

"The frames we employ affect the options that we see, the decisions that we make, and the results that we attain. By being better at framing, we get to better outcomes."

- [Kenneth Cukier, Viktor Mayer-Schonberger & Francis de Vericourt](#)

"Simply using your brain for crossing items off your to-do list is a poor use of a very sophisticated machine."

- [Srini Pillay](#)

## Insights to improve your critical thinking

### 1. Name the frame

We can learn a lot more and get better at the work that we do when we explain the why and the how behind doing it, rather than working on auto-pilot.

*What frames influence your thinking the most at work (e.g. achievement / enjoyment)?*

### 2. Carry out cognitive foraging

"By constantly looking, we are better at seeing." Cognitive foraging increases our knowledge by learning from different people and places.

*What is a topic you could focus your 'foraging' on and increase your curiosity at work?*

### 3. Use the power of constraints

Limiting options can help you to think more critically about a situation, especially when getting to an outcome feels overwhelming.

*What constraints can you play with at work (e.g. budget/deadlines)?*

### 4. Write problem statements

Before you try to solve a problem, look at it from different perspectives. Playing with the problem can unlock new thinking.

*When might using different problem statements help you reach better solutions at work?*

### 5. Create the right conditions

If you want to be a better critical thinker, consider who you invite into your conversations and their [problem-solving profile](#).

*Who could you invite to 'challenge and build' on your work?*

### 6. Work with 'what if'

Asking 'what/if' questions when generating ideas can help you imagine alternative options and reduces the risk of doing what's always been done.

*Which work challenges would benefit from 'what if' thinking?*



## Ideas for action

### Practice writing problem statements

You can write problem statements for projects, career challenges or for team ways of working.

Start with:

*"What do I want to change; what do I want to get better; how do we want to improve?"*

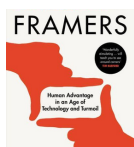
### Relook at your lens

Frames are like lenses we all look through to understand our world.

Looking through someone else's lens can give you more data to improve your decisions.

*Who sees things differently to you? What could you learn from looking through their lens?*

## Recommended resources



### [Framers: Make Better Decisions in the Age of Big Data](#)

by Kenneth Cukier, Viktor Mayer-Schonberger & Francis de Vericourt



### [Harvard Business Review's The HBR Guide to Critical Thinking](#)

Ask the right questions, analyse and learn, solve complex problems.