Critical Thinking in the Workplace Certificate Program

This online learning program was developed by the NYS & CSEA Partnership for Education and Training for CSEA-represented New York State employees. It has been designed for all employees who wish to develop or improve their critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving skills. Participants will be required to successfully complete all eight of the following courses and achieve a passing grade of 70% or higher in each course.

Thinking Critically: Coming to Terms with Assumptions .4 Hour
Assumptions can get in the way of thinking rationally, critically, and unemotionally. This course defines what assumptions are, describes how different kinds of assumptions may be appropriately challenged, and covers the importance of seeking out the perspectives of others as a check on your own assumptions.

Thinking Critically: Getting Your Arms around Arguments .5 Hour
An argument typically has a rationale and a conclusive statement, both deserving of exploration and questioning. In this course, you'll learn to identify arguments, recognize persuasion techniques, explore arguments for accuracy and logic, and marshal arguments of your own.

Thinking Critically: Drawing Conclusions with Confidence .5 Hour
Drawing conclusions is an appropriate expression because concluding – when thinking critically – often involves mapping out data and making it visual. In this course, you will analyze the process of drawing a conclusion into its logical components. You'll also learn about the use of questions and diagramming tools to assist in this process.

Solving Problems: Framing the Problem .5 Hour
Framing the problem accurately requires finding out who is affected and who is impacted by the problem. It also requires identifying the reason(s) the problem exists. In this course, you'll learn how to identify stakeholders and effectively elicit their input. You'll find out how the causes of problems can lie at different levels of the organization, and you'll learn techniques to uncover the root cause.

Solving Problems: Generating and Evaluating Alternatives .6 Hour
Before generating alternative potential solutions to a problem, it's helpful to have a sense of the 'ideal state' – what the situation would look like if people had a magic wand. In this course, you'll first learn how to elicit descriptions of ideal states. Next, you'll find out how to use basic techniques for generating and evaluating alternative solutions to a problem. Finally, you'll learn to recognize and avoid common pitfalls that can occur while generating and evaluating alternatives.

Generating Creative and Innovative Ideas: Enhancing Your Creativity   ***1 Hour***
What makes a person creative? This course explores the essential attributes of a creative person. It also describes how to recognize and overcome barriers to creativity. In addition, it demonstrates how you can enhance your creativity in the workplace.

Generating Creative and Innovative Ideas: Maximizing Team Creativity   ***1 Hour***
Is creativity within everyone's grasp? This course discusses how to maximize team creativity. It explores the conditions in the work environment that help encourage team creativity, such as diversity among team members. In addition, it describes team methods for fostering creativity, including such techniques as brainstorming and role playing.

Generating Creative and Innovative Ideas: Verifying and Building on Ideas   ***1 Hour***
Generating creative ideas can be a very exciting and stimulating process.This course covers a variety of techniques used to verify and build on creative ideas. It outlines when to use research and when to use simulations to explore the workability of an idea. In addition, it discusses ways to build on ideas effectively.

Foundational Competencies

Workplace development competencies are job-based skills employees need in order to succeed across a wide variety of occupations. Having completed this certificate, you have enhanced your skills in one or more competency areas. You can learn more about these competencies by visiting the [Workforce Development Competencies](#) page. This certificate assisted you in developing the following competencies:

Communication and Interpersonal Relations

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Professionalism and Self-Management