

DAVID KOLB'S LEARNING STYLES



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Define tomorrow.



OBJECTIVES

- Provide an overview of **Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)**
- Understand the **concept of learning styles (LS)**
- Identify **your** learning style
- Become aware of how you can approach learning in a **way that may work best for you.**
- Recognize how your learning style may **influence your academic, social, and career functioning**
- Understand how to work with **others; different or similar** to you

WHY LEARNING STYLES ARE IMPORTANT...

- Understand how you learn
- Maximise learning experiences
- Recognise and optimize strengths
- Become aware of areas for development
- Use to market yourself
- Work more effectively in teams
- Improve problem-solving/decision-making

Some individuals
tend to focus on
facts & data

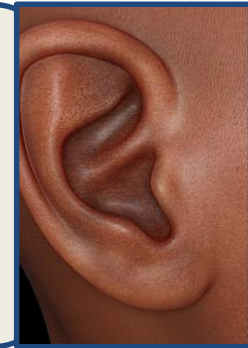


Others more
comfortable with
theories and
mathematical model



Some respond well
to **visual forms** of
information, like
pictures, diagrams

Some get more
from **verbal
presentation** –
(written and
spoken
explanations)



Some prefer to
learn **actively and
interactively**

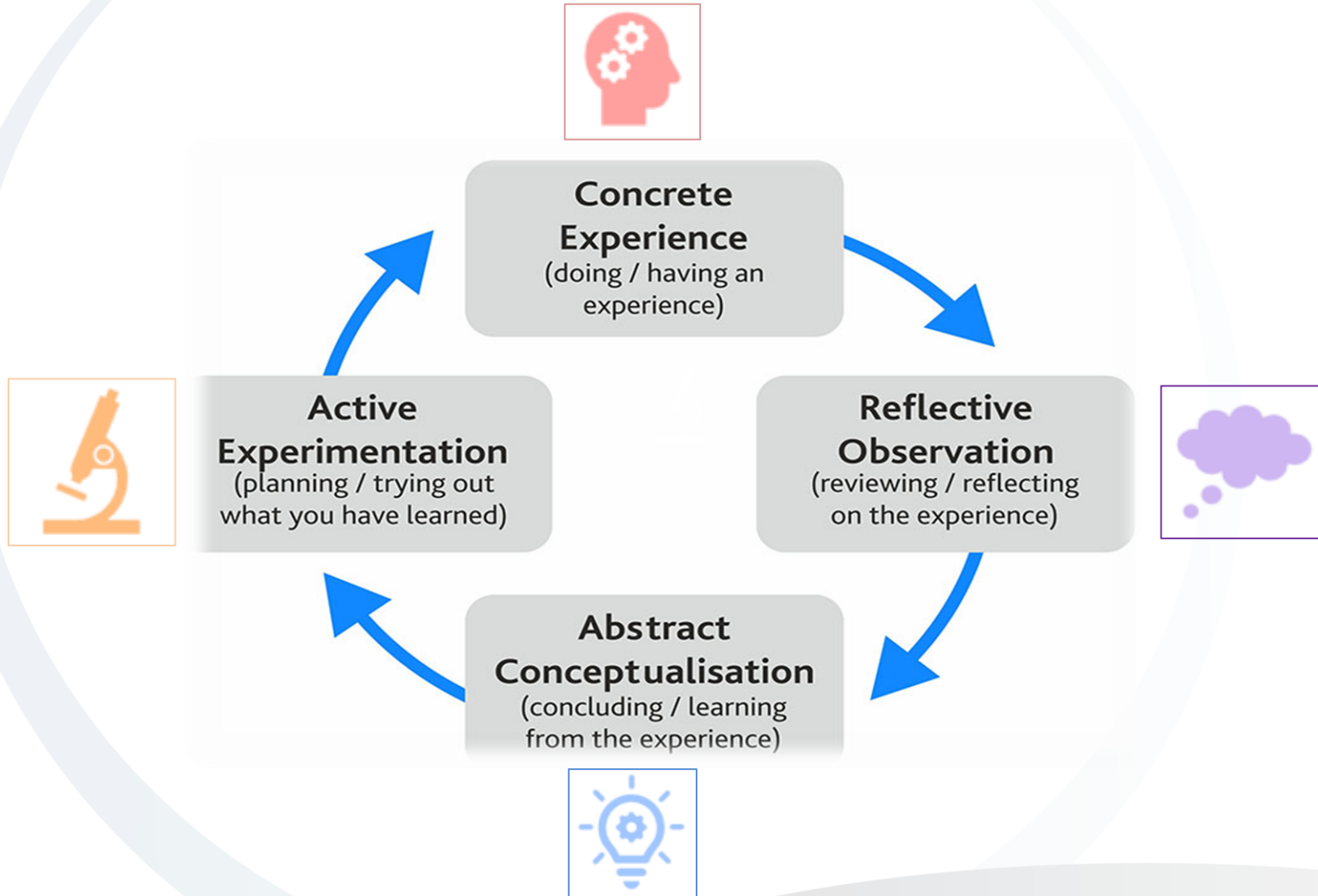
While others function
more
**introspectively &
individually**



