

*Links and videos within the Navigator are best viewed and experienced using a non-NMCI device.
If you are using an NMCI machine, full links are provided on page 4.
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COMPETENCY
CORNER

In this issue we are focusing on **Strategic Thinking**: Innovating through the analysis of issues and trends and how these link to the responsibilities, capabilities, and potential of the organization.

Review these five descriptions to determine your proficiency level in Strategic Thinking:

- 1. Awareness:** You have the ability to think both logically and creatively to assess organizational opportunities and needs.
- 2. Basic:** You use industry best practices and trends to recommend ways to achieve high-impact results.
- 3. Intermediate:** You understand emerging challenges and opportunities, understand available options, formulate objectives, and determine the direction to achieve strategic objectives. You avoid rushing to conclusions and judgment.
- 4. Advanced:** You are able to anticipate emerging challenges and opportunities. You develop a clearly focused strategic vision. You use experiences and knowledge to more efficiently and effectively tackle strategic issues.
- 5. Expert:** You exemplify open-mindedness to all ideas without prioritizing your own ideas. You recognize internal and external subtleties, political and otherwise, to guide future direction and leverage opportunities for the organization.

READY TO BUILD YOUR SKILLS?

Opportunities include:

Awareness/Basic:

- You may think that strategic thinking is the responsibility of the leadership team, but it's never too early to start cultivating a forward-thinking mindset. Strategic thinking involves long-term planning for the future, taking into account factors that affect the success of the organization. Strategic thinking incorporates many of the foundational competencies such as [Problem Solving](#), [Communicating for Results](#), and [Continual Learning](#). As you work through other competencies, consider how they will help you build the skills needed to become a long-term planner and visionary.
- Practical exercise: Take some time to discuss a problem or an idea with a coach, mentor, or colleague. Listen to what they say, and ask questions to gain as much insight as possible. This will help you gain new perspectives on your problem, a key aspect of becoming a more strategic thinker.

Intermediate:

- Practical exercise: Practice thinking strategically in small ways. For example, take a few minutes to consider just one immediate problem you need to solve. As you consider possible solutions, think about the potential long-term effects of those solutions, beyond the immediate issue. Alternatively, write down some assumptions you have about that problem and question whether those assumptions are true. How might any of those assumptions be keeping you from considering a possible solution? Would the solution be clearer if that assumption weren't true? Can you change something to facilitate that solution? Challenging assumptions is one practice of strategic thinking and will help broaden your perspective.

**Advanced/Expert:**

- NEW this month:
 - Use the job aide, [4 Tips to Incorporate Strategic Thinking](#), as a reference for practical skills that can help you improve your strategic thinking and solve complex problems.
 - In the podcast, [Up Your Strategic Thinking Game in Just 5 Minutes a Day](#), explore how to cultivate your planning and strategic thinking skills through a series of daily practices.
 - Join the live webinar later this month, [Making Strategic Thinking Part of Your Daily Routine!](#) See more details on page 3.
- Practical exercise: Encourage your team to think strategically about problems and voice solutions. Take the time to listen to their ideas and suggestions.

LEARN MORE ...

You can find more learning and development opportunities on the [Strategic Thinking competency page](#) of the Career Compass Resource Center (CCRC), and in the [Career Compass Catalog](#).



Dear Navi,

Navi is your trustworthy confidant with sound advice for matters related to workforce development. As always, please consult with your local HR/LER/EEO/IG as appropriate on workplace issues.

Dear Navi,

I'm a maintenance mechanic and work with a small team for a Public Works Department. I've always focused on the technical skills my job demands and have never been very concerned with developing the so-called "soft skills." As the maintenance requests increase and our team gets stretched thinner, I've found myself noticing areas where we could improve our processes and possibly ease the burden, but I'm hesitant to speak up. Any tips on how I can present my ideas and be taken seriously?

— Hoping to Be Heard

Dear Hoping to Be Heard,

First of all, it's great to hear that you're naturally starting to observe your team's workflow patterns and asking strategic questions about how processes can be improved to better serve the overall mission. You're already exercising some of the practices of a strategic thinker!

