

## Learning styles

One way in which you can better facilitate the goals of a mentoring partnership is by understanding the particular learning styles of the mentee, and to adapt the mentoring approach accordingly. Honey and Mumford's 4 Learning Styles is one recommended route into this, and their questionnaire serves as an important entry point towards this element of self-learning. Both mentors and mentees may want to consider using this early on in their Mentorship.

### What are Learning Styles?

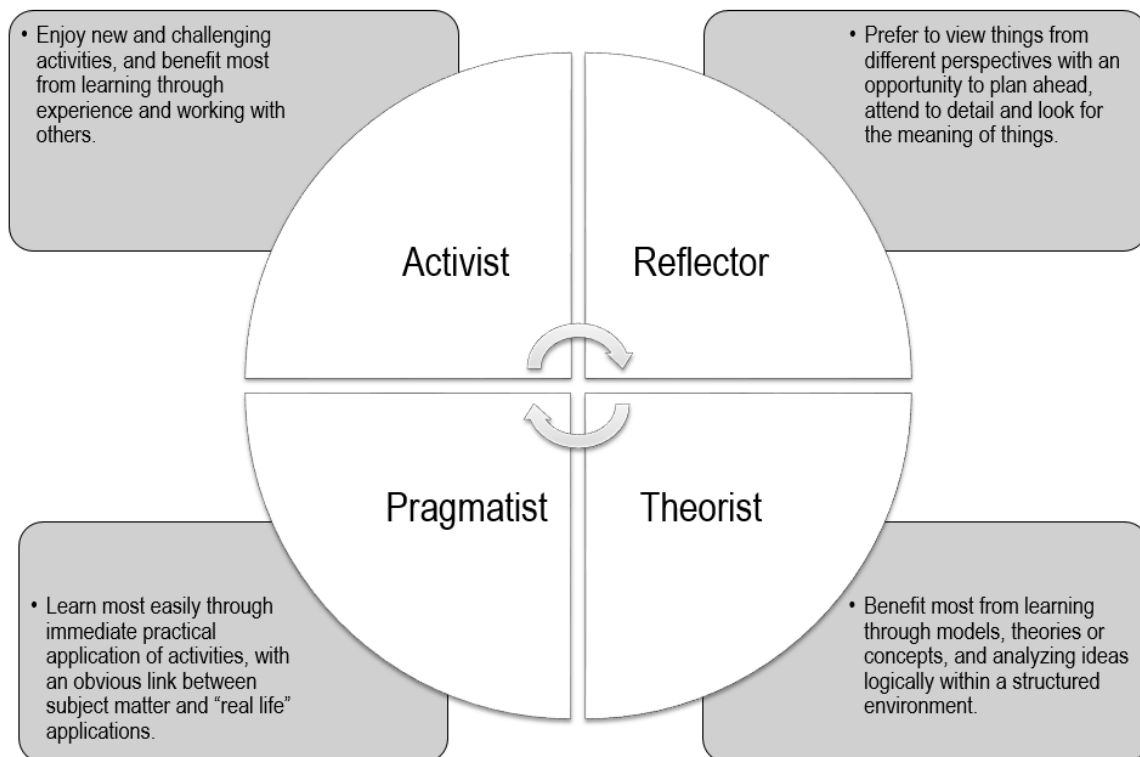
These are based on the acknowledgement that we do not all learn in the same way. Peter Honey and Alan Mumford's model for learning styles is linked to the steps which we naturally go through when we learn something new. They are essentially our learning preferences and habits which are adaptable, not hardwired.

### Why are they important?

Learning is a constant and ongoing process, so being aware of our preferred learning styles, and thereby understanding our strengths and weaknesses, enables us to take active steps towards becoming more effective learners. Being cognizant of the fact that our colleagues have a different learning style from us and from each other can help us to adapt our communication and training style – this could be very useful for Mentors and Mentees.

### The 4 Learning Styles

## Honey & Mumford's 4 Learning Styles



In terms of strengths, preferences, concerns and dislikes of these 4 styles this is a useful summary:

**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOUR LEARNING STYLES**

(Sources: Learning Styles. FEDA, 1995; Honey & Mumford, The Manual of Learning Styles. 1992)

	ACTIVISTS	REFLECTORS	PRAGMATISTS	THEORISTS
<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Doing things</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Putting ideas into action</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy change and variety</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Acting quickly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Collection of data from variety of sources</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Looking at situations from various perspectives and grasping the big picture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Practical application of ideas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Integrating theory and practice</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Decision making in organisations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Getting things done</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Creating theoretical models</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Thoroughness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Industriousness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Developing and working with systems</li> </ul>
<b>PREFERENCES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> New experiences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Taking risks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Getting involved in activities with people</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Getting things done</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> More interested in people (how they behave and how they feel) than in structures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To get involved directly and then reflect on the experience</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> More concerned with processes than outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> More interested in structural aspects of situations than in people.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> "Hands On" experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dealing with ideas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Solving problems</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To know the experts' views</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To work alone</li> </ul>
<b>CONCERNED ABOUT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Personal relevance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Doing what interests them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Personal meaning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The feelings of others</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Maintaining wide ranging interests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Harmony</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Testing things out to get correct solution</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Practical application of what they learn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Details</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of information</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Accuracy of facts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Personal effectiveness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual ability</li> </ul>
<b>Dislikes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sitting around for too long</li> <li>Working alone</li> <li>Theorising</li> <li>Listening to others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being hurtled into activity</li> <li>No time to think</li> <li>Crammed timetables</li> <li>Lack of privacy</li> <li>No time to prepare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anything theoretical</li> <li>Learning that focuses too much on past or future and not present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frivolity</li> <li>Mindless fun; wasting time</li> <li>Not being able to question</li> <li>Lack of a timetable and structure</li> </ul>

**How Can I Find Out My Preferred Learning Style?**

There are various free online tests available when searching for the Honey & Mumford Learning Styles questionnaire. We would recommend taking this one:

<http://resources.eln.io/honey-mumford-learner-types-1986-questionnaire-online/>

There are 40 questions and your preferred learning style will be shown after the final question. We hope you find this useful within a Mentoring context and look forward to your feedback on it.