KOLB'S EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THEORY (ELT)

- **Learning** is a combination of how we
 - *approach a task* and how we *respond to the experience*
- In *responding* to an experience - preference for *feeling or thinking*.
- In *approaching* a task - preference for *doing or watching*
- **Kolb's Learning Theory** - two levels:
 - 4 Stage Experiential Learning Theory (**ELT**)
 - 4 Learning Styles (**LS**)
- **ELT** - made up of four different stages of learning from experience.
- **LS** - refer to an individual's *preferred* way of gathering, interpreting, organising & thinking about information

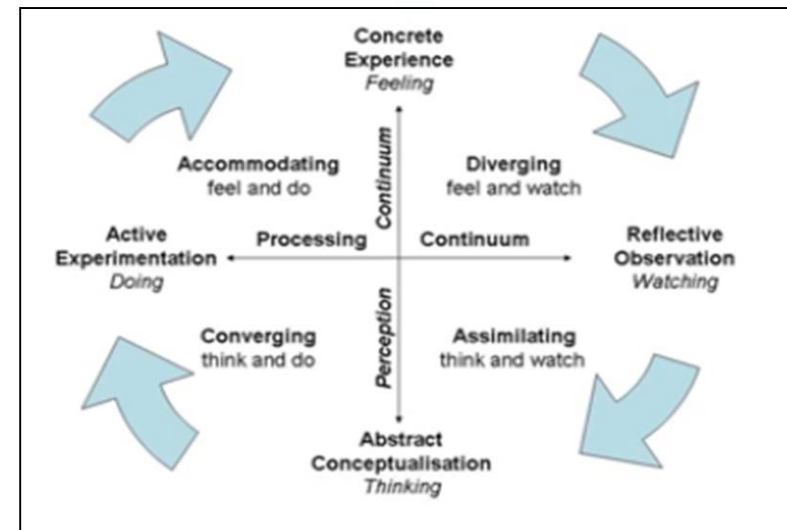
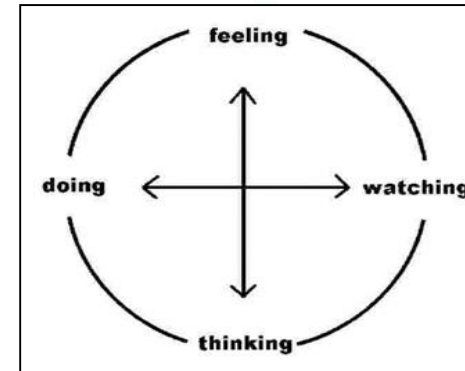
THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE



EXAMPLE:

Learning a Software Programme

- **Concrete experience**
Using help feature – get expert tips.
- **Reflective observation**
Thinking about what you just performed.
- **Abstract conceptualization**
Reading the manual to get a clearer grasp on what was performed.
- **Active experimentation**
Jumping in and doing it.



WHAT IS A LEARNING STYLE

An individual's preferred way of gathering, interpreting, organizing and thinking about information

Individuals have different *learning styles* – each style has strengths and preferences in the way individuals take in and work through (process) information.

