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**Evaluation Consultants**

# Reflections on AfrEA conference held in Uganda March 2017

SAMEA EvalCafé 11 April 2017

# Evaluative Thinking: Why worry about it?

- How do you get people to have an AHA moment? After a training, or workshop or evaluation process?

# What is Evaluative Thinking?

***Evaluative Thinking** is a cognitive process in the context of evaluation, motivated by an attitude of inquisitiveness and a belief in the value of evidence, that involves skills such as identifying assumptions, posing thoughtful questions, pursuing deeper understanding through reflection and perspective taking and making informed decisions in preparation for action.*

<https://tgarchibald.wordpress.com/2013/11/11/18/>

# Why should evaluators worry about Evaluative Thinking?

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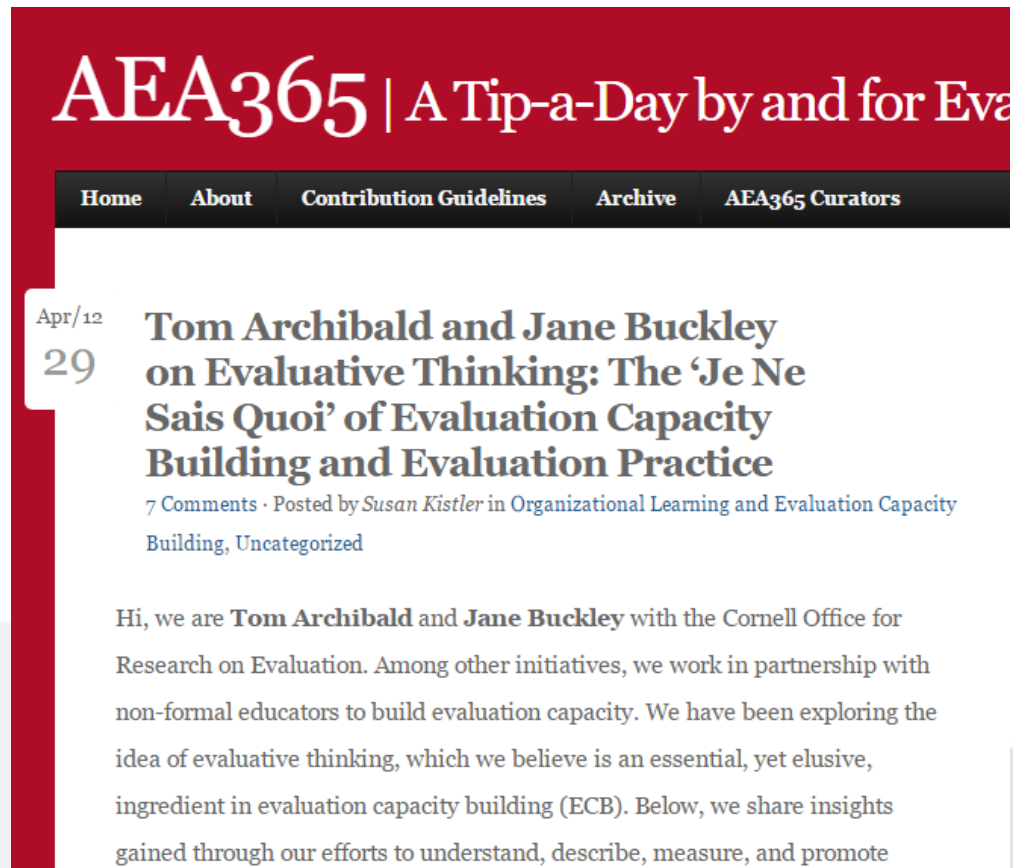
- This is a broader topic than just Evaluations, and something that Evaluators should encourage in the clients they work with.

# Why should managers worry about Evaluative Thinking?

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Commissioners may also benefit from considering how the evaluations that they commission fits with their own agenda's of evaluative thinking, and how the organization's processes support evaluative thinking

# Resources



**AEA365** | A Tip-a-Day by and for Evaluators

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**Tom Archibald and Jane Buckley on Evaluative Thinking: The 'Je Ne Sais Quoi' of Evaluation Capacity Building and Evaluation Practice**

7 Comments · Posted by *Susan Kistler* in [Organizational Learning and Evaluation Capacity Building](#), [Uncategorized](#)

Hi, we are **Tom Archibald** and **Jane Buckley** with the Cornell Office for Research on Evaluation. Among other initiatives, we work in partnership with non-formal educators to build evaluation capacity. We have been exploring the idea of evaluative thinking, which we believe is an essential, yet elusive, ingredient in evaluation capacity building (ECB). Below, we share insights gained through our efforts to understand, describe, measure, and promote

- The AEA 365 Blog on it:
- <http://aea365.org/blog/tom-archibald-and-jane-buckley-on-evaluative-thinking-the-je-ne-sais-quoi-of-evaluation-capacity-building-and-evaluation-practice/>

# Resources

Article

## Defining and Teaching Evaluative Thinking: Insights From Research on Critical Thinking

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and William M. Trochim<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Evaluative thinking (ET) is an increasingly important topic in the field of evaluation, particularly among people involved in evaluation capacity building (ECB). Yet it is a construct in need of clarification, especially if it is to be meaningfully discussed, promoted, and researched. To that end, we propose that ET is essentially critical thinking applied to contexts of evaluation. We argue that ECB, and the field of evaluation more generally, would benefit from an explicit and transparent appropriation of well-established concepts and teaching strategies derived from the long history of work on critical thinking. In this article, based on previous work in the fields of education, cognitive science, and critical thinking, as well as on our experience as ECB practitioners, we propose several guiding principles and specific strategies for teaching ET that draw directly from research on the teaching of critical thinking.

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- AJE Article
- <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/research/2015/2015%20-%20Buckley%20et%20al%20-%20Evaluative%20Thinking.pdf>