

MEMORARE

# DEVELOPING CRITICAL APTITUDE

A challenge for reconsideration  
of employee training

LYCEUM  
INSTITUTE

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# DEVELOPING CRITICAL APTITUDE:

A challenge for reconsideration of employee training

What are your employees lacking? Training? Dedication? Focus? *Care*? Good employees always possess more than mere technical skills: they communicate well, plan logically, reason clearly, and behave ethically. We call this set of abilities "Critical Aptitude". Employees possessing critical aptitude make a company flourish.

Today, educational institutions have become focused exclusively on training in technical skills, leaving these other abilities underdeveloped in their graduates. By and large, hiring employees in possession of critical aptitude has become a matter of luck rather than of successful recruitment.

But what if the approach to hiring employees itself needs to change? What if, instead of seeking employees as plug-and-play components of an extant structure, they were seen as organic investments for long-term stability and development?

In recent years, many organizations have recognized the need for continued technical training, ensuring that their employees have the skills needed for adapting to the constantly changing environments of business. Yet the "soft skills" remain neglected at every level, and businesses suffer through high rates of turnover, weak corporate culture, and fractious relationships between employers and employees.

## Professional Development Programs

Many companies recognize the inadequacy of their employees' training and education, particularly in the abilities of Critical Aptitude. Professional Development programs often attempt to

respond to these needs with superficial treatments, often grounded in pop-psychology.

But these are cheap solutions and produce cheap results. Subjecting your employees to personality tests and employing different management styles increases manipulative operationalization that might benefit the bottom line in the short term, but will not produce meaningful development of a real corporate culture.

## Critical Aptitude and Employee Assets

Helping your employees increase their critical aptitude allows a company both to promote within and to build a strong culture of loyalty and dedication. But how do you develop this critical aptitude? Enrollment in the Lyceum Institute builds employees' *habits* of reflexive self-awareness through rigorous and frequent questioning concerned not only with what is **useful** but with what is **true** and **good**.

This approach to critical aptitude teaches employees and especially managers better to solve problems, handle difficulties ethically, take accountability, manage emotions, build trust, follow direction intelligently, maintain honesty, foster a united culture, act as leaders when appropriate, and take thoughtful initiative. Most of all, it develops an attitude of taking care for one's actions, personally and professionally.

By investing in the development of critical aptitude, you transform your employees into **dynamic assets**, capable of bringing their insights and talents to every level of your organization.

## The Lyceum Institute Program

The program of instruction made available by the Lyceum Institute—highly flexible and fully digital—enables enrollees to develop this critical aptitude in an environment that encourages striving at their own pace: teaching them to improve habits in communication,

planning, critical reasoning, and consideration in the light of ethical principles.

Members of the Lyceum Institute have access to a wide range of learning opportunities: including a large repository of archived philosophy lectures, regularly scheduled live seminars, and a growing number of second-language programs.

However, for developing the skills of critical aptitude, this specific course of study is recommended:

### **Introduction to Philosophical Thinking**

An eight-week course that introduces questions concerning truth and belief, power and virtue, meaning, logic, how to think about the world and how to think about the self. Participants will learn how to identify and question their presuppositions and critically evaluate their positions.

### **Trivium: Grammar**

A twelve-week course that fosters the ability not only to write with correct English grammar but also to structure and categorize well the objects of one's thinking. Language is here taught not only as a tool, but as something integral to our human well-being.

### **Ethics: The Good Life**

An eight-week course that challenges participants to reflect on the meaning of life and how to live integrally. These questions are essential to maintaining a healthy life-work balance, and to finding fulfillment through our employment.

### **Trivium: Logic**

A twelve-week course that teaches the fundamentals of reasoning itself by examining the activity of the human mind and the relational structure whereby we move from awareness of objects to conclusions about their meaning and our actions respecting them. An essential course for anyone looking to improve reasoning skills.

## **Ethics: Virtue**

An eight-week course that teaches ethics not as a system of rules by which to determine what is right to do, but as principles whereby we learn *to be good*, with emphasis on the virtues of moderation, fortitude, justice, prudence, and friendship.

## **Introduction to Philosophical Personhood**

An eight-week course that challenges participants to examine what it means to be a human person. Topics include the concept of human nature, the faculties of the human person, the relational constitution of society, and the experience of culture.

## **Trivium: Rhetoric**

A twelve-week course that examines persuasive discourse not as a means of manipulation but as a process of discovering and revealing the truth through the thoughtful use of language. Participants will learn how to structure their presentations, practice composition and oration, and how to integrate all they have learned in previous courses.

Beyond these seven core courses lies an ever-expanding range of optional studies: from aesthetics to philosophical psychology, from politics to semiotics, from Classical Latin to modern German, and much more. These programs are structured to be flexible, with passive learning content structured asynchronously in multiple means (audible and visible) while active learning and accountability are maintained through regularly scheduled synchronous and engaging meetings that challenge participants to undertake active practice in thinking and communicating.

## **Develop to Attract and Retain**

A company's reputation in the twenty-first century depends on a multitude of factors, such as: the quality of its products, the character of its leaders, the embodiment of environmental, social, and governance values, and the efficiency of its services. But the

single most important factor in building a good reputation for your business is the treatment of employees.

Research has shown that companies who provide opportunity for their employees to develop their aptitude are rated better places to work, have higher rates of employee retention, and are more attractive to talented workers seeking new employment. The development of professional, technical skills satisfies only a part of the development that employees seek—and only an element of what employers need.

By providing an atmosphere in which your employees improve their critical aptitude, the Lyceum Institute will help you will retain and attract talented team members and build foundations for a strong organizational culture.

*Contact us today to discuss how enrolling your employees in the Lyceum Institute can benefit your business.*

## Executive Director

My name is Brian Kemple and I hold a PhD in Philosophy from the University of St. Thomas, in Houston TX. I have written two scholarly books (*Ens Primum Cognitum in Thomas Aquinas and the Tradition: The Philosophy of Being as First Known* and *The Intersection of Semiotics and Phenomenology: Peirce and Heidegger in Dialogue*), two public-oriented books (an *Introduction to Philosophical Principles* and *Linguistic Signification: A Classical and Semiotic Course in Grammar & Composition*), a number of scholarly articles and a few public-oriented ones, as well.

After receiving my PhD and spending a few years on the academic job market, I began to see the structure of academia as inhibiting rather than enabling philosophical thinking, both for professors and for students. The thoughts of Aquinas and Peirce are equally rejected by mainstream academia, and opportunities outside the mainstream are few and far between (becoming fewer and farther by the day). I realized I had a choice: I could continue striving for a job in a broken system, or I could do something different—risky, but possibly better not only for myself but for those I teach.

Thus, I started the Lyceum Institute. In the span of a few years, it has grown beyond my greatest expectations and proven fruitful for not only myself but for the whole community of participants. I am excited by the constantly-appearing opportunities and the future appears unlimited.

## Mission Statement

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The Lyceum Institute provides a digital environment dedicated to fostering the philosophical habit—of questioning the truth of things and the good of life—in all its members, as we collectively pursue the never-ending education of a truly mind-liberating nature. Much of education depends upon the atmosphere in which we immerse ourselves, and, in the twenty-first century, we all inhabit a digital atmosphere. The Lyceum Institute seeks a continual, communal, and thoughtful ennobling of that atmosphere.

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