

# Learning Processes in Discussion Boards



Learning processes can be understood as ways that we gain and build knowledge. Three of the more common learning processes are included here. Additionally you'll find examples of how discussion board prompts encourage these approaches to thinking, along with suggestions of how you can help students consistently apply them.

## What is it?

### Critical Thinking

*Reflective Logical Evidence-based*

The process of "evaluating the accuracy, credibility, and worth of information and lines of reasoning."

## How is it applied in Discussion Boards?

Discussion board prompts often ask students to think critically of the course concepts. Threads can be seen as opportunities for persuasive arguments, where students defend their perspective through reasoning and respectfully challenge others.

**Example prompt:** *Choose two existing companies to evaluate: one large company and one small company. Through research, develop a short list of their top three competitive advantages. In your opinion, are these advantages sustainable?*

## How can you encourage it?

### Encourage intellectual skepticism!

- Model this learning process through asking probing and challenging questions.
- Share resources and provide reasoning.
- Encourage differences in perspective while maintaining group harmony.

### Constructivism

*Individual & Social*

The process of constructing and organizing knowledge, rather than just acquiring or absorbing it.

Discussion boards support social constructivism by bringing people together to work through and make sense of their experiences as it relates to learning while creating engagement.

**Example prompt:** *Have you ever experienced a situation where you were judged for your age, gender, race, or size? Describe the instance and how you would handle it differently next time. Be sure to include three of the conflict resolution and assertive communication techniques from this week's reading. Respond to a peer's solution by adding a suggestion that may also be helpful in the given incident.*

### Seek and value students' points of view!

- Bring relevance to the course concepts
- Ask students what they think they know and why they know it.
- Analyze students' understanding and customize instructional practice.

### Metacognition

*Thinking about thinking*

Awareness and understandings of one's own thinking and learning process.

Discussion boards encourage self-reflection, where students can exchange their learning processes and strategies.

**Example prompt:** *What do you know about running your own business-about being your own boss? Have you ever considered working for yourself rather than having a job and working for someone else? Can you think of any advantages and disadvantages to being a small business owner \*an entrepreneur?*

### Acknowledge and highlight learning processes!

- Reinforce effective learning processes students share.
- Provide solutions/suggestions where learning strategies could be more efficient.
- Model learning and study strategies.