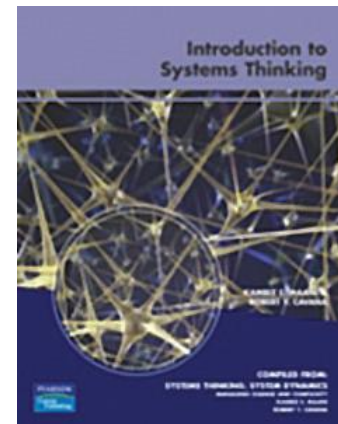
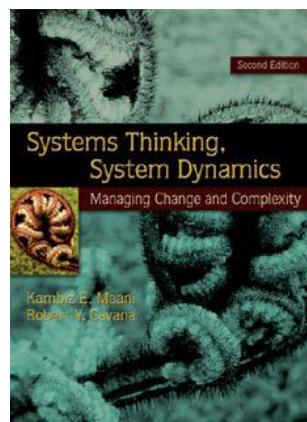
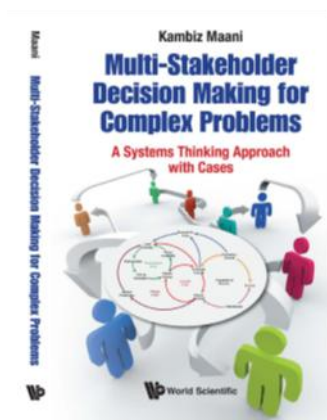


# Systems Thinking for Managing Complexity

With Internationally Acclaimed Expert

**DR. KAMBIZ MAANI**

*This is the century of complexity - Stephen Hawking*



Is your organisation prepared to effectively anticipate, respond to, and manage the emerging trends and challenges?

This practical training provides a powerful thinking framework and tool kit related to:

- Strategic Thinking
- Emotional Intelligence (EI)
- Planning & Decision Making
- Systemic Project Management
- Scenario Thinking and Planning

This Two-Day course will introduce concepts and tools of Systems Thinking & complexity management and relate them to endemic strategic issues and challenges facing organizations today.

Over the intensive two-day program, you will learn how to:

- Effectively deal with uncertainty and complexity
- Foresee the unintended consequences of actions, policies, and strategies
- Identify fundamental causes and solutions to chronic problems
- Avoid misjudging problem symptoms for their causes
- Reconcile dilemma of short-term fixes vs long terms interventions
- Resolve endemic staff morale and productivity problems
- Bring alignment of vision and action to teams and groups and company divisions

- Apply systemic leverage for sustainable interventions
- Become a learning organization

### What is Systems Thinking?

As the world has become increasingly complex we need to rethink leadership for a postmodern world. Systems Thinking is the dynamic, paradigm-breaking science of assisting business leaders and practitioners in seeing and understanding alternative perspectives within the greater picture so that they are able to strategize and plan effectively. It enables you to better comprehend interdependencies in the business world and to position yourself sustainably and profitably in a changing landscape.

*“Capital isn't that important in business. Experience isn't that important. You can get both of these things. What's important is ideas!”*

*Harvey S. Firestone*

How does Systems Thinking benefit management and organizations?

- Break down silo thinking and the “us-and-them” mentality in your organization
- Avoid costly strategic errors.
- Improve communications and collaboration.
- Improve process and revenue streams.
- Fact-based problem solving.
- The above enhanced efficiencies ultimately result in higher worker morale, less errors, higher productivity and a measurably improved bottom line.

### Why you should attend:

As part of realizing the above benefits, you will:

- Learn a state-of-the-art technique which enables complex issues to become manageable.
- Be able to effectively develop meaningful learning in your organization.
- Be able to use that learning to profitably enhance your people and organization’s capacity to think and act strategically.
- Learn how to effectively and smoothly transition from linear procedural thinking to broad-based, inclusive thinking that holds in balance both the macro and the micro viewpoints. This gives you the ability to align and harmonize the individual parts with the big picture and vision of your organization.