The fact is, while strategic guidance comes from the top down, ideas about how to get better can come from anywhere within the organization. In fact, a [McKinsey study](#) that has recently been revisited and reframed for today's workforce, found that in the most successful organizations, strategic thinking capabilities are developed throughout the workforce, not just in the top echelons. Consequently, strategic thinking is not solely the responsibility of leadership.

Don't feel hesitant to share your thoughts. Your technical expertise and experience are exactly what has given you the ability to identify patterns that need to change in order to fully support the mission. And showing your boss and your peers that you're able to think for yourself and propose ideas that support organizational goals is a good thing – for you and the team.

That said, it's important that you fully develop your ideas for change so that you can present them in a way that will be received positively. The handout, [4 Tips to Incorporate Strategic Thinking](#), provides further practical ideas for improving your strategic thinking and cultivating your ability to solve complex problems. These tips will help you question, analyze, and test your ideas before you present them

so that you'll be better prepared to clearly explain how they will benefit the team and the organization as a whole.

On that note, ensure you have a comprehensive understanding of your organization's mission and strategy. The more you can tie the success of your team and the potential success of your ideas to the overall mission, the better. If you have a mentor within the organization, consider sharing your ideas and asking for help in formulating a plan of action. Seek out as much information as you can and consider the questions you might be asked in an effort to defend your suggestions.

Many other competencies support the development of your strategic thinking skills as well. In this case, further maturing your problem solving skills would be helpful. The steps outlined in the infographic, [Critical Thinking in 5 Steps](#), will help you better define the problem and your proposed solution.

Clearly strategic thinking is starting to come naturally to you. It's a useful skill to help you improve your work, develop those around you, and ultimately advance your career. Check out the podcast, [Up Your Strategic Thinking Game in Just 5 Minutes a Day](#), for simple, practical ways you can build strategic thinking into your daily routine and continue to develop those skills. Wishing you the best of luck in sharing your ideas for positive change!

-Navi

Do you have a question for Navi? Send your questions to NAVFAHQDearNavi@us.navy.mil, and you may be featured in an upcoming column of *Dear Navi*. All questions will remain anonymous.



SYSCOM TRAINING SUMMARY

Below is a list of all SYSCOM trainings being held in November and trainings in December that are now open for registration. Find more details and registration links on the [CCRC Event Calendar](#).



NOVEMBER TRAININGS

START DATE	EVENT
Tue, 01 Nov	Mid-Career Retirement Training (West)
Tue, 01 Nov	Pre-Retirement Training (West)
Wed, 02 Nov	Project & Program Management (East)
Mon, 07 Nov	Early Retirement Training (East)
Mon, 07 Nov	Current Supervisor Training II
Tue, 08 Nov	Project & Program Management (West)
Mon, 14 Nov	Current Supervisor Training I
Tue, 15 Nov	Live Webinar: Making Strategic Thinking Part of Your Daily Routine
Tue, 15 Nov	Financial Management Training (West)
Tue, 15 Nov	Pre-Retirement Training (East)
Thu, 17 Nov	Live Webinar: Making Strategic Thinking Part of Your Daily Routine
Tue, 29 Nov	Mid-Career Retirement Training (East)
Wed, 30 Nov	Financial Management Training (East)

DECEMBER TRAININGS OPEN FOR REGISTRATION

START DATE	EVENT
Tue, 06 Dec	Pre-Retirement Training (East)

Stay tuned for details on additional SYSCOM offerings.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY...

How to Demonstrate Your Strategic Thinking Skills

We've made the point so far that developing strategic thinking skills is important at every level of an organization, but it's not enough to simply think about the future or develop a strategy for achieving goals. You also must be able to demonstrate those skills to other members of the organization. No one can successfully make decisions in a vacuum when those decisions are going to affect other people. This article from Harvard Business Review makes the case that learning how to communicate your strategic efforts well is equally important. The author offers practical advice for clarifying your vision, gathering information, and effectively demonstrating that you can think strategically about the topics most important to your organization.

Read the full article [here](#).

CAREER COMPASS SPOTLIGHT

Live Webinar Coming This Month: Making Strategic Thinking Part of Your Daily Routine

In this webinar, you'll learn what strategic thinking is, practical ways to improve your strategic thinking, and how to make strategic thinking part of your daily life.

