

Learning Styles Feedback Report

Learning Styles Indicator Step 1 - Version IW

Susan Sample

Introduction

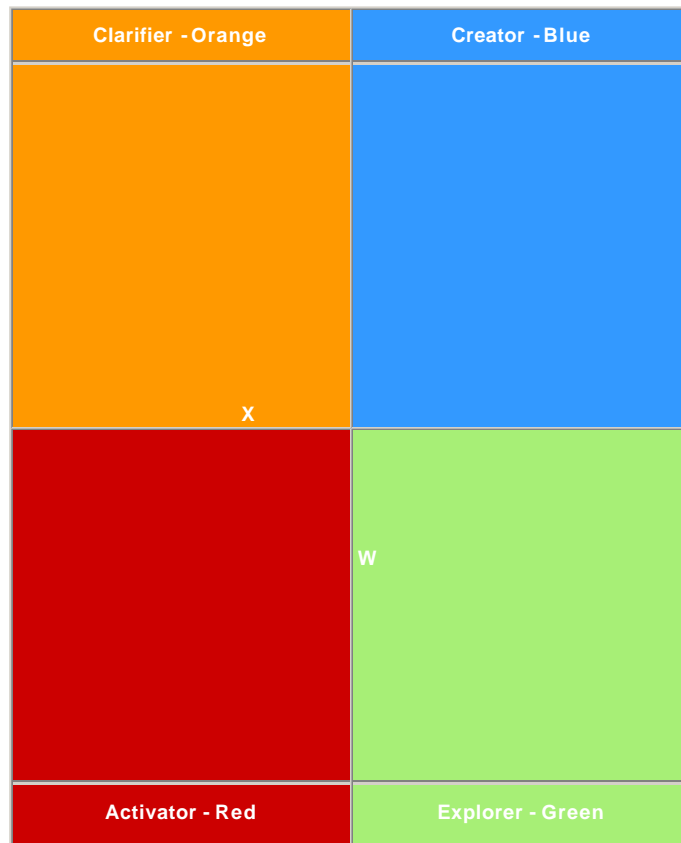
This report gives an indication of your style and preferences based on the answers you gave when completing the Learning Styles Indicator. The questionnaire is designed to identify fundamental differences in the way people think, communicate and learn.

Understanding more about your learning style might help you to:

- choose topics, areas and qualifications which are more likely to interest you
- understand how you communicate, how this might come across and how you learn best
- select the teaching style and learning environment that most suits you and keeps you motivated
- judge which situations require you to adapt your style

Results

Your answers have been scored and displayed using the symbols X and W in the boxes below.



The X shows the Clarifier as your most likely style in your current situation based on your answers to "the way it is". The W shows the Explorer as your preferred or ideal style based on your answers to "the way I want". Differences between the two styles are worth careful consideration. Sometimes we wish to be different because we are frustrated by life's opportunities to date and we have a natural inner style waiting to come out. Sometimes the difference reflects pressures and wishes from earlier in our life but which may no longer be relevant. If you find the difference confusing you should talk it over with a friend, tutor, manager or the facilitator who asked you to complete the questionnaire. It can also be useful to consider whether your preferences are borderline - see below.

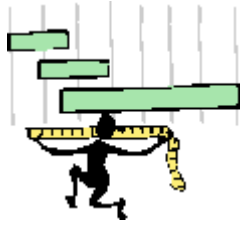
Interpretation

If your 'X' or 'W' is near one of the outer corners you have indicated a clear preference and the identified style is more likely to be noticeable and characteristic. If they are near the borderline of two boxes it can indicate that you show greater flexibility in using the style from both boxes. Alternatively it may mean that you are less clear about your preferred learning style at this point in time.

Whatever the results, there is neither good nor bad. The results may be most useful if you use them to consider whether they truly reflect your style and preferences. This may help you clarify how you learn best, how you choose what to learn, why you make the choices you do, what environments suit you best and what you could do to improve and enjoy learning more. You may also like to consider how much the questionnaire reflects your natural or dominant style and under what circumstances you use the other three styles. A summary of the four styles can be found on the next page.

