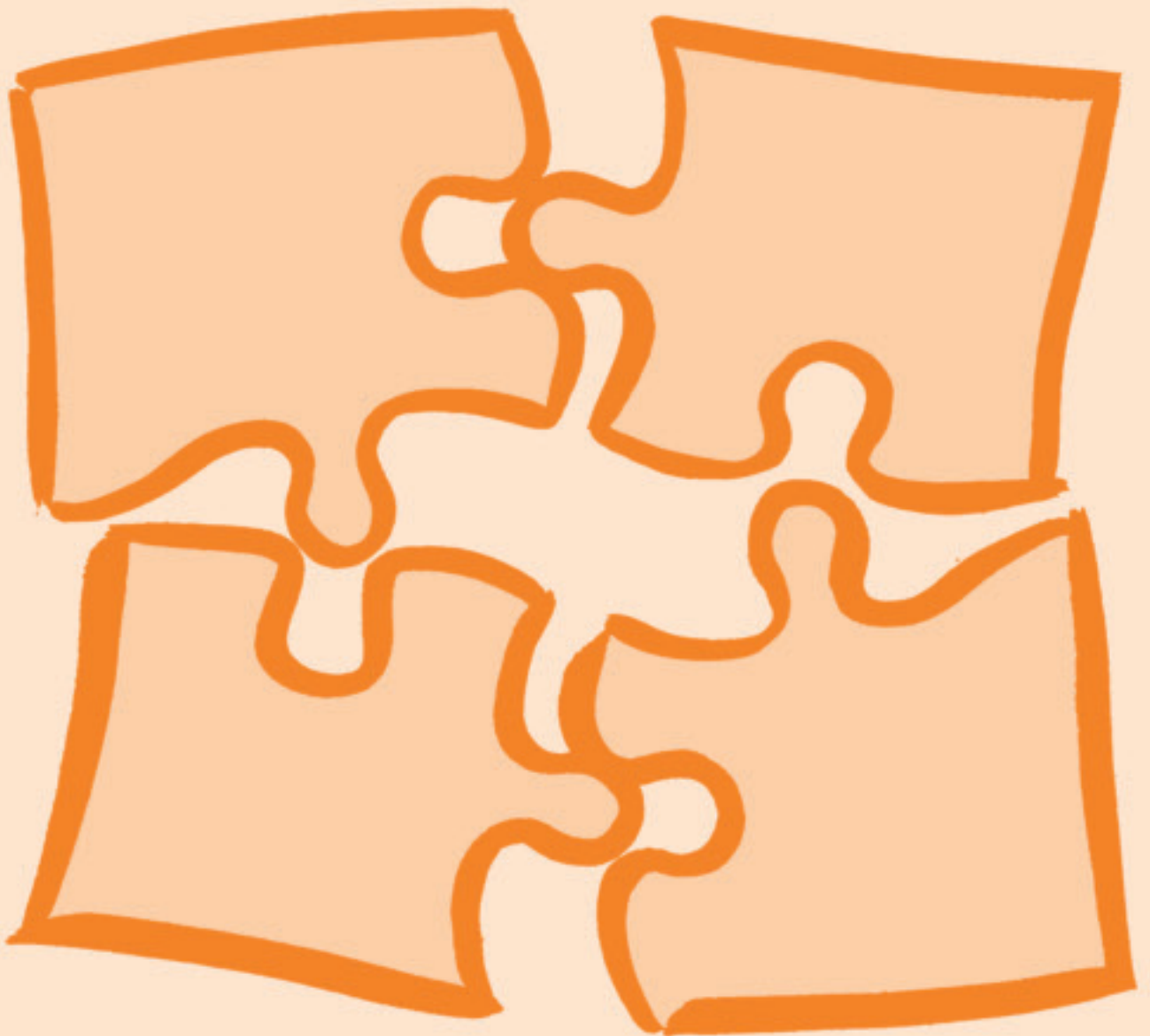


NAME:

The Learning Styles Questionnaire

40-item version

Peter Honey



Learning Styles Questionnaire
40-item version
Peter Honey

To find out more about learning and learning styles visit our website:

www.peterhoney.com

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Peter Honey Publications Limited

Registered Office: 10 Linden Avenue Maidenhead Berks SL6 6HB

Tel: +44 (0)1628 633 946 Fax: +44 (0)1628 633 262 Email: info@peterhoney.com

Website: www.peterhoney.com

VAT No. GB208066480

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Foreword

The Honey & Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire (80-item version) was first published in the autumn of 1982. Since then it has been widely used throughout the world, in all sectors of commerce and education, to help people identify and benefit from their learning style preferences.

In the intervening years, the process of learning, 'learning to learn' and lifelong learning has attracted growing interest and been increasingly recognised as a key (perhaps even *the* key) life skill. Being aware of your learning style preferences is now widely acknowledged as a prerequisite to becoming a more effective learner.

