

Cutting the Puppet Master's Strings: Part 4-Critical Thinking



MORGAN WORKS

THRIVE IN THE AGE OF KNOWLEDGE

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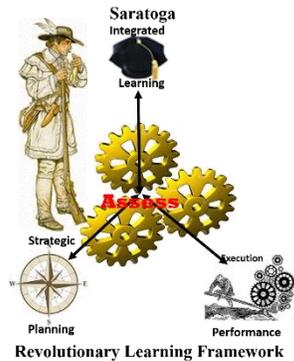
Morgan Works helps organizations transform into Revolutionary Learning Organizations to thrive in the rapidly changing and chaotic environment.

The Age of Knowledge is a dynamic and disruptive environment in which organizations must continually adapt themselves to meet challenges and opportunities or face irrelevance or even extinction. It is marked by the rapid emergence of disruptive technologies, the ease of use of these technologies and users that can rapidly and effectively apply information to achieve their own ends and purposes.

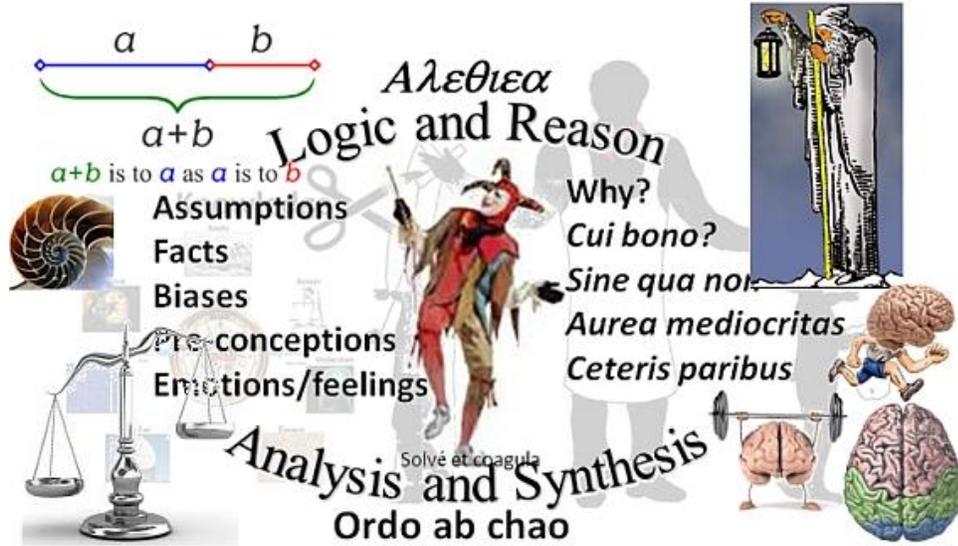
***Key Points:** Critical thinking is the inoculation for the viral meme. Critical thinking helps a person to think through issues and ask the right questions before the meme takes root. Legend has it that the Court Jester was often the only one who could tell the king the truth at a medieval court. The Jester used humor to point out key issues and perhaps solutions and to peel away the layers of complexity and obscurity to get to the real truth within the layers.*

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Morgan Works provides a suite of integrated planning and execution tools through the Saratoga Revolutionary Learning Organization Framework™.



Saratoga's modules may be implanted separately or as part of a cohesive framework to integrate key aspects of planning and execution in a Revolutionary Learning Environment. It is based on knowledge enablement to help people and organizations to understand their environment and to thrive in a chaotic and rapidly changing world. **Thrive in the Age of Knowledge**



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The Jester is framed between the phrases “Ordo ab chao” and “Alētheia”.

“Ordo ab chao” is a Latin phrase meaning “order out of chaos”. “Alētheia” is a Greek word meaning “truth”, but also literally “not forget”. Our task in critical thinking is to bring the truth out of the chaos. Our primary tools are logic and reason to employ analysis and synthesis. I am not sure how time schools spend teaching logic and reason any more. When I was a Plebe at West Point, we did not take English. Rather we took Logic and Composition. The course was as much about understanding and learning how to employ logic as it was about writing. Likewise, our mandatory Philosophy class taught elements of logic and reason. These were classes all my classmates took, regardless of whether we concentrated in Engineering, Physics, or Psychology. West Point understood that a leader who makes key decisions must understand logic and reason and be able to employ



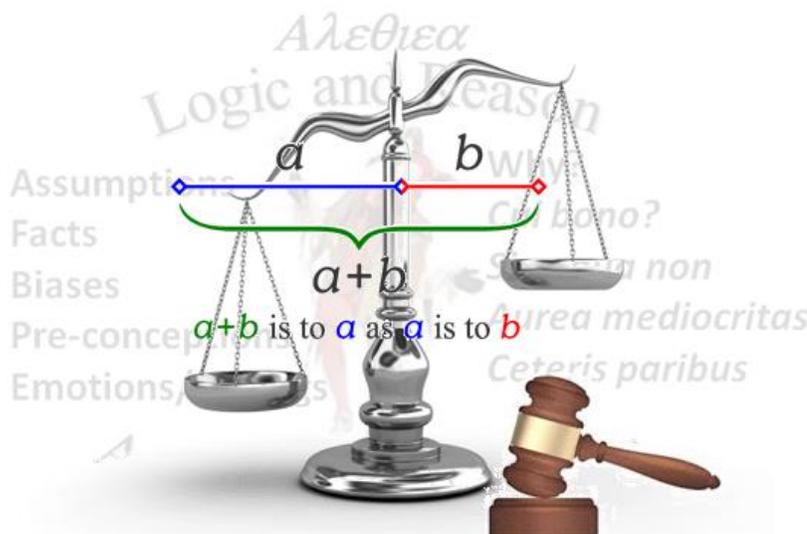
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them effectively. Today's leaders, who may not have had the benefits of a classical education that included logic and reason must find ways to build these skills on their own. Fortunately, there are many sites on the Internet that provide tutorials on logic, but the emerging leader must take the personal time to find and use them.