A group of characteristics, attitudes and behaviors that define our way of learning

Various factors influence a persons preferred style

Concrete Experience - CE (feeling)

vs

**Abstract Conceptualization - AC
(thinking)**

Active Experimentation - AE (doing)

vs

**Reflective Observation - RO
(watching)**

The Learning Styles Inventory (LSI)

The Learning Style Inventory or LSI is an inventory, **not a standard assessment**. That means that the result of the LSI is an **indication of or a guide** to your learning style. It is not an absolute answer or scientific result.

So is it useful?

Its biggest benefit is to get you to **think about how you learn and to consider learning alternatives**; not to rigidly classify you.

WHAT IS YOUR LEARNING STYLE?

Scoring your LSI

		A		B
1	I often produce off-the-cuff ideas that at first might seem silly or half-baked.		I'm thorough and methodical	
2	I am normally the one who initiates conversations		I enjoy watching people	✓
3	I am flexible and open minded.	✓	I am careful and cautious	
4	I like to try new and different things without too much preparation.		I investigate a new topic or process in depth before trying it	✓
5	I am happy to have a go at new things.	✓	I draw up lists of possible courses of actions when starting a new project.	✓
6	I like to get involved and to participate.		I like to read and observe.	✓
7	I am loud and outgoing		I am quiet and somewhat shy.	✓
8	I make quick and bold decisions.		I make cautious and logical decisions.	✓
9	I speak fast, while thinking.		I speak slowly, after thinking.	✓
SUBTOTALS:		2	—	7



-5

		C		D
1	I ask probing questions when learning a new subject.		I am good at picking up hints and techniques from other people.	
2	I am rational and logical.	✓	I am practical and down to earth.	
3	I plan events down to the last detail.	✓	I like realistic, but flexible plans.	
4	I like to know the right answers before trying something new.	✓	I try things out by practicing to see if they work.	✓
5	I analyse reports to find the basic assumptions and inconsistencies.	✓	I rely upon others to give me the basic gist of reports.	
6	I prefer working alone.		I enjoy working with others.	
7	Others would describe me as serious, reserved and formal.	✓	Others would describe me as verbal, expressive and informal.	✓
8	I use facts to make a decision.		I use feelings to make decisions.	✓
9	I am difficult to get to know.	✓	I am easy to get to know.	
SUBTOTALS:		6	—	3



3

HORIZONTAL DIMENSION

*TRANSFORMING INFORMATION:
how we understand things*

ACTION-ORIENTED
ACTIVE
EXPERIMENTATION

OBSERVER-ORIENTED
REFLECTIVE
OBSERVATION

PERCEIVING CONTINUUM

how we do things

Doing

Watching/
Observing

TASK

Reaction to the environment
Extrovert - Introvert

Thought or Emotional PROCESSING:

