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Systems Thinking has grown during the latter part of the 20th century into highly useful discipline independent methods, languages and practices. Systems Thinking focuses upon applying concepts, principles, and paradigms in the analysis of the holistic structural and behavioral properties of complex systems. In particular the patterns of relationships that arise in the interactions of multiple systems.

Systems and Software Engineering Systems Engineering has gained momentum during the latter part of the 20th century and has led to engineering related practices and standards that can be used in the life cycle management of complex systems. Software Engineering has continued to grow in importance as the software content of most complex systems has steadily increased and in many cases have become the dominant elements. Both Systems and Software Engineering focus upon transforming the need for a system into products and services that meet the need in an effective, reliable and cost effective manner. While there are similarities between Systems and Software Engineering, the unique properties of software often requires special expertise and approaches to life cycle management.

Systems Science, Systems Thinking, Systems and Software Engineering can, and need to, be considered complementary in establishing the capability to individually and collectively "think" and "act" in terms of systems in order to the face of the complex multi-disciplinary challenges of modern systems. Publications providing perspectives on the Frontiers of all aspects of Systems as well as publications advancing the state of Practice and Education are provided in this Systems Series.