most prone to.

Critical Thinking: The Way Forward

The Reasoned Recommendation Brief sets out a claim, its graded evidence, the alternatives tested and the doubts that remain. Its first use is the next proposal a participant must defend, and decision makers use it to see how a conclusion was reached. After several decisions, the assumption register within it is worth revisiting to see which beliefs proved accurate.