

BUILDING CREATIVE BRIDGES

paulsignorelli & associates

ps

Staff Training

Mentoring

Volunteering
& Docents

Writing

**Making Effective Decisions with Critical Thinking Tools:
Addressing Our Assumptions
(Summary & Resources)**

1. **Some foundations for our decision-making assumptions:**
 - Age, education, ethnicity, gender, occupation, physical appearance, sexual orientation, social status
 - Body language
 - Position within an organization
 - Our organization's mission, vision, and value statements
2. **How our brains work when making decisions:**
 - Fight or flight vs. reasoned responses
 - The role stress plays in hindering critical thinking and reaching effective decisions
3. **Communication**
 - Face to face—body language, tone of voice
 - Online—aural and written communication
 - Synchronous
 - Asynchronous
4. ***Our goal is to assume the best: It's far more fun and productive to assume that we and our colleagues want to work together rather than against each other.***
5. **Next Steps:**

Informal

 - One action to be taken this week to set aside an assumption and communicate effectively with a colleague
 - One action that establishes a long-term pattern to engage in critical thinking for positive decision-making with a colleague or group of colleagues

Formal:

 - Weekly follow-ups documenting action(s) taken to improve communication with colleagues

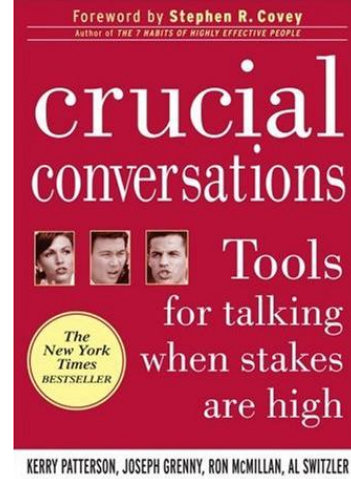
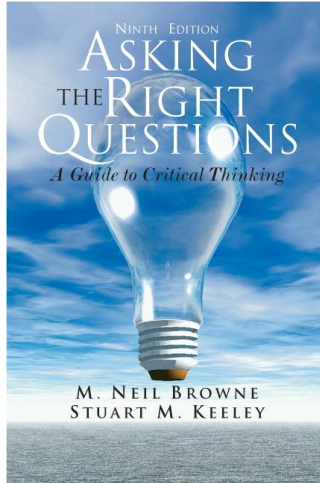
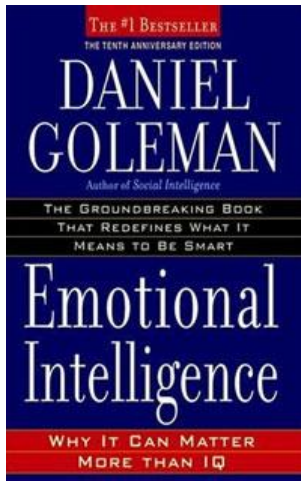
Phone:
415.681.5224

E-mail:
paul@paulsignorelli.com

Website:
www.paulsignorelli.com

Resources

Books



Online

The Critical Thinking Community, comprised of The Center for Critical Thinking and Moral Critique at Sonoma State University and the Foundation for Critical Thinking, provides numerous resources for those interested in continuing their explorations of critical thinking to promote positive change:

<http://criticalthinking.org/ABOUT/index.cfm>

“Critical Thinking: Distinguishing Between Inferences and Assumptions,” a two-page article that helps make us aware of the assumptions we bring to situations so we can improve our responses within those situations:

<http://www.criticalthinking.org/page.cfm?PageID=484&CategoryID=68>

“Critical Thinking: What It Is and Why It Counts,” a 23-page article with additional recommended readings, by Peter Facione:

http://free.uwc.ac.za/ripmixlearners/_media/tracey:media:what_why2006.pdf

Post-session Activity

Please list the action(s) you will take this week to set aside an assumption and communicate effectively with a colleague:

Please list on action you will take this week to establish a long-term pattern to engage in critical thinking for positive decision-making with a colleague or group of colleagues:

***Prepared by Paul Signorelli for the Contra Costa Community College District
Professional Development Committee; latest update: 4/18/2011***

