

## Handout 14: Honey and Mumford's Learning Styles

## Honey and Mumford's Learning Styles

Learning styles were developed by Peter Honey and Alan Mumford, based upon the work of Kolb, and they identified four distinct learning styles or preferences: **Activist**, **Theorist**, **Pragmatist** and **Reflector**. These are the learning approaches that individuals naturally prefer and they recommend that in order to maximise one's own personal learning each learner ought to:

- understand their learning style
- seek out opportunities to learn using that style

The characteristics of the four learning styles are summarised in the following table:

Learning style	Attributes	Activities
<b>Activist</b>	Activists are those people who learn by doing. Activists need to get their hands dirty, to dive in with both feet first. Have an open-minded approach to learning, involving themselves fully and without bias in new experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brainstorming</li> <li>• problem solving</li> <li>• group discussion</li> <li>• puzzles</li> <li>• competitions</li> <li>• role-play</li> </ul>
<b>Theorist</b>	These learners like to understand the theory behind the actions. They need models, concepts and facts in order to engage in the learning process. Prefer to analyse and synthesise, drawing new information into a systematic and logical 'theory'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• models</li> <li>• statistics</li> <li>• stories</li> <li>• quotes</li> <li>• background information</li> <li>• applying theories</li> </ul>
<b>Pragmatist</b>	These people need to be able to see how to put the learning into practice in the real world. Abstract concepts and games are of limited use unless they can see a way to put the ideas into action in their lives. Experimenters, trying out new ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• time to think about how to apply learning in reality</li> <li>• case studies</li> <li>• problem solving discussion</li> </ul>
<b>Reflector</b>	These people learn by observing and thinking about what happened. They may avoid leaping in and prefer to watch from the sidelines. Prefer to stand back and view experiences from a number of different perspectives, collecting data and taking the time to work towards an appropriate conclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• paired discussions</li> <li>• self analysis questionnaires</li> <li>• personality questionnaires</li> <li>• time out</li> <li>• observing activities</li> <li>• feedback from others</li> <li>• coaching interviews</li> </ul>

(Reference: <http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/training/resources/teaching/theories/honey-mumford>)