# Learning Styles Report Debrief Guide

Training Guide
*Version 2c: 8.19*

ASSESSMENTS 24x7
A Global Leader in Online Assessments

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# Getting Started

The Learning Styles Questionnaire is intended to help determine where people's general preferences, or natural learning biases, might lie. Although this is far from an exact science, the simple view is that the more we can understand about how we perceive new information or new learning, the better and more successful our learning transfer will be.

Achievement and accomplishment in any endeavor is easier when we understand more about how we learn and grow. Your goal is to help your client recognize, understand, and leverage their inherent learning preferences in their personal and professional life.

## Prior to Debrief

- ☐ Review the Learning Styles Report and organize your thoughts according to their preferred style.
- ☐ Consider what insights to draw special attention to as you work through the report, tying assessment results to client's life to provide coaching opportunities.
- ☐ Have a copy of the report for you and the client.
- ☐ Encourage the client to take notes.
- ☐ Offer opportunity for follow up, if applicable.

***NOTE: A debrief is most effective when the individual already has established goals and you can highlight how his/her report content can help or hinder his/her progress. However, this may be unknown to you at this point; therefore, use this debrief as an opportunity to find out what is important to the respondent to ensure time is well spent.***

# Introduction

How we learn is a topic that is covered in thousands of books and articles written on the subject from hundreds of different perspectives. One particular, but large, foundational part of this subject area is learning styles.

Not everyone agrees on a common definition of learning styles. Some prefer to see it as part of overall perception and memory, some see it as part of human cognition and understanding, and some see it as a unique human "stream" of understanding or process for collecting information.

All learners are not equal. They come in a variety of sizes, shapes, and from many cultural backgrounds. In addition, their past experience and existing methods of learning may be quite different. Apart from differences in general background or culture, some people like to process information through text, while others want visual support and images. Some assimilate information individually, while others prefer to work in groups. Some grasp information intuitively and quickly, while others prefer to see a strong sequential path and time to reflect. In the end, the only thing you can say for sure is that every individual learns in their own particular way.

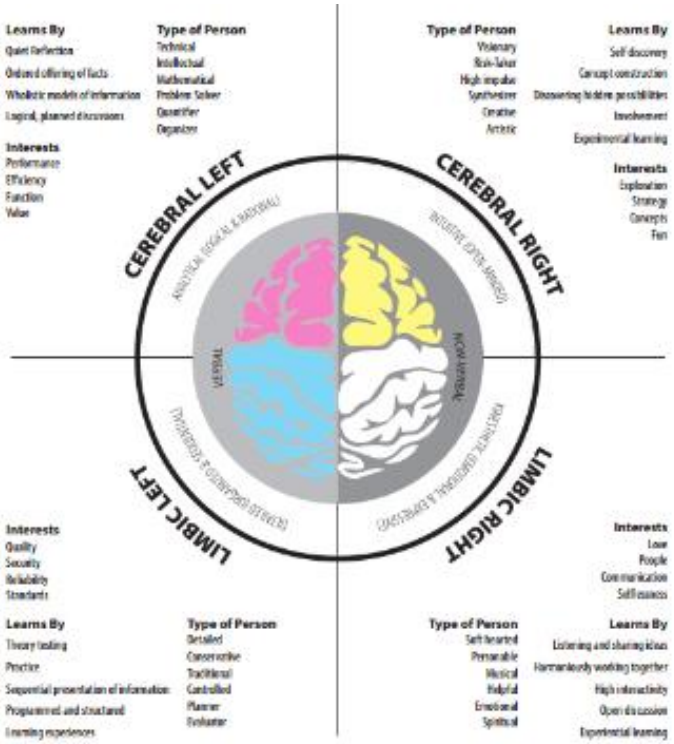
The Learning Styles Questionnaire simply helps individuals understand their relative preferences as they learn and to better manage their transfer process in the future.

It is intended to help determine where people's general preferences, or natural learning biases, might lie. Although this is far from an exact science, the simple view is that the more we can understand about how we perceive new information or new learning, the better and more successful our learning transfer will be. This means using our whole brain to learn, as is illustrated in the diagram on the next page.

