

SYSTEM THINKING

Introduction

Think about how a car works. The engine helps the car run, the steering wheel works to direct the car, the wheels allow the car to move and the seats allow us to comfortably sit in the cars. All of the parts of a car work in unison to create a larger system, a fully functioning car. However, when you take all the pieces apart, it's no longer a car, just a pile of parts! So how does this connect to system thinking? System thinking is understanding the links and interactions between elements and how they combine to create a larger system. By understanding the parts that make up a whole, it allows us to not only form new perspectives on the problem at hand, but also allow us to see how things are interconnected and influence each other.

So what makes someone a system thinker? System thinkers work to understand the bigger pictures and the relationships between the parts. By understanding a system fully, they can recognize that a system's structure causes its behavior and identify cause and effect relationships within the system. This allows them to change their perspectives and determine leverage points to change the system that will inspire new perspectives. And through analyzing the problem as a whole and resisting the urge to make quick decisions, system thinkers work to make decisions that will overall have short and long-term effects.

Northeastern Connections

Faculty Connection

<http://catalog.northeastern.edu/undergraduate/business/concentrations/supply-chain-management/>

<https://cee.northeastern.edu/>

Student Connection

A

Do Now

A

Activity

A

Materials Needed:

You can use any materials you want but here are some suggestions:

- A

Steps:

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Discussion Questions:

- A

Share Your Results

We'd love to know how the activity and/or the "do now" turned out! What worked and what didn't work? Please share with us something you learned and/or send us pictures! Email us at stem@northeastern.edu.

Related links/Extensions

- e