how we think about things or take in/grasp info

FEELING-ORIENTED
CONCRETE EXPERIMENTATION

creative & emotional

GRASPING INFORMATION
↑
↓
PROCESSING

FACT-ORIENTED
ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALIZATION

abstract & logical

Concrete Experience/ Feeling

Experiences/Association/
relationships/examples
Feeling component

Conceptual Thinking

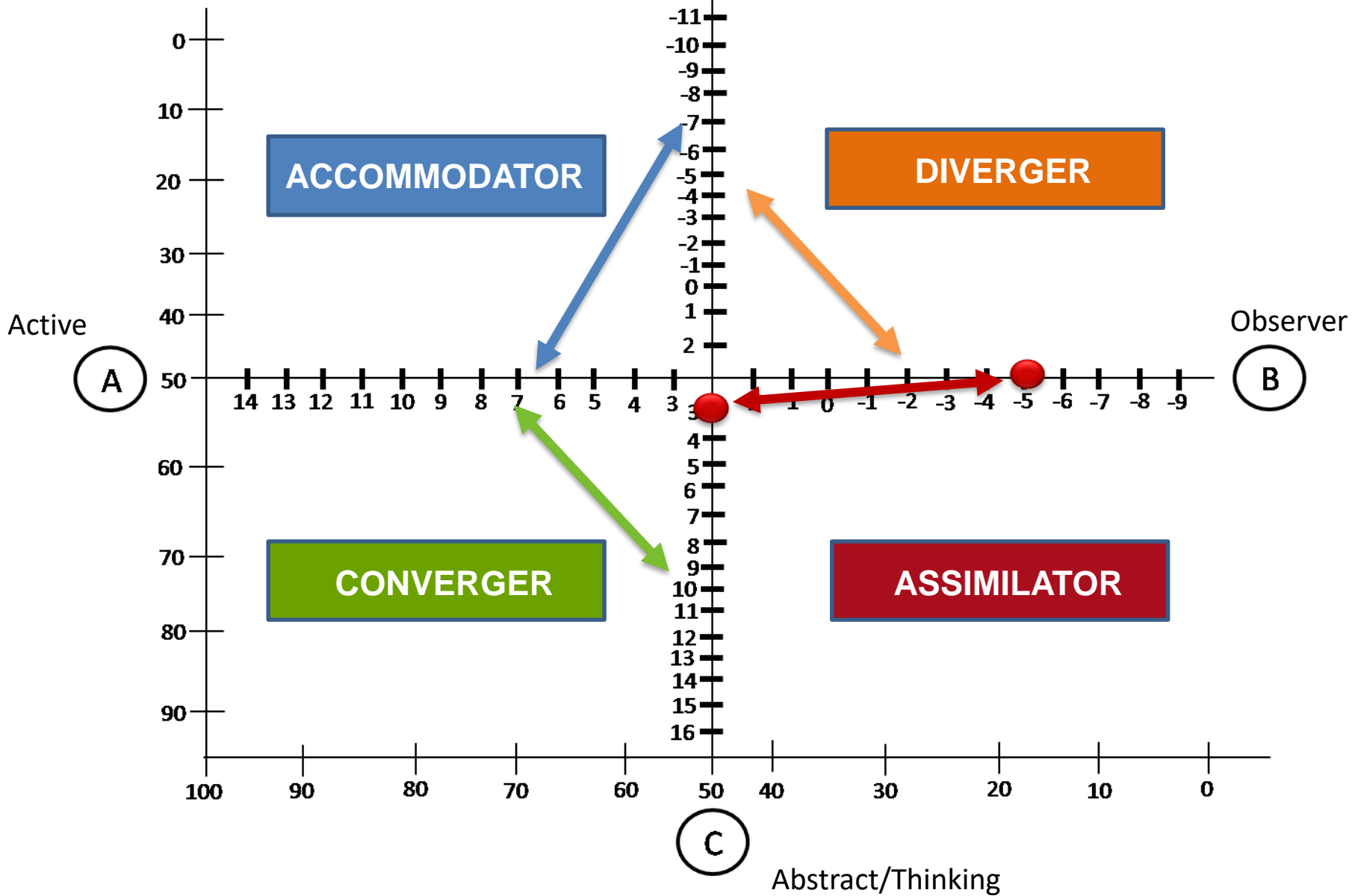
Ideas and theories
Abstract & logical
Factual

