

Critical thinking: strategies in decision making



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According to the Critical Thinking Company, “ Critical thinking is the identification and evaluation of evidence to guide decision making. A critical thinker uses broad in-depth analysis of evidence to make decisions and communicate his/her beliefs clearly and accurately” (Critical thinking definition. Para 1). The best thinkers are those who go through a trained thought pattern of choosing a solution, the effect of the choice in the workplace, and the consequences of making a final decision.

My father who is a critical thinker has a mechanical and electrical background and taught me from a young age and through adulthood to, “ Go slow to go fast. ” The intensive work of learning critical thinking, requires skills of the mind that through perseverance and commitment will evolve with practice. I was always taught to think one step ahead and visualize the solution. I was also mentally trained that starting at the bottom and working up to a position, required knowledge and experience, both that require critical thinking.

Critical thinking involves asking questions to understand the issue at hand when there is no immediate understanding or solution. Critical thinkers do not allow other people to define their level of intelligence (Paul & Elder, 2006). In the workplace critical thinking applies significantly to emergency situations. Starbucks I began a position with Starbucks in January 2009 as a barista. This starting position required me to train during the evening shift that began at 4: 00 p. m. and ended at 11: 30 p. m. Generally, when applying for Starbucks, the company provides an availability form that an employee fills out.

The store has numerous shifts throughout the hours of operation. After my training was complete, I provided a morning availability but lack of experience in high volume coffee sales denied me the morning shift. After working for Starbucks for six months, I was promoted to a shift supervisor position. Two weeks prior to my training as a shift supervisor, a man in plain clothing approached the front cash register and produced a gun. I turned from the position in the drive thru to realize the store was being robbed. Our front cashier could not open the drawer and was panicking.

The shift supervisor was clear across the store and struggled to get the cash drawer open in a reasonable amount of time for the situation. He struggled to produce a key to unlock the register and the man grew impatient. I froze in the position I was in, taking a mental note of the man's description. This moment felt like a lifetime. The robber was in and out within two minutes. This happened during business hours while there were customers in the store. I instinctively picked up the phone and dialed 911 to report the incident.

I directed the shift supervisor to lock the doors to keep anyone from leaving or entering while the police were in route. I then called the store manager to report our store was robbed at gun point. Luckily, no one was hurt during the robbery. Fortunately, Starbucks has a camera system that recorded the incident. After the police arrived, they began to take statements from all employees on duty. The shift supervisor and the other employee were first to give descriptions of the man and the account of what took place. I gave mine last.

While frozen in place during the robbery, I was able to recount my description to the officer of what the man was wearing down to the logo on his hat. After reviewing the footage my description was the only one which matched. The other employees were in shock and couldn't remember details. Critical thinking involves pressure in certain situations. No formal training on critical thinking in times of emergency caused the supervisor and my coworker to describe the confrontation differently. The thief was never apprehended. Critical thinking Skills " Critical thinking works.

It is practical. It will enable you to be more successful, to save time and energy, and to experience more positive and fulfilling emotions. It is in your interest to become a better critic of your own thinking: as a student, scholar, parent, consumer, and citizen, and in other roles as well" (Paul & Elder, 2006 p. xxxvii). There are certain standards, elements, and intellectual traits that I used while making critical decisions during the armed robbery at Starbucks. Critical thinkers routinely apply the intellectual standards to the elements of reasoning in order to develop intellectual traits (Paul & Elder 2006, p. 54). The individual standards I used were logic and accuracy. I logically and instinctually picked up the phone immediately to call the police department. My accurate description of the suspect helped the police in their investigation. I then applied the element of the purpose which was to lock the doors to protect the customers and the employees. My intellectual trait of confidence helped with the reason for my actions during the incident.

Conclusion

Critical thinking is a skill that is learned over time and with education both internally and externally. Applying the skilled thought pattern that critical thinkers use can make the difference between success and failure of projects in the workplace. Critical thinking skills can also help in a situation that is life threatening especially during an armed robbery. I will never forget the intellectual thought of “ Go slow to go fast,” that has become a trait during times of critical thinking in and outside the workplace.