Barry Richmond’s Systems Thinking Skills

**Forest Thinking** – As if viewing the system from 10,000 meters, seeing a big picture rather than focusing on details

**Dynamic Thinking** – Recognizing patterns rather than events, realizing that continuous processes rather than discrete events create the conditions in the real world – understanding that you can always quantify, though you can’t always measure

**System as Cause Thinking** – Placing responsibility for a behavior on internal actors, self-generating rather than external forces

**Operational Thinking** – Understanding how things really work, e.g., maintaining consistent units of measure, and expecting that factors don’t always cause proportional effect

**Closed-Loop Thinking** – Tracing ongoing interdependent processes rather than one-way causal chains

**Scientific Thinking** – Testing hypotheses, applying rigorous simulation and quantification

**Empathic Thinking** – Giving and receiving feedback, expanding personal boundaries, avoid taking a single rigid position, and appreciating a spectrum of opinions

**Generic Thinking** – Recognizing generic structures rather than specific events

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