SUMMARY OF THE FOUR MAIN LEARNING STYLES

CLARIFIER - orange



- collects facts and details
- gives practical examples
- wants time and space to reflect
- needs preparation and research
- prefers working at own pace
- prefers details of implementation
- prefers clear structure and steady progress

CREATOR - blue



- enjoys theories and models
- wants the 'big picture' first
- thrives on intellectual challenge
- reflects and has insights
- enjoys possibilities and wonders 'what if?'
- seeks to question and innovate
- driven to create something different

ACTIVATOR - red



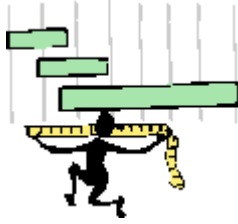
- prefers tangible ideas
- enjoys practical activities
- works at a fast pace
- wants 'hands on' and 'having a go'
- creates a buzz
- enjoys interaction
- prefers things 'signed, sealed and delivered'

EXPLORER - green



- seeks novelty
- craves variety and options
- learns by trial and error
- needs inspiration
- enjoys discussion and debate
- moves on to new topics quickly
- enjoys exploration, flexibility and discovery

IN-DEPTH DESCRIPTION OF YOUR STYLE



Overview

The way it is - your questionnaire results indicate a current preference for learning using the Clarifier style. This style is described in detail below.

The way I want - your questionnaire results indicate an ideal preference for learning using the Explorer style. This style is described in detail below.

Because you indicate different preferences in "the way it is" and "the way I want" this report will help you explore the characteristics of both. The styles are described alongside each other and you are encouraged to identify those descriptions that are clearly "you" - the style with which you are most comfortable and which you enjoy. Any description that seems less like you may help you clarify why your scores are borderline.

You may find that you gain more insight into why there is a discrepancy between "the way it is" and "the way I want" if you discuss your thoughts with someone trained in the use of these questionnaires. This will enable you to get the maximum benefit from the results.

<p style="text-align: center;">THE WAY IT IS - Clarifier</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THE WAY I WANT - Explorer</p>
<p>Summary Description</p> <p>Clarifiers are characterised by the desire to make the learning process clear, practical, detailed and structured.</p>	<p>Summary Description</p> <p>Explorers are characterised by the desire to discover new things with a constant need for stimulation and variety. A summary of the four main learning styles is given on the previous page so that you can see how the Explorer differs from others.</p>
<p>Some of the key characteristics of the Clarifier:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wants learning to be structured and systematic • prefers subjects that contain a lot of detail and the facts • wants time to absorb all the information available • enjoys organising and structuring what is to be done • creates an orderly process with milestones • builds detailed plans where nothing is forgotten • questions to help clarify and make sure that everything has been considered • learns best when has a chance to reflect and get into the detail 	<p>Some of the key characteristics of the Explorer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wants the “big picture” rather than the details • values options, complexity and flexibility • values inspiration above perspiration • enjoys opportunities for being creative and trying out new things • craves variety and change • enjoy learning by active discovery • comfortable with more questions rather than simple answers • desires personal growth and sees learning as part of a life-long process
<p>What Clarifiers might choose to study</p> <p>People choose to learn things for many different reasons. Sometimes this is because they have had particular experiences; sometimes they are influenced by friends, parents or have particular career interests. However, your learning style can help you to recognise how certain topics could be more naturally and immediately interesting for you. People with the Clarifier learning style preference often prefer subjects which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contain facts and details • can be organised and structured • are not too open-ended • are not too theoretical • can be linked to past experience <p>This generally means that theoretical, abstract subjects where there is a lot of opinion with few answers are not natural choices for Clarifiers.</p> <p>Clarifiers can learn to enjoy almost any subject. In particular, they tend to enjoy subjects which require the acquisition of a lot of detail and facts, such as history, accountancy, law and experimental sciences. However, they can also enjoy many other subjects which are not so obvious a fit to their style as these, perhaps because of an interest in specific aspects of a subject or because they like a particular teacher or learning environment.</p> <p>If they find that they are studying a particular subject but do not enjoy it, then they should consider why they chose to study that subject and whether in fact it is a subject that fits their most natural style of learning.</p>	<p>What Explorers might choose to study</p> <p>People choose to learn things for many different reasons. Sometimes this is because they have had particular experiences; sometimes they are influenced by friends or parents or have particular career interests. However, your learning style can help you to recognise how certain topics could be more naturally and immediately interesting for you. People with the Explorer learning style preference often prefer subjects which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have personal relevance and can inspire them • are engaging and different • are new and challenging • involve concepts, abstractions, metaphors and theories • are visual and allows mental imagery • have options and possibilities rather than answers • have personal purpose and relevance <p>This generally means that very factually based topics requiring close attention to detail are not natural choices for Explorers.</p> <p>Explorers can learn to enjoy almost any subject. In particular, they tend to enjoy marketing, social sciences, humanities, counselling, languages and business studies. However, they can also enjoy many other subjects which are not so obvious a fit to their style as these, perhaps because of an interest in specific aspects of a subject or because they like a particular teacher or learning environment.</p> <p>If they find that they are studying a particular subject but do not enjoy it, then they should consider why they</p>