Remember:

- This is not a test.
- There are no right or wrong answers.

## Learning with the Whole Brain – Page 4




We inherently use different parts of our brain to learn different things, and activate different parts of our brains more readily than other parts. The graphic on page 4 gives some key insight to how various parts of our brain function, including:

- Verbal vs. Non-Verbal
- Intuitive, Kinesthetic, Detailed, & Analytical
- Types of Person
- Interests
- Learns by

***Review the graphic discussing how our whole brain is part of the learning process, and how different areas of the brain are engaged in our learning.***

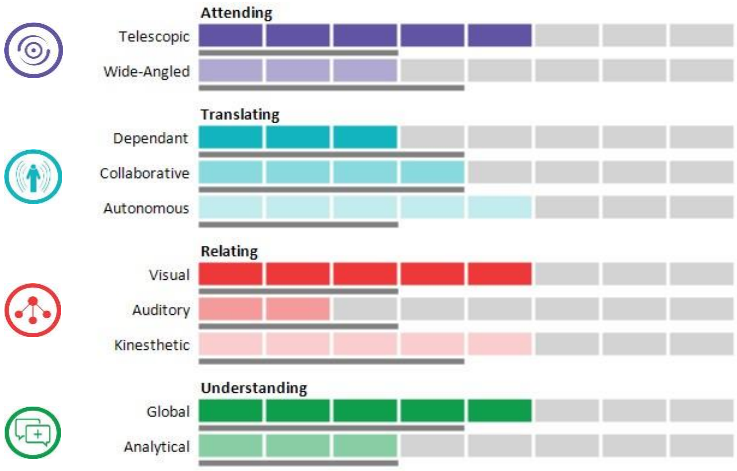
***If you have worked with other assessments, you can also talk about how behavior, motivation, critical thinking, and more, show up in this graphic engaging our whole brain as well.***

The important thing to remember as we move forward is that all of our learning experiences should engage our whole brain to give us the best attention, retention, recall and application.

## Your Results – page 5

**There are 4 steps of learning measured in this report:**

- **Attending**
- **Translating**
- **Relating**
- **Understanding**




Each of these four areas is broken down into various ways we learn at each step and this page provides a score in each area. The color highlights reveal your preferences, while the gray bars underneath each score show you the average score (or "norm") for the individuals who have completed this assessment in the past.

As we review each area, we'll keep in mind your scores in these four steps. Let's note where you have a preference according to the results. Remember, that while you may have a preference in one area, it is also common to shift that preference based on a variety of information, the situation or the environment. And, while we may have a noted preference in a particular category, we may also have blends of preferences; that's ok too!

***Make a note of the score preferences to discuss as you go through each page of the report. The scores are located on each page associated with the descriptors of the steps.***
***You can also explain each of the definitions and examples as you review the scores, or save that for development on the next pages.***

***Note:***
***While some will be interested in knowing how they compare to the population, it's more important to create their own personal understanding here. If there is a large discrepancy from the average score, it may be helpful for them to understand that they could experience challenges with learning the way everyone else does, or with others understanding their perspective. They may have to work a little harder to help others see things the same way they do, or to see things the same way others do.***

# Using Learning Styles: Page 6

This page provides a brief overview of each of the four categories of learning:


***Review each of the definitions listed on page 6, noting again which way this individual prefers to learn as you share the definition aloud:***

### *1. ATTENDING*

The **ATTENDING** category looks at an individual's motivation to learn in the first place, and the levels of commitment or concentration they tend to give when new information is presented to them. This category has two sub-scales: "Telescopic" and "Wide-angled". Telescopic means that they are generally effective at concentrating and keep their mind on the information being shared without worrying about the physical context. Wide-angled means that the individual is often easily affected by environmental factors such as noise, low light, and other physical influences that can easily interfere with any information being shared.

