

BUILD YOUR BRAIN

Knowing how you learn best is key to unlocking your full potential. Creating a comprehensive understanding of your learning preferences and strengths will serve you well. To achieve this, try integrating the concepts of the **VARK model**, Howard Gardner's theory of **Multiple Intelligences**, Honey and Mumford's **learning styles**, and the distinctions between **left-brain and right-brain** dominance. Together, these frameworks will provide a useful picture of your ideal learning pathways, allowing you to tailor your learning strategies effectively.

VARK Model: How You Prefer to Receive Information

The VARK model helps you identify the sensory modalities through which you most effectively take in information:

1. **Visual (V):** If you're a visual learner, you process information best through photographs, diagrams, charts, and other visual aids such as video. You might find that seeing information laid out visually helps you better understand and retain it.
2. **Aural/Auditory (A):** Auditory learners benefit from listening to spoken information. Whether through lectures, discussions, or audio recordings such as podcasts, you might find that hearing information enhances your understanding.
3. **Read/Write (R):** If you prefer learning through reading and writing, you likely excel when you can engage with texts, take notes, and write about what you've learned. Written words are your primary tool for processing information.
4. **Kinesthetic (K):** Kinesthetic learners prefer a hands-on approach, learning best through direct experience, practice, and physical activity. If this is your preference, you might find that movement and doing are integral to your learning process.

Multiple Intelligences: What You Excel At

Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences identifies different areas where you might have natural strengths:

1. **Linguistic Intelligence:** Strong linguistic intelligence means you excel with words, whether in reading, writing, or speaking. You're likely good at language-related tasks.
2. **Logical-Mathematical Intelligence:** If you're strong in this area, you're good at reasoning, logic, and problem-solving, particularly in mathematical or scientific contexts.
3. **Spatial Intelligence:** High spatial intelligence indicates a strong ability to visualize and manipulate objects in your mind. You might be naturally talented in fields like art, architecture, or engineering.
4. **Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence:** If you learn best through physical activity, you have strong bodily-kinesthetic intelligence. You might excel in sports, dance, or hands-on activities.
5. **Musical Intelligence:** Those with strong musical intelligence have a good ear for rhythm, melody, and sound, and might excel in playing instruments or understanding musical composition.
6. **Interpersonal Intelligence:** If you're skilled at understanding and interacting with others, you likely have strong interpersonal intelligence, making you effective in communication and teamwork.

7. **Intrapersonal Intelligence:** High intrapersonal intelligence reflects a deep understanding of your own emotions and motivations. You might be introspective and self-aware.
8. **Naturalistic Intelligence:** This type of intelligence relates to understanding the natural world, recognizing patterns in nature, and having a strong connection to the environment.

Honey and Mumford Learning Styles: How You Engage with Learning Activities

Honey and Mumford's learning styles describe how you prefer to engage with learning tasks:

1. **Activist:** Activists learn by doing. You might thrive in environments where you can immerse yourself in new experiences and actively participate in group activities.
2. **Theorist:** As a theorist, you prefer to understand the underlying principles and theories. You enjoy analyzing and synthesizing information, and you learn best when concepts are logically structured.
3. **Reflector:** Reflectors prefer to observe and reflect before taking action. You might excel in situations where you can carefully consider different perspectives and gather comprehensive information before making decisions.
4. **Pragmatist:** Pragmatists are practical learners who like to apply theories to real-world situations. You might enjoy learning through experimentation and seeing how ideas work in practice.

Left-Brain vs. Right-Brain Dominance: Cognitive Preferences

The concept of left-brain versus right-brain dominance describes two different cognitive styles:

1. **Left-Brain Dominance:** If you're more left-brain dominant, you might prefer logical, analytical, and detail-oriented tasks. This side of the brain is often associated with linguistic, logical-mathematical, and sequential thinking skills. You might enjoy tasks that involve structure, planning, and organization.
2. **Right-Brain Dominance:** If you're more right-brain dominant, you might excel in tasks that involve creativity, intuition, and holistic thinking. This side of the brain is often linked to spatial, musical, and artistic abilities. You might enjoy activities that require creativity, imagination, and visual thinking.

Bringing It All Together

By considering the VARK model, Multiple Intelligences, Honey and Mumford's learning styles, and left-brain/right-brain dominance, you can gain a thorough understanding of how you learn effectively. For instance, if you're a **right-brain dominant, visual learner (VARK)** with strong **spatial intelligence (Multiple Intelligences)** and a **pragmatist (Honey and Mumford)** learning style, you might benefit most from learning activities that allow you to visualize concepts and apply them creatively in practical scenarios.

