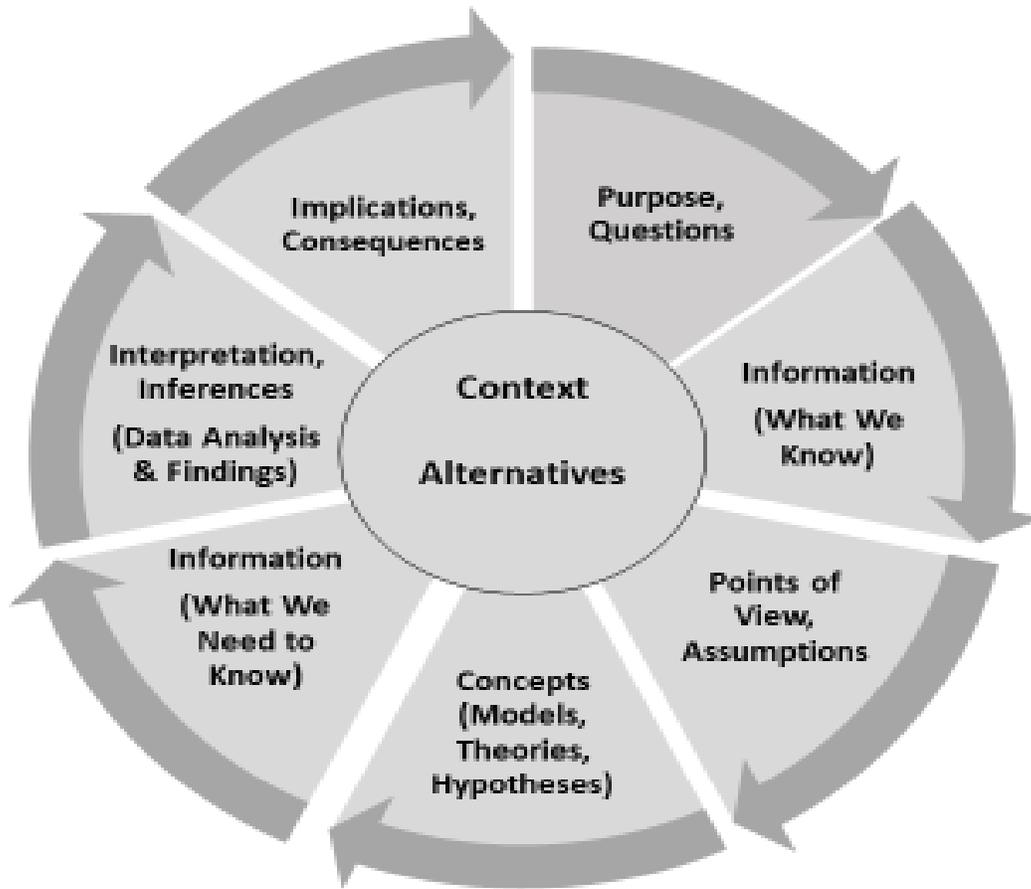# Critical Thinking Worksheet

This is a worksheet for use in Critical Thinking projects. Use the below worksheet (add pages as needed) to complete your critical thinking analysis.

Elements of Thought (Reasoning)

Topic you plan to analyze:

Element: Purpose:

Element: Question(s):

Element: Information/Context (What We Know)

Quality of Information Checks

Source	Critical Information (Data, Evidence, Facts)	Corroboration of Information	Confidence Level (H, M, L)	Comments

Add additional rows as needed. The number of sources will depend on the topic, purpose, and question(s).

Elements: Points of View/Assumptions

First, identify your actors and conduct a 4-Ways of Seeing analysis.

Four Ways of Seeing	
Actor A: How does Actor A see the issue at hand?	**Actor B:** How does Actor B see the issue at hand?
How does Actor A see Actor B vis-a-vis the issue at hand?	How does Actor B see Actor A vis-a-vis the issue at hand?

Second, using the 4 Ways of Seeing results and informed brainstorming to determine the key assumptions at work in your analysis. Assess each key assumption as to category. Then convert key assumptions into beliefs.

Key Assumption and Critical Belief Analysis				
Key Assumption/Belief*	**Assumption Category****	**Informative Belief**	**Reassuring Belief**	**Change Caveat**
Actor A:				
Actor B:				
Analyst(s):				

* Add rows or actors as needed.
** Paradigmatic, Prescriptive, Causal

Third, conduct a critical belief analysis of each belief, including uncovering any supporting beliefs (stated or implied).

Critical Belief Analysis				
Goal (of Actor or Analyst):				
Belief: Actor or Analyst believes that…				
Degree of Ambiguity				
Viewpoints	Precise Beliefs	Imprecise Beliefs	Rules of Thumb	Catalytic Narratives
Quest and Commitment	■	■	■	▨
Visionary	■	■		▨
Ethical (is "what is" good?)	■			▨
Realist (what is?)				▨
Existential	■	■	■	▨
Evaluation (circle): Informative Belief or Reassuring Belief				
Comments:				

Does belief provide the guidance (to reach the goal) the believer relies on it for?

Element: Conceptualization

Diagram or Draw your conceptual structural causal, process model, or agency model—or list the key components of your models (only one type model needed, but more than one is better).

Element: Alternatives

List your alternatives and describe the methods or processes used to develop the list.

Element: Information (What We Need to Know)

Quality of Information Checks

Source	Critical Information (Data, Evidence, Facts)	Corroboration of Information	Confidence Level (H, M, L)	Comments

Add additional rows as needed. The number of sources will depend on the topic, purpose, and question(s

Element: Interpretation/Inference

Select at least one method to test your list of alternatives (using more than one method is recommended). Recommend use either pattern matching, logical argumentation, probability/event/decision trees, pros-cons-fixes, outcome matrix, or other analytic method.

Pros-Cons-Fixes

Alternative: (separate analysis for each alternative)

Pros	Cons	Fixes

Add rows as needed. There should be at least one evaluation worksheet for each alternative.

Matrix Analysis

Evidence/Evaluation Factors	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Evaluation Factor/Evidence 1			
Evaluation Factor/Evidence 2			
Evaluation Factor/Evidence 3			
Evaluation Factor/Evidence 4			
Decision			

Add columns for additional alternatives or rows for evaluation factors as needed.

Element: Implications/Consequences

List those implications or consequences—intended or unintended--that may result from the selection of your best alternative(s).

Finishing Activities: Checking Your Findings

Conduct a Structured Self=Critique to include:

Ask, "What if my contention (findings, etc.) turns out to be wrong?

Check each Element of Thought and make sure it was considered properly in the analysis.

Common analytic errors:

- **Did I ignore contrary information (data, evidence, etc.)?**
- **What should absence of information tell me?**
- **Were key assumptions and beliefs reliable?**
- **How reliable was my key evidence?**
- **Did I avoid common analytic pitfalls (used analogy, intuition, etc.)?**

Check your analysis with the **Intellectual Standards** to include:

Clarity – gives good examples?

Accuracy – verifies information?

Precision – argument provides sufficient detail?

Relevance – actually addresses the initial problem?

Depth – covers the complexities of issue?

Breadth – considers other points of views?

Logic – makes sense, employs good reasoning (avoids logic fallacies)?

Significance – identifies most important facts/problems?

Fairness – does not serve own vested interests?