

LEARNING STYLES INDICATOR

This questionnaire is designed to find out your preferred learning style(s). Over the years you have probably developed learning “habits” that help you benefit more from some experiences than from others. Since you are probably unaware of this, this questionnaire will help you pinpoint your learning preferences so that you are in a better position to select learning experiences that suit your style.

There is no time limit to this questionnaire. It will probably take you 10-15 minutes. The accuracy of the results depends on how honest you can be. There are no right or wrong answers. If you agree more than you disagree with a statement put a tick by it. If you disagree more than you agree put a cross by it. Be sure to mark each item with either a tick or cross.

- 1. I have strong beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad.
- 2. I often act without considering the possible consequences.
- 3. I tend to solve problems using a step-by-step approach.
- 4. I believe that formal procedures and policies restrict people.
- 5. I have a reputation for saying what I think, simply and directly.
- 6. I often find that actions based on feelings are as sound as those based on careful thought and analysis.
- 7. I like the sort of work where I have time for thorough preparation and implementation.
- 8. I regularly question people about their basic assumptions.
- 9. What matters most is whether something works in practice.
- 10. I actively seek out new experiences.
- 11. When I hear about a new idea or approach I immediately start working out how to apply it in practice.
- 12. I am keen on self discipline such as watching my diet, taking regular exercise, sticking to a fixed routine, etc.
- 13. I take pride in doing a thorough job.
- 14. I get on best with logical, analytical people and less well with spontaneous 'irrational' people.
- 15. I take care over the interpretation of data available to me and avoid jumping to conclusions.
- 16. I like to reach a decision carefully after weighing up many alternatives.
- 17. I'm attracted more to novel, unusual ideas than to practical ones.
- 18. I don't like disorganised things and prefer to fit things into a coherent pattern.
- 19. I accept and stick to laid down procedures so long as I regard them as an efficient way to getting the job done.

- 20. I like to relate my actions to a general principle.
- 21. In discussions I like to get straight to the point.
- 22. I tend to have distant, rather formal relationships with people at work.
- 23. I thrive on the challenge of tackling something new and different.
- 24. I enjoy fun-loving, spontaneous people.
- 25. I pay meticulous attention to detail before coming to a conclusion.
- 26. I find it difficult to produce ideas on impulse.
- 27. I believe in coming to the point immediately.
- 28. I am careful not to jump to conclusions too quickly.
- 29. I prefer to have as many sources of information as possible - the more data to think over the better.
- 30. Flippant people who don't take things seriously enough usually irritate me.
- 31. I listen to other people's points of view before putting my own forward.
- 32. I tend to be open about how I'm feeling.
- 33. In discussions I enjoy watching the manoeuvrings of the other participants.
- 34. I prefer to respond to events on a spontaneous, flexible basis rather than plan things out in advance.
- 35. I tend to be attracted to techniques such as network analysis, flow charts, branching programmes, contingency planning, etc.
- 36. It worries me if I have to rush out a piece of work to meet a tight deadline.
- 37. I tend to judge people's ideas on their practical merits.
- 38. Quiet, thoughtful people tend to make me feel uneasy.
- 39. I often get irritated by people who want to rush things.
- 40. It is more important to enjoy the present moment than to think about the past or future.
- 41. I think that decisions based on a thorough analysis of all the information are sounder than those based on intuition.
- 42. I tend to be a perfectionist.
- 43. In discussion I usually produce lots of spontaneous ideas.
- 44. In meetings I put forward practical, realistic ideas.
- 45. More often than not, rules are there to be broken.
- 46. I prefer to stand back from a situation and consider all the perspectives.
- 47. I can often see inconsistencies and weaknesses in other people's arguments.
- 48. On balance I talk more than I listen.
- 49. I can often see better, more practical ways to get things done.
- 50. I think written reports should be short and to the point.

