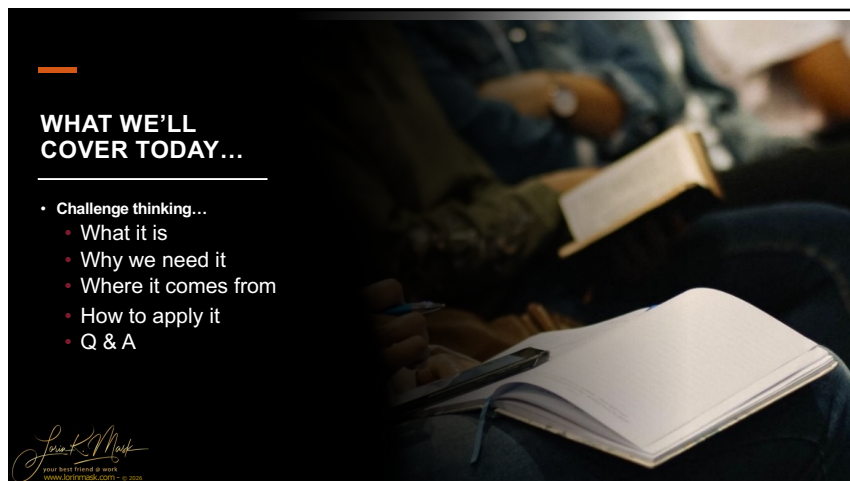
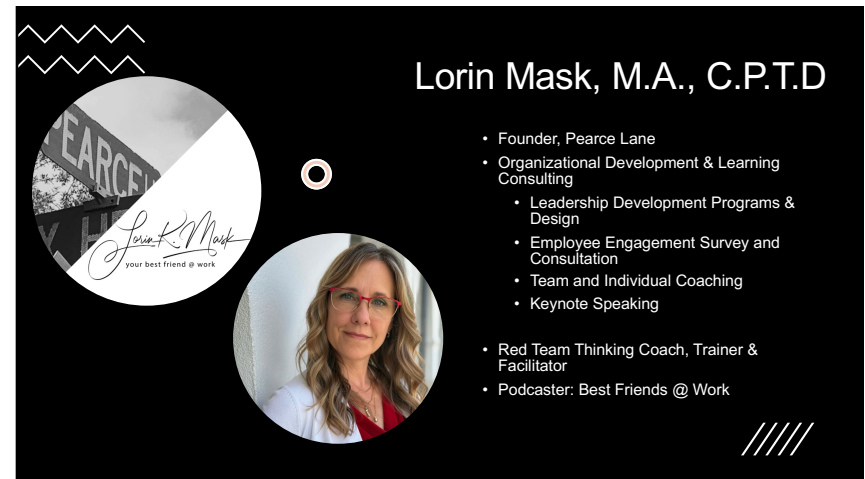




WHAT IS CHALLENGE THINKING?

"The **deliberate** application of critical thinking to enhance decision-making, **refine plans**, identify risks, and uncover opportunities, ensuring more robust and resilient outcomes."

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WHY WE NEED IT

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WHY WE NEED TO CHALLENGE OUR THINKING

Because **applied critical thinking** and **creative problem-solving** are two of the most desperately needed skills in business today.

HR.com Report — Future of HR Skills and Strategies 2026

- Strategic business acumen = #1 non-negotiable leadership capability (67% of experts)
- Ranks above AI/digital fluency (58%), adaptive resilience (50%), human-centric change leadership (50%)
- AI and automation proficiency = HR's largest skills gap to close
- Must hire for learning agility and problem-solving ability — not just experience
- HR must question AI outputs, identify bias risk, recognize data limitations

Core skills in 2025

- Analytical thinking
- Resilience, flexibility and agility
- Leadership and social influence
- Creative thinking
- Motivation and self-awareness
- Technological literacy
- Empathy and active listening
- Curiosity and lifelong learning
- Talent management
- Service orientation and customer service

Note: The skills selected by surveyed organizations to be of greatest importance to workers at the time of the survey. Source: World Economic Forum, (2025), Future of Jobs Report 2025.

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WE USE CHALLENGE THINKING TO...

