

Preferred Learning Styles Self Test

Everybody, over time, develops learning preferences according to their personality, culture and background. Within a team environment, it is very beneficial to have a mix of different types of people -invariably, teams that don't *function* are found to have a preponderance of people with similar character attributes. However, this does tend to mean that applying a common learning approach benefits some more than others, and thus the learning process is not as effective as it should be. This questionnaire enables learning preferences to be reflected in the type of training and education provided -sometimes this can mean individual people being offered different approaches to the same subject, but more usually it enables the training designer to make sure that there is an appropriate balance in the programme.

There is no time limit on the questionnaire, but it should not take more than 10-15 minutes. If it does, it probably means that you are thinking too hard about each question, whereas your initial reaction is probably more reliable. The questionnaire is totally confidential, and there are no right or wrong answers, so please be honest with yourself.

Look at each statement in turn, and if you agree more than you disagree with it, tick the open box . If you disagree more than you agree, don't tick anything -simply go on to the next statement.

- I have strong beliefs about right and wrong, good and bad
- I often act without considering the possible consequences
- I tend to solve problems using a step-by-step approach
- I believe that formal policies and procedures inhibit people
- I have a reputation for saying what I think
- I often find actions based on feelings are as sound as those based on careful analysis
- I like the sort of work where I have time for thorough preparation
- I regularly question people about their basic assumptions
- What matters most is whether something works in practice
- I actively seek out new experiences
- When I hear about a new idea I immediately start working out how to apply it in practice
- I am good at self discipline such as taking exercise, dieting, sticking to a fixed routine
- I take pride in doing a thorough job
- I get on best with logical analytical people
- I take care over the interpretation of data available and avoid jumping to conclusions
- I like to reach a decision carefully after weighing up many alternatives
- I am more attracted to novel, unusual ideas than to practical ones
- I don't like disorganized things and prefer things to fit into a coherent pattern
- I accept and stick to laid down policies and procedures
- I like to relate my actions to a general principle
- In discussions I like to get straight to the point
- I tend to have distant, rather formal relationships with people at work
- I thrive on the challenge of tackling something new and different
- I enjoy fun-loving, spontaneous people

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- I pay meticulous attention to detail before coming to a conclusion
- I find it difficult to produce ideas on impulse
- I believe in coming to the point immediately
- I'm careful not to jump to conclusions too quickly
- I prefer to have as many sources of information as possible
- Flippant people who don't take care over things usually irritate me
- I listen to other people's views before putting my own forward
- I tend to be open about my own feelings
- In discussions I enjoy watching the maneuverings of the other participants
- I prefer to respond on a spontaneous, flexible basis rather than planning things in advance
- I tend to be attracted to techniques such as network analysis, planning and scheduling
- It worries me if I have to rush a piece of work to meet a deadline
- I tend to judge people's ideas on their practical merits
- Quiet, thoughtful people tend to make me uneasy
- I often get irritated by people who want to rush things
- It is more important to enjoy the present than worry about the past or future
- I think that decisions based on thorough analysis are better than those based on intuition
- I tend to be a perfectionist
- In discussion I tend to produce lot of spontaneous ideas
- In meetings I usually put forward practical realistic ideas
- More often than not, rules are there to be broken
- I prefer to stand back from a situation and consider all the perspectives
- I can often spot inconsistencies and weaknesses in other people's arguments
- On balance I talk more than I listen
- I can often see better, more practical ways of getting things done
- I think written reports should be short and to the point
- I believe that rational, logical thinking should win the day
- I tend to discuss specific things with people rather than engaging in social discussion
- I like people who approach things realistically rather than theoretically
- In discussions I tend to get impatient with irrelevancies and digressions
- If I have report to write I tend to produce many drafts before settling on the final version
- I'm keen to try things out to see if they work in practice
- I'm keen to reach answers via a logical approach
- I enjoy being the one who talks a lot
- I find I am usually the realist, keeping people to the point and avoiding speculation
- I like to ponder many alternatives before making up my mind
- In discussion I often find I am the most objective
- In discussion I am more likely to adopt a low profile
- I like to be able to relate current actions to a longer term bigger picture

