

Figure 3.2

The Five Habits of the Master Thinker

A good analytic thinker who has mastered the core structured analytic techniques will instinctively:

1

Know when to challenge **key assumptions**—usually far more often than you think!

2

Consider **alternative explanations** or hypotheses for all events, including when applicable the deception hypothesis and the null hypothesis, which states that what is being hypothesized is not true.

3

Look for **inconsistent data** that provides sufficient justification to quickly discard a candidate hypothesis.

4

Focus on the **key drivers** that best explain what has occurred or what is about to happen.

5

Anticipate the customers' needs and understand the overarching **context** within which the analysis is being done.