



LSI

LEARNING STYLES
INVENTORY

Sample Report

Career Decisions

5/5/2006

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Learning Style

What is Learning Style?

Different people have different ways that they prefer to learn. For example, while some people prefer to learn by reading about things, others prefer to learn by direct experience. Learning by direct experience might involve learning by making things, learning by trial and error or learning through experimentation. In this way each person has their own preferred way of learning, or Learning Style. There are no good or bad, right or wrong learning styles, just different preferred ways of learning; just as some people rock music to rap, or folk music to classical music.

However, your preferred way of learning (your Learning Style) is more important than other preferences, such as your preference for different styles of music. This is because your Learning Style affects how you learn. Specifically, you will be able to learn something most easily if it is taught in a way that is consistent with your learning style. So, for example, if you are trying to learn a foreign language (such as French or German), and you prefer learning by reading about things, you are likely to learn the language best by reading about the language's grammar, by memorising lists of words, translating passages of text, etc. However, if you learn best by experience, you will find it easiest to learn a foreign language by using the language in real settings. This may involve role playing situations such as shopping and ordering food, listening to conversations and answering questions about what you have just heard, etc.

The important thing here is that to maximise your learning potential you have to approach learning something new in a way that is consistent with your Learning Style. One reason why many people have difficulty learning certain things is because they go about learning things in the wrong way. They may for example always have found learning languages difficult because they have tried to learn grammar, memorise lists of words and translate passages of text, when they prefer learning by experience rather than learning by reading. Moreover, given the difficulties they may have had learning a language through reading, they may have come to the opinion that they are bad at learning languages when in fact they are not bad at learning languages, it is just that they have gone about learning languages the wrong way.

Below you will find a description of your Learning Style. It explains your preferred and least preferred ways of learning and how you can use this information to maximise your learning potential.

Your Learning Style

Your Most Preferred Learning Style -Realist

You are inclined to prefer to take a direct, practical and hands-on approach to learning, rather than focus on abstract, theoretical issues. Being fairly realistic and down-to-earth by nature, you are likely to be more productive when learning material that has an obvious use and can be easily put into practice. Taking a fairly pragmatic, hardheaded and matter-of-fact approach to life, you are likely to prefer working in areas where you can readily see the tangible products of your efforts. Being inclined to concentrate on the practical issues at hand, you are likely to prefer to focus on how to make things work, rather than ask deeper conceptual questions about why things work. When learning something new you are likely to tend to question its practical value and wish to explore ways in which the material you are learning can be put to direct use. Given your fairly concrete, down-to-earth approach to learning, you are likely to value being given clear demonstrations, and real world examples, of how things work in practice. Having a fairly well developed sense of what is useful, realistic and practical, you will be very motivated to focus on achieving tangible results and outcomes.

Your Second Most Preferred Learning Style - Activist

You show a slight, although not a great, preference for learning through direct experience rather than through quiet reflection and self-directed private study. As a result, while you are not averse to spending time working on your own in the library, or reading, you may prefer group work. Being slightly more extraverted and expressive than many people, you should be quite comfortable participating in brain storming sessions. Moreover, you are likely to appreciate the value of bouncing ideas off other people and talking things through with your co-students. You may however wish to balance this by making time to be on your own, so you can quietly think through your ideas and review the material you are learning. A little more lively and participative than some, you may become a little bored if there are not sufficient activities to keep you busy. While generally being happy to let your co-students express their own views and opinions you may on occasion, when discussing an issue you feel particularly strongly about, tend to dominate group discussions. Having a slightly greater need for variety and change than many people, you may at times wish to seek out new learning experiences to become actively engaged with. At times you may be a little more prone than some of your more reticent co-students to rush head long into new learning situations without having put aside sufficient time to quietly reflect on the material you are studying. In general, however, you will wish to balance your desire to become actively involved, and learn by trial and error and direct experience, with a recognition of the importance of making time to reflect on the material you are learning.

Your Most Underdeveloped Learning Style - Theorist

You show little interest in learning about theories or focusing on abstract, conceptual matters. As a result, you are likely to be somewhat disinclined to critically evaluate the logical basis, and theoretical underpinnings, of others' arguments, showing a preference instead to take things at face value. Being quite focused on achieving practical results, you may not always appreciate the value of approaching problems from a theoretical perspective. Not paying a great deal of attention to overarching theoretical concepts and ideas, you are not likely to be naturally inclined to attempt to solve problems by focusing on first principles. Rather, you are quite likely instead to simply be concerned to find an immediate, practical solution to current problems regardless of how elegant that solution may be. Being fairly pragmatic and down-to-earth by nature, you may on occasion be somewhat inclined to reject theoretical ideas out of hand, not having great faith that such ideas will be useful in practice.

How to Develop your Underdeveloped Learning Style

Work on developing your appreciation of theoretical perspectives:

- choose a book about a "heavy" theoretical subject (i.e. a popular book about science, philosophy, etc.) that is outside your study area and aim to read it within a month
- in your area of study, choose two competing theories (or models) and compare and contrast them (i.e. decide which has the better evidence to support it, etc.)
- in your area of study choose one theory and study it in depth: identify the theory's underlying assumptions; work what out what predictions the theory makes; decide how you could test these predictions

Develop your ability to think in a deeper, more conceptual theoretical manner:

- consider a decision that you're about to make and decide what the consequences of this decision might:- what assumptions have you made when considering the possible consequences of this decision; do the anticipated outcomes change if you make different assumptions?
- practise asking probing questions, aimed at identifying any hidden assumptions that may be underlying others' opinions and decisions
- take a complex problem you are working on and analyse it in detail:- what theoretical concepts and ideas can be used to understand the problem; what possible solutions does this theoretical analysis suggest?

In Summary, you are likely to prefer learning:

- by being given practical examples and demonstrations of how things work
- useful techniques rather than abstract principals
- facts rather than theories
- material that is clearly relevant, practical and useful
- how to solve real world problems
- about things you can see, hear or touch, rather than studying hypothetical concepts or ideas

