

Chapter 3 Knowledge and Technology

Handout

Extract from Descartes' *Discourse on Method* (Part 2)

The first was never to accept anything as true if I did not have evident knowledge of its truth: that is, carefully to avoid precipitate conclusions and preconceptions, and to include nothing more in my judgments than what presented itself to my mind so clearly and so distinctly that I had no occasion to doubt it.

The second to divide each of the difficulties I examined into as many parts as possible and as may be required in order to resolve them better.

The third, to direct my thoughts in an orderly manner, by beginning with the simplest and most easily known objects in order to ascend little by little, step by step, to knowledge of the most complex and by supposing some order even among objects that have no natural order of precedence.

And the last, throughout to make enumerations so complete and reviews so comprehensive, that I could be sure of leaving nothing out.