- Navigate complexity
- Think more strategically
- Develop new ideas and perspectives
- Be more adaptive and resilient
- Make better decisions faster in our increasingly complex world
- Navigate AI

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HOW WE REALLY MAKE DECISIONS

"You believe you know what goes on in your mind, which often consists of one conscious thought leading in an orderly way to another. But that is not the only way the mind works, nor indeed is that the typical way. Most impressions and thoughts arise in your conscious experience without your knowing how they got there."

- Dr. Daniel Kahneman

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70% Decision Making

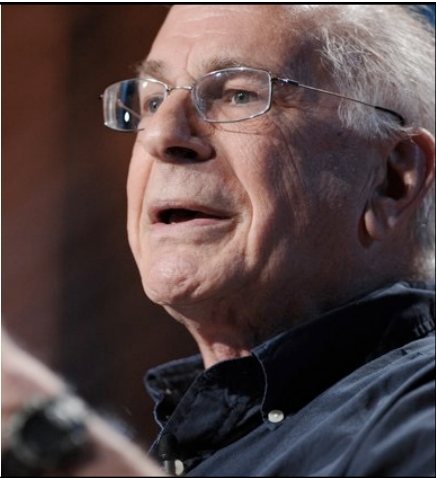
30% Decision Making

HOW WE REALLY MAKE DECISIONS

System 2: Deliberate and effortful.

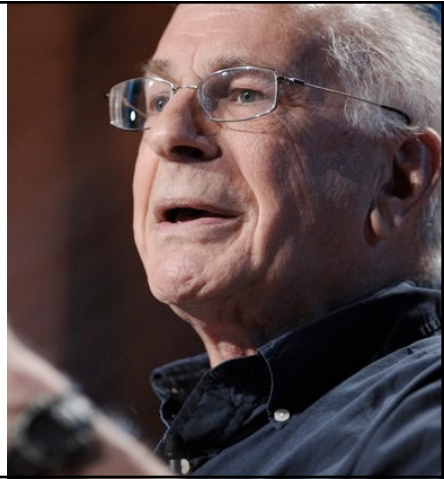
- "... one of its main characteristics is laziness, a reluctance to invest more effort than is strictly necessary.
- As a consequence, the thoughts and actions that System 2 believes it has chosen are often guided by ... System 1."

- Dr. Daniel Kahneman

A close-up, profile view of Daniel Kahneman, an older man with white hair and glasses, looking slightly to the left. He is wearing a dark blue shirt. The background is blurred.

- "... one of its main characteristics is laziness, a reluctance to invest more effort than is strictly necessary.
- As a consequence, the thoughts and actions that System 2 believes it has chosen are often guided by ... System 1."

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The diagram illustrates the two systems of thinking. On the left, a large red circle contains the text "95%", representing System 1 - Unconscious. In the center is a gray silhouette of a human head in profile, facing right, with a white brain inside. On the right, a large black circle contains the text "5%", representing System 2 - Conscious.



95%



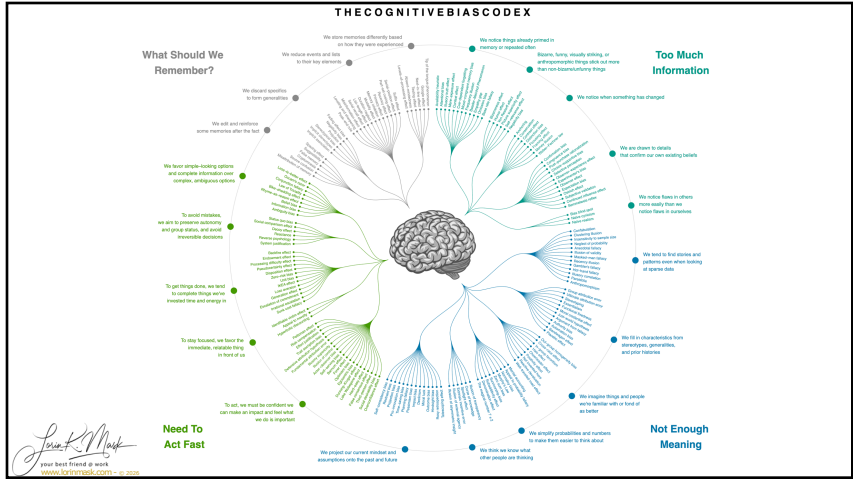
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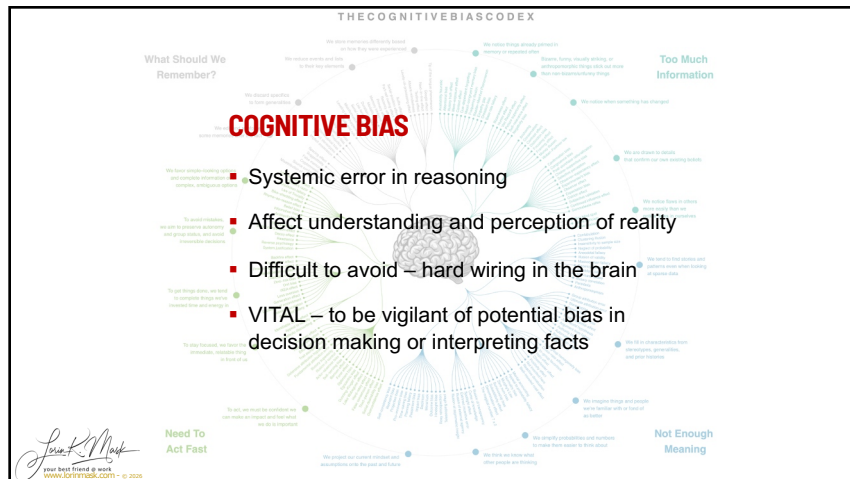