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- When things go wrong I tend to shrug them off and put them down to experience
- I tend to reject wild, spontaneous ideas as impractical
- It's always best to think carefully before talking action
- On balance I do the listening rather than the talking
- I tend to be tough on people who find it difficult to adopt a logical approach
- Most of the time I believe the end justifies the means
- I don't mind hurting people's feeling as long as the job gets done
- I find the formality of having specific objectives and plans stifling
- I'm usually one of the people who puts life into the party
- I do whatever is expedient to get the job done
- I quickly get bored with methodical, detailed work
- I am keen on exploring the basic assumptions, principles and theories underpinning events
- I'm always interested to find out what people think
- I like meetings to be run on methodical lines with a clear laid down agenda
- I steer clear of subjective or ambiguous topics
- I enjoy the drama and excitement of a crisis situation
- People often find me insensitive to their feelings

Now please total the ticks in each column and enter the numbers in the boxes below:

Totals			
P	T	R	A

		General Norms (Preferences from general sample of professional workers)				
		Very Low	Low	Moderate	Strong	Very Strong
		<i>Lowest 10%</i>	<i>Next 20%</i>	<i>Middle 40%</i>	<i>Next 20%</i>	<i>Highest 10%</i>
P	Pragmatist	0 to 8	9 to 11	12 to 14	15 to 16	17 to 20
T	Theorist	0 to 7	8 to 10	11 to 13	14 to 15	16 to 20
R	Reflector	0 to 8	9 to 11	12 to 14	15 to 17	18 to 20
A	Activist	0 to 3	4 to 6	7 to 10	11 to 12	13 to 20

Learning Style Preferences

Pragmatist	<i>Most preferred:</i>	Linkages between subject and objective clear Opportunity to tackle real problems Opportunity to practice with coaching Repeatable models Immediate opportunity to implement Concentration on practical issues
	<i>Least preferred:</i>	Talk and chalk No direct or apparent relevance Theoretical emphasis No clear guidelines Apparent lack of progress Political, managerial or personal obstacles to implementation No apparent reward from learning activity
Theorist	<i>Most preferred:</i>	Structured situation Clear purpose System, model or method offered Opportunity to analyze and generalize Opportunity to question and probe basic precepts Intellectually stretched Well argued ideas or concepts Interesting concepts (not necessarily directly relevant) Complex situations
	<i>Least preferred:</i>	Emotional situations Lack of context Open ended or irreconcilable problems Incompatible and/or contradictory approaches / techniques Being out of tune with others No basic policy, principle or concept Lack of depth, 'Overview' level No intellectual peers, no like-minded people
Reflector	<i>Most preferred:</i>	Stand back and observe Opportunity to review learning Making decision in own time Allowed to think before commenting Opportunity for painstaking research Structured discussion

	<i>Least preferred:</i>	Instant reaction required Cut and dried instruction Rushed activities Forced into a prominent role Given insufficient data Forced to do a superficial job in the interests of expediency
Activist	<i>Most preferred:</i>	New experiences Ideas without constraint In at the deep end – challenges Games, competitive teamwork Excitement, drama, crisis High personal visibility
	<i>Least preferred:</i>	listening how to do – passive roles in learning Data assimilation Solitary work Setting specific learning objectives Repetitive activity Precise, rigorous specification Attention to detail and follow through

Effective learning involves four stages, each of which is more suited to a particular learning style. These stages are:

- having the experience;
- reviewing the experience;
- concluding from that experience;
- planning the implementation of the lessons learned.

These stages tend to map on to the Activist, Reflector, Theorist and Pragmatist styles, in that order. If your results in the above exercise show a balanced, all-round style (i.e. where all scores were roughly at the same norm), you are likely to manage each stage of the cycle effectively. If you showed a marked preference for one or two styles, with a commensurately lower preference for the others, you should be aware of the need to address the blockages associated with these styles and by being conscious of the need to display the attributes of that style, attempt to approach issues in the most appropriate way according to the stage of learning.

Please keep this questionnaire for future reference