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The Elements of Analysis: Making Sense of a Complex World For Your Readers (It's Elemental)

Charles Euchner

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Analyze *This*

You're analyzing a problem. You understand the basic issues—the problems, possible solutions, the pros and cons, the evidence and why it matters.

You work for a business or a nonprofit and you need to understand markets, opportunities, and threats. Or you analyze public policy for a public agency or university. Or you're trying to make an organization work better… or understand a research question … or break down patterns in science or technology.

You need the "tricks of the trade" that all great analysis use to understand the complex world.

You have come to the right place.

The Elements of Analysis works because it goes beyond the usual abstractions to show you, step by step, how to come to grips with issues that matter.

The Elements of Analysis is based on a simple insight: That all analysis is really just storytelling, but at a higher level of abstraction. Stories focus on particular people and things, places, and events. Analysis, on the other hand, focuses on *groups* and *patterns*, which recur again. Both stories and analysis, have the same basic structure. If you understand stories, you can master analysis too.

The process, then, begins with *storytelling for analysis*, moves to *questions and brainstorming*, explores how to *frame* complex questions, and concludes with all the steps you need to gather evidence and *make your case*.

Along the way, you get tips and hints from the masters of analysis.

Charles Euchner, the author of the renowned *Nobody Turn Me Around* who has taught in Yale's premier writing program, has not just broken down the best of the best to identify their tricks. He has also dug into the brave new world of brain research to figure out how you can manage your writing process—and give your reader a compelling experience.

The Elements of Analysis* offers the final third of *The Elements of Writing, the only comprehensive system, for mastering writing in all genres. If you want the complete writing took hit, get *The Elements of Writing*. If you want to focus on analysis, get this short but rich guide.

In less than 200 pages, Euchner shows you how to:

- Use storytelling techniques to get to then bottom of complex issues.

- Use “beats” and “cliffhangers” to make arguments and explore different dimensions of problems.
- Allow ideas to “unfold,” one by one, rather than rushing and packing ideas too closely together (the “tin or sardines” problem).
- “Spill your mind” and then follow up with “This-or-That” and “W” questions.
- Consider hypotheticals and scenarios.
- Take advantage of “super models” and the testimony of experts and lay people.
- Identify and “operationalize” variables—and then crunch the numbers.

And so much more.

Charles Euchner—a case writer at the Yale School of Management and author of books on writing, the sports industry, civil rights, and politics—has taught his unique system to audiences across the U.S. He works the full range of writers--from high school students and teachers to first-time and bestselling authors.

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