The program has been specifically designed to:

- Help you equip yourself, your management team and your organization, to successfully handle increasingly complex decisions and planning.
- Give you an indispensable tool in the form of Systems Thinking, to help you:
  - Create high-impact, market-driven strategies.
  - Develop business environmental awareness.
  - Influence and changing market dynamics successfully.
  - Move all parts of your company towards a shared vision.
  - Enable your people to own the big picture

### The Learning Modules

- What is Complexity Management?
- Why leaders, managers and organizations need Systems Thinking?
- What are the implications for:
  - Assessing where the organization is?
  - Integration across functions & organizations?

- Harmonizing organizational culture?
- Breaking down silo mentality?
- Managing complexity?
- Conducting interactive & scenario planning?
- How to create & present systems diagrams?
- How to create constructive dialogue and build learning teams and organizations?
- How to implement Systems Thinking in your organization?
- Real case studies in financial markets, housing market, healthcare policy, energy, banking, farming sectors and many others

*“The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence - it is to act with yesterday’s logic.”*  
*Peter Drucker*

### **Expected Learning’s**

At the conclusion of the workshop, participants will be able to use Systems Thinking concepts and tools to model and explain complex and dynamic situations related to growth, stability, and competitiveness, as well as management processes such as strategic planning, knowledge management, project and performance management, cross functional management, supply chain management, and enterprise systems. They will be able to recognize the dynamic and interdependent nature of recurring problems and to identify key leverage points for lasting interventions.

### **Course Approach**

The course will be participatory and interactive. It will integrate presentations, group discussion, case studies, and specialized software for systems mapping. Participants will work in small teams throughout the course.

### **Who should attend?**

All professionals and knowledge workers from private, public or volunteer sectors, and in particular the following management groups, will benefit from the tools and insights learned in this course

- CEO, CFO, CIO,
- Senior Managers
- Head of Strategy
- Directors & Vice Presidents
- Divisional Managers
- Product Managers
- Senior Functional Managers
- Departmental Heads
- Country Managers
- Project Managers
- Managers and leaders looking to increase their understanding of strategy and planning
- Functional managers who influence the future direction of their department or organization
- Operational staff who define and implement organizational, business unit or divisional objectives
- Managers and leaders who wish to improve the performance of their decision making
- Managers, leaders and executives with no formal training in strategy and planning and who want to formalize their understanding of the latest tools and applications

## Cohort Size

To allow individualized attention and small group activities the number of participants is limited to 15 for each cohort.

## COURSE AGENDA

### DAY ONE

#### WHAT IS SYSTEMS THINKING?

Our prevailing worldview and the way modern organizations are structured and function are deeply rooted in the reductionist thinking that originated in the 17th century! This fragmented, divide-and-conquer mindset has been a major barrier to breakthrough thinking in our technology led world and business.

- Why do we think the way we do?
- What is a system and what is not?
- Why do leaders and managers need Systems Thinking?
- How do we make sense of the world?
- Why do organizations fail?

#### UNRAVELLING COMPLEXITY

Today, leaders and decision makers live and operate in ever-increasing complex environments. Yet, most are not equipped to understand and manage complexity. Hence, they are baffled by uncertainty, ambiguity, lack of control and change. Thus, they become perplexed and frustrated when their well-conceived strategies and plans don't work or fall short of expectations.

- Detailed vs. Dynamic Complexity
- Chaos, Order and Organization
- Reinforcing and Counteracting Forces (forces of change and resistance)
- Dynamics of Change, Stability and Growth

#### LEARNING THE SYSTEMS THINKING LANGUAGE

Systems Thinking provides a powerful tool kit and language for dealing with wicked problems. The systems thinking tools show how cause and effect unfold over time and why they are not close in time and space. It identifies the unintended consequences of actions and policies and why and how these effects recur and persist. Systems Thinking tools help leaders to see beyond day-to-day events by understanding recurring patterns through Causal Loop Models.

- Uncovering Complexity: What is a Causal Loop Diagram?
- How events, patterns, structures and mental models are linked?
- How to foresee growth, decline and stability?
- How to read 'organizational temperature'? Lessons from the "thermostat"
- How to identify and reverse vicious cycles?
- Case study Workshop: Reconciling Strategy and Operations

#### UNDERSTANDING GENERIC STRUCTURES

- Why certain unwanted patterns occur repeatedly despite our best efforts to stop them?

