

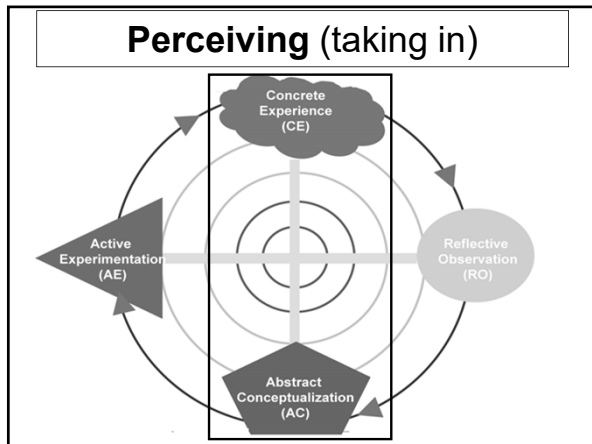
Kolb's Learning Style Inventory

- ❖ Indicates preferences, not abilities
- ❖ Applies across race, gender, culture
- ❖ Immediately usable
- ❖ Developmental model –

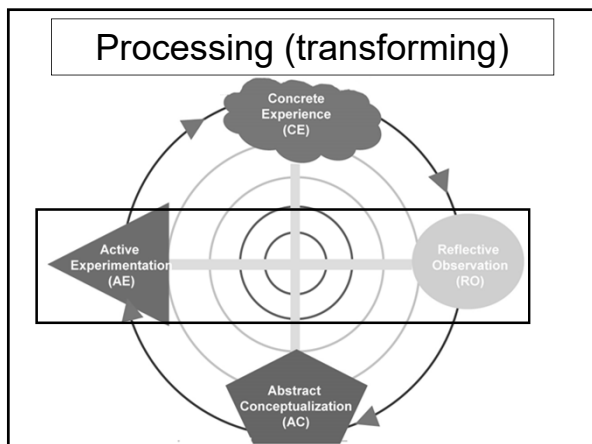
➡ Goal: **transformative** education

Learning Objectives

- At the end of this session, you will be able to:
 - Assess your own learning style;
 - Describe the four modes of learning from Kolb's learning circle; and
 - Analyze the implications of learning style preferences when working with teams.



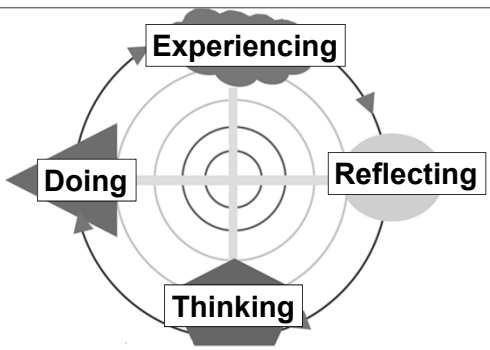
- ### How We Perceive
- Concrete Experience:**
Learning by experiencing
 - Learning from specific experiences
 - Being sensitive to feelings & people
 - Abstract Conceptualization:**
Learning by theorizing
 - Analyzing, theorizing, planning
 - Acting on an intellectual understanding



How We Process

- Reflective Observation:**
 - Learning by reflecting
 - Carefully observing before judging
 - Looking for meaning
- Active Experimentation:**
 - Learning by applying
 - Testing, trying it out, taking risks
 - Action-oriented

The Circle Again



Concrete Experience: Learning By Experiencing

- Learning from specific experiences
- Relating to people
- Being sensitive to feelings and people

