



Seven Steps of Critical Thinking in the Assessment Process

Regardless of the **PURPOSE** of the assessment, the **PROCESS** of assessment always involves the same seven steps of critical thinking:

1. **Knowing why an assessment needs to be done** - what critical questions need to be answered and what decisions will be made using the information
2. **Determining the most pertinent and relevant criteria to be assessed** -- that is, the type, scope, and depth of information that must be gathered to inform the decision
3. **Implementing a variety of information-gathering strategies** to access and record the needed information
4. **Analyzing the information** (examining in detail) and formulating hypotheses about what the information reveals
5. **Testing out hypotheses** to assure a high degree of accuracy and consistency in the information
6. **Synthesizing or integrating the information** so it is congruent and allows accurate conclusions to be drawn
7. **Using the conclusions to make well-informed decisions** that achieve the desired outcome