This holistic approach to understanding your learning preferences and strengths empowers you to customise your study habits and strategies to align with your natural tendencies.

Example

Nia is a woman who wants to enhance her personal wellbeing practice and eventually guide others through wellness coaching. She is focused on developing routines that integrate self-awareness, discipline, and physical movement, aiming for structured programs she can later teach.

Learning Profile

- **Left-brain dominant, kinaesthetic learner (VARK):**
Nia prefers structured, sequential activities but learns best when physically engaged. She thrives on routines, tangible practice, and hands-on tasks where she can feel and embody what she is learning.
- **Strong intrapersonal and bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence (Multiple Intelligences):**
Nia has a keen awareness of her own body, emotions, and internal states. She is deeply introspective but expresses understanding through movement, physical routines, and embodied practices such as yoga or martial arts.
- **Pragmatist learning style (Honey and Mumford):**
As a pragmatist, Nia learns most effectively by applying ideas in practical, real-world contexts. She values approaches that are outcome-focused and enjoys testing techniques immediately for their usefulness.

Learning Approach

Given Nia's learning profile, here's how she might approach developing her skills:

- **Structured Physical Practice:**
Nia could design disciplined routines that integrate mindful movement, such as yoga flows, martial arts drills, or fitness regimes, using them as a laboratory for self-exploration. These routines give her structure (left-brain preference) while engaging her kinaesthetic intelligence.
- **Self-Monitoring and Journaling:**
To honour her intrapersonal strength, Nia could maintain a detailed journal documenting her physical experiences and internal states during practice. She might record measurable progress (e.g., flexibility, stamina) alongside reflections on mood, energy, and emotions.
- **Workshops with Practical Outcomes:**
As a pragmatist, Nia might attend hands-on workshops that offer concrete skills she can implement immediately — for instance, certification courses in yoga instruction or wellness coaching that blend theory with practice.
- **Goal-Oriented Experimentation:**
Left-brain dominance means Nia benefits from setting clear, sequential goals and evaluating results. She might experiment with different wellness routines and assess which practices deliver specific results (e.g., improved sleep, reduced stress), refining her approach through direct feedback and iteration.

Outcome

By engaging in disciplined physical routines, tracking her self-awareness through structured journaling, and attending outcome-focused workshops, Nia can develop a unique, practical, and embodied approach to wellness coaching. This method supports her bodily-kinaesthetic strengths while aligning with her analytical, structured cognitive preferences and intrapersonal self-knowledge, positioning her to both deepen her own practice and share it effectively with others.

Example

Kai is an emerging spoken word artist who wants to learn how to enhance his performances by incorporating multimedia elements, such as visual effects and soundscapes, into his live shows. He also aims to deepen his understanding of performance techniques and how to connect more powerfully with his audience.

Learning Profile

1. **Right-brain dominant, visual learner (VARK):** Kai absorbs information most effectively through visual stimuli. He is drawn to imagery, video, and visual metaphors that help him conceptualize his spoken word pieces.
2. **Strong spatial intelligence (Multiple Intelligences):** Kai has an innate ability to think in three dimensions, which helps him visualize how his words, movements, and multimedia elements interact on stage.
3. **Pragmatist learning style (Honey and Mumford):** Kai learns best through hands-on experiences. He enjoys experimenting with new ideas and immediately applying them to his performances.

Learning Approach

Given Kai learning profile, here's how he might approach developing his skills:

1. **Visual Inspiration:** Kai could start by watching visually rich performances, both live and recorded. This could include spoken word shows, theatrical performances, or music videos that creatively use lighting, projections, and stage design. These visuals would help him generate ideas for his own work.
2. **Multimedia Workshops:** To harness his spatial intelligence, Kai might participate in workshops where he can learn to integrate visual effects and soundscapes into his performances. These workshops could involve experimenting with different stage setups, lighting techniques, and the use of projection mapping to enhance his spoken word pieces.
3. **Practical Performances:** As a pragmatist, Kai would benefit from immediately applying what he's learned in a live setting. He could organize small, intimate performances where he tests out new multimedia elements. This real-time application allows him to see what works and what doesn't, helping him refine his approach.
4. **Audience Feedback and Iteration:** Finally, Kai might seek feedback from his audience and fellow artists after each performance. This feedback is crucial for his pragmatist style, as it provides insights that he can use to iterate and improve his work in subsequent performances.

Outcome

By immersing himself in visual media, engaging in spatially-oriented workshops, and experimenting through live performances, Kai can elevate his spoken word artistry. This approach allows him to effectively blend his natural talents with practical experience, ultimately enhancing the impact of his work on stage.

Produced by:

