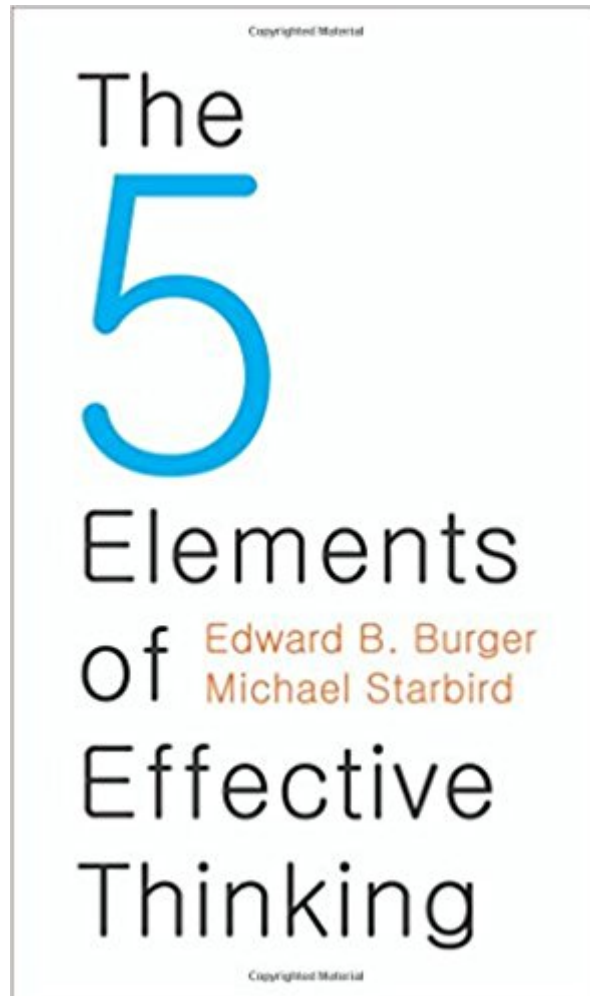




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# The 5 Elements Of Effective Thinking



## Synopsis

The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking presents practical, lively, and inspiring ways for you to become more successful through better thinking. The idea is simple: You can learn how to think far better by adopting specific strategies. Brilliant people aren't a special breed--they just use their minds differently. By using the straightforward and thought-provoking techniques in The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking, you will regularly find imaginative solutions to difficult challenges, and you will discover new ways of looking at your world and yourself--revealing previously hidden opportunities. The book offers real-life stories, explicit action items, and concrete methods that allow you to attain a deeper understanding of any issue, exploit the power of failure as a step toward success, develop a habit of creating probing questions, see the world of ideas as an ever-flowing stream of thought, and embrace the uplifting reality that we are all capable of change. No matter who you are, the practical mind-sets introduced in the book will empower you to realize any goal in a more creative, intelligent, and effective manner. Filled with engaging examples that unlock truths about thinking in every walk of life, The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking is written for all who want to reach their fullest potential--including students, parents, teachers, businesspeople, professionals, athletes, artists, leaders, and lifelong learners. Whenever you are stuck, need a new idea, or want to learn and grow, The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking will inspire and guide you on your way. To share thinking stories, go to: <http://5elementsofthinking.wordpress.com>

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Winner of the 2013 Silver Medal in Self-Help, Independent Publisher Book Awards"What do earth,

