

MASTERCLASS IN LEADERSHIP THINKING SKILLS



GENTEX[®]
TRAINING CENTER



Introduction

Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills Training Course develops the quality of thinking that senior leadership depends on. Leaders are paid for judgment: how they frame problems, weigh evidence, anticipate consequences, and decide when information is incomplete. Most leadership development focuses on behaviour and overlooks the underlying thinking. This masterclass corrects that imbalance. It covers systems thinking, critical reasoning, strategic and creative thinking, and decision quality. As a result, participants learn to reason more clearly, resist bias, and explain their conclusions convincingly. Furthermore, the course covers mental models, scenario thinking, and ethical judgment.

Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills Course Objectives

- Distinguish analytical, critical, systems, strategic, and creative thinking.
- Apply systems thinking with causal loop diagrams and the iceberg model.
- Test arguments with logic, evidence, and fallacy identification.
- Use the MECE principle and issue trees for problem structuring.
- Apply the Cynefin framework to match thinking approach to context.
- Recognise cognitive bias and apply structured debiasing techniques.
- Apply mental models like second-order thinking and inversion.
- Build scenarios and stress-test strategic assumptions.
- Apply decision matrices and sensitivity analysis to choices.
- Communicate reasoning with the Pyramid Principle and clear logic.

Course Methodology

- Facilitated sessions built around complex leadership dilemmas.

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- Thinking workshops using issue trees and causal loop diagrams.
- Structured debate and argument analysis exercises.
- Group exercises in scenario building and assumption testing.
- Case studies of good and flawed executive reasoning.
- Simulation of a high-stakes leadership decision round.
- Peer review, reflection, and a personal thinking development plan.

Who Should Take This Course

- Senior managers and department heads.
- Strategy and corporate planning professionals.
- Executives making complex organisational decisions.
- Program and transformation directors.
- Governance, risk, and audit professionals.
- Consultants advising on strategy and decisions.
- High-potential leaders preparing for senior roles.

Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills Course Outlines

Day 1: Foundations of Leadership Thinking

- Defining thinking skills and why they matter to leaders.
- Types of thinking: analytical, critical, systems, strategic, creative.
- Mental models and how they shape judgement.
- Cognitive bias: confirmation, anchoring, availability, and framing.
- The difference between opinion, evidence, and inference.



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- Common reasoning failures in leadership.
- Workshop: thinking profile self-assessment.

Day 2: Systems and Critical Thinking

- Systems thinking principles and the iceberg model.
- Causal loop diagrams: reinforcing and balancing loops.
- Stocks, flows, and system delays.
- Leverage points and unintended consequences.
- Critical reasoning: claims, premises, and conclusions.
- Logical fallacies and rhetorical manipulation.
- Workshop: mapping a system with causal loops.

Day 3: Problem Structuring and Analysis

- Framing the question before solving it.
- Issue trees and the MECE principle.
- Root cause analysis with the 5 Whys and fishbone diagrams.
- The Cynefin framework: matching approach to context.
- Hypothesis-driven analysis and evidence testing.
- Distinguishing symptoms from underlying causes.
- Workshop: structuring a complex leadership problem.

Day 4: Strategic and Creative Thinking

- Second-order thinking and long-term consequences.
- Inversion: working backwards from failure.
- Scenario planning for uncertainty.



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- First-principles thinking and assumption breaking.
- Divergent and convergent thinking with SCAMPER.
- Six Thinking Hats for balanced evaluation.
- Workshop: scenario building for a strategic question.

Day 5: Decision Quality and Communicating Reasoning

- Decision matrices and weighted scoring.
- Sensitivity analysis and reversibility.
- Pre-mortem analysis and red team review.
- Ethics and values in leadership judgement.
- The Pyramid Principle for explaining reasoning.
- Creating a personal thinking development plan.
- Capstone: presenting a reasoned leadership recommendation.

Conclusion

By successfully completing Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills Training Course, participants will have acquired the knowledge to think systemically, reason critically, structure complex problems, anticipate consequences, generate and evaluate options, avoid common cognitive traps, and explain their reasoning clearly to others. They will also understand how mental models and bias shape leadership judgment. Gentex Training Center delivers this program through applied workshops and expert facilitation, helping leaders think more clearly under pressure.





FAQs for the Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills course

Q1 What is the "Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills" course about?

It is a training program that develops the quality of thinking behind leadership decisions. It covers systems and critical thinking, problem structuring, strategic and creative thinking, decision quality, and communicating reasoning.

Q2 What are the key benefits of the "Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills" course?

Participants gain sharper judgement, fewer reasoning errors, and clearer explanations of their decisions. Organizations benefit from better-quality decisions, fewer unintended consequences, faster problem resolution, and leaders who can defend their reasoning under challenge.

Q3 What skills will I gain from the "Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills" course?

Participants build systems thinking and causal mapping, critical reasoning and fallacy detection, problem structuring and analytic framing, and strategic, creative, and decision-quality thinking.



Q4 What tools, methods, or standards are covered in the "Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills" course?

The course covers the iceberg model, causal loop diagrams, stocks and flows, leverage point analysis, issue trees and the MECE principle, the 5 Whys, fishbone diagrams, the Cynefin framework, second-order thinking and inversion, first-principles thinking, SCAMPER, Six Thinking Hats, scenario planning, decision matrices, sensitivity analysis, pre-mortem and red team review, and the Pyramid Principle.

Q5 How is the "Masterclass in Leadership Thinking Skills" course applied in real-world practice?

Learners apply it by framing problems with issue trees before proposing solutions, mapping systems to find leverage points, testing assumptions with evidence, running pre-mortems on major decisions, and presenting conclusions with a clear logical structure.