

Logical Thinking and Communication



*Improving the **Two Key Skills**
needed for **Business Success***

*Staff who can't **think**
logically or communicate
clearly will have trouble...*



making decisions	giving instructions
solving problems	presenting ideas
creating plans	asking questions
analyzing choices	explaining situations

The 3-day **Logical Thinking and Communication** workshop teaches students to respect the quality of information and of proof, and the value of discussion, disagreement and clear communication. Topics covered include:

- how thinking affects communication
- how Chinese culture affects Chinese communication
- communication needs of modern business: open, honest, clear and accurate
- how to concentrate on the communication needs of the audience
- how to make communication clear
- how to ask good questions and offer good answers
- how to make all information relevant, accurate and true
- how to add all information needed to achieve communication success
- how to make, defend and analyze logical arguments
- logical argument structures common in business: decision making, cause and effect (planning and problem solving), benchmarking, persuading

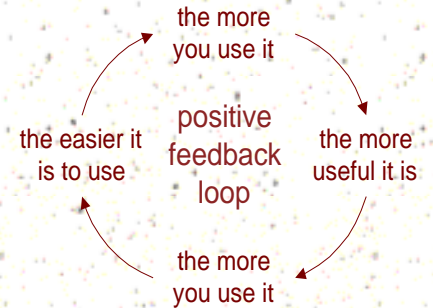


*If you think education
is expensive,
try ignorance.*

Derek Bok

evaluating results

There is no overnight success. Do not expect dramatic or immediate improvement. The good news is that it is a cumulative skill: once you understand and use it a positive feedback loop is created. Students begin to see the real benefits a few months after the course, and it just grows from then on. You never forget logic.



the instructor



The workshop was designed and is taught by Greg Bissky. After an MA in modern Chinese politics Greg moved to Taiwan in 1985, his home for the next 14 years. In 1998 Greg moved back to Canada but kept his Asia roots, traveling frequently and often working Chinese time zone hours.

Greg also teaches Westerners how to do business in Chinese Asia, and leads performance enhancement-type projects in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

course details



The **Logical Thinking and Communicating** workshop lasts 3 full days. Offsite locations work far better than onsite classes.

- classes conducted in English and Mandarin: best if students have a basic grasp of spoken English
- course materials are in English and Chinese
- class size limited to 20 participants (12-16 is best)
- students work hard (homework and difficult subject material) so employers are asked to limit normal work for the 3 days
- cell phones that ring during class are confiscated
- classes are difficult but fun; students who laugh forget how hard they are working

workshop objectives



- given any message to transfer, be better able to use the audience's needs and expectations to tailor how to communicate the message
- given any question to ask, be better able to focus on the key needed information and to ask clearly for it
- given any opinion to offer, be better able to use the attitude, "If I think it is important then I should clearly say it" to speak out
- given any management skill to learn, be better able to participate actively in the learning process
- given any persuasive argument, be better able to decide if the facts prove the conclusion; or know what facts are needed to prove it
- given any problem to solve, decision to make or plan to form, be able to see key cause and effect relationships
- given any message to communicate, be better able to do so in a clear, brief and straightforward manner

workshop outline

Class 1a

- the effect of thinking on communication
- should you "sell" or "market" your message
- how culture creates unique *Rules of Communication*; differences between Chinese, Western and modern-business Rules of Communication

methodology: mostly lecture, some question and answer (QA)
break for lunch

Class 1b

- what is needed to make a persuasive argument
- the analytic process: description of the steps and how to follow them
- relevant is not the same as true: what makes one fact relevant and another irrelevant
- the limitations of one-statement or one-fact generalizations
- introduction of basic "salesman's" argument format (persuasive argument)
- how relevance can depend upon culture; how to explain to Westerners that "X" is relevant in Chinese Asia
- how to separate useful facts from the words, sentences and paragraphs they hide in
- how to add missing facts to an argument to make it complete

methodology: lecture, small problem-solving groups, big group discussion
class finishes for the day



It is only the wisest and most stupid who can not change.