- ❑ 51. I believe that rational, logical thinking should win the day.
- ❑ 52. I tend to discuss specific things with people rather than engaging in social discussion.
- ❑ 53. I like people who approach things realistically rather than theoretically.
- ❑ 54. In discussions I get impatient with irrelevancies and digressions.
- ❑ 55. If I have a report to write I tend to produce lots of drafts before setting on the final version.
- ❑ 56. I am keen to try things out to see if they work in practice.
- ❑ 57. I am keen to reach answers via a logical approach.
- ❑ 58. I enjoy being the one that talks a lot.
- ❑ 59. In discussions I often find I am the realist, keeping people to the point and avoiding wild speculations.
- ❑ 60. I like to ponder many alternatives before making up my mind.
- ❑ 61. In discussions with people I often find I am the most dispassionate and objective.
- ❑ 62. In discussions I'm more likely to adopt "low profile" than to take the lead and do most of the talking.
- ❑ 63. I like to be able to relate current actions to a longer term bigger picture.
- ❑ 64. When things go wrong I am happy to shrug it off and "put it down to experience".
- ❑ 65. I tend to reject wild, spontaneous ideas as being impractical.
- ❑ 66. It's best to think carefully before taking action.
- ❑ 67. On balance I do the listening rather than the talking.
- ❑ 68. I tend to be tough on people who find it difficult to adopt a logical approach.
- ❑ 69. Most times I believe the end justifies the means.
- ❑ 70. I don't mind hurting people's feelings so long as the job gets done.
- ❑ 71. I find the formality of having specific objectives and plans stifling.
- ❑ 72. I'm usually one of the people who puts life into a party.
- ❑ 73. I do whatever is expedient to get the job done.
- ❑ 74. I quickly get bored with methodical, detailed work.
- ❑ 75. I am keen on exploring the basic assumptions, principles and theories underpinning things and events.
- ❑ 76. I'm always interested to find out what people think.
- ❑ 77. I like meetings to be run on methodical lines, sticking to laid down agenda.
- ❑ 78. I steer clear of subjective or ambiguous topics.
- ❑ 79. I enjoy the drama and excitement of a crisis situation.
- ❑ 80. People often find me insensitive to their feelings.

LEARNING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE - SCORING

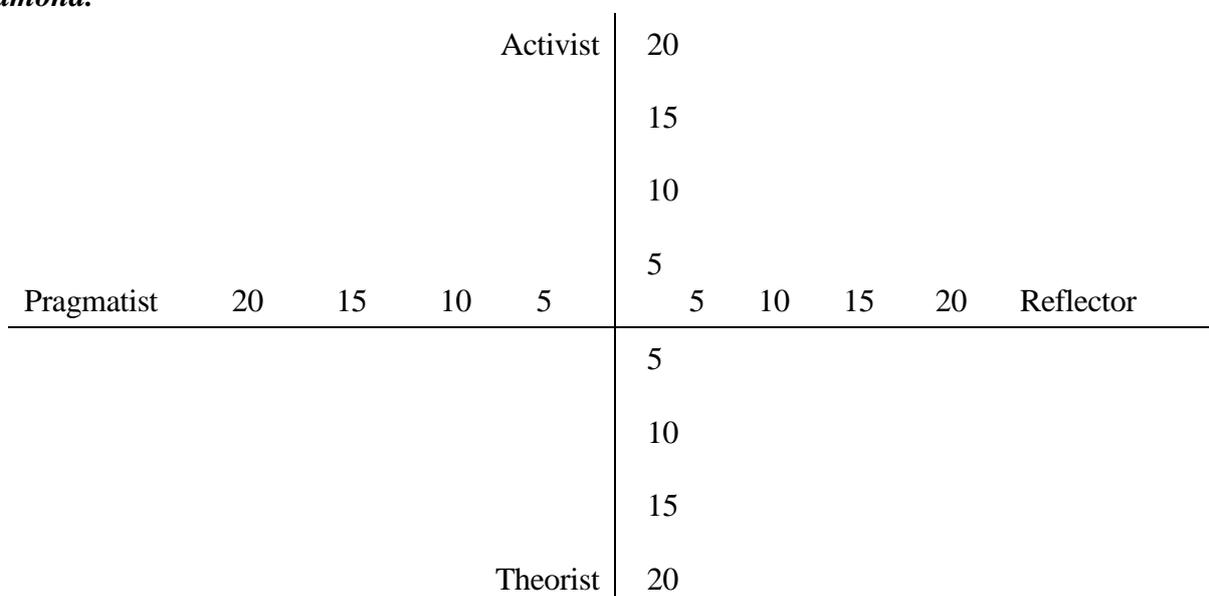
You score one point for each item you ticked. There are no points for items you crossed. Simply indicate on the lists below which items were ticked.

2	7	1	5
4	13	3	9
6	15	8	11
10	16	12	19
17	25	14	21
23	28	18	27
24	29	20	35
32	31	22	37
34	33	26	44
38	36	30	49
40	39	42	50
43	41	47	53
45	46	51	54
48	52	57	56
58	55	61	59
64	60	63	65
71	62	68	69
72	66	75	70
74	67	77	73
79	76	78	80

TOTALS	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Activist	Reflector	Theorist	Pragmatist

Personal Learning Styles Profile

Plot the scores on the arms of the cross below, then draw 4 lines to connect the points to form a diamond.



