

Where the Method Comes From

None of these questions is new. Each comes from a field that learned to question its own thinking because mistakes there were expensive. The Method brings them into one room.

Intelligence analysis

Questions 1, 2 and 5

Analysts are trained to list their key assumptions, test them against evidence that cuts the other way, and track indicators that would show a judgment is wrong. Richards Heuer's *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (1999) remains the standard account of why this discipline matters.

Red teaming

Question 3

A red team is a deliberately independent group asked to argue the other side of a plan. Its premise is that the people closest to a plan are poorly placed to see what it leaves out, so outside views have to be brought in on purpose.

Military planning

Question 4

Planners trace the second- and third-order effects of each course of action before committing to one, asking how an adversary, an ally or a population will respond to the first move.

Design thinking

Question 6

Design teams build cheap prototypes and test them with the people affected before investing in a full solution. Small, fast tests replace large, slow bets.

The academic seminar

The norms of the room

The seminar contributes a way of behaving rather than a question. Everyone at the table speaks, ideas are challenged on their merits, and no one is required to agree by the end.

The Mountaineer Method adapts these traditions for conversations that cross sectors. It makes no claim that they are original.