chose to study that subject and whether in fact it is a subject that fits their most natural style of learning.

The learning environment Clarifiers usually prefer

When Clarifiers use their preferred learning style they usually seek an environment which is quiet and has a clear framework and rules. They like the chance to absorb information at their own pace and get frustrated by too much theory without more concrete examples and supporting information. You may like to consider previous learning situations that you found motivating and stimulating. Clarifiers usually describe situations which involve:

- plenty of interesting information, facts and details
- tangible ideas which they can relate to their own experience
- learning through reading, absorbing and reflection
- a quiet environment with few distractions
- getting things clear and structured
- having a clear idea of "how to" do something

You are therefore unlikely to find learning rewarding when you are expected to react quickly with insufficient preparation. You like getting immersed in the subject so that you feel you have a good grasp of all the relevant details. You can get frustrated if the people around you are too noisy, wanting to chat and learn by discussion. Your preferred style would normally be more individual and reflective.

You may sometimes benefit from being a little more interactive, talking, listening and discussing things with others before you have formulated your ideas. You may find that this increases the speed with which you gather information and it may also help you to see the bigger picture.

Your **ideal teacher**: this will be someone who is knowledgeable, thoughtful and detailed. They have a vast store of additional relevant details which they happily share when questioned and they do not try to get you to move on too quickly. They encourage you to contribute, recognising that you are not necessarily the first to put your ideas forward and they allow time for reflection and consolidation.

The learning environment Explorers usually prefer

When Explorers use their preferred learning style they usually seek an environment which is active and participative. Too much observation and reflection is likely to make them restless. You may like to consider previous learning situations that you found motivating and stimulating. Explorers usually describe situations where:

- there are lots of ideas and possibilities
- you can learn by trial and error
- there are lots of opportunities to discuss, suggest and interact with others
- there is debate and challenge
- learning is a process of questioning and discovery
- there is not an over emphasis on presentation and neatness
- broad meanings and implications are preferred to exhaustive details

You are therefore unlikely to find learning rewarding when you are expected to take a more reflective or passive approach such as listening to lectures or reading. As a colleague you are probably seen as enthusiastic and stimulating but with a tendency to keep asking questions and introducing new options and ideas. At the right time this can be extremely stimulating for your colleagues. At other times this may become frustrating because they may have a more linear or progressive approach and feel you are deflecting them from their goal or objective.

