

The 4 Learning Styles

From Honey and Mumford



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 by implementation and long-term consolidation. They are gregarious people constantly involving them-selves with others but, in so doing, they seek to centre all activity around themselves.



Pragmatists are keen on trying out new 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 courses brimming with new ideas that they want to try out. They like to get on with things, and act quickly and confidently on ideas that attract them. They tend to be impatient with ruminating and open-ended discussion. They are essentially practical, down-to-earth people who like solving problems (often through trial and error). They view problems and difficulties as a “challenge”. Their philosophy is: “As long as it works, that’s fine.” - although they may also be keen to experiment to find better ways to do things.



Theorists adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They think through problems in a logical, step-by-step fashion. They assimilate disparate facts into coherent, holistic theories. They tend to be perfection-ists who do not rest easy until things are tidy and fit into a rational scheme. They like to analyse and synthesise. They are keen on asking questions and challenging assumptions. Their philosophy is: “If it’s logical then it’s good.” They attempt to fit everything together into a single jigsaw that encompasses “life, the universe and everything”. They tend to be detached, analytical and dedicated to rational objectivity rather than anything subjective or ambiguous. They may rigidly reject anything that does not fit in with their own particular mind-set.



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. 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 enjoy observing other people and prefer to take a back seat in meetings and discussions. They listen to others 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.