The quest for truth requires judgment based on facts, and an understanding of assumptions, underlying biases, pre-conceptions, and emotions. It often a matter of choosing the optimal point, or "golden" mean between two extremes. Finding the golden mean also requires judgment to understand the poles and to find root issues that can be hidden in a labyrinth of competing ideas and data.

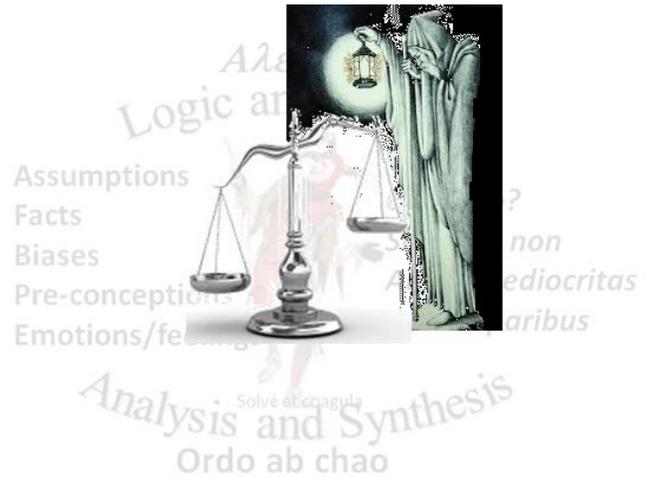
Judgment and Justice are related but not the same. Judgment uses wisdom and understanding to make a decision about a situation. The decision does not

necessarily seek to keep the scales of justice in balance. Rather, it seeks a practical equilibrium, which, like the Golden Mean, may imply a heavier weighting of some issues, facts, and concerns over others. Leaders exercise judgment to weigh the merits of each part of a problem and the environment as part of critical thinking to make effective decisions and to create new equilibriums.

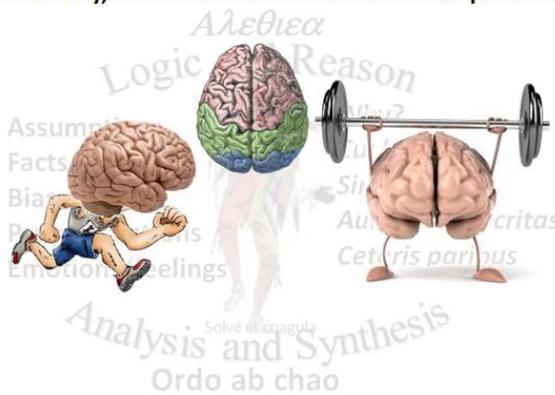


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The wisdom associated with judgment comes from experience and study. This wisdom is manifested in both the conscious and subconscious mind. Unfortunately, sometimes these two differ. For example, during a brigade level Warfighter exercise, we received a report about enemy forces. My gut told me the report was wrong, the enemy could not be where it was reported. My conscious mind told me the report was correct, largely given the simulation. My gut was correct. These gut feelings come from the subconscious mind. The subconscious mind takes in far more data than the conscious mind and processes it, leaving the conscious mind to process what it sees as more immediate concerns. I've learned over time the gut feeling is usually correct, provided it has the depth of experience required to understand and piece together the data properly. As the sign over the Oracle at Delphi said, "Gnothi Seathon"—"Know Thyself". Understand when your subconscious mind has enough data and experience to send accurate gut feelings to make an effective judgment and when the conscious mind needs to overrule it because conditions are different than when the subconscious mind learned its lessons.



Like the body, the mind must be trained in multiple dimensions



Effective leaders understand they must provide time and training to develop critical thinking. They must also create a culture that embraces critical thinking and an environment in which people can constructive debate key issues that will impact the organization.

Training needs to be informal and formal. Examples of informal training are review sessions after key decisions are made and/or actions are taken. The leader opens a dialog with all involved and allows them to freely discuss what went right and what went wrong and how they can sustain and improve. The leader or facilitator must ask open ended questions that allow people to think through the issues and find root causes. Formal training can be classroom training on critical thinking skills and simulations designed to bring people out of their comfort zones

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and have them make critical decisions within the simulation. These can be group simulations or individual games. The effective leader uses both formal and informal and works to develop both the conscious and subconscious critical thinking skills.

For reference, some of my past articles include:

[The Data Puppet Masters and the Muddling of Knowledge](#)

[Cutting the Puppet Master Strings Part 1 Knowledge Overview](#)

[Cutting the Puppet Master Strings Part 2 Educational Silos and Stovepipes](#)

[Cutting the Puppet Master Strings Part 3 Meme Propagation](#)

[Longitudinal Learning: Any Road or the Right Road](#)

[Adaptive Learning Organizations and the Water Wheel of Knowledge](#)

[Thriving in the Age of Knowledge](#)

[Cognitive Dominance and Training](#)

[Cognitive Dominance: Open the Doors of Perception](#)

[Big Data for Leaders: Integration and Exploitation](#)

[Big Data: Ontology as the Lexicon of Strategy](#)

[Big Data for Leaders: Strategic Linkage](#)

[Disingenuous Statistics and Models: The Viper That Strangles and Poisons and How to Kill It](#)