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## Questioning as we learn: An introduction to critical thinking

### Material for Higher Education students in Sierra Leone by INASP, UK



Provided by the Critical Thinking Taskforce (CTTF)  
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#### *Unit 4 - Snippet 107*

#### **Fallacies - False cause**

This fallacy relates to our discussion about causality above. People may try to convince you that because one event follows another closely in time, the first has caused the second to occur. Do you remember our example in a previous snippet about the battery recycling plant and the recorded cases of headache and fatigue? We had pointed out that there could be quite a diversity of causes for the correlation between the increase of lead production and recorded patient cases, or it could even be only a coincidence.

So, without further evidence, the following argument is not strong enough to support the conclusion:

*The battery recycling plant increased the production and at the same time the doctors started to record higher numbers of patients with headache and fatigue. That can't be a coincidence. Certainly, the pollution of the environment with lead had caused the increasing numbers of complaints about headache and fatigue.*

A critical thinker should always look for enough evidence before concluding that one thing has caused another one.

This GIF pictures a funny example for a false cause fallacy:

<https://giphy.com/gifs/D9g6O1ClOj9Ru>