fire, air, and water have to do with effective thinking? Everything, according to mathematics professors Edward B. Burger and Michael Starbird. In *The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking*, the authors draw on these metaphor-laden elements from the natural world to demonstrate how to ask better questions, take calculated risks, learn from mistakes, and, ultimately, transform ourselves into more engaged and thoughtful citizens of the world. . . . *The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking* is a useful guide for anyone interested in tackling difficult subject matter, particularly in the classroom. The book also could serve as a solid supplementary text in courses on critical thinking."--Jennifer Moore, *ForeWord Reviews*"If you remember being told by your teachers to think harder and having no idea how, *The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking* should help. . . . This is a snappy, illuminating read that should appeal to anyone who has ever dreamed of being a genius and is willing to strive, step by step, to become one."--David Wilson, *South China Morning Post*"Thinking is good, enthuses this book by two distinguished teachers of mathematics. You might think you're being creative or having intuitions or conducting a romance or whatever, but it's all thinking, right? And you can learn to think better! So you can, and the advice herein, which includes many practical tenets of 'critical thinking', will surely be useful to many a schoolchild or business leader."--Steven Poole, *Guardian (U.K.)*"The authors aim to teach readers how to expand their intellectual and creative capacity by adopting habits that train the mind to see beyond the surface level of ideas in order to find innovative ways to solve problems. . . . Overall, *The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking* is a quick, easy read that is entertaining and engaging. It's the type of book that you can read in one sitting or read over time as you grapple to master the elements."--Catherine A. Cardno, *Education Week*"The challenge of books such as these is that, in the wrong hands, the contents can come across as banal generalities and just so much hokum. But the appeal of *The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking* lies in that its authors are mathematicians by profession, and it shows in how the book is written. It's a very systematic book about being organized and critical in one's thinking, written by individuals whose work demands that they are organized and critical in their thinking. Yet it isn't at all imposing; in fact, the discussion is often down-to-earth, and the fact that the book is structured like a playbook readers can easily apply certainly has its merits. In short, *The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking* is the kind of book I know would have helped me a lot in my days as a student. I'd like to think it will be helpful to students of today, too."--Brian L. Belen, *Brain Drain blog*"The root of success in everything is thinking--whether it's thinking disguised as intuition or as good values or as decision making or problem solving or creativity, it's all thinking. The surprising fact is that just a few learnable strategies of thinking can make you more effective."--John G. Agno, *Business Week's Coaching Tip blog*"Inspirational and engaging but also educational and immensely practical."--Anthony J. Sadar,

Washington Times" The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking by Edward B. Burger and Michael Starbird is a fun little book with great tips to improve overall thinking skills. . . . Suited for students who can employ the techniques in the book to earn better grades and become better thinkers."--Brandon Kroll, NACADA Journal

"There is undoubtedly much here that would be of practical use to professionals from all walks of life, and indeed other educators, such as management trainers and coaches. As a practical and helpful guide, particularly for students seeking to improve the quality of their thinking and learning, The Five Elements of Effective Thinking is a thought-provoking and useful manual."--Jonathan Gravells, Teachers College Record

"Teachers from primary grades to university courses can use the model in this book to deliver curriculum in a way that students are forced to develop thinking skills to successfully understand the material they are being taught and to identify their own next steps in learning. Although the authors draw most of their examples from the learning of mathematics, The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking can be applied in any classroom where thinking is emphasized."--Kent Miller, Canadian Teacher Magazine

"This is a short book, easy to read and understand. But its value is very high because it teaches us how to change the way we think. It shows us how to think effectively. Our thoughts precede our actions and govern our lives. The way we think determines our success and happiness in life. If these are important elements to you, so is this book."--Paiso Jamakar, Biz India

"Whenever you are stuck, need a new idea, or want to learn and grow, The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking will inspire and guide you on your way."--World Book Industry

"I've applied some of the ideas and they give real food for thought in terms of comparing and contrasting different approaches."--Ian Baulch-Jones, Quality World

"I remember as a kid in school being told by teachers to think harder and having no idea what to do. This book solves that once and for all. We now have a guide for people of all ages to learn how to think more effectively. I highly recommend this book."--Jack Canfield, cocreator of the New York Times best-selling Chicken Soup for the Soul® series and The Success Principles

"Think...fail...question...understand...change...learn: in their powerful new book, Burger and Starbird show students, teachers, and everyone else how to harness the genius of learning. The 5 Elements argues that the door to knowledge is not opened by a magical test. Instead, the key is for each of us to boldly embrace a willingness to fail while organizing persistent approaches to thinking. Even more than helping one master content, this book can lead to a satisfying and rewarding life of the mind."--Dennis Van Roekel, president of the National Education Association

"The authors invoke Michael Jordan, Warren Buffett, and Winston Churchill to illustrate practical approaches--including failing--to understanding, creativity, and wisdom. Their observations

apply to honing any skill from sports and school to leadership and citizenship. Knowing how to listen and learn has become a rare art--The 5 Elements is a timely tutorial."--Janet Brown, executive director of the Commission on Presidential Debates

"In this compact and remarkable book, two renowned professors share decades of teaching experience with anyone--from students to business people--seeking advice on how to improve skills and expand learning. It should be read, studied, and cherished--then reread."--Fay Vincent, former commissioner of Major League Baseball and former president of Columbia Pictures

"This book is just what American education needs. It guarantees invention and discovery."--Barbara Morgan, former NASA "Teacher in Space" astronaut

"The 5 Elements is an enormously insightful examination of what constitutes effective thinking. Everyone will find something of value in it."--Morton O. Schapiro, president of Northwestern University

