



# Learning Styles

A learning style is how a person prefers to learn and how they absorb or deal with it. Think of it in terms of a preference; we all have preferences, and without knowing it, we all have a preferred learning style. We have all four but usually have a noticeable preference for one.

In the 1970s, Peter Honey and Alan Mumford adapted David Kolb's model to create a Styles Questionnaire directly derived from Kolb's theory. They published their version of the model in *The Manual of Learning Styles* (1982) and *Using Your Learning Styles* (1983).

It has helped people identify their preferred method/style of learning new Skills, Knowledge or Understanding (SKU). The styles below are either liked, disliked or deemed not to exist.

## Reflectors

Reflectors prefer to gather information and analyse it. They don't like diving straight in; they are cautious, thorough people. They'd rather observe than take the lead.

Reflectors are slower to make up their minds, but when they do, their decisions are soundly based not only on their knowledge and opinions but also on what they have learned from watching and listening to others making their decisions.

Though they are often quieter learners, it is because they're thinking and analysing.



## Activists

Activists love novelty and will dive in headfirst immediately. Give them a task, and they will throw themselves straight into it. They like to get on with things, so they are not overly interested in planning what they are about to do.

They live very much in the here and now. They get bored with repetition and what they see as raking over the dead embers of the past. They are exciting, vital, open-minded, and gregarious.



## Pragmatists

Pragmatists seek practical ideas and solutions. They are, like activists, keen on ideas and ready to get going, but they want to try them out to see if they work.

They may implement the ideas of others to help them work more efficiently and effectively. Whilst they want practical solutions, they are not overly fussed about the theory backing up the idea. Instead, they want to try it out. They'll often try something else rather than analyse why something doesn't work. Whatever they do must have a purpose, something they can use, find useful, and employ.



## Theorists

Theorists are step-by-step people who investigate observations and findings into a logical theory. They have neat, structured and organised thinking. They are happy once they have got to the bottom of why something is the way it is.

They require things explained and want to know the logic of what is being discussed. They dislike uncertainty, subjectivity, and ambiguity and are unsettled by those who do things quickly without thinking through what they are doing. Like reflectors, they may take longer to get there, but their thoughtful ways are usually worth the wait.

