



Application for Certification in the Paul-Elder Approach to Critical Thinking™

Revised November 14th, 2023

Instructions:

1. Before submitting this application, please ensure you have read through the entire [White Paper on Certification](#).
2. Please complete and submit this application after successfully completing your certification training and assessments.
3. Upon approving this application, the Foundation for Critical Thinking will provide an invoice for the \$500 certification fee. You will receive documentation that confirms your certification after completing payment.
4. If you have questions or concerns not addressed in the [White Paper on Certification](#) or this application, please contact us at cct@criticalthinking.org or at 1-800-833-3645. (Please leave a voicemail if no one is available to take your call.)

Last name:

First name:

Date:

Street address:

State/Province:

ZIP or Postal Code:

Country:

Email address:

Phone number(s):

Educational Institutions Attended	Year of Graduation	Subject(s) Studied	Degree Acquired
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Place(s) of work and job title(s)

Please answer the following questions on separate sheets of paper, or in a separate digital document, and submit your answers with your application.

- What do you intend to do with certification once achieved?
- Do you intend to use the certification for internal purposes only? In other words, do you intend to use certification solely for teaching others within your institution or organization? If so, please describe precisely how you intend to work internally using this certification.
- Do you intend to use certification for external purposes – for example, as a professional consultant? If so, please describe precisely how you intend to use this certification in such contexts.

The purpose of the Foundation for Critical Thinking is to advance fairminded critical thinking in human societies across the world and in every part of human life. We assume that those interested in certification in our approach share this goal and will use our work in keeping with this philosophy.

We also want to ensure that our work is not taken out of context and misapplied. Again, we are fundamentally concerned with advancing a fairminded conception of critical thinking - *strong-sense critical thinking*, rather than weak-sense critical thinking. In other words, we do not support our work being used to foster critical thinking without concern for the rights and needs of people and other sentient creatures across the world.

This application is for Level One Certification in the Paul-Elder Approach to Critical Thinking. Facilitators at this level show proficiency in leading foundational activities in:

- The analysis of thought (focused on the elements of reasoning).
- The assessment of thought (focused on the universal intellectual standards).
- The intellectual virtues.
- Understanding academic subjects and professions as modes of thinking to be reasoned through using the tools of criticality.
- The intrinsic barriers to critical thought, egocentric and sociocentric thinking.
- Bringing critical thinking into everyday learning, work, and decision-making.

Given these premises, by signing this application, you (the applicant) agree 1) to all provisions and requirements described in this document, and 2) that you have read our [White Paper on Certification](#) in full and agree to all of its provisions and requirements. Among these provisions and requirements are the following.

- 1) You understand that after your application is approved, the Foundation for Critical Thinking will email an invoice for the \$500 certification fee, to be paid within thirty (30) days.
- 2) You understand that after you have completed the certification payment, the Foundation for Critical Thinking will supply documentation confirming your certification status. This documentation will typically be provided within three (3) business days after payment is complete, although extenuating circumstances may require additional time.
- 3) You understand that your certification will remain in effect for one year from the date that you receive the documentation mentioned in #2 above, unless you are decertified per the provisions in #12 below.
- 4) You understand that if you wish to maintain your certification status, you must reapply each year, and the Foundation for Critical Thinking must approve your application contingent upon the following:
 - a) To remain certified, you must continue training each year directly under Foundation for Critical Thinking Scholars and/or Fellows. This entails one of the following:
 - i) Engaged participation in at least one Foundation for Critical Thinking [event](#), [course](#), or [guided study group](#).

-or-

 - ii) A contracted tutoring/training series with one of our Fellows or Scholars. ([Contact us](#) for options and details.)

- 5) Every four (4) months while certified, you will video-record yourself leading a session on critical thinking and submit this video footage to the Foundation for Critical Thinking for review. This is to ensure that you are adhering to the concepts and principles in the Paul-Elder Approach.
- 6) If you cannot meet the requirement in #5 above – for example, due to conducting fewer than three workshops per year – you will notify the Foundation for Critical Thinking by email at your soonest availability. You further understand that the Foundation may then or thereafter request video footage of mock training sessions to offset the deficit in real training videos.
- 7) At the end of each year of certification, you will submit a report of the groups and individuals with which you utilized the Paul-Elder Approach during the preceding year.

