

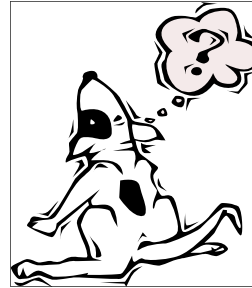
Understanding Learning Styles



Committed to Excellence through Supervision
Improving Recruitment and Retention
in Public Child Welfare
University of Iowa School of Social Work

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Whistling Dog Theory



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Adult Learners

- Adults need to know *why* they should learn something – WII-FM
- Adults prefer life-centered, task-centered, problem-centered learning activities
- Adults come with experience and learn easiest what they have some familiarity with
- Adult learners favor different senses for learning
- Adults like to be self-directing and monitoring

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Perceiving and Processing



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Perceiving Information

- Visual: Sight
- Auditory: Sound
- Kinesthetic: Touch
- Olfactory: Smell
- Gustatory: Taste

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Gardner's Seven Multiple Intelligences

- Visual-Spatial
- Bodily-Kinesthetic
- Linguistic
- Musical
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Logical-Mathematical

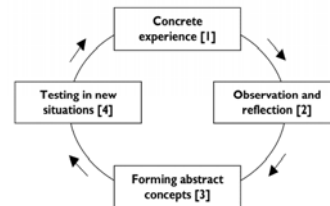
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Design learning opportunities to use as many senses as possible

- Visual
- Auditory
- Kinesthetic
- Olfactory
- Gustatory

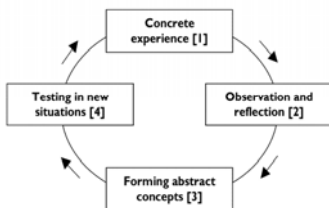
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Processing Preferences: Kolb's Learning Styles



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Kolb's Learning Styles



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Tips for Teaching/Learning

- Concrete Experience: Specific examples in which they can be involved, hands-on, immersion, field experiences
- Observation and Reflection: Lectures that allow the role of impartial objective observers; discussions which allow for reflection on experience
- Forming Abstract Concepts: Authority-directed, impersonal learning situations that emphasize theory and systematic analysis; theory discussions
- Testing in New Situations: Projects, homework, group discussions, role plays

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Learning Styles and Approach to Work

- Active Learners: Let's try it and see how it works, I can adjust as I go along
- Reflective Learners: Let's think through it first.
- Active learners like groups; reflective prefer to work alone.

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Sequential vs. Global Learners

- Sequential learners tend to gain understanding in linear, logical steps
- Global learners tend to learn in large jumps, absorbing material randomly then suddenly "getting it"
- Sequential learners find solutions by following step-wise paths
- Global learners may solve complex problems quickly once they have the big picture

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Things to Remember

- Every person has perceiving and processing preferences.
- Staff development programs should reach all of the people some of the time.
- Integrating multiple methods of teaching improves the engagement and comprehension of all staff members.

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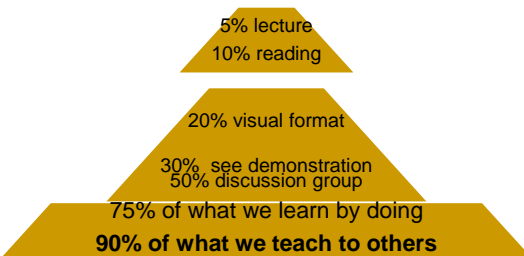
How to “hold on to what we’ve got”

- Reinforcement
- Retention
- Transfer to new situations

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We retain

Source: National Training Institute



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Transfer of Skill Learned in Training to Work Environment

- Transfer of skill requires:
 - Self-awareness about what you do now
 - Training (knowledge) about new skill and when to use it
 - Watch skill being modeled in training
 - Practice skill (if possible) in training setting
 - **Decision to do something different**
 - **Commitment (write down/tell someone)**
 - Opportunity to use new skill
 - Ability to self-critique – did I use it? if not, why not?
What will I do next time to substitute new skill for old way of doing things?

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For Table Discussion:

- Do you know what your staff's learning styles are? How can you find out? Do you think it is important?
- Do you tend to teach the way you learn?
- How could you adjust your teaching and coaching strategies using this information?

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