**Reflective Observation:
Learning by Reflecting**

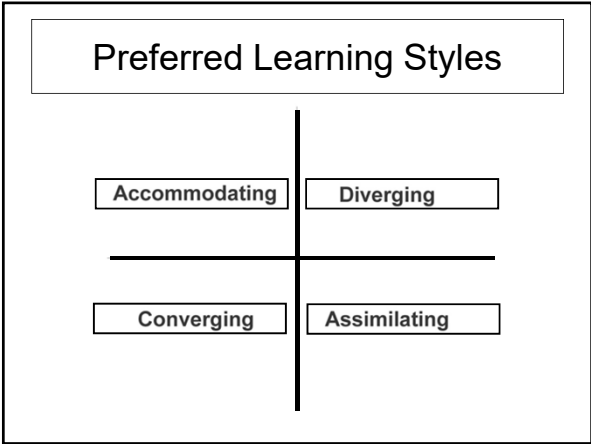
- Carefully observing before making judgements
- Viewing issues from different perspectives
- Looking for the meaning of things

**Abstract Conceptualization:
Learning by Thinking**

- Logically analyzing ideas
- Planning systematically
- Acting on an intellectual understanding of a situation

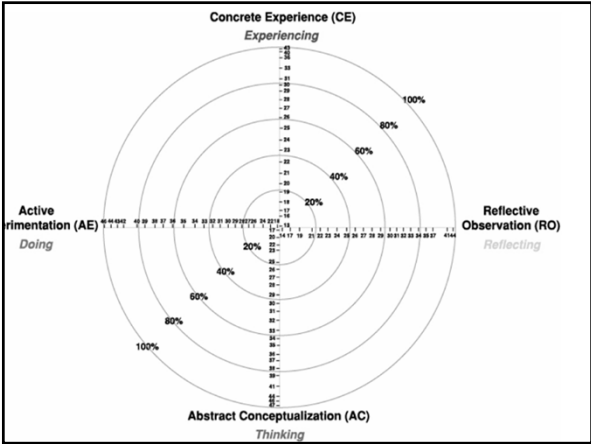
**Active Experimentation:
Learning by Doing**

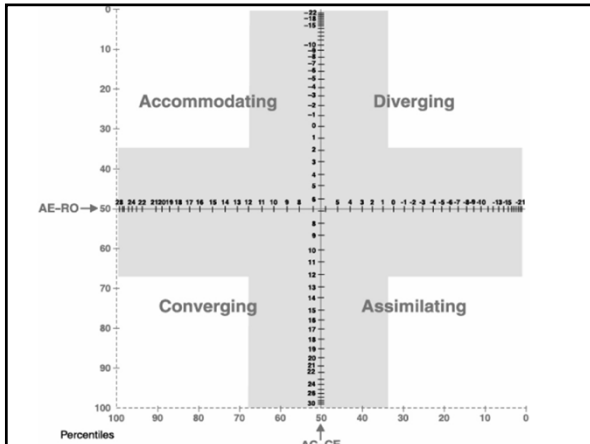
- Showing ability to get things done
- Taking risks
- Influencing people and events through action



The Learning Style Inventory

It's time to take the LSI.





Accommodators (The “Do-ers”)

- Puts ideas into action
- Adapts well to changing circumstances
- Intuitive; trial and error
- Likes technical or practical fields such as business

Learning Style Strengths: Accommodating

- Accomplishment
- Goal Orientation
- Decision Implementation
- Entrepreneurial
- Adaptable

Improving Your Accommodating Learning Skills

- Commit yourself to objectives
- Seek new opportunities
- Influence and lead others
- Become personally involved
- Deal with people

Diverger (The “Creator”)

- Imaginative
- Many perspectives
- Broad cultural interests
- Specializes in the arts and humanities
- Information seeking

Learning Style Strengths: Diverging

- Creativity
- Brainstorming
- Problem Recognition
- Understanding People

Improving Your Diverging Learning Skills

- Be more sensitive to people's feelings
- Be more sensitive to values
- Listen with an open mind
- Gather information
- Imagine the implications of ambiguous situations

Assimilator (The "Planner")

- Ability to create theoretical models
- Assimilates disparate observations
- Inductive reasoning
- Likes abstract concepts—basic science and math