WHY WE NEED IT

Part 2

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NOT ALL BIASES ARE COGNITIVE

Behavioral biases may be unconscious, but they are not hardwired into our brains. They include:

- POWER BIAS:** The tendency to shape the data and recommendations to match what we think those in power want to hear.
- PLANNING FALLACY:** The tendency to use best-case scenarios and overly optimistic estimates to ensure proposals are approved.
- PREJUDICE:** Racism, sexism, religious intolerance, etc.

ORGANIZATIONAL DYSFUNCTION

Organizations magnify the biases of the individuals that make up that organization, and they also create more problems:

- Groupthink
- Satisficing
- Bureaucracy
- Internal Politics
- Careerism

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - RISK

HR.com Report — Future of HR Skills and Strategies 2026

- The "IT initiative" trap** — treating AI as a tech rollout instead of something that changes how people actually work
- Erosion of human connection** — over-automation weakening trust and psychological safety
- Algorithmic bias** — unmonitored systems creating inequity and legal exposure

THE ANTIDOTE IS UTILIZING CHALLENGE THINKING TOOLS

(Decision Support Red Teaming)

How **challenge thinking** helps:

- Engage "System 2" thinking
- Counter unconscious biases and heuristics
- Allow all voices to be heard
- Providing techniques to surface alternative perspectives.
- Force ourselves to challenge our own assumptions and AI output
- Leverage the wisdom of the group to overcome the blind spots of the individual

