

# Learning Styles Feedback Report

## Learning Styles Indicator Step 1 - Version I

### Susan Sample

#### Introduction

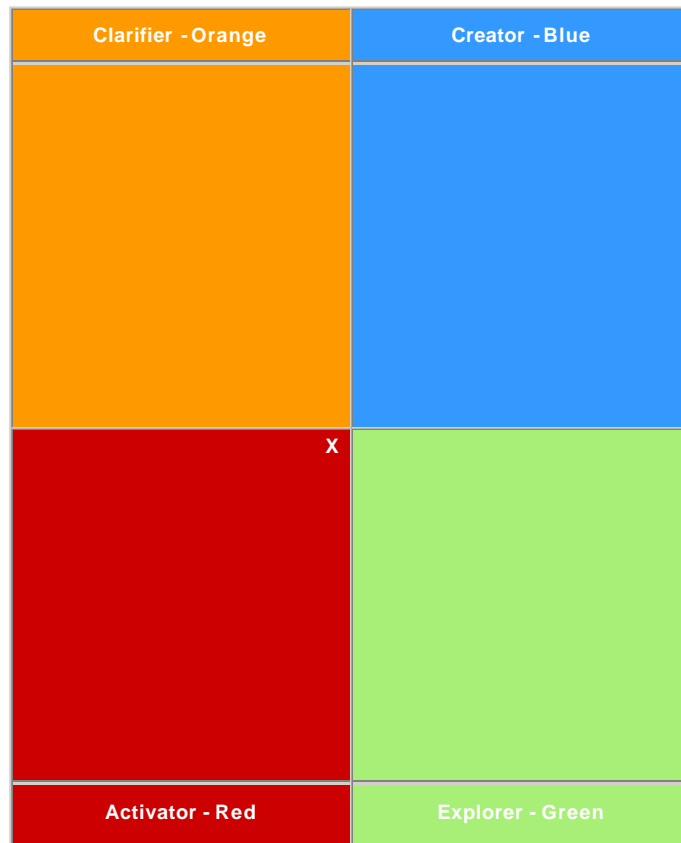
This report gives an indication of your style and preferences based on the answers you gave when completing the Learning Styles Indicator. The questionnaire is designed to identify fundamental differences in the way people think, communicate and learn.

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 symbol X in the boxes below.



The X shows that your most likely style is the Activator. Whilst this may be your most natural or characteristic style it does not mean it is the only style you use. Everyone shows some variety and flexibility.

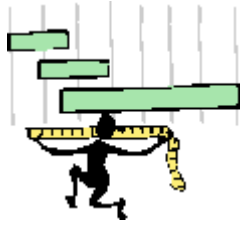
## Interpretation

If your 'X' 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 the X is 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

Your questionnaire results indicate a preference for learning using the Activator style. This style is described in detail below.

### Summary description:

Activators are characterised by the desire to relate extensive and accumulated experience to the learning so that it becomes a concrete reality.

### Some of the key characteristics of the Activator:

- wants learning to have some practical application
- prefers subjects that require a common-sense and matter-of-fact approach
- wants action, realism and does not want change for change sake
- enjoys organising facts, situations and people
- creates order and efficiency and delivers results
- dislikes “woolly” thinking and procrastination
- attends to immediate and practical issues and details
- learns best from direct experience and practice

### What Activators might choose to study

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 Activator learning style preference often prefer subjects which:

- are structured, contain facts, are practical and useful
- demand high standards
- have consequences rather than just interesting theories
- can be related to their own experience
- provide problems requiring solutions

This generally means that highly academic or theory - based topics which deal with concepts rather than applications are not natural choices for Activators.

Activators can learn to enjoy almost any subject. In particular, they tend to enjoy subjects which result in practical results such as engineering, applied mathematics, project management, law, history, accounting, business studies, health studies, marketing and practical skills. 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.

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.