Your **ideal teacher**: this will be someone who is enthusiastic, someone who can stimulate and inspire you. You don't want simple or "spoon-fed" answers but you want them to stimulate you and to give you direction so that you can embark on a journey of exploration and discovery.

What motivates Clarifiers to learn something new

Everyone needs a purpose and some kind of outcome or benefit from their learning. However, people with different learning styles are likely to have very different reasons and rewards. Clarifiers are likely to want to feel that they have:

- a good grasp of all the relevant details
- have questioned and probed so that the subject is not too abstract
- related the subject to their own previous learning and experience
- produced a detailed and structured outline or plan
- acquired techniques and skills
- consolidated their learning

What motivates Explorers to learn something new

Everyone needs a purpose and some kind of outcome or benefit from their learning. However, people with different learning styles are likely to have very different reasons and rewards. Explorers are likely to want to feel that they:

- have explored and learnt something quite new
- have come up with a variety of different options so that there are plenty more questions to explore
- feel changed, more knowledgeable and skilled
- have their own creative stamp on whatever is produced

A Clarifier's most natural talents

Clarifiers have a style that makes them particularly good at:

- working with detail
- exposing flaws and gaps
- converting ideas into structured plans
- grasping basic issues and ensuring that nothing is left out
- researching the background and producing more relevant information
- imposing order and structure
- giving clear and detailed instructions

An Explorer's most natural talents

Explorers have a style that makes them particularly good at:

- finding out new things and turning up the unexpected
- making intuitive leaps, thinking broadly, introducing a wide range of ideas, options and information
- considering abstract ideas and divergent solutions
- stimulating others to consider more possibilities
- encouraging interaction, participation, sharing and discussion
- remaining flexible and adapting to new ideas and information

A Clarifier's least natural talents

Clarifiers have to work harder to:

- see the value in an abstract idea
- be innovative and consider alternatives
- accept that sometimes subjects are ambiguous
- proceed on the basis of incomplete information
- accept group working involving much discussion and interaction
- letting go, getting on with it and learning on the job

An Explorer's least natural talents

Explorers have to work harder to:

- attend to the details – of either the instructions or the solutions
- maintain interest when the initial excitement has passed
- ensure a sufficiently detailed and thorough evaluation and analysis has been completed
- introduce structure and method
- communicate sufficient detail and practicalities

Clarifiers get criticised for:

- being pedantic and nit-picking
- criticising before they have the whole picture
- using plans as rules rather than as guides
- proceeding with insufficient flexibility
- not seeing the wood for the trees
- responding too slowly in a crisis

Explorers get criticised for:

- starting many things and opening too many avenues
- failing to see things through
- becoming restless and bored when the hard work starts
- throwing in too many red herrings and introducing chaos
- communicating generalities leaving people unsure about what needs to be done
- trusting in luck and moving on with inadequate analysis and evaluation

Development suggestions for Clarifiers

If you have a need to improve your learning and have to adapt your style in order to do so you may like to consider trying some of the following:

- Consider an activity or piece of work you need to produce. Write down a summary of how you would normally approach it. Does this involve pre-reading, careful preparation or gathering a wide range of potentially relevant information? Does it involve being precise, building a plan or sequence of steps? Now consider an alternative approach. Clarifiers can sometimes benefit if they:
 - brainstorm the subject with someone they respect
 - work furiously whilst feeling unprepared but considering this to be a

Developmental suggestions for Explorers

If you have a need to improve your learning and have to adapt your style in order to do so you may like to consider trying some of the following:

- write a description of an event or something you have just learned. Get someone with a different learning style from yourself to read it and comment – perhaps with the mind-set that they wanted to learn the same topic. Then rewrite it all giving a lot more detail and trying to be as specific and concrete as possible. Address the following:
 - who
 - what
 - when

“first draft”

- consider the bigger picture
- work hard to introduce novel ideas to make the work different and individual
- do less research and preparation on their own

Now try to complete this piece of work using a different approach to the one you use normally.

