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ADMINISTRATION AND SECRETARIAL | AS-039

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving for Administrative Professionals

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Course content

Why Attend

Administrative professionals solve problems all day long: conflicting diary requests, missing information, unclear instructions, process breakdowns and urgent issues that land without warning. The quality of their thinking directly affects how smoothly an office runs and how much managers can rely on them.

This Critical Thinking and Problem Solving for Administrative Professionals training course strengthens the way participants analyse situations, question information and reach sound decisions. It introduces practical techniques for defining problems clearly, finding root causes, generating options, weighing evidence and choosing the best course of action.

Course Methodology

• The course is highly interactive and built around realistic office scenarios. Participants practise each technique on case studies, puzzles and problems drawn from their own work, working in small groups and individually. Short reflection activities help them notice their own thinking habits and improve them.

Course Objectives

• Describe the elements of critical thinking in an administrative role

• Define problems clearly before attempting to solve them

• Gather and evaluate information for accuracy, relevance and bias

• Apply root cause techniques to recurring office problems

• Generate and compare alternative solutions using simple criteria

• Recognise common thinking errors and assumptions

Target Audience

• Executive, personal and administrative assistants

• Office managers and office coordinators

• Secretaries and administrative officers

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- Team assistants and project support staff

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Course outline

Detailed course outline

Day-by-day outline for Critical Thinking and Problem Solving for Administrative Professionals.

Day 1 - Foundations of Critical Thinking

- 09:00-09:39 | What critical thinking means for administrative professionals
- 09:39-10:18 | The difference between reacting to problems and thinking them through
- 10:18-10:57 | Asking powerful questions to clarify requests and instructions
- 10:57-11:00 | Separating facts, opinions, assumptions and inferences
- 11:00-11:30 | Coffee break
- 11:30-12:06 | Separating facts, opinions, assumptions and inferences (continued)
- 12:06-12:44 | Evaluating sources of information for reliability and bias
- 12:44-13:22 | Common thinking traps: jumping to conclusions and confirmation bias
- 13:22-14:00 | Self-assessment of personal thinking and decision habits

Day 2 - Defining and Analysing Problems

- 09:00-09:34 | Writing a clear problem statement that the team agrees on
- 09:34-10:08 | Distinguishing symptoms from underlying causes
- 10:08-10:42 | Using the five whys to uncover root causes
- 10:42-11:00 | Fishbone diagrams for recurring process problems
- 11:00-11:30 | Coffee break
- 11:30-11:46 | Fishbone diagrams for recurring process problems (continued)
- 11:46-12:20 | Collecting simple data to confirm what is really happening
- 12:20-12:53 | Breaking complex issues into manageable parts
- 12:53-14:00 | Case study: analysing a recurring office process failure

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Day 3 - Generating and Evaluating Options

- 09:00-09:34 | Brainstorming techniques that produce useful ideas quickly
- 09:34-10:08 | Looking at a problem from the viewpoint of different stakeholders
- 10:08-10:42 | Setting criteria for comparing possible solutions
- 10:42-11:00 | Simple decision matrices and pros and cons analysis
- 11:00-11:30 | Coffee break
- 11:30-11:46 | Simple decision matrices and pros and cons analysis (continued)
- 11:46-12:20 | Considering risks, costs and unintended consequences
- 12:20-12:53 | Knowing when to decide yourself and when to escalate
- 12:53-14:00 | Exercise: choosing the best solution for a scheduling conflict

Day 4 - Decision Making Under Pressure

- 09:00-09:34 | Making sound decisions when time and information are limited
- 09:34-10:08 | Prioritising competing urgent requests from several managers
- 10:08-10:42 | Using judgement on confidentiality and sensitive matters
- 10:42-11:00 | Handling ambiguity and changing instructions calmly
- 11:00-11:30 | Coffee break
- 11:30-11:46 | Handling ambiguity and changing instructions calmly (continued)
- 11:46-12:20 | Learning from mistakes without blame or defensiveness
- 12:20-12:53 | Ethical reasoning in everyday administrative decisions
- 12:53-14:00 | Scenario practice: resolving a crisis in the executive office

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Day 5 - Presenting Solutions and Taking Ownership

- 09:00-09:30 | Structuring a recommendation: issue, options, proposal and next steps
- 09:30-10:00 | Writing concise problem-solving emails and briefing notes
- 10:00-10:30 | Presenting ideas confidently to managers and senior staff
- 10:30-11:00 | Responding constructively to questions and objections
- 11:00-11:30 | Coffee break
- 11:30-12:30 | Implementing solutions and checking that they work
- 12:30-13:30 | Building a reputation as a proactive problem solver
- 13:30-14:00 | Personal action plan for applying critical thinking at work

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Seminar dates

Available seminar dates

Live dates and pricing for Critical Thinking and Problem Solving for Administrative Professionals generated from the course details page.