Learning Style Strengths:
Assimilating

- Planning
- Creating Models
- Formulating Theories
- Defining Problems
- Being Patient

Improving Your Assimilating Learning Skills

- Organize information
- Test theories and ideas
- Build conceptual models
- Design experiments
- Analyze quantitative data

Converger (The "Decision Maker")

- Practical application of ideas
- Does well on conventional tests
- Hypothetical-deductive reasoning
- Engineering and physical sciences

Learning Style Strengths:
Converging

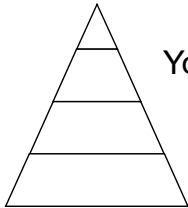
- Design
- Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Logical Thinking
- Action Oriented

Improving Your Converging Learning Skills

- Create new ways of thinking and doing
- Experiment with new ideas
- Choose the best solution
- Set goals
- Make decisions

Implications for Small Group Work

Your own learning style tendencies affect how you work in small groups.



You should balance your preferred style with the other styles.

Potential Problems

- Siding with similar learning styles
- Tensions between opposite types
- Over-supporting learners' strengths
- Over-challenging learners
- Valuing abstract over concrete



Everyone gets more out of a group dynamic that includes multiple perspectives.

Reflect and Connect

1. Find a partner with a different learning style from yours.
2. For a few minutes, compare your learning styles:
 - How you each like to learn,
 - What strengths you each personally bring to learning situations, and
 - What you might like to improve.

The Brain Looks for Patterns:



Searches existing patterns to see where new information or experiences fit in



Stores information in and retrieves it through patterns

Adults As Learners

- ❖ Have a dominant style but also the ability to adjust to other styles
- ❖ Are **resources**
- ❖ Are application-oriented
- ❖ Process the present based on the past
- ❖ Need time to reflect and **connect**

Adult Learning Principles

- Use multiple **senses** when possible
- Ask/acknowledge what learners know
- Compare to common sense or everyday experience(s)
- Connect to prior concepts
- If unfamiliar area: avoid information **overload!**

The Take-Home

- Our learning style says much about how we take in and process information
- Taking in and processing information are key components to decision-making
- Self-awareness of our learning style = awareness about our decision-making
- Small-group decision-making benefits from decision-makers having awareness

**“Emotion drives
attention, and attention
drives learning.”**

**Robert Sylvester
*A Biological Brain in a
Cultural Classroom***

LEARNING MODES AND CAPACITIES FOR LIVING

Concrete Experience

- Contributes to increased affective functioning
- Enlarges repertoire of appropriate emotional responses
- Promotes managing emotions
- Promotes higher order sentiments, including capacity for intimacy
- Highly differentiated feelings
- Promotes valuing

Reflective Observation

- Sharpens perceptual capabilities
- Potential for reducing stereotypes and prejudices
- Promotes capacity for empathy
- Increases perspective taking
- Contributes to ability to discern and assign meaning
- Increases tolerance

Abstract Conceptualization

- Develops sophisticated symbolic proficiency
- Enables us to think in abstractions
- Permits appreciation for many higher order concepts (i.e., God, love, Justice)
- Helps in discriminating between facts
- Helps in defining reality
- Sharpens analytical and digital thinking
- Increases capacity for logic

Active Experimentation

- Increases behavioral complexity
- Helps refine actions, nuance
- Behavior becomes more congruent with knowledge
- Develops self-control
- Actions become more appropriate for circumstance
- Control of temper and violent behavior

As one matures and transits the circle repeatedly, constantly recycling and integrating the dialectic conflicts among the four modes, one moves to greater creativity and growth. The capacities increasingly impact on each other and contribute to each other, i.e., as one's perceptual capacities increase, so does one's behavioral repertoire.

The circle thus becomes a helix or a cone, the four modes positioned at some distance forming the floor, and with distance decreasing as the modes are engaged at increasing levels of sophistication and complexity.

David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984.