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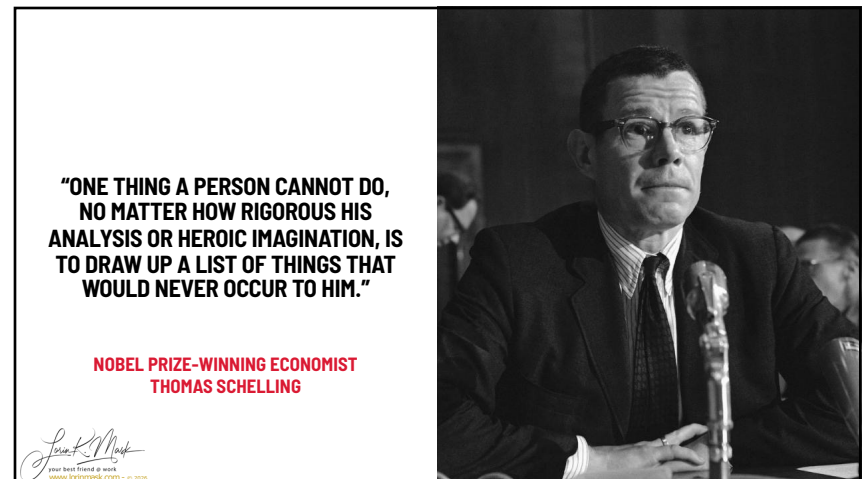
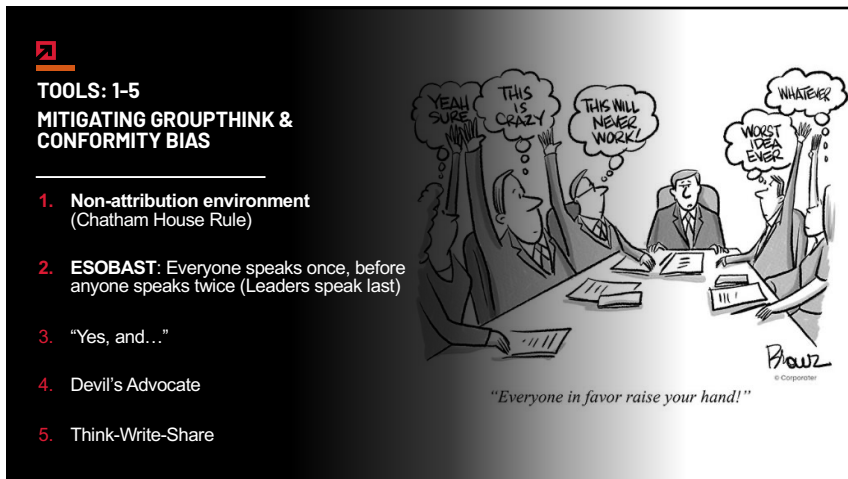
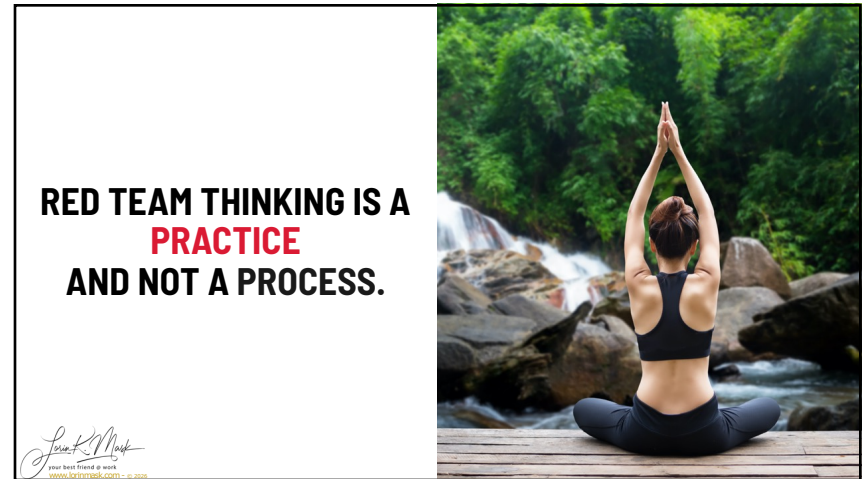
WHERE IT COMES FROM

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RED TEAM THINKING

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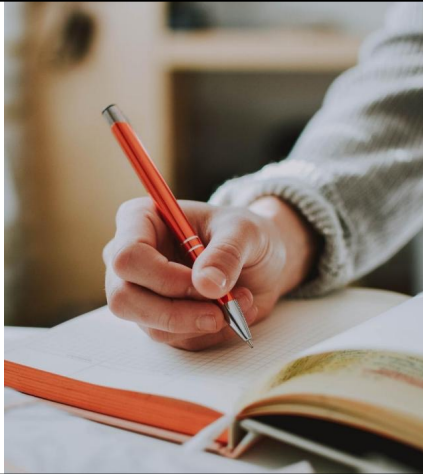


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TOOL #5
THINK-WRITE-SHARE

This is a way to:

- gather the wisdom of the group
 - one easy step to strengthen psychological safety in your organization and ensure every voice is heard
- Surface diverse ideas and perspectives
- engage System 2 thinking





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THINK-WRITE-SHARE

- Think:**
Consider the question, no writing (2 mins)
- Write:**
Use **BLOCK CAPITALS**, same color pen, on **One Side Only (2 mins)**
- Share:**
 - Turn over read,
 - or pass cards around or have someone collect them and pass them out.
 - Then each take turns reading what is written.