- Why leaders and organizations get trapped in endless quick fixes and firefighting?
- Why organizations underestimate 'limits to growth' in their policies and decisions?
- Why companies get trapped in escalating competition and price wars?
- Why most interventions backfire and create undesirable side effects?
- Why organizational 'addictions' persist and cause their demise?
- Systems Thinking in Practice: case study from various organizations and industries

*"Thinking clearly and effectively is the greatest asset of any human being." - Harry Lorayne*

#### LEVERAGE, DELAY AND INTERVENTION

Managers often mistake symptoms for the cause. Hence, their interventions tend to focus on the 'wrong' issues. They also commonly overlook systemic delays that mask cause and effect lag time. Consequently, they frequently change directions, introduce new initiatives and abandon otherwise sound initiatives that appear not to be working. In doing so, they destabilize their organizations causing low morale and endemic vicious cycles.

- Why over-intervention is counterproductive?
- Worse-before-better & better-before-worse scenarios.
- In Company Workshop.

#### DAY TWO

Recap of learning from Day One

#### Workshop: MODELING ISSUES AT YOUR ORGANIZATION

During this workshop, the participants will work in small groups on real issues related to their organization. The strategic issues will be identified and selected by the participants themselves. They will then apply Systems Thinking tools to model these issues and to identify leverage points and intervention strategies.

Group Presentations and Feedback: The workshop will conclude with presentations and feedback on projects. The pathway to implementation will then be identified and chartered.

#### SYSTEMS THINKING AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

Organizational Learning (OL) is about enhancing collective will and collective intelligence in leading organizations. In this session we link Systems Thinking to OL their implications for leadership.

- 10 'fatal' learning disabilities of managers?
- 5 capabilities of learning organizations?
- How can organizations learn? double loop learning
- Shared vision and mental models - top down or emergent?
- Leaders' new role: Creating Learning Organizations
- How to create learning teams?

## SAMBLE TESTIMONIALS

- The systems thinking course really made a difference in my career and personal life
- The best training our organisation has ever provided
- The best training I have ever attended
- Leading edge content
- A fascinating course!

“Totally brilliant – beyond my expectations and has sparked new patterns of learning! This new level of thinking is something I want to build on. Opening my eyes to the reality of interrelationships in events, patterns, systemic structures and mental models - From this day on my head is officially out of the sand! Thanks for such an inspiring experience!”

Ann Calman, Director, Human Resources, Nokia, South East Asia

"The Best Course I have ever attended"

Joseph G. Leonti - Chief Information Technology Officer, Office of Ohio Secretary of State, USA

“I would suggest we send as many managers of ours as possible to attend this course at first priority. This course is distinctively different from any other courses in any EMBA program... It was the only “non-linear” knowledge in the program in contrast to all other “linear” ones, and it will definitely pay off very quickly.”

Dr. Kent Koh, EMBA, Helsinki School of Economics, Taiwan

“Perfect learning method.”

General Manager, Telekom Malaysia

“Dear Professor Kambiz, I would like to express my appreciation for you to teach us the topic Systems Thinking for Strategic Leadership over the weekend in Singapore. It was very rewarding to learn about this subject in a very systematic and structured approach. It empowers us to view issues systemically and holistically. This learning is going to impact the rest of my life. Not only you are able to apply active listening, but you are also very effective in getting the message across concisely with real life examples. It is powerful, indeed. I really enjoyed this learning experience tremendously. Keep up the excellent skills and know-how in teaching!”

Gordon Yiu, Senior Financial Manager, Sun Microsystems, Singapore

“Your workshop Building Multi-Stakeholder Consensus Decisions using Systems Thinking Language introduced a new perspective on looking at organizations, leadership and, specifically, building consensus by utilizing systems thinking. The workshop was inspiring to us all.”

Camille Crichton, Manager, Bureau of Research New Jersey Department of Transportation

“I really enjoyed your presentation at Transportation Research Board and believe it was one of the best I experienced all week! I served as Federal Highway Administration Chief Knowledge Officer for the prior 7 years and can relate to the context of data to information to knowledge to wisdom. Thanks very much for your "wisdom" and sharing your work with us. I do hope to order a copy of your book for further reading.”

Mike Burk, PE, Chief, Workforce Development, Federal Highway, Administration, USA

"Thinking strategically and Managing Complexity challenges the dominant model of strategic planning and problem solving in the modern organisation. Well presented with practical case studies, the course contrasts the traditional planning model with strategic thinking as the emergent approach using systems thinking as a language for interpreting and managing our increasingly complex environment."