Confucius, Analects



workshop **outline**

Class 2a

- how to focus on the point when asking questions
- when to use, and when not to use, logic or modern business communication
- the *only* four relevant answers when you've done something wrong/made a mistake
- different ways things can be made irrelevant

methodology: lecture, small problem-solving groups, big group discussion
break for lunch

Class 2b

- why one fact can be “believable” with no proof, and why another fact needs proof
- what is difference between facts and opinions, truths and beliefs
- guidelines for the Acceptability of facts
- how to judge when to trust, and not to trust, “expert opinions”
- need for facts to be clear; a “good” fact can have only one meaning
- standardized format for a “push-pull” argument (basic decision making)
- standardized format for “benchmarking” arguments
- guidelines for student presentations (for Class 3b)

methodology: lecture, small problem-solving groups, big group discussion
class finishes for the day

Class 3a

- introduction to analyzing cause-and-effect relationships
- standardized format for cause-and-effect arguments
- principles about how to tell if an argument has included enough proof (sufficiency)

methodology: lecture, small problem-solving groups, big group discussion
break for lunch

Class 3b

- students present the argument they wrote (and prepared on an overhead transparency) to the class, then defend it against criticisms from the class and the instructor
- how to fix “bad” arguments (using student presentations as examples)
- general summary of points covered
- fill out course evaluations

methodology: each student presents an argument; big group discussion about
each presentation; can the argument be fixed; summary

class finishes

argument templates

Argument templates are very useful. They teach students how to:

- organize information logically and clearly
- include all the information needed to “prove” a conclusion
- have confidence in their presentation of information, opinions and ideas

decision to take action

PUSH: an argument that proves some action (called “action X”) must be taken

PULL: an argument that proves that one alternative is better than the rest

Every decision to take action is a “Push-Pull” argument. To be correct it must follow this format:

Push: “. . . (therefore) we must do [x]”

Pull: P1: we must do [x]

P2: these are the criteria we will use to make a decision

P3: we could do [a] to achieve [x] (it meets the criteria)

P4: we could do [b] to achieve [x] (it meets the criteria)

P5: we could do [c] to achieve [x] (it meets the criteria)

P6: proof only options that meet the criteria are [a], [b] & [c]

P7a: plus/minus analysis of [a]

P7b: plus/minus analysis of [b]

P7c: plus/minus analysis of [c]

P7: (therefore) option [a] is superior to options [b] and [c]

C: we should do [a] to achieve [x]



P = premise (reason)
C = conclusion

analysis

Decisions are made every day about what action to take. Business success depends upon making good decisions. Common problems in decision making are:

- trying to prove what to do (C) without first proving something must be done (P1)
- not defining the criteria (P2) used to make the decision (often using different criteria for each option)
- not showing that all possible choices are being examined (P6)
- using different methods to analyze possible choices (P7a, b and c)

These problems lead to bad decisions and wasted time. When students use this template managers can easily understand why an action must be taken and can quickly evaluate the reasons why doing X is the best choice. This leads to better staff input and better decisions.

basic "change" argument

Change arguments are used to prove or show why something should happen or change. A few examples would be trying to change a method, policy or action. To be correct and clear, change arguments should follow this format:



- P1: this is the current situation (or method used)
- P2a: fact about the current situation (method)
- P2b: fact about the current situation (method)
- P2c: fact about the current situation (method)
- P2: the current situation is bad (method won't work)
- C: we should change the current situation (change the method)**

SIMPLE EXAMPLE

- P1: *Department D is not following the Quality Guidelines*
- P2a: *Department D's scrap and waste percent is too high*
- P2b: *shipping dates are often missed because of waiting for Department D's products*
- P2c: *72% of customer complaints are caused by mistakes made by Department D*
- P2: *by not following the Quality Guidelines Department D is hurting the company*
- C: *Department D should be made to follow the Quality Guidelines***

analysis

Business is all about managing change, and change arguments are very common. Problems happen when people only offer a conclusion with no proof or give reasons in a confused way. By using the change argument template a person:

- tells the audience what the point is, or what to focus on (P1)
- offers proof in a clear way (P2a, b and c), proving the current situation is bad (P2)
- gives enough information to prove the conclusion (C)

Very simple, but also very clear and convincing. And useful. Change arguments are used in all areas of business, and can even be used to show that no change is needed!

business communication

Besides orders (*do this*), there are six basic types of business communication (right). If staff do not communicate these clearly and properly, business is hurt.

The argument templates, logic and other workshop skills help staff make business communication clear and orderly, with all necessary detail added.

persuading <i>You should do this</i>	describing <i>What this is</i>
requesting <i>I want this</i>	explaining <i>Why this happened</i>
instructing <i>How to do this</i>	questioning <i>What is this?</i>