

HANDOUT 1: VAK Learning Style Inventory

This chart helps you determine your learning style; read the word in the left column and then answer the questions in the successive three columns to see how you respond to each situation. Your answers may fall into all three columns, but one column will likely contain the most answers. The dominant column indicates your primary learning style.

When you...	Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic & Tactile
Spell	Do you try to see the word?	Do you sound out the word or use a phonetic approach?	Do you write the word down to find if it feels right?
Talk	Do you sparingly but dislike listening for too long? Do you favor words such as <i>see</i> , <i>picture</i> , and <i>imagine</i> ?	Do you enjoy listening but are impatient to talk? Do you use words such as <i>hear</i> , <i>tune</i> , and <i>think</i> ?	Do you gesture and use expressive movements? Do you use words such as <i>feel</i> , <i>touch</i> , and <i>hold</i> ?
Concentrate	Do you become distracted by untidiness or movement?	Do you become distracted by sounds or noises?	Do you become distracted by activity around you?
Meet someone again	Do you forget names but remember faces or remember where you met?	Do you forget faces but remember names or remember what you talked about?	Do you remember best what you did together?
Contact people on business	Do you prefer direct, face-to-face, personal meetings?	Do you prefer the telephone?	Do you talk with them while walking or participating in an activity?
Read	Do you like descriptive scenes or pause to imagine the actions?	Do you enjoy dialog and conversation or hear the characters talk?	Do you prefer action stories or are not a keen reader?
Put something together	Do you like at the directions and the picture?	Do you prefer verbal instructions or talking about it with someone else?	Do you ignore the directions and figure it out as you go along?
Need help with a computer application	Do you seek out pictures or diagrams?	Do you call the help desk, ask a neighbor, or growl at the computer?	Do you keep trying to do it or try it on another computer?

HANDOUT 2: LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCES

VAK Learning Styles

The VAK learning Style uses the three main sensory receivers - Vision, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (movement) to determine the dominate learning style.

Learners use all three to receive information. However, one or more of these receiving styles is normally dominant. This dominant style defines the best way for a person to learn new information by filtering what is to be learned. This style may not always to be the same for some tasks. The learner may prefer one style of learning for one task, and a combination of others for another task.

Classically, our learning style is forced upon us through life like this:

- In grades kindergarten to third, new information is presented to us kinesthetically;
- In grades 4 to 8, new information is visually presented;
- In grades 9 to university and on into the business learning environment, information is presented to us auditory by lectures.

As trainers, we need to present information using all three styles. This allows all learners, no matter what their preferred style is, the opportunity to become involved. It also allows a learner to be presented with the other two methods of reinforcement. Just because we prefer one style, does not mean that the other two do us no good. On the contrary, they help us to learn even faster by reinforcing the material. Some hints for recognizing and implementing the three styles are:

Auditory learners often talk to themselves. They also may move their lips and read out loud. They may have difficulty with reading and writing tasks. They often do better talking to a colleague or a tape recorder and hearing what was said. To integrate this style into the learning environment:

- Begin new material with a brief explanation of what is coming. Conclude with a summary of what has been covered. This is the old adage of "tell them what they are going to lean, teach them, and tell them what they have learned."
- Use the Socratic method of lecturing by questioning learners to draw as much information from them as possible and then fill in the gaps with your own expertise.
- Include auditory activities, such as brainstorming, buzz groups, or Jeopardy.
- Leave plenty of time to debrief activities. This allows them to make connections of what they leaned and how it applies to their situation.
- Have the learners verbalize the questions.
- Develop an internal dialogue between yourself and the learners.

Visual learners have two subchannels - *linguistic* and *spatial*. Learners who are *visual-linguistic* like to learn through written language, such as reading and writing tasks. They remember what has been written down, even if they do not read it more than once. They like to write down directions and pay better attention to lectures if they watch them. Learners who are *visual-spatial* usually have difficulty with written language and do better

with charts, demonstrations, videos, and other visual materials. They easily visualize faces and places by using their imagination and seldom get lost in new surroundings. To integrate this style into the learning environment:

- Use graphs, charts, illustrations, or other visual aids.
- Include outlines, agendas, handouts, etc. for reading and taking notes.
- Include plenty of content in handouts to reread after the learning session.
- Leave white space in handouts for note taking.
- Invite questions to help them stay alert in auditory environments.
- Post flip charts to show what will come and what has been presented.
- Emphasize key points to cue when to take notes.
- Eliminate potential distractions.
- Supplement textual information with illustrations whenever possible.
- Have them draw pictures in the margins.
- Show diagrams and then explain them.
- Have the learners envision the topic or have them act out the subject matter.

Kinesthetic learners do best while touching and moving. It also has two subchannels - kinesthetic (movement) and tactile (touch) They tend to lose concentration if there is little or no external stimulation or movement. When listening to lectures they may want to take notes. When reading, they like to scan the material first, and then focus in on the details (get the big picture first). They typically use color highlighters and take notes by drawing pictures, diagrams, or doodling. To integrate this style into the learning environment:

- Use activities that get the learners up and moving.
- Play music, when appropriate, during activities.
- Use colored markers to emphasize key points on flipcharts or white boards.
- Give frequent stretch breaks (brain breaks).
- Provide toys such as Koosh balls and Play-Dough to give them something to do with their hands.
- To highlight a point, provide gum, candy, scents, etc. which provides a cross link of scent (aroma) to the topic at hand (scent can be a powerful cue).
- Provide highlighters, colored pens and/or pencils.
- Guide learners through a visualization of complex tasks.
- Have them transfer information from the text to another medium such as a keyboard or a tablet.