FEELING-ORIENTED CONCRETE EXPERIMENTATION

(D) Feeling/Concrete

ACTION-ORIENTED ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION

OBSERVER-ORIENTED REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION



FACT-ORIENTED ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALIZATION

FEELING-ORIENTED
CONCRETE EXPERIMENTATION

ACCOMMODATOR

DIVERGER

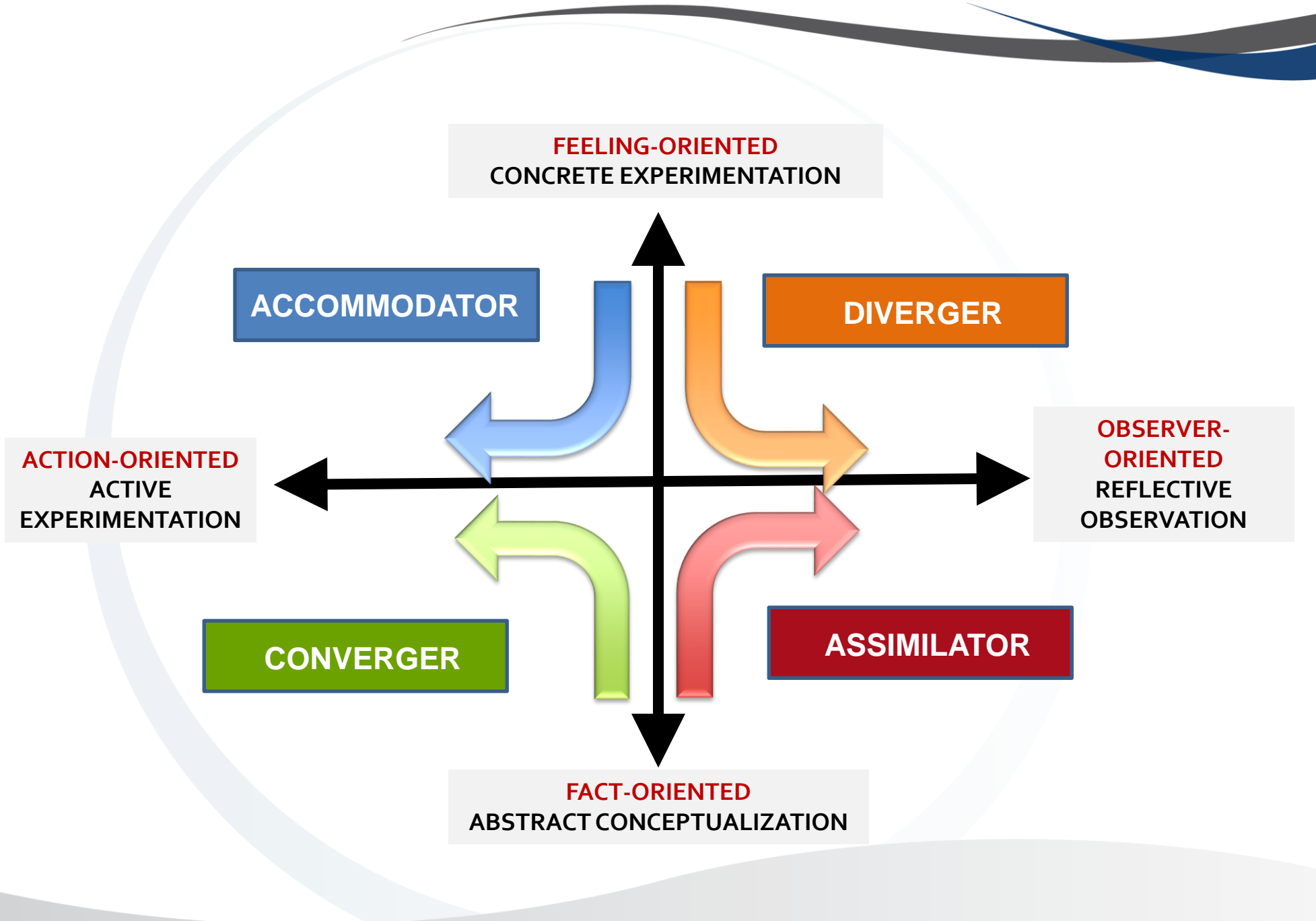
ACTION-ORIENTED
ACTIVE
EXPERIMENTATION

OBSERVER-ORIENTED
REFLECTIVE
OBSERVATION

CONVERGER

ASSIMILATOR

FACT-ORIENTED
ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALIZATION





ACCOMMODATOR

Strengths

- Like concrete experience/active experimentation
- Learn by doing/“hands-on”
- Works well with people/in teams
- Approach to learning is more trial and error
- Learn through discussing issues with others
- Can work quickly
- Gets very involved

- Can act on their “gut” – intuitive rather than logical or technical analysis
- Asks lots of questions – what if?
- Adaptable and open-minded
- Willing to take risks/experiment
- Likes excitement, new experiences, challenges
- Enthusiastic



ACCOMMODATOR

Potential growth areas

- Neglects subjects that doesn't interest them
- Can tackle too many problems/projects at once
- May not be good at organizing time
- Insufficient preparation before doing
- Doesn't prioritize well
- Leaves things till last minute
- Poor critic of own ideas
- Not very thorough – can't be bothered with too much details, research
- Doesn't plan work in advance
- Doesn't read through/check work
- Doesn't rewrite or file notes
- Tend to rush into exam questions & essays without thinking them through
- May get bored easily