- Next time you are in a group discussion write down any ideas and contributions that occur to you which you don't express. Choose at least one of them, even if it is insufficiently thought through and ask the group to help you think it through aloud.
- Prepare yourself for your next interactive learning opportunity (ie. where you will be learning through interaction and discussion). Imagine yourself as a fly on the wall observing yourself contributing in that environment. Do you:
 - talk too little
 - contribute by criticising others for their broad, expansive, exploratory ideas
 - get bogged down in clarifying the detail
 - get frustrated by people who keep adding in new suggestions
- Write a list of reminders for recognising some of these failings and write down a list of suggestions for what you will do differently next time.

○ how

- consider an activity or piece of work you need to produce. How would you normally approach it? Now consider an alternative approach. Explorer – Catalysts usually need to work at producing a more structured plan with more specific detail concerning content and time-scales.
- prepare yourself for your next interactive learning opportunity (ie. where you will be learning through interaction and discussion). Imagine yourself as a fly on the wall observing yourself contributing in that environment. Do you:
 - talk too much and interrupt others
 - go off at tangents and bring in red herrings
 - show frustration and boredom
 - avoid the detail
 - suggest alternatives once too often
- Write a list of reminders for recognising some of these failings.
- Write down what you will try to do differently – be specific.

LEARNING STYLES AND THE LEARNING CYCLE

Linking your learning style to the learning cycle can be very useful and make you a more effective learner. The principle behind the link is that all learning benefits from being consolidated by all the stages – act, reflect, construct and practice. Greater awareness of your strengths and preferences can therefore help you to make better use of the full cycle. Below is a description of the 4 stages and the style which feels most natural at each stage:

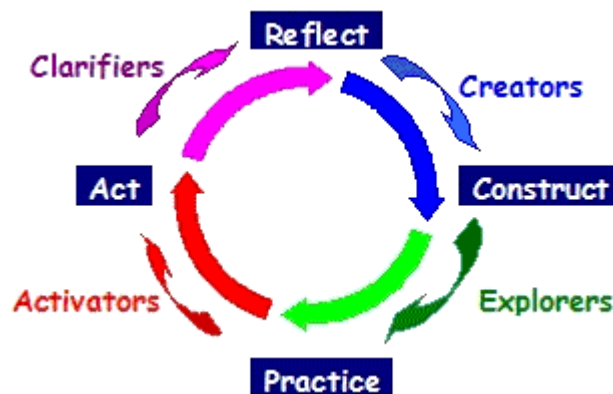
Stage 1 - ACT: This is the active experience, a period where there is opportunity to learn by involvement, practical activity and “getting on with it”. Activators are keen to move into this stage.

Stage 2 – REFLECT: This is a period of contemplation and reflection where there is an opportunity to review, understand and personalise the experience. Clarifiers are keen to move into this stage.

Stage 3 – CONSTRUCT: This is a period where the implications can be explored and new ideas or theories can be created. Creators are keen to move into this stage.

Stage 4 – PRACTICE: This is a period where the new ideas are explored more actively, perhaps with some trial and error. It is the stage where plans or scheme emerge with designs implementation. Explorers are keen to move into this stage.

Below is a diagrammatic representation of the way the cycle and the styles link. It shows how each style has a tendency to move the learning process onto a stage that suits its own particular preferences and frustrations.



Learning to use each stage of the cycle in a more conscious way can make learning both more enjoyable and more effective. This does not mean that everyone would use each style or stage in equal measure, but it does suggest that there can often be a more appropriate balance that is influenced by your preferences and the situation. Greater awareness of your learning style preferences can also help reduce tension when you are learning and working with others. This is because people with different styles want to spend more time at a different part of the cycle. The recognition that people have different preferences can help all those involved to manage learning to fit the individuals concerned and their colleagues and also to use the most appropriate balance to fit the learning environment which can all lead to a more useful and harmonious learning experience.