Two options are available:

- ▶ Tue, 15 Nov: 1000-1100 ET
- ▶ Thu, 17 Nov: 1500-1600 ET

Proficiency Level: Advanced/Expert

No need to register – mark your calendar and look for the emails from your local Civilian Training Advocate (BD17) for more details.



The upcoming holiday season provides an ideal opportunity to devote time to your professional development and prepare for the new year.

- ▶ Haven't taken your Employee Competency Assessment (ECA) yet? Take 10 minutes and complete it [here](#).
- ▶ Need to complete your Individual Development Plan (IDP) to guide your growth throughout the year? Find it [here](#).

Your IDP is a critical tool to strategically guide your development all year long.



If you are unable to access the links on pages 1–3, copy and paste the full links below into the URL bar of a new browser window to view the content.

Competency Corner

Problem Solving Competency Page – <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Competency-Development-Content/Problem-Solving/>

Communicating for Results Competency Page – <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Competency-Development-Content/Communicating-for-Results/>

Continual Learning Competency Page – <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Competency-Development-Content/Continual-Learning/>

4 Tips to Incorporate Strategic Thinking (Job Aide) – [https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20\(WFD\)/CCRC/CDC/Strategic%20Thinking/Job%20Aides/4_Tips_to_Incorporate_Strategic_Thinking_JobAide_Final.pdf](https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20(WFD)/CCRC/CDC/Strategic%20Thinking/Job%20Aides/4_Tips_to_Incorporate_Strategic_Thinking_JobAide_Final.pdf)

Up Your Strategic Thinking Game in Just 5 Minutes a Day (Podcast) – [https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20\(WFD\)/CCRC/CDC/Strategic%20Thinking/Podcasts/Up%20Your%20Strategic%20Thinking/Up_Your_Strategic_Thinking_Game_Podcast_Final.mp3](https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20(WFD)/CCRC/CDC/Strategic%20Thinking/Podcasts/Up%20Your%20Strategic%20Thinking/Up_Your_Strategic_Thinking_Game_Podcast_Final.mp3)

Making Strategic Thinking Part of Your Daily Routine – <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Event-Calendar/>

Strategic Thinking Competency Page – <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Competency-Development-Content/Strategic-Thinking/>

Career Compass Catalog – <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Career-Compass-Catalog/>

Dear Navi

McKinsey Study on "Thinking Strategically" – <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/thinking-strategically>

4 Tips to Incorporate Strategic Thinking (Job Aide) – [https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20\(WFD\)/CCRC/CDC/Strategic%20Thinking/Job%20Aides/4_Tips_to_Incorporate_Strategic_Thinking_JobAide_Final.pdf](https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20(WFD)/CCRC/CDC/Strategic%20Thinking/Job%20Aides/4_Tips_to_Incorporate_Strategic_Thinking_JobAide_Final.pdf)

Critical Thinking in 5 Steps (Infographic) – [https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20\(WFD\)/CCRC/CDC/Problem%20Solving/Infographics/Critical-Thinking-5-Steps-Infographic.pdf](https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20(WFD)/CCRC/CDC/Problem%20Solving/Infographics/Critical-Thinking-5-Steps-Infographic.pdf)

Up Your Strategic Thinking Game in Just 5 Minutes a Day (Podcast) – [https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20\(WFD\)/CCRC/CDC/Strategic%20Thinking/Podcasts/Up%20Your%20Strategic%20Thinking/Up_Your_Strategic_Thinking_Game_Podcast_Final.mp3](https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Portals/68/NAVFAC/Careers/CC%20(WFD)/CCRC/CDC/Strategic%20Thinking/Podcasts/Up%20Your%20Strategic%20Thinking/Up_Your_Strategic_Thinking_Game_Podcast_Final.mp3)

SYSCOM Training Summary

CCRC Event Calendar – <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Event-Calendar/>

What the Experts Say

Read the full article, "How to Demonstrate your Strategic Thinking Skills" – <https://hbr.org/2019/09/how-to-demonstrate-your-strategic-thinking-skills>

Career Compass Spotlight

Career Compass Resource Center (CCRC) – <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/>

Employee Competency Assessment – <https://chci-survey.com/eca/>

Individual Development Plan – <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center/Individual-Development-Plan/>

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<https://navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Career-Compass-Workforce-Development/Career-Compass-Resource-Center>

