

Learning outcomes:

- Discuss the difference between independent thinking and critical thinking.
- Recognise the importance of independent thinking skills in a workplace context.

What you will need:

- Flipchart and markers
- Handout 1 – Independent Thinking

Content and suggested timings:

What is independent thinking? What is critical thinking?	20 mins
Why is independent thinking a valued skill?	15 mins
What happens to workplaces where staff are not able to think independently?	15 mins
	5 mins
Total duration:	55 mins

General introduction

Begin this course by explaining why the organisation has identified a need for developing skills in independent thinking and explain how long the course will take in total. Explain that whilst many of the exercises and discussions in this training relate to things outside of the workplace, it is useful to continually think how to apply the learning and ideas in the workplace.

What is independent thinking?

Split the delegates into two groups. Ask each group to come up with a very short (no more than 40 words) definition of what independent thinking is. Group one will answer box one and two on the handout. Group two will answer box one and three on the handout. They have 10 minutes. Issue **Handout 1** for them to complete their answers.

Important note: this is the first of many short exercises that will require delegates to independently think. Therefore, even if tempted, the trainer should not try to suggest ideas or guide groups but instead allow them to develop their own ideas – even if that takes slightly longer than the exercise timings state.



- ▶ Box One: Find out what definitions are given on the web and agree from those their own definition.
- ▶ Box Two: Discuss and agree what employers/organisations usually expect when they encourage more independent thinking by staff.
- ▶ Box Three: Discuss and agree what most employees understand when they are asked to demonstrate more independent thinking.

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