

# **THEORY OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES: TEACHING CRITICAL THINKING IN AN ONLINE CLASSROOM**

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## **Importance of Critical Thinking**

Marketing managers should constantly monitor the environmental influences and sort through a plethora of data in order to design effective marketing strategies. Marketers should learn how to assess this data and determine what is relevant when designing the marketing strategies. The process for assessing this data is critical thinking. Educators should determine the most effective methods for teaching critical thinking in the online classroom.

## **Teaching Critical Thinking in an Online Classroom**

Limited literature exists on how to teach critical thinking in an online classroom. Tyler and Loventhal (2011) suggested the need for academic rigor to bring credibility to online instruction for teaching critical thinking. Cooper (2000) suggested to discover students' learning styles and to enhance classroom instruction with technology to aid in student success. Watrous-McCabe (2005) suggested a broad range of technologies are available to support online learning such as "web conferencing, online chats, blogs, discussion boards, interactive games, and Internet resources" (para. 23). These technologies could be applied using Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences for teaching critical thinking skills.

## **Theory of Multiple Intelligences**

Gardner (1983) identified eight intelligences and stated the intelligences are more a potential for solving problems than a measurement of a single IQ score. Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences along with the learning styles for problem solving and decision making can enhance student comprehension of critical thinking skills. By applying different intelligences, critical thinking skills can be taught in such a manner to increase student comprehension and success.

## **Different Learning Styles**

The most common learning styles are visual, auditory, and tactile ("Learning Styles," n.d.). The learning styles in combination with the multiple intelligences give educators insight into the preferred method of how their students process information.

## **Conclusion**

The intense global competition for the same consumers makes the critical thinking skills that are used in designing effective marketing strategies one of the few sustainable competitive advantages. Specific activities using all of the multiple intelligences and learning styles will engage the marketing student in learning the critical thinking process. Because of the limited literature and few studies that exist applying the theory of multiple intelligences and critical thinking skills to an online marketing classroom, further development is needed.

References Available upon Request