

**AUSTHINK**  
C O N S U L T I N G

# Advanced Reasoning and Analysis

A three-day workshop covering advanced reasoning and argument skills, based on mapping techniques and using the JFK assassination as a case study.

# Overview

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- The Advanced Reasoning and Analysis (ARA) workshop is an intensive three-day introduction to advanced concepts and skills of reasoning and argumentation.
- Participants are generally already proficient, and are seeking to take their understanding and performance to a new level.
- The ARA workshop uses software-supported argument mapping techniques and a very engaging case study.
- Austhink has delivered the ARA workshop many dozens of times, to organisations ranging from law firms and large corporations to intelligence agencies. The workshop is continually being refined.

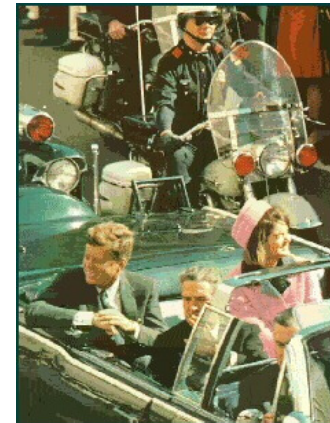
# The JFK Case Study

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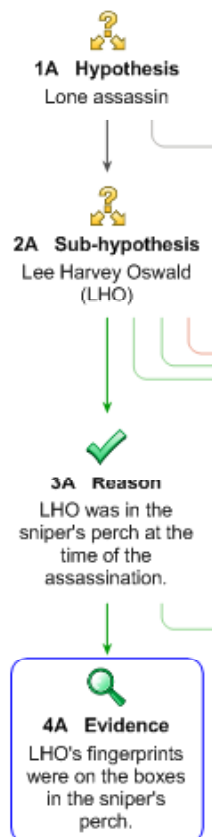
The workshop case study is the 1963 assassination of US President John F. Kennedy. We focus on the events in Dealey Plaza, and consider the arguments that there was a conspiracy.

Participants universally find the JFK case deeply engaging, and it provides excellent material for training in advanced reasoning and argument skills.

Austhink does not promote conspiracy theories. The conspiracy arguments fail, but this can only be properly demonstrated with rigorous analysis and attention to detail.



# Workshop Content



- **Macrostructure:** assembling, organising and refining complex sets of arguments
- **Microstructure:** fine-grained analysis of reasoning, including exposing critical assumptions
- **Evaluation:** identifying strengths and weaknesses of individual inferences and complex cases
- **Argument mapping:** key concepts and techniques
- **Technical skills:** using argument mapping software

# Benefits

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*It has helped me to better analyse information, set out clear arguments and develop more reasoned recommendations and supporting data for briefs and reports prepared in performing my duties.*

*R.E., senior public servant*

Participants will have improved general critical thinking skills. Specifically they will be:

- Better able to articulate and organize complex arguments
- Better able to identify strengths and weaknesses in reasoning
- Better able to collaborate with others in tasks involving reasoning and argument
- Better able to make and defend decisions turning on complex arguments
- Better able to participate in developing evidence-based policy
- Better able to lead and mentor others in rigorous reasoning and argumentation

# Facilitators

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The facilitators are leading experts in the use of mapping techniques to improve reasoning and argument skills and performance. They have extensive experience conducting the ARA workshop with high-level participants in many different organisations, in Australia and North America.



- **Dr. Tim van Gelder** is a cognitive scientist with an international reputation for his work in critical thinking and reasoning skill acquisition. He pioneered the development of argument mapping and developed the software tools Rationale and bCisive.



- **Dr Paul Monk** is a widely recognised author and public intellectual. After gaining a PhD in international relations he worked for the Defense Intelligence Organisation, becoming head of China analysis. He has written many books and articles on a diverse array of topics, but with a focus on our thinking capacities.

# Workshop Structure

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## **Hands on**

The workshop is conducted in a “hands-on” manner, using the bCisive software and numerous exercises, leaving participants able to apply their new knowledge and skills as soon as they return to their desks.

- The workshop is conducted in four sessions of approx. 90-105 minutes with breaks for morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea.
- Generally the workshop runs from 9.00-5.00 three consecutive days. However alternative arrangements are possible.
- The workshop requires computers for participants and multimedia equipment (data projector, audio).



# Pricing for ARA workshop

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## **Price Structure**

The fee for the Austhink Advanced Reasoning and Analysis workshop is \$2400 (ex. GST) per participant (min 6 participants). The fee includes:

- Prior consultation with customer
- Preparation and organisation (e.g. facilities)
- Facilitation by an appropriate number of Austhink staff
- Training materials, inc. workshop booklet for participants
- Evaluation and follow-up with customer

## **Terms and Conditions**

Key points

1. Additional direct expenses (travel, facility fees, catering) charged at cost plus 10% for overheads.
2. Deposit of 50% of fee paid in advance to secure booking; balance payable on delivery.
3. Additional days (e.g. travel days) charged at \$800 (ex GST) per day
4. Business class airfares for international flights

For more information please ask for our full Terms and Conditions.

## **Special Arrangements**

We recognize that many organisations have unique constraints in relation to training expenditures. Austhink is frequently able to make special arrangements to accommodate these constraints. Please feel free to discuss your needs with one of our Principal Consultants.





# About Austhink Consulting

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Austhink Consulting is a critical thinking and communications consultancy based in Melbourne, Australia.

Since 2000 we have been providing facilitation, training and consulting services to organisations in all sectors (government, professional, corporate and non-profit) in Australia and overseas, particularly the US.

Our unique expertise lies in using our distinctive mapping techniques to improve the clarity and rigour of thinking about complex issues.

Our techniques are based on extensive original research at the University of Melbourne. The techniques are now being adopted by organisations around the world.

**bCisive**<sup>™</sup>

Current and recent clients include Rio Tinto, ANZ, Vanguard, Green Cross, Origin Energy, The Australian National University, and the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment.

 **Rationale**<sup>™</sup>

In 2004 we set up a sister company, Austhink Software to develop tools for the diagrammatic display of complex reasoning in both education and the workplace. Austhink Software has released the bCisive and Rationale packages. bCisive is the main tool used in Austhink Consulting activities.



# Contacting us

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