Electronic Cognitive Preference Estimator (e-CPE) Results

Your Result: Mildly Adaptive

Understanding Your Result: What Does Your Estimate Mean?

There are six cognitive preferences from strongly, moderately, and mildly adaptive to strongly, moderately, and mildly innovative. Your results provide an estimate of where you lie in terms of your cognitive preference for structure.

As we move from left to right along the spectrum, the preference for structure decreases [1]. Therefore, a person whose cognitive preference is mildly innovative prefers more structure than a person whose cognitive preference is moderately innovative; that same person prefers less structure than someone whose cognitive preference is moderately adaptive– and so on. In other words, it is relative! Remember, the e-CPE provides only an estimate of your cognitive preference. For more accuracy regarding your preference, make arrangements to take the KAI®. by contacting a KAI practitioner through the www.kaicentre.com web site.

To learn more you can read Dr. Kirton's book (Adaption-Innovation in the Context of Diversity and Change, London: Routledge, 2011). To gain an appreciation for how your creative style affects your life in different ways and contexts, look over the descriptions in Table 1 and judge for yourself how each description/behavior applies to you. You may find it helpful to draw a line through any descriptions that do not sound like you at all, and then underline, circle, or highlight those that do. If your preference is mildly adaptive or mildly innovative, you may be comfortable with descriptions/behaviors in both columns. If you are moderately adaptive or moderately innovative, you are probably comfortable with many of the descriptions/behaviors in one column, but may also be comfortable with a few of the descriptions/behaviors in the other column. If you are strongly adaptive or strongly innovative, then you are probably comfortable with most or all of the descriptions/behaviors in one column and may not be comfortable with any descriptions from the other column.

Introduction & Background: What is Cognitive Preference?

Cognitive Preference is a stable preference that reflects the characteristic manner in which you solve problems, make decisions, and seek to bring about change. In other words, it reflects the way in which you are creative. Among general populations (and across continents and cultures), cognitive style preference spans a wide bipolar spectrum in a normal distribution, ranging from those with a strong preference for structure to those with a weak preference for structure. M. J. Kirton[1-3], one of the leading scholars in this field, uses the terms "highly adaptive" and "highly innovative" to describe these two poles, respectively, with most people falling somewhere in between (see Note). For accuracy, we use the terms "more adaptive" and "more innovative" to describe our style preferences relative to others.

Note: It is important to note that "innovation" in the popular sense (i.e., the realization of ideas) is different from Kirton's definition of the term. From the cognitive style perspective, both more adaptive and more innovative people regularly realize novel ideas (i.e., "innovate"), but they do so in different ways – and their ideas are novel in different ways as well!

Value of Different Cognitive Style Preferences

No position along the cognitive preference spectrum is ideal in general, as complex problem solving and creative endeavors require a diversity of cognitive style preference for success overall. Cognitive style preference is independent of creative level (e.g., intelligence, knowledge, skills, expertise), which means that people of all levels can be found at all places along the style spectrum – and vice versa. Your cognitive style preference does not change during your lifetime, although you can (and will) behave in ways that do not align with your style when you have sufficient motive to do so; called coping behavior, it comes at an extra personal cost.

Estimating Your Cognitive Style Preference

The online e-CPE was developed by Mr. Rich Rafferty and Dr. Stephen Harris at the Barnes Center for Enlisted Education, United States Air Force, in collaboration [1] with Dr. Kathryn Jablokow, Penn State University. It provides only a general estimate of your cognitive style preference. A more specific and psychometrically accurate evaluation of your cognitive style preference can be obtained through the KAI® (created by M. J. Kirton), which must be administered by a certificated practitioner. Nevertheless, the e-CPE has been shown to correlate quite well with official KAI results and can provide useful insights in concert with a clear explanation of the underlying theory. It simulates self-assessment exercises often used by practitioners in academic and corporate workshops to give participants a general sense of their cognitive preference/ creative style.

[1]Remember that no one can exist with no structure or within a completely rigid system! The real world lies between the two.

Table 1

___

Adaptive [2]	Factors [3]	Innovative [4]
Prefer to operate within boundaries (system, policy, regulations, structure, standards, customs, organizational norms, etc) Believes their way (current paradigm) works well, thus it is the best way (i.e. no reason to change), may challenge / adjust rules if problem cannot be solved within current rule set.	Concern for Paradigm/Structure	Broader ranging views, thus can operate in or outside boundaries (paradigm, system, policy, regulations, structure, standards, customs, organizational norms, etc) Feels current way (paradigm) is ineffective, thus it must be changed, will challenge and bend/break rules to solve problems.
Help maintain continuity, knows and honors history/heritage, reminds others of "why" things are done the way they are (i.e. adherence to rules), uses structure/rules to keep projects and programs on track to accomplish the mission.	Importance to Organization	Helps shake things up, key to success during crisis and significant change initiatives. Not concerned with continuity or "why" things are done the way they are, may affect mission because of their struggle with staying focused / dedicated to routines / projects / programs. Often placed in organizations to "blow it up".