Matt Bartlett, Head of Strategy, ASB Bank

"When I first considered joining the workshop, I wondered how much I could gain given that managing complexity is part of my everyday role. But by the end of the second day I was amazed at how much I'd learnt and how much of that I would be able to apply. Much of this I think is the balance of team interaction during the sessions as well being able to hear from Kambiz himself about the latest developments in management thinking. The range of backgrounds and the high caliber of the people on the course also give an opportunity to hear about what's happening in other pro-active organisations."

Matthew Ensor, Manager, Transportation, Beca

"The Thinking Strategically & Managing Complexity course was an extremely enlightening introduction to and development of the concepts of systems thinking. It was presented with an appropriate balance of practical workshop exercise backed up by theory. The facilitator, Kambiz Maani, demonstrated a thorough understanding of the topics and communicated this to the class with enthusiasm and humor. The course allowed all participants to interact with Kambiz and each other. I became familiar with a number of techniques that will undoubtedly prove useful in the workplace. This course would be ideal for any middle/senior manager who is presented with problems that have multiple variables or aspects to solve concurrently."

Ed Overy, General Manager- Air New Zealand

"Very fundamental and easy to understand! It helped us to think strategically and apply to our work environment which gives rise to amazing opportunities and is also applicable in everyday life."

Senior Operations Director, Medical Latex, Malaysia

"Exercises were very useful. Knowing what to do and being able to actually do it are different things."

Deputy Director Ministry of Health - Singapore

"Ability to capture the dynamics of the issues without being burdened by details they can be tackled later! This program differentiates the topic & other available system tools process or methodologies."

Director of Manufacturing Proton - Malaysia

"Provided me with an effective tool to unravel the complex relationships among variables affecting organization."

Senior Executive, Petronas – Malaysia

"Learnt a new management style for making decisions the systems thinking way!"

Global Operations Vice President, Saudi Electric Company

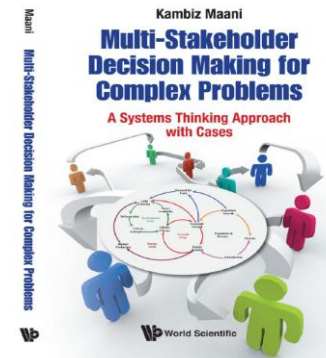
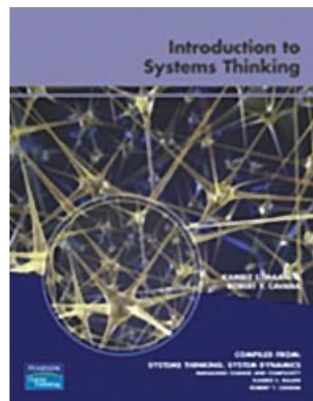
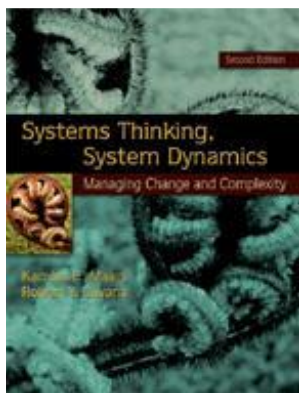
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Dr Kambiz Maani

Kambiz is an acknowledged international expert and consultant in Systems Thinking & Complexity for multi-agency decision-making, planning and policy design. His professional and consulting career spans over 30 years in the USA, Australasia, Asia, and South America including visiting positions at MIT, London Business School, Boston University, and Helsinki School of Economics. Professor Maani was the founding Chair in Systems Thinking and Practice at the University of Queensland (Australia) and Head of Auckland Business School at Tamaki (New Zealand).

Kambiz has advised and consulted extensively for numerous corporations, public organisations and government departments worldwide and provides seminars and short courses internationally. His book *“Systems thinking, Systems Dynamics - Managing Change and Complexity”*, now in its second edition with multiple reprints, is taught at universities, and used in public and private organizations around the world. His new book *“Multi Stakeholder Decision Making for Complexity - Systems Approach & Cases”* was released by World Scientific in 2017.



<http://www.worldscientific.com/worldscibooks/10.1142/9294>