LEARNING STYLES - GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS

ACTIVISTS

Activists involve themselves fully and without bias in new experiences. They enjoy the here and now and are happy to be dominated by immediate experiences. They are open-minded, not sceptical, and this tends to make them enthusiastic about anything new. Their philosophy is “I’ll try anything once.” They tend to act first and consider the consequences afterwards. Their days are filled with activity. They tackle problems by brainstorming. As soon as the excitement from one activity has died down they are busy looking for the next. They tend to thrive on the challenge of new experiences but are bored with implementation and longer term consolidation. They are gregarious people constantly involving themselves with others but, in doing so, they seek to centre all activities around themselves.

REFLECTORS

Reflectors like to stand back to ponder experiences and observe them from many different perspectives. They collect data, both first hand and from others, and prefer to think about it thoroughly before coming to any conclusion. The thorough collection and analysis of data about experiences and events is what counts so they tend to postpone reaching definite conclusions for as long as possible. Their philosophy is to be cautious. They are thoughtful people who like to consider all possible angles and implications before making a move. They prefer to take a back seat in meetings and discussions. They enjoy observing other people in action. They listen to others and get the drift of the discussion before making their own points. They tend to adopt a low profile and have a slightly distant, tolerant unruffled air about them. When they act it is part of a wide picture which includes the past as well as the present and others’ observations as well as their own.

THEORISTS

Theorists adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They think problems through in a vertical, step by step logical way. They assimilate disparate facts into coherent theories. They tend to be perfectionists who won’t rest easy until things are tidy and fit into a rational scheme. They like to analyse and synthesise. They are keen on basic assumptions, principles, theories models and systems thinking. Their philosophy prizes rationality and logic. “If it’s logical, it’s good”. Questions they frequently ask are; “Does it make sense?” “How does this fit with that?” “What are the basic assumptions?” They tend to be detached, analytical and dedicated to rational objectivity rather than anything subjective or ambiguous. Their approach to problems is consistently logical. This is their “mental set” and they rigidly reject anything that doesn’t fit with it. They prefer to maximise certainty and feel uncomfortable with subjective judgements, lateral thinking and anything flippant.

PRAGMATISTS

Pragmatists are keen on trying out ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications. They are the sort of people who return from management courses brimming with new ideas that they want to try out in practice. They tend to be impatient with ruminating and open-ended discussions. They are essentially practical, down to earth people who like making practical decisions and solving problems. They respond to problems and opportunities “as a challenge”. Their philosophy is; “There is always a better way” and “If it works, it’s good”.

THOUGHT STARTERS

Self-development activities to strengthen the *REFLECTOR* style

- Practice observing, especially at meetings where there are agenda items that do not directly involve you. Study people's behaviour. Keep records about who does the most talking, who interrupts whom, what triggers disagreements, how often the chairperson summarises and so on. Also study non-verbal behaviour. When do people lean forward and lean back? Count how many times people emphasis a point with a gesture. When do people fold their arms, look at their watches, chew their pencils and so on?
- Keep a diary and each evening write an account of what happened during the day. Reflect on the day's events and see if you can reach conclusions from them. Record your conclusions in the diary.
- Practice reviewing after a meeting or event of some kind. Go back over the sequence of events identifying what went well and what could have gone better. If possible tape record some conversations and play back the tape at least twice, reviewing what happened in great detail. List lessons learned from this activity.
- Give yourself something to research, something that requires the painstaking gathering of data from different sources. Go to your local library and spend a few hours in the reference section.
- Practice producing highly polished pieces of writing. Give yourself essays to write on various topics (something you have researched?) Write a report or paper about something. Draft watertight policy statements, agreements or procedures. When you have written something, put it aside for a week then force yourself to return to it and do a substantial rewrite.
- Practice drawing up lists for and against a particular course of action. Take a contentious issue and produce balanced arguments from both points of view. Whenever you are with people who want to rush into action, caution them to consider alternatives and to anticipate the consequences.

THOUGHT STARTERS

Self-development activities to strengthen the *ACTIVIST* style

- Do something new, i.e. something that you have never done before, at least once a week. Hitch a lift to work, visit a part of your organisation you have neglected, go jogging at lunch time, wear something outrageous to work one day, read an unfamiliar newspaper with views that are diametrically opposed to yours, change the layout of furniture in your office, etc.
- Practice initiating conversations (especially 'small talk') with strangers. Select people at random from your internal telephone directory and go and talk to them. At large gatherings, conferences or parties, force yourself to initiate and sustain conversations with everyone present. In your spare time go door to door canvassing for a cause of your choice.
- Deliberately fragment your day by chopping and changing activities each half. Make the switch as diverse as possible. For example, if you had half an hour of cerebral activity, switch to do something utterly routine and mechanical. If you have been sitting down, stand up. If you have been talking, keep quiet, and so on.
- Force yourself into the limelight. Volunteer whenever possible to chair meetings or give presentations. When you attend a meeting set yourself the challenge of making a substantial contribution within 10 minutes of the start of the meeting. Get on a soapbox and make a speech at Speakers' Corner.
- Practice thinking aloud and on your feet. Set yourself a problem and bounce ideas off a colleague (see if between you can generate 50 ideas in 10 minutes). Get some colleagues/friends to join in a game where you give each other topics and have to give an impromptu speech lasting at least 5 minutes.