DIVERGER

Strengths

- Likes brainstorming, idea generation
- Can see long-term implications of things
- View concrete solutions from many different points of view
- Learn by listening to and observing and thinking about what happened
- Can see connections between different subjects being studied

- Presents work in novel and artistically appealing ways
- Pinpoint important new questions
- Good at seeing the whole picture
- May like working in groups to gather information, listen with an open mind and to receive feedback
- Uses intuition – Feeling
- Prefer groups – personalised feedback – listen with open mind



DIVERGER

Potential growth areas

- May forget important details while understanding the 'big picture'
- Waits too long before getting started
- May not organize work well
- Does not like revision timetables
- Tends to work in bursts of energy
- Can be easily distracted from the job at hand

- Tends not to rework notes or classify material
- Easy going, not assertive enough with friends or others or in getting help
- Spends too much time on working out alternatives
- Prefer to observe rather than take action
- Often not critical enough of ideas



CONVERGER

Strengths

- Can work well alone/independently
- Good at setting goals and making action plans - get things done on time
- Draws up timetables - can stick to it
- Results driven – solution focussed
- Knows how to find information – how type questions
- Can see the application of a theory
- Does not get easily distracted
- Practical application of ideas –

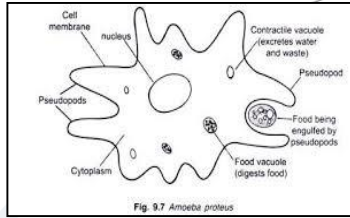
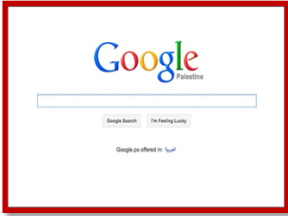
- Good decision makers based on finding solutions to questions or problems
- Prefer dealing with technical problems rather than the social or interpersonal issues
- Put the learning into practice in the real world
- Gets straight to the point
- Reads instructions carefully
- Has notes classified & filed



CONVERGER

Potential growth areas

- May get impatient with others' viewpoints
- May prefer to work independently
- Fail to use friend & teachers as resources
- Task-oriented
- Can pay more attention to presentation of your work
- Guarded about feelings - own and others
- Communicating how you got to a decision



ASSIMILATOR

Strengths

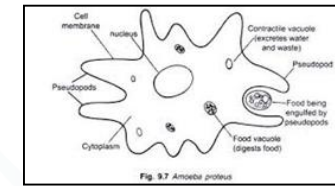
- Independent – works well alone with minimum help from educators & friends
- Abstract concepts and logical approach
- Can organize facts/material well
- Can reason it out step by step – logical and objective
- Likes to understand everything you are working on - Curious & enjoys problems
- May prefer lectures, readings, exploring analytical models & having time to think through that on their own first

- Plans well in advance
- Prefer concise logical explanations
- Precise & thorough
- Good at making lists, timetables & plans
- Can set clear goals & can prioritize
- Works things out well on paper
- Attention to detail
- Preference for sticking to one thing at a time
- Good at asking probing questions– what is there to know?



ASSIMILATOR

Potential growth areas



- Can collect too much information
- Can get caught up in detail/theory
- May not like to participate in group discussions
- May not use friends & teachers as resources
- Dislike for uncertainty and disorder
- Reluctant to try new approaches/apprehensive about new techniques -
Overcautious, does not like taking risks or trying 'silly' ideas
- May like to do things in a set way
- Reliance on logic/facts rather than feelings - does not trust intuition enough

REFLECTION

What are the strengths of my learning style?

What potential growth areas do I need to develop?

How does my learning style affect how I manage time?

What practical ideas/strategies could I put in place to overcome obstacles?

What possible solutions can I think of to counter hindrances to getting the most out of my learning experiences?

Introduce self to dominant learning style, key strength - 2 things that you may have learnt about myself or would like to do differently from now on...

Thank you

Your participation, interest and contribution was highly appreciated

Define tomorrow.

UNISA | 
university
of south africa

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Kindly complete the evaluation
(link e-mailed)

<https://forms.gle/Tg6BqTyV4ox7K2Tm7>



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