

VISUAL, AUDITORY AND KINAESTHETIC (VAK) STYLES

Most people have a natural tendency to prefer one style or manner of communication to another. This is not to say that the style is exclusive or that they are unable to adopt other – or a mixture of – styles. Many people, of course, do not even think about this; they communicate in the manner with which they feel most comfortable.

However, to be really effective, business owners and managers need to be aware of the different style preferences of their staff, colleagues, clients (both internal and external), suppliers and others – and be able to tailor their own manner to suit these preferences. All because we are seeking **mutual understanding**.

VISUAL people:	Prefer reading and visualising	SEEING
Verbal style:	“That <u>looks</u> good” “I <u>see</u> what you mean”	
Indicators:	Their expansive handwriting Doodles Fast speech	
AUDITORY people:	Prefer to speak and listen	HEARING
Verbal style:	“That <u>sounds</u> good to me” “I <u>hear</u> what you are saying”	
Indicators:	Much use of the telephone Buy CDs rather than books Give speeches and presentations	
KINAESTHETICS:	Prefer a sense of body	TOUCHING
Verbal style:	“I can <u>grasp</u> your point” “I’ve got a <u>handle</u> on that” “It doesn’t <u>feel</u> right to me”	
Indicators:	Use of gestures Difficulty in sitting still Described as ‘hands-on’ people	

**ALWAYS TRY TO PITCH YOUR COMMUNICATION STYLE
TO MIRROR THAT OF THE RECIPIENT**

Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Please place a cross in the appropriate answer box A, B or C – or simply circle the letter

1. When I operate new equipment I generally:		
A Read the instructions first	B Listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before	C Go ahead and have a go, I can figure it out as I use it
2. When I need directions for travelling I usually:		
A Look at a map	B Ask for spoken directions	C Follow my nose and maybe use a compass
3. When I cook a new dish, I like to:		
A Follow a written recipe	B Call a friend for an explanation	C Follow my instincts, testing as I cook
4. If I am teaching someone something new, I tend to:		
A Write instructions down for them	B Give them a verbal explanation	C Demonstrate first and then let them have a go
5. I tend to say:		
A Watch how I do it	B Listen to me explain	C You have a go
6. During my free time I most enjoy:		
A Going to museums and galleries	B Listening to music and talking to my friends	C Playing sport or doing DIY
7. When I go shopping for clothes, I tend to:		
A Imagine what they would look like on	B Discuss them with the shop staff	C Try them on and test them out
8. When I am choosing a holiday I usually:		
A Read lots of brochures	B Listen to recommendations from friends	C Imagine what it would be like to be there
9. If I was buying a new car, I would:		
A Read reviews in newspapers and magazines	B Discuss what I need with my friends	C Test-drive lots of different types
10. When I am learning a new skill, I am most comfortable:		
A Watching what the teacher is doing	B Talking through with the teacher exactly what I'm supposed to do	C Giving it a try myself and work it out as I go
11. If I am choosing food off a menu, I tend to:		
A Imagine what the food will look like	B Talk through the options in my head or with my partner	C Imagine what the food will taste like
12. When I listen to a band, I can't help:		
A Watching the band members and other people in the audience	B Listening to the lyrics and the beats	C Moving in time with the music
13. When I concentrate, I most often:		
A Focus on the words or the pictures in front of me	B Discuss the problem and the possible solutions in my head	C Move around a lot, fiddle with pens and pencils and touch things
14. I choose household furnishings because I like:		
A Their colours and how they look	B The descriptions the sales-people give me	C Their textures and what it feels like to touch them
15. My first memory is of:		
A Looking at something	B Being spoken to	C Doing something

16. When I am anxious, I:			
A	Visualise the worst-case scenarios	B Talk over in my head what worries me most	C Can't sit still, fiddle and move around constantly
17. I feel especially connected to other people because of:			
A	How they look	B What they say to me	C How they make me feel
18. When I have to revise for an exam, I generally:			
A	Write lots of revision notes and diagrams	B Talk over my notes, alone or with other people	C Imagine making the movement or creating the formula
19. If I am explaining to someone I tend to:			
A	Show them what I mean	B Explain to them in different ways until they understand	C Encourage them to try and talk them through my idea as they do it
20. I really love:			
A	Watching films, photography, looking at art or people watching	B Listening to music, the radio or talking to friends	C Taking part in sporting activities, eating fine foods and wines or dancing
21. Most of my free time is spent:			
A	Watching television	B Talking to friends	C Doing physical activity or making things
22. When I first contact a new person, I usually:			
A	Arrange a face to face meeting	B Talk to them on the telephone	C Try to get together whilst doing something else, such as an activity or a meal
23. I first notice how people:			
A	Look and dress	B Sound and speak	C Stand and move
24. If I am angry, I tend to:			
A	Keep replaying in my mind what it is that has upset me	B Raise my voice and tell people how I feel	C Stamp about, slam doors and physically demonstrate my anger
25. I find it easiest to remember:			
A	Faces	B Names	C Things I have done
26. I think that you can tell if someone is lying if:			
A	They avoid looking at you	B Their voices changes	C They give me funny vibes
27. When I meet an old friend:			
A	I say "it's great to see you!"	B I say "it's great to hear from you!"	C I give them a hug or a handshake
28. I remember things best by:			
A	Writing notes or keeping printed details	B Saying them aloud or repeating words and key points in my head	C Doing and practising the activity or imagining it being done
29. If I have to complain about faulty goods, I am most comfortable:			
A	Writing a letter	B Complaining over the phone	C Taking the item back to the store or posting it to head office
30. I tend to say:			
A	I see what you mean	B I hear what you are saying	C I know how you feel

Now add up how many A's, B's and C's you selected:

A's =

B's =

C's =

VAK Learning Styles Explanation and Analysis

If you chose mostly A's you have a **VISUAL** learning style.

If you chose mostly B's you have an **AUDITORY** learning style.

If you chose mostly C's you have a **KINAESTHETIC** learning style.

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, (and there is no right or wrong learning style):

- Someone with a **Visual** learning style has a preference for seen or observed things, including pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, displays, handouts, films, flip-chart, etc. These people will use phrases such as 'show me', 'let's have a look at that' and will be best able to perform a new task after reading the instructions or watching someone else do it first. These are the people who will work from lists and written directions and instructions.
- Someone with an **Auditory** learning style has a preference for the transfer of information through listening: to the spoken word, of self or others, of sounds and noises. These people will use phrases such as 'tell me', 'let's talk it over' and will be best able to perform a new task after listening to instructions from an expert. These are the people who are happy being given spoken instructions over the telephone, and can remember all the words to songs that they hear!
- Someone with a **Kinaesthetic** learning style has a preference for physical experience - touching, feeling, holding, doing, practical, hands-on experiences. These people will use phrases such as 'let me try', 'how do you feel?' and will be best able to perform a new task by going ahead and trying it out, learning as they go. These are the people who like to experiment, hands-on, and never look at the instructions first!

There is no right or wrong learning style. The point is that there are types of learning that are right for your own preferred learning style. When you know your preferred learning style(s) you understand the type of learning that best suits you. This enables you to choose the types of learning that work best for you. People commonly have a main preferred learning style, but this will often 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.