THOUGHT STARTERS

Self-development activities to strengthen the *THEORIST* style

- Read something “heavy” and thought provoking for at least 30 minutes each day. Try philosophy, especially linguistic analysis, logic or the theory of relativity. If this seems a tall order, try tackling a text book on management or read Thouless on “Straight and Crooked Thinking.” Whatever you elect to read, afterwards try to summarise what you have read in your own words.
- Practice spotting inconsistencies/weaknesses in other people’s arguments. Go through reports highlighting inconsistencies. Analyse organisation charts to discover overlaps and conflicts. Take two newspapers of different persuasions and regularly do a comparative analysis of the differences in their points of view.
- Take a complex situation and analyse it to pinpoint why it developed the way it did, what could have been done differently and at what stage. The situations could be historical or something drawn from current affairs, or something you have been involved in personally. You could for example, do a detailed analysis of how you spend your time, or of the work flow in and out of your department, or of all the people you interact with and with what frequency in the course of your work.
- Collect other people’s theories, hypotheses and explanations about events; they might be about environmental issues, theology, the natural sciences, human behaviour - anything providing it is a topic with many different, and preferably contradictory theories. Try to understand the underlying assumptions each theory is based upon and see if you can group similar theories together.
- Practice structuring situations so that they are orderly and more certain to proceed in the way you predict. You might, for example, plan a conference where delegates are going to work in different groupings. Structure the timetable, the tasks, the plenary sessions. Or try structuring a meeting by having a clear purpose, an agenda and a planned beginning, middle and end. Invent procedures to cope with problems such as too many people speaking at once, or failure to reach a consensus.
- Practice asking probing questions - the sort of questions that get to the bottom of things. Refuse to be fobbed off with platitudes or vague answers. Particularly ask questions designed to find out precisely why something has occurred: “Why do you think the machine has gone down again?” “Why is absenteeism increasing?” “Why do more women than men smoke?” “Why is heart disease higher in the UK than in Japan?”

THOUGHT STARTERS

Self-development activities to strengthen the *PRAGMATIST* style

- Collect techniques, i.e. practical ways of doing things. The techniques can be about anything potentially useful to you. They might be analytical techniques such as critical path analysis or cost benefit analysis. They might be interpersonal techniques such as Transactional Analysis or Assertiveness or presentation techniques. They might be time saving techniques or statistical techniques to improve your memory, or techniques to cope with stress and reduce your blood pressure!
- In meetings and discussions of any kind (progress meetings, problem solving meeting, planning meetings, appraisal discussions, negotiations, sales calls etc.), concentrate on producing action plans. Make it a rule never to emerge from a meeting or discussion without a list of actions either for yourself or for others or both. The action plans should be specific and include a deadline e.g. “I will produce chapter 4 by 31st May”. “Bill will produce a 2 page paper listing alternative bonus schemes by 1st September”).
- Make opportunities to experiment with some of your new found techniques. Try them out in practice. If your experiment involves other people then tell them openly that you are conducting an experiment and explain the technique which it about to be tested. (This reduces embarrassment if, in the event, the technique is a flop!) Choose the time and place for your experiments. Avoid situations where a lot is at stake and where the risks of failure are unacceptable high. Experiment in routine settings with people whose aid or support you can enlist.
- Study techniques that other people use and then model yourself on them. Pick up techniques from your boss, your boss’s boss, your colleagues, your subordinates, visiting salesmen, interviewers on television, politicians, actors and actresses, your next door neighbour. Then you discover something they do well - emulate them.
- subject yourself to scrutiny from ‘experts’ so that they can watch your technique and coach you in how to improve it. Invite someone who is skilled in running meetings to sit in and watch you chairing, get an accomplished presenter to give you feedback on your presentations techniques. The idea is to solicit help from people who have a proven track record - it’s the equivalent of having a coaching session with a golfing professional.
- Tackle a ‘do-it-yourself’ project - it doesn’t matter if you aren’t good with your hands. Pragmatists are practical and, if only for practice purposes, D.I.Y. activities help develop a practical outlook. Renovate a piece of furniture, build a garden shed or even an extension to your house. At work, calculate your own statistics once in a while instead of relying on the printout, be your own organisation and methods person, go and visit the shop floor in search of practical problems to solve. Learn to type, learn a foreign language.