



TISHK International University

**FASE | Accounting, Banking & Finance & IRD
Departments**

ACC 153/IRD 155 - Academic Research and Writing

Chapter 7A:

Critical Thinking, Reading and Critique

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A row of five yellow pawns, likely from a chess set, standing on a dark wooden surface. The pawns are arranged in a slightly staggered line, with the first one on the left and the others following towards the right. They are all the same color and shape, with a rounded top and a textured surface.

Critical Thinking for Management

- The ability to reason logically and objectively is considered vital for professional success. In fact, “objectivity,” “critical thinking” and “problem-solving” are key words in management positions.
- Together with skills in leadership, teamwork and communication, a demonstrated ability in dispassionate analysis of critical issues is highly sought after in most professional positions.



Principles of Critical Thinking

- **Think independently:** Listen to other points of view, but do not follow any viewpoint without examining it first from different angles. Especially be cautious not to blindly accept claims and statements just because they are issued by an authority or expert. Everybody can be wrong, and facts can change as knowledge develops. Therefore, develop your own informed opinion.
- **Think objectively:** Try to see situations from another person's point of view, beyond your own personal concerns. Do not become too attached to a theory or hypothesis because it is yours, or because you have believed it to be correct up to now. Examine why you believe this theory or hypothesis to be accurate and compare it fairly with alternatives. If the theory survives the test, you will be more prepared to defend it when the occasion arises.



Principles of Critical Thinking

- **Develop intellectual perseverance:** Show that you have the persistence to think through all the aspects of a problem. Do not be tempted to give up because a problem is too challenging. Consider more than one hypothesis. If there is something to be explained, think of different ways it could be explained. Then think of how you would test each of the alternatives.
- **Develop observation skills:** When you read or listen critically, make sure that you clarify and understand key words, ideas and conclusions. Generate questions about what you read and remember to place the information you read and hear in context, using audience analysis skills. For example, find out about the audience that the information is directed towards, and identify how the needs of the audience influence the selection of information and the way it is presented. Find out who generated the information, and by what methods.



Critical Reading

- You read to learn and use new information. But sources are not equally valid or equally useful, so you must learn to distinguish critically among them by evaluating them. Through evaluation, you determine the extent to which sources are reliable.
- There is no ready-made formula for determining reliability. Critical reading and its written equivalent—the critique—require **discernment; sensitivity; imagination; knowledge** of the subject; **and, above all, willingness to become involved in what you read.** These skills are developed only through repeated practice. starting by posing two broad questions about passages, articles, and books that you read:
 1. To what extent does the author succeed in his or her purpose?
 2. To what extent do you agree with the author?



Inferring and Implying Assumptions

- The words infer and imply are important in any discussion of hidden, or unstated assumptions. You should be clear about their meanings. A critical reader infers what is hidden in a statement and, through that inference, brings what is hidden into the open for examination.
- Money spent on space exploration is a waste of public money
- Assumptions provide the foundation on which entire presentations are built. You may find an author's assumptions flawed—that is, not supported by factual evidence. You may disagree with value-based assumptions underlying an author's position. For instance, you may not share a writer's assumption of what counts as “good” or “correct” behavior. You may disagree with the conclusions that follow from such assumptions. At the same time, you should be willing to examine the validity of your own assumptions



Critique

- A careful judgment in which you give your opinion about the good and bad parts of something (such as a piece of writing or a work of art).
- A critique is a formalized, critical reading of a passage. It is also a personal response, but writing a critique is considerably more rigorous than saying that a movie is “great”, or a book is “fascinating” or “I didn’t like it.” These are all responses, and, as such, they’re a valid, even essential, part of your understanding of what you see and read. But such responses don’t illuminate the subject—even for you—if you don’t explain how you arrived at your conclusions.
- Your task in writing a critique is to turn your critical reading of a passage into a systematic evaluation in order to deepen your reader’s (and your own) understanding of that passage.



Critique

When you read a selection to critique, determine the following:

- What an author says
- How well the points are made
- What assumptions underlie the argument
- What issues are overlooked
- **What implications can be drawn from such an analysis; when you write a critique, positive or negative, include the following:**
- A fair and accurate summary of the passage
- Information and ideas from other sources (you're reading or your personal experience and observations) if you think these are pertinent
- A statement of your agreement or disagreement with the author, backed by specific examples and clear logic
- A clear statement of your own assumptions



How to Write Critique

- **Introduce.** Introduce both the passage under analysis and the author. State the author's main argument and the point(s) you intend to make about it. Provide background material to help your readers understand the relevance or appeal of the passage. This background material might include one or more of the following: an explanation of why the subject is of current interest, a reference to a possible controversy surrounding the subject of the passage or the passage itself
- **Summarize.** Summarize the author's main points. Make sure to state the author's purpose for writing.



How to Write Critique

- **Assess the presentation.** Evaluate the validity of the author's presentation, distinct from your points of agreement or disagreement. Comment on the author's success in achieving his or her purpose by reviewing three or four specific points.
- Base your review on one or more of the following criteria:
 - **Is the information accurate?**
 - **Is the information significant?**
 - **Has the author defined terms clearly?**
 - **Has the author used and interpreted information fairly?**
 - **Has the author argued logically?**



How to Write Critique

- **Respond to the presentation.** Now it is your turn to respond to the author's views. With which views do you agree? With which do you disagree? Discuss your reasons for agreement and disagreement; when possible, tie these reasons to assumptions—both the author's and your own. Where necessary, draw on outside sources to support your ideas.
- **Conclude.** State your conclusions about the overall validity of the piece—your assessment of the author's success at achieving his or her aims and your reactions to the author's views. Remind the reader of the weaknesses and strengths of the passage.



Statistics and Public Opinion

- When discussing an issue, people often give statistics to seal an argument and close off any further debate. Also, managers in business and finance, social policy and education routinely support their policies and decisions with numbers and statistics. Statistics can give the appearance of solidity and “hard” evidence; numbers are often thought of as irrefutable, or undeniable. But the appeal to statistics sets off a whole new set of questions.
- Where did the statistics come from?
- What groups in society are excluded from the statistics?
- If the statistics are accurate, then what decision or action should follow from them?
- After all, numbers are meaningless unless they are interpreted.



Thank You!