

The goose that laid the golden egg

Recall the fable credited to Aesop that tells the story of a goose that magically laid golden eggs? Let's reconsider that fairy tale and use critical thinking to come to a decision.

In short, a man and his wife had the good fortune to possess a goose which laid one golden egg every day. As fortunate as they were to have this special goose, they began to think they could get more eggs faster if they could get all the golden eggs out of the bird at one time. So, they decided to cut open the goose to get all the gold from its insides. Unfortunately for them however, when cutting the goose open, they found its insides to be exactly the same as any other goose. Their quest for wealth ended on a poorly made decision based on greed and not real critical thinking.



Of course, today we think we would make a different decision because, of course, we are smarter and have better information than those of yesteryear. Think of a decision you recently made. Do you wish you could have a *do-over*? Was the decision hastily made? In spite of our *modern enlightenment*, as you reconsider your recent decision, think on this. Before deciding:

- Did you have enough information?
- What didn't you know?
- Did you consider what else could have been true?
- Did you rely on information provided to you by others without questioning its validity?
- What unintended consequences should you have thought about?
- What primal emotions may have been at play but were ignored?
- Were any ethics or moral principles involved in your decision?
- Did you take the time to explore competing interests?
- Whose voice was silent or not included?
- Did you think about who would be helped and who may be hurt by your decision?

Sometimes, we need to make quick decisions. When we are facing dangerous situations or scenarios where we or those we love may be hurt or are in danger, we do not have time to think about our thinking. However, when we are making decisions that impact lives, choices, and future goals over the long term, unquestionably, we must take the time to consider as many of the potential consequences of our decisions as possible.

Critical thinking is sorely needed in a diverse world where cultural differences and varying beliefs abound. Just as individuals do not look alike; neither should they be expected to think in the same way. A contrast in how problems are approached is essential to get to the best possible decision. To think critically in order to make the best possible decisions requires one to think meta cognitively (think about their thinking). Understanding the elements of critical thinking and its role in decision-making is needed to help move individuals out of the rut of **“garbage can decision making”**.

What type of decision-maker are you?

For more information on Dr. Burrs program on *Critical Thinking and Managerial Decision-Making*, call: (937) 866-7511 or visit her website at: www.DrBurrs.com.