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THINK-WRITE-SHARE +
TOOL #6
WEIGHTED ANONYMOUS FEEDBACK

- Think:**
Consider the question, no writing (2 mins)
- Write:**
Use **BLOCK CAPITALS**, same color pen, on **One Side Only (2 mins)**
- Share:**
 - Pass cards to another person up to 4 times or until you here the sound
 - Read the card silently
 - Rate the idea 1-5 (5 being amazing!)
 - When I say go, repeat steps 1,2 & 3
 - Do this 5 times!!!
 - Stop and add the totals on the back
 - Top ideas get shared and discussed
 - All ideas are considered and discussed!

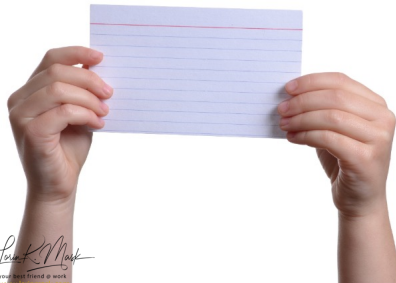




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THINK-WRITE-SHARE +
WEIGHTED ANONYMOUS FEEDBACK +
TOOL #3
LIES WE TELL OURSELVES

- Think:**
Consider the question, no writing (2 mins)
- Write:**
Use **BLOCK CAPITALS**, same color pen, on **One Side Only (2 mins)**
- Share:**
 - Pass cards to another person up to 4 times or until you here the sound
 - Read the card
 - Rate the idea 1-5 (5 being amazing!)
 - When I say go, repeat steps 1,2 & 3
 - Do this 5 times!!!
 - Stop and add the totals on the back
 - Top ideas get shared and discussed
 - All ideas are considered and discussed!



THINK-WRITE-SHARE + WEIGHTED ANONYMOUS FEEDBACK + TOOL #7 LIES WE TELL OURSELVES

- Think:**
Consider the question, no writing (2 mins)
- Write:**
Use **BLOCK CAPITALS**, same color pen, on **One Side Only** (2 mins)
- Share:**
 - Pass cards to another person up to 4 times or until you hear the sound
 - Read the card
 - Rate the idea 1-5 (5 being amazing!)
 - When I say go, repeat steps 1,2 & 3
 - Do this 5 times!!!
 - Stop and add the totals on the back
 - Top ideas get shared and discussed
 - All ideas are considered and discussed!

WEIGHTED ANONYMOUS FEEDBACK

Helps a group of people to democratically prioritise ideas, insights, problems etc.

Alternative facilitation:

- Physical dots
- Online digital whiteboards:
 - Preset virtual stickies on digital whiteboard tools, use icons
 - Mural (w/Feedbeo, like Mentiimeter but cut and paste are easier)

WEIGHTED ANONYMOUS FEEDBACK

You can use this technique to:

- Learn what people really think about a plan, problem, or situation.
- Leverage the wisdom of your teams and create psychological safety
- Ensure that everyone's voice is heard, and everyone's idea is considered.

STRESS TESTING STRATEGIES AND PLANS

We work to create better futures...

- Take longer and cost more
- Become committed too early
- Plans often fail
- AI must be monitored for accuracy and quality
- Challenging our **assumptions** is key (Assumptions Challenge)
- Leveraging the wisdom of the group to overcome the blind spots of the individual.
- Enabling you to make better decisions faster in today's complex world.

Resources

24 Tools – Red Team Thinking
238 pages – Red Team Handbook
33 Liberating Structures

- Problem analyses and strategy testing - ensuring that you are solving the right problem
- Challenging assumptions
- Possible futures analysis
- Seeing Perspectives of other people, groups, teams, and/or organizations
- Outside impact on internal teams and/or organizations
- Devil's advocacy
- Stakeholder influencing – the next step after analysis
- Root cause analysis with expanded possibilities
- Planning and analyzing certain futures from multiple angles, honoring the potential positives and negatives
- Pre-Mortem Analysis – begin at the end of a disaster and work backwards







RECAP

Today we covered:

- Challenge thinking, what it is, why we need it, where it comes from and how to apply it.

The tools we explored are:

1. Non-attribution
2. ESOBAST
3. "Yes, and..." or "Yes, and what I like about that is..."
4. Devil's Advocacy
5. Think-Write-Share
6. Weighted Anonymous Feedback
7. Lies We Tell Ourselves

...and about the need to deliberately test our assumptions.






Q and A

Handout and Slides







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Handout and Slides

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