

VAK-assess your own or another person's learning style Model- strongly link with Emotional intelligence

Different approaches and theoretical models have been developed for Emotional Intelligence. Emotional Intelligence links strongly with concepts of VAK which illustrates and measures the range of capabilities people possess, and the fact that everybody has a value.

Background:

The explanation and understanding of Gardner's classical intelligence and learning styles model, known as the **Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic** learning styles model or 'inventory', usually abbreviated to VAK. The VAK concept, theories and methods (initially also referred to as VAKT, for Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic-Tactile) were first developed by psychologists and teaching specialists such as Fernald, Keller, Orton, Gillingham, Stillman and Montessori, beginning in the 1920's. The VAK theory is a favorite of the accelerated learning community, and continues to feature - although not nearly as strongly as it should do - in the teaching and education of young people. The Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic learning styles model does not overlay Gardner's multiple intelligences; rather the VAK model provides a different perspective for understanding and explaining a person's preferred or dominant thinking and learning style, and strengths. Gardner's theory is one way of looking at thinking styles; VAK is another.

Everyone has preferences for how information is perceived organised and processed. Ask yourself these simple questions:

- Do you remember faces rather than names?
- Can you focus if a speaker is talking but not using any visuals?
- Do you find you need to take notes or do something with your hands when you concentrate?

Essentially visual learners learn through what they **see**, auditory from what they **hear** and kinaesthetic from activity or **doing** something. While some people can make use of more than one learning style most people have a preference for one style.

VAK visual-auditory-kinesthetic learning styles indicators and test

Here is a VAK learning style indicator, which can be used as a questionnaire or 'test' to assess your own preferred learning style or styles, or the VAK learning styles of your people. Score each statement and then add the totals for each column to indicate learning style dominance and mix. Your learning style is also a reflection of the type of person you are - how you perceive things and the way that you relate to the world. This questionnaire helps you to improve your understanding of yourself and your strengths.

There are no right and wrong answers. The point is that there are types of learning that are right for your own preferred learning style.

	Visual	Auditory	kinesthetic/physical/tactile
operate new equipment	read instructions	listen to explanation	have a go
travel directions	look at a map	ask for spoken directions	follow your nose and maybe use a compass
cook a new dish	follow a recipe	call a friend for explanation	follow your instinct, tasting as you cook

teach someone something	write instructions	explain verbally	demonstrate and let them have a go
you'd say..	I see what you mean	I hear what you are saying	I know how you feel
you'd say..	show me	tell me	let me try
you'd say..	watch how I do it	listen to me explain	you have a go
faulty goods	write a letter	Phone	send or take it back to the store
Leisure	museums and galleries	music and conversation	playing sport or DIY
buying gifts	Books	Music	tools and gadgets
Shopping	look and imagine	discuss with shop staff	try on and test
choose a holiday	read the brochures	listen to recommendations	imagine the experience
choose a new car	read the reviews	discuss with friends	test-drive what you fancy

You can use this grid as a simple learning style indicator questionnaire - for example score each box out of five or ten and then put the total for each column in the boxes below. The totals will indicate your relative learning style preference and mix.

totals indicate preferred learning style(s)			
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VAK Learning Styles Explanation

The VAK learning styles model suggests that most people can be divided into one of three preferred styles of learning. These three styles are as follows:

Visual learners

Like to see or observe things, including pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, handouts, videos, graphs, the written word, etc. They tend to say "show me" and "I see what you mean." They learn best by seeing, reading, writing, drawing; they like written instructions. Typically they will be unhappy with a presentation where they can't take detailed notes. Some visual learners will take notes even when they have printed materials on the desk in front of them. Visual learners make up around 65% of the population.

Auditory learners

Take in information through listening to the spoken word, to self or others, to sounds and music and noises. They tend to say "tell me" and "I hear what you are saying." They learn best by saying things aloud or repeating words and key points in their heads. They like lectures, debates, discussions, audiotapes, and verbal instructions. They will tend to listen to a lecture, and then take notes afterwards,

or rely on printed notes. Often information written down will have little meaning to them until they have heard it. They learn by talking and listening and information does not seem real to them until they have had a chance to discuss it. Auditory learners make up about 30% of the population.

Kinesthetic learners

Like physical experiences - touching, feeling, holding, doing, and MOVING - practical hands-on experiences and physical activities. They tend to say "let me try " and "I know how you feel." They learn best by moving (either small-motor movement such as taking notes or large-motor movement such as walking around the room while thinking), and by touching, doing, practicing, or even imagining an activity being done. The kinesthetic learner has to feel or live the experience in order to learn it. They like hands-on labs, field trips, projects, trial-and-error, and real-life examples. They will learn skills by imitation and practice. It's important to note that learners who are predominantly kinesthetic can appear "slow," because classroom information is normally not presented in a style that suits their learning methods. Kinesthetic learners make up around 5% of the population.

People commonly have a main preferred learning style, but this will be part of a blend of all three. Some people have a very strong preference; other people have a more even mixture of two or less commonly, three styles.

How to use learning styles in business?

Learning styles can help us ensure that we offer something for everyone. We need to recognize that each of us has different learning preferences, and no matter which model we use, we need to ensure that we combine a mix of methods and preferences. To help learning be more effective in your organisation chose a model... any model. Then check that all of your learning interventions have something for all - be it the VAK - Visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or the Activist, pragmatist, theorist or reflector preference.