



# Coffee Break Training - Training Programs and Tips

## Learning Styles: Using the Learning Styles Index for Self-Improvement (Part 2 of 3)

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**Learning Objective:** The student shall understand applications of learner styles for personal use.

**Step One:** Identify your learning preferences for each learning dimension. Read the explanations of each learning preference and choose the one that best reflects your style.

**Step Two:** Analyze your results and identify those dimensions where you are “out of balance,” meaning you have a very strong preference for one style and dislike the other.

**Step Three:** For each out of balance area, use the information below to improve your skills in areas where you need development.

### Balancing Your Learning Styles

Learner Styles (dimensions):	Suggested approach to balance:
<b>Sensory:</b>	If you rely too much on sensing, you tend to seek out what is familiar and concentrate on facts you know instead of being innovative and adapting to new situations. Seek out opportunities to learn theoretical information and then bring in facts to support or negate these theories.
<b>Intuitive:</b>	If you rely too much on intuition, you risk missing important details, which can lead to poor decision-making and problem-solving. Force yourself to learn facts or memorize data that will help you defend or criticize a theory or procedure you are working on. You need to slow down and look at details you would otherwise typically scan.
<b>Visual:</b>	If you concentrate more on pictorial or graphic information than on words, you put yourself at a distinct disadvantage because verbal and written information is still the preferred choice for delivery of information. Practice your note-taking and seek out opportunities to explain information to others using words.
<b>Verbal:</b>	When information is presented in diagrams, sketches, flow charts and so on, it is designed to be understood quickly. If you can develop your skills in this area, you can significantly reduce time spent learning and absorbing information. Look for opportunities to learn through audio-visual presentations, such as CD-ROM and webcasts. When making notes, group information according to concepts and then create visual links with arrows going to and from them. Take every opportunity you can to create charts, tables and diagrams.
<b>Active:</b>	If you act before you think, you are apt to make hasty and potentially ill-informed judgments. You need to concentrate on summarizing situations. Take time to sit by yourself to digest information you have been given before jumping in and discussing it with others.
<b>Reflective:</b>	If you think too much, you risk doing nothing. There comes a time when a decision has to be made or an action taken. Involve yourself in group decision-making whenever possible and try to apply the information you have in as practical a manner as possible.
<b>Sequential:</b>	When you break things down into small components, you are often able to dive right into problem-solving. This seems to be advantageous but can often be unproductive in over-thinking details. Force yourself to slow down and understand why you are doing something and how it is connected to the overall purpose or objective. Ask yourself how your actions are going to help you in the long run. If you cannot think of a practical application for what you are doing then stop and do some more “big picture” thinking.
<b>Global:</b>	If grasping the big picture is easy for you, then you can be at risk of wanting to run before you can walk. You see what is needed but may not take the time to learn how best to accomplish it. Take the time to ask for explanations and force yourself to complete all problem-solving steps before coming to a conclusion or making a decision. If you cannot explain what you have done and why, then you may have missed critical details.

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