## The learning environment Activators usually prefer

When Activators use their preferred learning style they usually seek an environment which is practical, exciting and which has a clear framework and rules. Too much theory, listening and absence of doing things is likely to make them restless. You may like to consider previous learning situations that you found motivating and stimulating. Activators usually describe situations which involve:

- tangible ideas which they can relate to their own experience
- learning through doing, practising and opportunities to “have a go”
- working with others to discuss and bounce ideas around
- fast pace with lots of interaction
- clear direction and priorities
- specific instructions
- practical activities and useful outcomes

You are therefore unlikely to find learning rewarding when you are expected to be passive, unable to try things or test the practical aspects of the topic. You may also feel uncomfortable when instructions are ambiguous or unclear, or when you are left alone without sufficient directions and objectives. As a colleague you are probably seen as practical, quick, decisive and driven to get results. This is an appropriate and valuable attribute but it also means that, sometimes, you may not always listen actively and you may decide and jumping to conclusions too quickly before enough information is available.

You may sometimes benefit from being a little more patient, suspend your judgement, adopt a more questioning style and encourage contributions from others before offering your own views. This may particularly be the case when you are required to help others to learn when it is important to work at their pace rather than yours.

**Your ideal teacher:** this will be someone who is practical, realistic and structured. They involve you in the learning process by letting you contribute, discuss, question and try things out. They give you clear instructions and objectives and they deliver with pace and energy. When teaching you “the theory” they give clear, concrete and practical examples. Your best teachers understand your tendency to jump to conclusions and rush into things. They help you avoid unnecessary effort and mistakes by checking that you have listened and understood.

## What motivates activators 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. Activators are likely to want to feel that they have:

- learned something which has an application
- practised sufficiently to make it tangible and useful
- feel they have acquired some new skill
- produced something that is complete and useful
- adequate opportunity to put the learning into practice

## An activator’s most natural talents

An Activator’s style can make them particularly good at:

- working with real issues
- converting ideas into action
- grasping basic issues and seeing their practical implications
- being involved and interacting with others
- grasping the facts, handling the detail and engaging in practical activities
- giving or responding to clear instructions and structure

## An activator’s least natural talents

Activators have to work harder to:

- see the value in an abstract idea
- be innovative and consider alternatives before moving into action
- deal with ambiguity and incomplete information
- work and study on their own
- suspend judgement

### Activators get criticised for:

- attending to the obvious and missing the bigger picture
- jumping in too quickly before all the information is known
- trying things out too soon
- not listening
- becoming frustrated if the pace is too slow
- having pre-conceived ideas which make them less flexible
- being impatient

### Development suggestions for Activators

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 minimal research and getting stuck in early? Does it involve starting at the beginning and working through? Now consider an alternative approach. Activators can sometimes benefit if they:
  - make an overall plan of what is involved
  - consider the bigger picture
  - explore novel ideas and how to make it different
  - do more research and preparation on their own

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

- 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
  - ignore the concepts or theories
  - insist on the facts being provided and justified
  - get too involved in the detail irrespective of the need to do so
  - show your frustration when others do not work or learn at your pace
  - allowing your attention to wander and not listen when you are not involved

Write a list of reminders for recognising each of these failings and write down what you will do differently next time.

- Identify a new project where you will need several people to be involved and where you will need to learn and implement something new. Select someone with a different style to work with or advise you. At each stage of the project, produce what you think is needed separately and then compare and discuss the following:
  - what is different in each approach and specification
  - what is valuable in one approach which has been left out by the other
  - what would be needed if you were now to involve more people in the project
- Give a presentation combining your approaches to the other people you want to involve.

## 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:

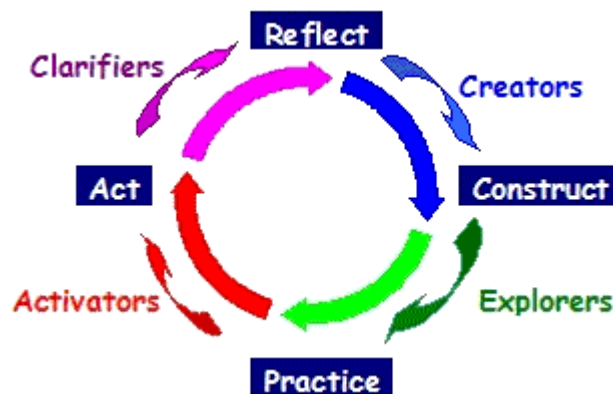
**Stage 1 - ACT:** This is the active experience, a period where there is opportunity to learn by involvement, practical activity and “getting on with it”. Activators are keen to move into this stage.

**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.