

Lesson 1.1: Six Steps to Thinking Systemically

Overview

Read this to learn about a six-step process proposed by two leading systems thinking experts to help people analyze challenging systemic situations. Then explore a WGU-created version of this tool, developed specifically for this course, that you will use in this section and the high-stakes performance assessment to analyze case studies.

Article: "Six Steps to Thinking Systemically"

This article by Michael Goodman and Richard Karash presents a six-step process that pulls together several of the tools you have already learned about in this course. After learning about it here, you will use a similar process to analyze a fairly complex case study.

 Read ["Six Steps to Thinking Systemically."](#)


Key Points


The six steps for systemic thinking are:

1. Tell the story. Explain what is actually happening.
2. Draw BOT diagrams, one per variable or issue.
3. Create a focusing statement, a question that expresses the heart of the problem.
4. Identify the structure of the system.
5. Go deeper into the issues by asking questions about the purpose of the system, any existing mental models, the larger system in which the one you are interested is embedded, and your own personal role.
6. Plan an intervention to correct the problem.

The Four Steps Tool

WGU has adapted this tool for your use in this course. This version is the Four Steps Tool.

 [WGU's Four Steps Tool template](#) (PDF version)

 [WGU's Four Steps Tool Template](#) (Word version)

Note: The Word version can be downloaded to the computer.

Attributions and References

Reference

Goodman, M., and Karash, R. (2018). *Six steps to thinking systemically*. The Systems Thinker. <https://thesystemsthinker.com/six-steps-to-thinking-systemically/>

Introduction to Systems Thinking