

Systems thinking approaches provide key insights for the management of complexity

Some of the key systems learning areas we concentrate on in this workshop include:

- The basic concepts of Systems Thinking
- How to understand “big picture thinking” and the impact of change in complex systems
- How to distinguish between dynamic versus linear problem definitions
- How to diagnose and explain dynamic behavior
- How to use the dynamics of cause-and-effect thinking to understand issues in your organization
- The importance of understanding factors that govern performance in an organization
- Conceptualizing a dynamic business issue using causal loop diagrams
- Using indicators to understand the nature of systems feedback.

Systems Thinking

Today's business problems are very complex, involving many different variables that interact and impact each other. To be effective as a leader in solving these problems, you need to see and understand how all of the pieces fit together and relate to each other. Sometimes this means making connections between seemingly separate, unconnected events, factors, and processes.

Now, more managers are recognizing the various parts of the organization, and, in particular, the interrelations of the parts, e.g., the coordination of central offices with other departments, engineering with manufacturing, supervisors with workers, etc. Managers now focus more attention on matters of ongoing organization and feedback. Managers now diagnose problems, not by examining what appear to be separate pieces of the organization, but by recognizing larger patterns of interactions. Managers maintain perspective by focusing on the outcomes they want from their organizations. Now managers focus on structures that provoke behaviors that determine events -- rather than reacting to events as was always done in the past. Systems thinking approaches provide key insights for the management of complexity, which is inherent in all business systems.

In AMA's highly interactive systems thinking workshop, we help teams to understand and simplify their complex, dynamic business problems so that they can deal with them more effectively at the root cause. By using a variety of techniques, approaches and tools, including a simulation, participants experience and master the principles of systems thinking. Participants attending our systems workshop walk away equipped to understand and influence complex dynamic systems.