Prefers a well-defined, disciplined, and detail oriented, approach; relies on established, proven methods. Offer fewer solutions, although those offered are unique and creative, and focus on improving existing programs. Often placed in organizations to get it focused on mission processes. Ideas are applicable to problem, economical, can be implemented immediately with high success rates.	**Continuous Improvement & Problem Solving**	Offers many solutions aimed at changing existing programs, policies, and processes, etc. though unique and creative, most are impractical, and result in high failure rates, rejects perception of problem so redefines it, finds pleasure in new ideas and concepts, often provides little follow-through.
Prefers/accepts change that improves existing programs, policies, and processes, etc.	**Change Management**	Prefers change that changes/replaces existing programs
Prefers to: know/clarify rules of engagement, hold quiet orderly give and take discussion, avoid/minimize interrupting others, seek agreement/ clarification of points discussed, sometimes misinterpreted as being meek	**Communication**	Not overly concerned with rules of engagement, okay with noisy, chaotic discussion, guilty/tolerant of interruptions, not concerned with or seek agreement, provides own interpretation/clarification of points discussed, may come across as harsh / rude / abrupt / disruptive
Seeks agreement/harmony, builds/values pulling together, tries to embrace/engage all members, want consensus, may appear more team oriented	**Teams / Teambuilding**	Not overly concerned with agreement/harmony, independent, rogue, often perceived as "loose cannon"
Able to identify advantages of being more adaptive, but tends to not recognize shortcomings, becomes concerned when adaptive preference is pointed out	**View of Self**	Able to identify advantages and disadvantages of being more innovative , but tend not to care about their shortcomings and are not concerned when these are pointed out

As seen by Innovators: "compliant, by the book, follows the regulations, conventional, stubborn, dedicated to current/in-place system, maintains status quo, uncomfortable with uncertainty, guarded, cautious, risk averse, boring, stoic.

As viewed by others

As seen by Adaptors: easily bored, lack of attention to detail, "noncompliant, throws out the book, treats regulations as guidelines, unconventional, not concerned about the status quo, comfortable with uncertainty, reckless, takes unwarranted risks.

Applicability of Adaption-Innovation Theory [5]

- Team building and re-building
- Conflict management (between individuals, within groups, and between groups)
- Selecting people for tasks, additional duties, special assignments, special duties
- Solving specific types of problems (e.g. adaptive, innovative, combination)
- Reducing stress (e.g. understanding and reducing coping, conflict)
- Managing Cognitive Diversity & Cognitive Gap (i.e. adaptors vs. innovators): manage Problem 'B' while creating a felt need and developing, implementing, and monitoring change initiatives
- Help with resilience by giving insight to potential stressors

Additional Terms and Definitions [6] Relative to Dr. Kirton's A-I Theory

- Problem A vs. B: Problem A is the agreed common problem for which any team is formed. Problem B is any problem that impedes progress towards resolution of Problem A. Note: two problem As make a Problem B and all sub-problems within Problem A need resolving such that they do not impede the solution of other sub-problems (create Problem B) - a key leadership concern.
- Paradox of Structure: Cognitive structure (paradigm) is both enabling and limiting.
- Cognitive Gap: The gap in style (as well as level, motive, attitude, etc.) between problem solvers and the problem and between the problem-solvers themselves, which needs to be resolved in order to problem solve alone or in teams. For example, the expected behaviors and differences that exist between a strong Adaptor and a mild Innovator.
- Coping Behavior: Behavior that is not in accord with a one's preferred style or comfortable reach of current level. Comes with a cost i.e. stress.
- Bridgers: Bridgers are those who have intermediate position (or can simulate it) between specific individuals and groups (wherever these may lie on the AI continuum), so appearing neutral, and to be willing to bridge, with appropriate skill.
- Cognitive Style: Synonymous with "cognitive preference", it is the preferred style ("in what manner") individuals approach problem solving (and creativity): highly resistant to change (i.e. preference does not change, but behavior does - see cognitive technique and coping behavior)
- Cognitive Techniques: Methods aimed at releasing potential capacity (enhancing level) or simulating a particular needed style. They are used when potential capacity is being blocked (anxiety, fatigue) or when preferred style is perceived as inappropriate to the problem.
- Collaboration: The diverse characteristics of each style provide robust opportunity for collaboration when each person understands what their style preference contributes. With this understanding, each person can create rich, though not always simple and easy, collaboration.

[1] The original, paper-based CPE instrument was based upon and derived from: Xu, Y., Tuttle, h5., (2012). Adaption-Innovation at work: A new measure of problem-solving styles. JAMAR 10(1), 17-34

[2] Kirton , M.J., (1999). Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory Manual , 3rd Edition. Terms and definitions. pp. 165-167

[3] Kirton , M.J., (2010). KAI Theory Workbook. Characteristics of Adaptors and Innovators. KAI Distribution Centre Ltd. pp. 39

[4] Kirton , M.J., (1999). Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory Manual , 3rd Edition. Terms and definitions. pp. 165-167

[5] Kirton , M.J., (1999). Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory Manual , 3rd Edition. Terms and definitions. pp. 165-167

[6] Kirton, M. J. (2003). Adaption-innovation: In the context of diversity and change. London: Routledge.