In 2000 we produced a shorter, online version of the questionnaire as an integral part of our *Learning Series*. The 40-item version is better suited to the online technology (all our online development tools are approximately 40 items in length) and it has proved popular with users. In the light of this development, it seems sensible to make the shorter version of the questionnaire available to an even wider audience – hence this booklet. The rationale for a shorter version of the questionnaire, and how it compares with the 80-item version, is expanded upon in the Appendix.

This booklet will help you to identify your preferred styles and optimise your learning effectiveness by guiding you towards learning opportunities that will best suit your preferences. It will also help you to learn more easily from a greater variety of learning opportunities by showing you how to expand your repertoire and become proficient at all four stages of the learning cycle: experiencing, reviewing, concluding and planning. You will also find valuable advice about the sort of help you can expect from your manager - given that he/she also has learning style preferences!

Everything you need is in this booklet. As Aldous Huxley said, 'The great end of learning is not knowledge, but action.' Go for it!

Peter Honey

SECTION 1

An introduction to learning – your most important capability

You are a product of your learning. Everything you know, everything you can do and everything you believe, you have learnt.

Despite your learning being largely responsible for who you are (you are what you learn!) it is probably something you tend to take for granted. Once we have left formal education, we continue to learn every day without necessarily realising it.

Learning is your most important capability simply because it is the gateway to every other capability you might wish to develop. Whether you want to become fluent in another language, and/or become better at winning friends and influencing people, and/or become better at surfing the web, and/or better at football, learning is the key. The process of learning underpins *everything*.

Another striking thing about the learning process is that it is impossible to imagine it will ever become obsolete. Human beings will always need to learn to develop their skills and adapt to changing circumstances. *What* we learn may become obsolete, but *how* we learn will always remain a priority.

What is learning?

The answer to this question depends on whether you are focusing on learning as an internal process, i.e. where information taken in by your senses is processed by your brain, or whether you are thinking of learning as a series of external inputs and outputs. The workings of the brain are so complex that neuroscientists are not yet able to give a complete answer to the question, 'what is learning?'

External inputs and outputs are far easier to track than the internal goings-on that forge connections between the two. Certainly, the outputs of learning are relatively easy to recognise – you can demonstrate that you know and/or can do something that you didn't know and/or couldn't do before you had learned.

But concentrating on the outputs alone makes learning sound as if it is a boring mechanistic process. Nothing could be further from the truth. The scope of learning, and understanding what is involved in getting better at it, makes learning endlessly fascinating and intriguing.

The following list of characteristics (not in any order of importance) may help to whet your appetite.

1 Learning is both a process and an outcome

We use the same word to describe the 'hows' of learning ('I did a search on the web') and the 'whats' of learning ('I found out about the planets').

2 Learning is both formal and informal

We can learn by participating in a formal learning event such as a course or conference and we can learn from our everyday experiences, e.g. a chat over lunch with a colleague.

3 Learning is both conscious and unconscious

We can learn deliberately and describe what and how we learned (explicit learning) and we can learn automatically, by a process of osmosis, without realising it (tacit learning).

4 Learning is both nice and nasty

We can have fun learning and find it a thoroughly enjoyable process and we can find it tough-going and frustrating.

5 Learning is both planned and accidental

We can identify our learning needs and plan how to meet them and we can learn from unplanned events that happened by chance (life's rich tapestry).

6 Learning is both desirable and undesirable

We can learn things that are useful and beneficial (good habits) and we can learn things that are inappropriate and/or harmful (bad habits).

7 Learning is both incremental and transformational

We can learn gradually by taking little steps and we can learn by having a 'Road to Damascus' experience that transforms us.

8 Learning is both a social and a solitary activity

We can learn collaboratively with and from other people and we can learn on our own through, for example, studying and reflection.

9 Learning is both reactive and proactive

We can learn after an experience (with the benefit of hindsight) and we can learn by having a premeditated need or objective and a plan to achieve it.

10 Learning is both about acquiring knowledge and acquiring skills

We can learn so that we add to our store of knowledge and insights and we can learn to develop our skills and talents.

11 Learning is both voluntary and compulsory

We can learn because we want to and we can learn because we are required to.

12 Learning is both recognised and unrecognised

We can be rewarded and/or receive accreditation for our learning and we can do it for its own sake, with no acknowledgement or recognition.

13 Learning is both supported and unsupported

We can get lots of encouragement and support whilst learning and we can be left to get on with it as best we can.

14 Learning is both shared and private

We can share our learning with others and we can choose to keep it to ourselves.

15 Learning is both superficial and deep

We can learn by rote without real understanding and we can learn by thoroughly internalising the principles.

16 Learning is both active and passive

We can learn by having a go and experimenting and we can learn by listening, watching and reading.

17 Learning is both taught and self-managed

We can learn from opportunities that are provided by other people (their agenda) and we can take full responsibility for our own learning (our agenda).

18 Learning is both short-term and long-term

We can indulge in some just-in-time, quick-fix learning and we can invest in our development over a lifetime.

Hopefully this list of characteristics will open your eyes to the sheer scope of learning and excite rather than depress you! Learning is the key to your continued effectiveness and to leading an interesting, fulfilled life.

The challenge is to treat your learning as a skill that, like all your other skills, needs to be consciously reviewed and developed.