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**Blueprint LEADERSHIP**  
Building Organizations that Change the World

**July 2016**



Greetings!

This month's Blueprint for LEADERSHIP focuses on the skill of conceptual thinking! Great leaders dare to think outside of traditional frameworks in order to create innovative change. Check out our feature article, supplemental piece and book of the month below to learn more about this important leadership skill.

Thank you for your continued engagement with us in building Blueprint Leaders. We welcome your comments and love hearing from our readers.



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## FEATURE ARTICLE: Conceptualizing a Better World



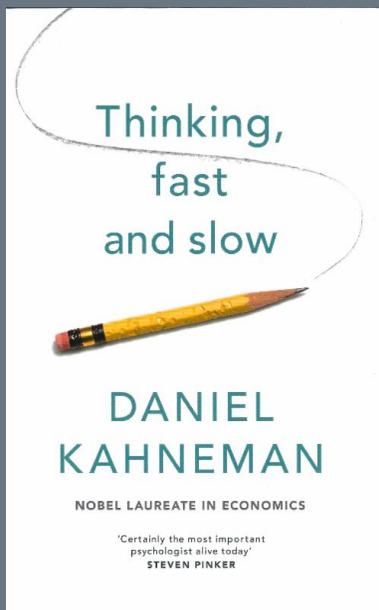
[Click here](#) for a comprehensive understanding of conceptual thinking and learn how to encourage your team to envision what is not yet seen.

## Conceptual Thinking Skill Level Progression Chart

CONCEPTUAL THINKING				
<i>Definition: The ability to analyze hypothetical situations or abstract concepts to compile insight.</i>				
<i>Scale progression: The scale progresses from applying guidelines to pattern recognition to theory or model building.</i>				
Level 1 <i>Applies established rules</i>	Level 2 <i>Sees patterns between data and information based on experience</i>	Level 3 <i>Applies complex models and concepts</i>	Level 4 <i>Clarifies complex data or situations</i>	Level 5 <i>Creates new concepts, theories, models and frameworks</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applies simple rules, common sense and past experiences to identify business issues.</li> <li>Recognizes when a current situation is exactly the same as a past situation.</li> <li>Applies preset decision trees to problems or opportunities.</li> <li>Uses established rules in predefined way.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notices when a current situation is similar or dissimilar to a past situation, and identifies the similarities and/or differences.</li> <li>When looking at information, sees patterns, trends or missing pieces.</li> <li>Seeks a precedent when faced with new situations to inform response.</li> <li>Identifies the links between the information and the context, identifies discrepancies, trends and inter-relationships in the information.</li> <li>Identifies pertinent information, and notices trends, patterns or missing pieces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses knowledge of theories or frameworks to look at current situations.</li> <li>Applies and modifies complex learned concepts, theories or methods appropriately.</li> <li>Applies advanced models to identify the intricacies of a situation and how they may impact the outcome.</li> <li>Formulates a clear explanation for complex business problems, situations or opportunities based on existing theories or frameworks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes complex or abstract ideas or situations clear, simple, and/or understandable.</li> <li>Assembles ideas, issues and observations into a clear, useful and complete explanation.</li> <li>Restates existing observations or knowledge in a simpler fashion.</li> <li>Synthesizes complex ideas, issues and observations into a clear understanding, takes intricate data and puts it into lay terms, "boils down" information.</li> <li>Conducts strategic analysis of trends to identify patterns or missing pieces.</li> <li>Selectively absorbs a large amount of diverse or complex information to identify central and underlying issues of a situation.</li> <li>Sees multiple relationships and missing factors/gaps in systems or processes, and takes corrective action as necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates new concepts that are not obvious to others and not learned from previous education or experience to explain situations or resolve problems.</li> <li>Looks at things in a novel way (i.e., breakthrough thinking).</li> <li>Shifts the paradigm, starts a new line of thought.</li> <li>Thinks beyond the issues and balances multiple perspectives when setting direction or reaching conclusions.</li> <li>Thinks beyond the organization and balances multiple perspectives when setting direction or reaching conclusions.</li> </ul>
 <b>Blueprint LEADERSHIP</b> Building Organizations that Change the World <small>Source: <a href="http://www.nrc.crrc.gc.ca/obj/doc/careers/careers/mg_conceptual_thinking.pdf">http://www.nrc.crrc.gc.ca/obj/doc/careers/careers/mg_conceptual_thinking.pdf</a></small>				

Click above to evaluate where you and your team members fall within the development stages of conceptual thinking, and consider how you can help your team progress to the next level.

### BOOK OF THE MONTH



[Thinking, fast and slow](#)

Daniel Kahneman, renowned psychologist and winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, takes his readers on a groundbreaking tour of the mind and explains the two systems that drive our thinking. System 1 is fast, intuitive, and emotional; System 2 is slower, more deliberative, and more logical.

Engaging the reader in a lively conversation about how we think, Kahneman reveals where we can and cannot trust our intuitions and how we can tap into the benefits of slow thinking. He offers practical and enlightening insights into how choices are made in both our business and our personal lives - and how we can use different techniques to guard against the mental glitches that often get us into trouble.

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