Date	Location	Format	Fee
7 - 11 December 2026	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
14 - 18 December 2026	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
21 - 25 December 2026	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
25 - 29 January 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
4 - 8 January 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
11 - 15 January 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
18 - 22 January 2027	Vienna	Classroom	**€3,425**
1 - 5 February 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
8 - 12 February 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
15 - 19 February 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**

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Seminar dates

Available seminar dates

Live dates and pricing for Critical Thinking and Problem Solving for Administrative Professionals generated from the course details page.

Date	Location	Format	Fee
22 - 26 February 2027	Amsterdam	Classroom	**€3,215**
8 - 12 March 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
15 - 19 March 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
22 - 26 March 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
1 - 5 March 2027	Cape Town	Classroom	**€1,825**
19 - 23 April 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
26 - 30 April 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
5 - 9 April 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
12 - 16 April 2027	Dubai	Classroom	**€2,845**
24 - 28 May 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**

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Seminar dates

Available seminar dates

Live dates and pricing for Critical Thinking and Problem Solving for Administrative Professionals generated from the course details page.

Date	Location	Format	Fee
3 - 7 May 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
10 - 14 May 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
17 - 21 May 2027	Geneva	Classroom	**€3,315**
7 - 11 June 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
14 - 18 June 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
21 - 25 June 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
12 - 16 July 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
19 - 23 July 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
26 - 30 July 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
5 - 9 July 2027	Kuala lumpur	Classroom	**€2,425**

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Seminar dates

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Date	Location	Format	Fee
16 - 20 August 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
23 - 27 August 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
2 - 6 August 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
9 - 13 August 2027	Madrid	Classroom	**€3,400**
6 - 10 September 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
13 - 17 September 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
20 - 24 September 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
4 - 8 October 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
11 - 15 October 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
18 - 22 October 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**

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Seminar dates

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Date	Location	Format	Fee
25 - 29 October 2027	Paris	Classroom	**€2,810**
8 - 12 November 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
15 - 19 November 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
22 - 26 November 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
1 - 5 November 2027	Rome	Classroom	**€2,830**
20 - 24 December 2027	London	Classroom	**€2,915**
27 - 31 December 2027	Barcelona	Classroom	**€2,275**
6 - 10 December 2027	Frankfurt	Classroom	**€2,175**
13 - 17 December 2027	Vienna	Classroom	**€3,425**
7 - 11 December 2026	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**

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Live dates and pricing for Critical Thinking and Problem Solving for Administrative Professionals generated from the course details page.

Date	Location	Format	Fee
14 - 18 December 2026	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
21 - 25 December 2026	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
25 - 29 January 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
4 - 8 January 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
11 - 15 January 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
18 - 22 January 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
1 - 5 February 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
8 - 12 February 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
15 - 19 February 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
22 - 26 February 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**

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Date	Location	Format	Fee
8 - 12 March 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
15 - 19 March 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
22 - 26 March 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
1 - 5 March 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
19 - 23 April 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
26 - 30 April 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
5 - 9 April 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
12 - 16 April 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
24 - 28 May 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
3 - 7 May 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**

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Date	Location	Format	Fee
10 - 14 May 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
17 - 21 May 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
7 - 11 June 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
14 - 18 June 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
21 - 25 June 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
12 - 16 July 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
19 - 23 July 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
26 - 30 July 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
5 - 9 July 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
16 - 20 August 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**

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Date	Location	Format	Fee
23 - 27 August 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
2 - 6 August 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
9 - 13 August 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
6 - 10 September 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
13 - 17 September 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
20 - 24 September 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
4 - 8 October 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
11 - 15 October 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
18 - 22 October 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
25 - 29 October 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**

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Date	Location	Format	Fee
8 - 12 November 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
15 - 19 November 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
22 - 26 November 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
1 - 5 November 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
20 - 24 December 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
27 - 31 December 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
6 - 10 December 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**
13 - 17 December 2027	Online / Live	Online / Live	**€1,625**