If you are using the Paul-Elder Approach in consulting work, you will submit a report as described in item 12e below.

- 8) You will conduct yourself ethically in professional dealings and in representing the Paul-Elder Framework for Critical Thinking.
- 9) In teaching the Paul-Elder Framework to clients, colleagues, students, or employees, you will ensure that participants do one or both of the following:
 - a) Purchase (or have purchased for them) copies of whatever [books](#) and/or [Thinker's Guides](#) are necessary for facilitating the relevant activities.

-or-

 - b) Create membership accounts (or have accounts created for them) in [The Center for Critical Thinking Community Online](#).
- 10) You understand and agree that copyright laws apply to the use of our intellectual property. You will never create unauthorized copies of our [books](#), [Thinker's Guides](#), or other Foundation for Critical Thinking Materials.
- 11) You will never misrepresent the spirit, principles, or other contents of the Paul-Elder Approach to Critical Thinking, such as by:
 - a) Mixing in critical thinking approaches or theories of mind other than the Paul-Elder Framework when leading classes, workshops, sessions, etc. on

critical thinking.

- b) Adding to, subtracting from, or modifying the spirit, principles, or other contents of the Paul-Elder Approach.

12) If you are a consultant, you agree that:

- a) You will use only the Paul-Elder Framework when teaching critical thinking in consultation work, and will never substitute or mix in other critical thinking methodologies or theories of mind.
- b) When teaching critical thinking in consulting work, you will use only those activities approved by The Foundation for Critical Thinking, most of which are contained in the facilitator's manual that is given to all facilitators.
- c) When teaching critical thinking in consulting work, you will use only Foundation for Critical Thinking materials, such as [books](#) and [Thinker's Guides](#). These materials may be purchased in print or digital format, such as by having clients establish subscriptions in [The Center for Critical Thinking Community Online](#).
- d) When using books or materials in training on other subject matters, such as leadership books, you will have these approved by the Foundation for Critical Thinking to ensure that they do not contradict best critical thinking practices and theory.
- e) In place of item 7 above, you will submit an annual report in which you detail the workshops conducted throughout the year under the concept of "critical thinking." This will include remuneration received for each critical thinking workshop conducted and what Foundation for Critical Thinking materials were used in the workshop (e.g., [books](#), [Thinker's Guides](#), subscriptions to [The Center for Critical Thinking Community Online](#), etc.)
- f) You will enter a customized agreement in which a percentage of your net income acquired through facilitating critical-thinking workshops will be paid to the Foundation for Critical Thinking.

13) You understand that if you allow your certification to lapse, you can renew it by submitting an application within one year of the lapse. Beyond this one-year grace period, you must attend facilitators' training again to regain your certification.

14) Facilitators who violate the requirements for maintaining certification, and are determined by the Foundation for Critical Thinking to have done so in bad faith, may be decertified. Decertified facilitators may or may not be allowed to regain

certification after any period of time determined by the Foundation for Critical Thinking.

The Foundation reserves the right to publish the name of a decertified facilitator on www.criticalthinking.org, and in correspondence with its email list, if it finds that the decertified facilitator 1) has violated the requirements for maintaining certification in bad faith, and 2) is likely to falsely represent himself or herself as a certified facilitator.

To be completed by applicant:

“I have read and understood the policies and responsibilities for Certification in the Paul-Elder Approach to Critical Thinking, which appear on this application and in the Foundation for Critical Thinking’s [White Paper on Certification](#). If the Foundation for Critical Thinking finds that I have violated these responsibilities after I am certified in its approach, I understand that my certification can be immediately revoked. I further understand that if I am decertified, I will not be allowed in any way to say that I am affiliated with the Foundation for Critical Thinking, nor that I “have been certified” by the Foundation for Critical Thinking, since this would be misleading to the public. In the event that I am decertified, I understand that I will no longer be authorized to use the work of the Foundation for Critical Thinking in my work as a consultant, or otherwise, for financial remuneration.”

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed name: _____