"I highly recommend this book for instructors who care more about their students than test scores, for students who care more about learning than their GPA, for leaders of society and masters of the universe who care more about serving the public good than increasing their profit margin, and for artists who constantly remind us of the human condition. The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking provides comfort in a world that has lost its equilibrium."--Christopher J. Campisano, director of Princeton University's Program in Teacher Preparation

"Our brain is our greatest asset in life, so it is a 'no brainer' that we should invest some time learning how to use it effectively. In this concise and carefully crafted book, renowned professors Burger and Starbird demonstrate their talent for making difficult concepts accessible. An average reader can peruse this book in only a few hours, but for many people those will be the best hours ever spent on a book. Highly recommended."--Brett Walter, president of the Homeschool Buyers Co-op

"Edward Burger and Michael Starbird became renowned scholars and educators by demonstrating that mathematical expertise is within the reach of the general population and not confined to those with the 'right' aptitude. With the publication of this remarkably wise and useful book, they extend their pedagogical principles to the general realm of practical affairs and the entire range of academic endeavor. Regardless of the reader's background, The 5 Elements offers highly applicable and original lessons on how to think."--John W. Chandler, president emeritus of Hamilton College and Williams College

"So this is how Newton stood on the shoulders of giants! Burger and Starbird outline the basic methods of genius--so that ordinary people, too, can see further than others."--Robert W. Kustra, president of Boise State University

"[A] short and brilliant book with tips on being a better thinker. . . . [I]nspiring."--Derek Silvers

In *The 5 Elements of Effective Thinking*, Starbird and Burger

recommend calling things as you see them, but also trying to understand fundamental things more deeply, to discover more implications of established truths. They advocate calling things as you see them as a starting point, as a way to establish the obvious and find out what else can be observed. They are commending, not banality or the obvious per se, but the process of recognition and discovery which starts with stating the obvious.

Some good points. Probably wouldn't have bought it if it hadn't been required class reading, but it's worth it if you like thinking about how you think. Plus, anything by Starbird is probably excellent.

This book was recommended to my class during a learning course. The authors pare down to the basic elements of effective learning in a concise, engaging and actionable format. I strongly recommend this book to learners at all stages, from tweens to professors.

Sound ideas for reflecting on learning how to learn. Fits nicely with the work of Edward De Bono. Aligns with the recommendations and Peter Drucker's autobiography. Wish I had given these ideas more thought in my teens and 20s but what the heck still worth using in my 60s and 70s.

Burger and Starbird make a valid argument to slow down and use reasoning skills to better define problems and to then effectively deal with solutions. Helpful suggestions are provided to improve understanding and application of new knowledge. The material is presented through the use of illustrations from life experience. Their focus is on effective thinking skills and they summarize these steps in an easy to remember fashion. Often with material such as this the points covered are valid but do take extended effort to be retained and become a part of one's way of thinking. As Kahneman brought out in his book "Thinking Fast and Slow" the human tendency is to rely on quick decisions without taking the time and effort to use solid reasoning skills. This book is one that needs to be reviewed from time to time or at least consulted when faced with important decisions in life. Unlike many of the critical thinking books out there, that can be over whelming, this book provides five solid points to make one a better thinker. It is a short book, but conveys realistic suggestions for improving one's learning and reasoning skills. I would recommend this book, especially to students and teachers but also to any that would like to improve their reasoning abilities.

This is a great book overall! It is practicable, practical, and focused on very simple but very useful and overlooked ideas. My main issue was that it felt a little amateur in presentation (not in the core

ideas). That might have been a formatting issue with my device, but often the language also felt over simplified. Still, that doesn't detract from its usefulness.

This book is a great value for your time and well worth reading. It outlines some very important concepts that separate average learners and great learners. I took a lot of notes to make sure I commit them to memory and keep them in the back of my mind all the time. It's an easy, quick read, although the authors recommend reading it several times. I think rereading it would be worthwhile as well. My only gripe was that the writing wasn't all that it could be. At times, it was awkward and the concepts weren't stated as eloquently as they perhaps could've been. The authors should've taken their own advice and iterated over it a few more times.

This book demonstrates how effective thinking can be mastered. It is insightful and practical. I find this book very useful. I read it more than two times as suggested by the authors. Personally, when I am on a given work, I try to get it right for the first time, which almost never ends up successfully as I do imagine before I begin working. But this book does teach and calls to mind a principal truth that most people are not aware of or do forget for the most of time. In order to succeed you must first fail, then learn from your mistakes and misconceptions to make it right the next time you get at the topic you want to master. This book should be read by everyone who is involved in intellectual work throughout his life. Great thanks for the authors.

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