### *2. TRANSLATING*

The **TRANSLATING** category looks at who an individual relies on most in managing the transfer of learning, and to make sense of what they see, hear, or sense. This category has three sub-scales: "Dependent", "Collaborative", and "Autonomous". Dependent means that the individual mainly favors relying on the trainer or facilitator for information. Collaborative means the individual mainly favors relying on group discussions or team activities for learning. Autonomous means that self-reliance is favored to manage the learning transfer process personally.

### *3. RELATING*

The **RELATING** category looks at an individual's perception of data or information, and how it is related to existing knowledge. This has three sub-scales: "Visual", "Auditory", and "Kinesthetic". Visual means that the preference is for information that can ideally be seen with the eyes. Auditory means that the preference is for information that can ideally be heard. Kinesthetic means that the preference is for information that can ideally be physically experienced (mainly through touch, smell, or taste).

### *4. UNDERSTANDING*

The **UNDERSTANDING** category looks at an individual's preferences for synthesizing data or information that they receive. This category has two sub-scales: "Global" and "Analytical". Global means a preference for understanding at a conceptual or "big picture" level. Analytical means a preference for understanding at a detailed or step-by-step level.

## Your Individual Score – Page 7

Once you have plotted your individual score (as long as this has been done honestly and accurately) you should be in a position to:

1. **Review the balance of learning styles that you draw upon (at the moment).**
2. **Compare your mix of learning styles with other average scores (shown on the graph).**
3. **Consider the implications for your future learning and how you might look to adjust your own approach to look to influence the way that future learning is delivered to you.**

Remember, there are no right or wrong answers in learning styles. The essential value in any measurement instrument is in the extent to which it provides useful information to your personal way of operating. Ideally, this should help you reflect upon and judge whether any adjustments or changes are necessary or desirable for you to be more effective.

A few reminders to keep in mind as you continue through the results:

- Remember, you may find things that describe you in more than one learning style preference in each step. That's very normal! Think about how those styles impact your learning journey, and what you can do with the information to be a more effective, empowered learner.
- Not all items in the description may fit. You may be a collaborative learner who dislikes role plays! We know these are tendencies and preferences for learning, but also acknowledge that you are a human that cannot be fully captured in any one report. There may be tendencies of your learning style that don't fit you specifically, however, when you come across something like that, we encourage you to take a moment to consider "when does that show up, if ever?" or "what might cause that to become true for me?"
- If something doesn't feel exactly right, think about how this learning style is reflecting your current experience. For example, you may generally believe you are a more wide-angled learner, yet this assessment shows a very telescopic focus. If you are very interested in your learning and find it incredibly valuable and relevant, you may be paying more attention than you would under typical circumstances.
- Keep in mind that all of this information is designed to help you be intention in creating effective learning for you and others. You can use this information as a gift, a revelation, or disregard the pieces that don't fit for you; that choice is yours. The assessment reveals simple, practical and applicable information for you to use purposefully as you desire.

## The Four Categories – Pages 8-11

***Review the descriptions at the top of each page and the individual score as a reminder, and identify which learning preference(s) your client values.***

- ***Discuss the bullet points specific to them, and acknowledge how others may be different.***
- ***Have them note a challenge and a benefit of their own preference(s) on each page.***
- ***Have them identify a way that they can ensure successful learning, given their preference:***
    - **If they are more <u>Telescopic or Wide-Angled</u>, what can they do to ensure that their learning experience is the best it can be (like paying attention to their level of concentration if the pace is too slow or if the presenter strays from the core message or eliminating distractions to remain focused)?**
    - **If they are more <u>Dependent, Collaborative or Autonomous</u>, what would help them to be successful in a learning scenario?**
    - **If they are more <u>Visual, Kinesthetic or Auditory</u>, how can they ensure that they are able to relate the information being presented to make sense for them, no matter how it's shared?**
    - **If they are more <u>Global or Analytical</u>, how can they see the alternate perspective more clearly (either a big picture view or a detailed view) to make better sense of the learning?**

# The Effective Learning Cycle - Pages 12-16

***Review each as you access each page.***

***For each of these steps in the learning cycle, the visual reminds you of the step and its relevance to the measurements on the previous pages, and offers prompts for you to discuss and explore in the debrief or coaching conversation.***

## Step 1: Attention Focus: Page 12

This step allows us to recognize the message, the context (what's going on around us at the time we are learning), and our commitment to learning. This primarily right-brained activity examines the context within which the information we will receive will be valued and evaluated (what's in it for me?).

