

Leveraging Limited Resources for Lasting Change

Putting Systems Thinking to Work

This workshop provides the fundamentals of systems thinking for managers and leaders who want to improve their ability to lead meaningful change and organizational improvement. It teaches the principles of systems thinking as a process of learnable tools and approaches, enabling leaders to bring together seemingly disparate events, understand cause and effect relationships, and see beyond the surface to patterns and underlying structures.

Systems thinking helps leaders transform their perspectives, refocusing daily management efforts into meaningful and long-lasting continuous improvements.

Learning Objectives

- Adopt a big-picture perspective of cause and effect relationships as it applies to change, initiatives, and organizational improvement
- Describe complex systems and structures with causal loop diagrams
- Facilitate the collaborative discussion and understanding of problems, events, patterns, and structures
- Recognize common archetypes, interdependencies, and feedback loops
- Identify key interactive relationships
- List the four change archetypes and describe their relative difficulty, risk, and resource requirements
- Explain how systems thinking applies in change initiatives
- List common change management mistakes to avoid
- Lead a collaborative team discussion to identify and model problems and possible improvement initiatives

Formats

One- to two-day seminar formats tailored to organizational objectives

Break-out session format of 60-90 minutes

Multi-session web delivery available

For related onsite training in this content area see ***Leading Meaningful Change*** and ***Leading Radical (and not so radical) Change***

Course Content

WHY SYSTEMS THINKING?

A Case for Systems Thinking
Linking Systems and Performance
Why Improvement Can Be So Difficult
Overcoming Obstacles to Improvement
Systems Thinking as a Leadership Skill
Leading Collaborative Initiatives

SYSTEM DYNAMICS

Systems Thinking Perspective
Understanding Events, Patterns, and Structures
Reinforcing and Balancing Processes
Using System Archetypes
Change Initiative Life-Cycle

APPLIED SYSTEMS THINKING

Performance Improvement Applications
Identifying Opportunities
Defining the Problem
Targeting High-Leverage Interventions
Anticipating Pitfalls and Roadblocks
Evaluating Possible Consequences and Unintended Outcomes
Implementation Best Practices

USEFUL TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Visualizing and Verbalizing Systems
Charting Variables with Graphs, Diagrams, and Archetypes
Process Improvement Tools
Root Cause; Five Whys; and Force Field Analysis
Collaboration and Facilitation Tools

USING SYSTEMS THINKING IN CHANGE INITIATIVES

Step 1: State the Issue
Step 2: Tell the Story
Step 3: Identify Key Variables
Step 4: Create a Focusing Question
Step 5: Visualize the Problem
Step 6: Use Archetype Thinking
Step 7: Determine the Intervention
Step 8: Implementation
Step 9: Evaluation

