

Introduction to Systems Thinking

Section 1: Introduction

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### SECTION 1

# THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SYSTEMS THINKING



## Section 1: Introduction

This section, Theoretical Foundations of Systems Thinking, introduces you to a new way of looking at problems and solutions using a holistic, systems-based approach. You begin by gaining a basic understanding of what systems thinking is, including its basic principles, theoretical foundations, concepts, and methods, then developing a systems thinking tool kit. You then apply these newly developed skills in the context of problem-based case studies, putting your learning to work.

This section covers one competency in four lessons:

- Lesson 1: The Systems Thinking Mindset
- Lesson 2: Boundaries, Patterns, and Interconnections
- Lesson 3: Understanding a System's Structure
- Lesson 4: Representing Interconnections and Patterns

## Build Employability Skills and Competence

The skills addressed in this section are valuable in fields ranging from business, education, healthcare, and science to information technology and many in between. Given today's increasingly complex, multifaceted world, every person needs to address difficult problems. The skills in this section are:

1. Describe behavior and events using patterns.
2. Examine the underlying structure of a system.
3. Identify interconnections within a system.
4. Visualize patterns.
5. Frame a problem in terms of a pattern over time.
6. Use systems theory as a lens to view multidisciplinary systems and their related problems.

In this section, you can demonstrate these skills by passing a final assessment that measures whether you have mastered this competency:

- Apply the basic principles and foundational theory of systems thinking to a scenario.

## Prepare for the Assessment

To prepare for the competency performance assessment, ask yourself these questions:

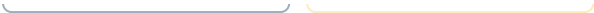
- Can I examine a system and its interconnections, patterns, and underlying structure in the context of a problem?
- Can I analyze systems and their related problems through the application of systems thinking tools?

## Move Ahead if Ready

Are you ready to demonstrate your competency and skills?

If you answered yes to all the "Prepare for the Assessment" questions, begin this section by taking the section 1 assessment.

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