**ATTENDING** looks at an individual's motivation to learn, and the level of commitment and concentration when new information is presented.

- The Purple Box noting 1: Attention Focus reminds you that our Attention is measured as more Telescoping or Wide-Angled.

- ***As you move around the grey boxes, discuss the prompts in each box to determine what may be impacting the ability to pay attention and maintain focus.***

  **Learning Styles & Context:** What about my unique Telescopic or Wide-Angled learning style blend supports my success in paying attention to taking in new information? What may prevent me from paying attention?
  **Motivation (What's in it for me?):** What is my motivation for learning this information? If I am not particularly motivated what I can I find that may be useful in the learning to help me stay engaged?
  **Distraction Removal**: In additional to distractions already acknowledged, what else might stand in my way that needs to be managed so I can be as attentive as possible?

## Step 2: Knowledge Encryption: The Process

We translate the information in a way that makes sense with our existing knowledge (Existing Mental Models & Language Vocabulary Translation) or ideas of the way things should work. We may have to "unlearn" something (unlearning) before we can encrypt or encode our new learning to be meaningful. This is primarily a left-brained activity connected with logic and reason.

**TRANSLATING** looks at whom an individual relies on most in managing the transfer of learning, to make sense of what they see, hear or sense. It is how information is made meaningful. There are 3 sub scales – **Dependent, Collaborative, and Autonomous.**

- The Blue Box noting 2: Knowledge Encryption reminds you that our once we've gained access to the information from the sources we prefer, we must make sense of that information to create retention of the new learning.

- ***As you move around the grey boxes, discuss the prompts in each box to determine what may be impacting the ability to pay attention and maintain focus***.

  **"Unlearning":** What did I believe to be true before that may have changed by receiving this new information? What do I need to unlearn to be able to accept the new information?
  **Language, Vocabulary, Translation:** Am I able to correctly identify vocabulary and understand the language, or translations of the information I am receiving? What support might I need to make this clearer?
  **Existing Mental Models:** What information do I know already that helps me understand this new information better? How does this new information add to my learning experience to deepen my understanding?

## Step 3: Relating

This step has to do with relating the new learning with what we already know. We must knowledge in our short-term or long-term memory in order to connect the new information with old information and store it in the most relevant place. Through memory filtering, discovering analogies and metaphors, and comparing and contrasting, we find the right place the new information "belongs". This is predominately a right-brain activity - to connect with associated general ideas and relationships.

**RELATING** looks at an individual's perception of data or information and how it is related or linked to existing knowledge. It has 3 sub scales – Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic.

- The Red Box noting 3: Relational Storage reminds that once we make sense of the new information, we must find ways to categories and store it. Think of this as a file cabinet in the brain and organizing our new information into appropriate file folders to find when we need it later.

- ***As you move around the grey boxes, discuss the prompts in each box to determine what may be impacting the ability to pay attention and maintain focus***.

  **Comparing & Contrasting:** Does this information seem similar in some ways to things I already know? Are there ways this information is different than what I already know?
  **Discovering Analogies and Metaphors:** An analogy is a direct comparison of how two things are similar (the classroom was a zoo). A metaphor uses one thing to mean another, typically

stating how they are alike. (life is like a box of chocolates). What analogies or metaphors come to mind to help you develop your understanding of this new information?
**"Memory" Filtering:** Memories are subjective, and are captured through the self-perspective. Two individuals who share an experience may recall different things that happened or experience emotions differently, based on their own perceptions. Those memories are then subject to storage based on ideas and information that may not be factual. What subjective elements may exist in your experience that may influence how you remember new information?

## Step 4: Understanding

In the last step we summarize the new information in connection with the old and refine it for access and use when needed. Long-term memory triggers connections or links, access triggers design and extrapolation, and problem-solving abilities are influenced by retrieval and understanding (we use what we can find, so to speak). Understanding is all about taking core information, and knowing when and how to apply it to wider situations. This is predominantly a left-brained activity connected with induction and deduction processes.

**UNDERSTANDING** looks at the individual's preference for synthesizing data or information that they receive or how we use and apply information. It has 2 sub-scales: Global and Analytical.

- The Green Box noting 4: Retrieval and Understanding reminds that once we've filed that information, we need ways to recall it and apply it to have it be useful.

- ***As you move around the grey boxes, discuss the prompts in each box to determine what may be impacting the ability to pay attention and maintain focus***.

  **Long-term memory triggers, connections or links:** What are some things I know help me remember information that I need to recall quickly?
  **Access Triggers Design -** Are there any tricks I can use to create easy reminders to access and apply this new information (songs, stories, acronyms, etc.)?
  **-Extrapolation & -Problem Solving Ability –** Once I access this new information, how can I apply to create solutions and take action?
  *Remember, the first two are focused on Retrieval, the last is focused on Understanding.

## Reinforcement - Self-Talk – Positive, Negative, Action/Deployment

In the learning cycle, we constantly evaluate what we are experiencing within the context of our past history and everything we already know. In this stage we are making a judgment about what we have heard, seen and experienced and deciding if it is valuable, or not. If not, we will most likely not commit the learning to long-term memory and it will be lost.

- If we travel the cycle successfully our "self-talk", or internal reflection, is positive and we can add it to our knowledge and action if we so choose.
- Sometimes, whether there is positive or negative consideration, immediate action/deployment is required (like when an authority gives a directive)

- However, if we stall at any of these steps, or travel this cycle with difficulty, our self-talk may be negative, or at least confused, and we introspectively travel the cycle again to see if we can work out the problem.

This learning evaluation cycle may be traveled in a few seconds in many cases, or may take much longer if the information is complex or confusing.

## Pulling it All Together – Facilitating Learning Transfer: Page 17

***For Self – Learning -***

If individuals understand their overall learning cycle and their individual strengths and weaknesses, biases, and preferences, they will more readily be able to adjust their whole approach to learning and building knowledge. The desire to further understand learning styles is the first step in determining your own personal "recipe" for effective learning in the future.

- Once your level of understanding about the subject is as broad and as deep as you would like it to be – consider what is relevant and what you are drawn to including in your own experiences

- Even concepts that have been internalized and accepted may need to be modified to be as effective for you as possible. Adapting these concepts to more accurately reflect how you learn or like to be taught individually is the next step toward effectiveness and applicability.

- Deploying some of the recommended approaches and activities is the final step in developing the right recipe for your benefit.

- It is understanding ourselves that is suggested to be the most important consideration in managing our learning journey in the future.

Consider the metaphor of a computer filling up with information and needing more memory. Humans aren't able to just get more room to fill – we must make space for new knowledge. On the bottom of page 17, you'll read of a model to direct our energy to make changes. There are other ways, but this is one way to help new learning "stick" as effectively as possible.

***For Facilitating learning with others –***

Just as you can use this information to support your own learning effectiveness, you can use these concepts when sharing new information, formally or informally, to help you help others learn as effectively as possible. Consider what all style preference and blends might need to be successful.

## Contract for Change: Page 18

Understanding your own learning preferences is paramount to your ability to gather, retain, and retrieve information. Using the contract on this page, we encourage you to complete the outline and commit to make a small change. Even small changes can have big effects. I would encourage you to set a deadline for completion of your contract to help you stay on track.

## Summary

This report is filled with information about each of your learning style preferences. Now you have a comprehensive profile that will truly help you understand your own unique learning style patterns.

There are many suggestions in each of the sections of this report, presenting opportunities for you to apply this valuable information. Take the next action steps required to make improvements in the specific learning styles sections most important to you and your success.