

# Approach to Learning: Self Assessment

Chapman Learning Commons



What's your approach? Take this quiz and find out...

This quiz may help you gain a little more insight into your typical approach to learning and which strategies may work well for you in maximizing your strengths. This is not a researched and tested instrument; it is meant to provide you with an avenue for self-exploration in preparation for learning. In contrast to claims about learning styles, which are largely unsubstantiated (see the Myth of Learning Styles by Cedar Riener and Daniel Willingham ), your approach to learning is changeable and takes into account your interests, motivations and tendencies which may influence learning.

## Question 1: When I am part of a discussion on a topic I am somewhat familiar with, I:

1. Listen to others first before offering my opinion
  - You seem to have a reflective approach to learning. You'll likely enjoy discussion (online or otherwise). It may be helpful for you to set up a file on your computer called discussion notes where you can keep some notes based on what you read - then refer to your notes in the discussion.
  - Refer to our [Taking Notes Toolkit](#) below for tips!
2. Reflect on my own views before responding
  - You seem to have a reflective approach to learning. You'll likely enjoy discussion. It may be helpful for you to set up a file on your computer called discussion notes where you can keep some notes based on what you read - then refer to your notes in the discussion later.
  - Refer to our [Taking Notes Toolkit](#) and [Reading Textbooks resource](#) below.
3. Jump right into the discussion
  - You seem to have an active approach to learning. Make sure you use your energy wisely. It may be helpful for you to set up a file on your computer called ideas (keep it in a folder labeled for your course).
  - Refer to our [Taking Notes Toolkit](#) below.

## Question 2: My approach to group work is usually:

1. Reluctance. I wait for others to get organized.
  - A reflective or theoretical approach to group work is often valuable. You might offer to summarize discussions or pull together the ideas in a coherent way.
  - Refer to our [Taking Notes Toolkit](#) below for tips. You may also want to review our [Working in Groups Toolkit](#) below for suggestions about how to be most effective.
2. I jump in and organize the tasks.
  - You seem to have an active approach to learning. Make sure you use your energy wisely. It may be helpful for you to set up a file on your computer called ideas (keep it in a folder labeled for your course). Take a look at the tips in the [Working in Groups Toolkit](#) below.



3. Fear. I prefer to work alone.
  - Activist and theorizing approaches are very helpful in research. It may be easier for you to work alone - however, you will often benefit from incorporating the ideas of others into your thinking. Offer to take on some of the writing or editing for the group - these are solitary activities that can contribute to the collaborative effort. Review our practical considerations about [Group Processes](#) for tips, below.

#### Question 3: I prefer my instructors to be:

1. Directive. Tell me exactly what to do.
  - You appear to appreciate structure and specific guidance. If you find your instructor's style is different than this - ask questions early - contact the instructor by phone or during office hours and communicate online often. It may also be wise to keep a running list of your content related questions so that you can tie them together in a single conversation or online exchange.
  - Review our tips for [Interacting with Profs](#) for more suggestions.
2. Consultative. Be available to me but let me choose my own approach. Remove feedback
  - You appear to be self-directed in your approach to learning. You will want to decide on some personal learning objectives/ project themes early and check these out with your instructor to ensure you are on the right track.
  - Review our tips for [Interacting with Profs](#) for more suggestions.
3. A guide. Provide clear guidelines for me but with flexibility to choose my own topics and learning objectives.
  - You appear to be self-directed in your approach to learning. You will want to decide on some personal learning objectives/ project themes that are of interest to you and check these out with your instructor to ensure you are on the right track. Review our tips for [Interacting with Profs](#) for more suggestions.

#### Question 4: During online group work, I prefer my peers to:

1. Approach learning in the same way as I do. • Online group work can be challenging at times. Ensure you set up some good strategies and processes for handling conflict and disagreements.
  - You may want to refer to [Communicating Effectively](#) and [Resources for Respectful Debate](#) [external link].
2. Offer a diverse range of experiences.
  - One of the greatest benefits of online group work is the potential for a diverse range of experiences and life contexts within a group. Your peers may be across the campus or across the world.
  - Your appreciation of diversity will help you to have a positive experience with group processes.
3. Be active and enthusiastic.
  - Online group work can be challenging at times. Ensure you set up some good strategies and processes for handling conflict and disagreements.
  - You may want to refer to [Communicating Effectively](#) and [Resources for Respectful Debate](#) [external link].



Question 5: When approaching a new learning experience or technology, I typically:

1. Experiment without direction.
  - Your desire to experiment typically means that you are not afraid to make mistakes - a good quality to have when learning something new - particularly a new technology. You will likely benefit by having a notebook close to your computer so that (when your experiments work) you can remember how you got there.
2. Wait for direction about how to proceed.
  - Particularly with new technologies, there are not enough directions in the world to prevent a problem. It is helpful to try not to be afraid of the tools you are using. It is almost impossible to break something and a little experimentation will help you to master the technology sooner so that you can focus on the course content.
3. Feel impatient with myself when I don't learn it quickly
  - Frustration and anxiety can be high when trying to learn with a new technology while on a deadline. Remember to ask for help when you need it. This can often save you time.
  - Learn about [Top 5 learning challenges](#) to help you learn more effectively and efficiently.

Question 6: In thinking about my goals for learning today, the most important thing for me is to:

1. Get excellent grades to provide me with future opportunities.
  - At this point, your motivation for learning is very much assessment driven. This is a pragmatic approach. It will be important for you to be clear about the expectations for the course and to add time into your study schedule for self assessment - to ensure you are learning what you need to learn in order to achieve your goals.
  - You may want to review our section on [Top 5 learning challenges](#) to help you clarify the steps you may need to take to reach your goals. Check out [Academic and Learning Resources](#) offered by UBC, as well!
2. Immediately apply the learning to my life or work.
  - You seem to be taking a pragmatic approach to your learning at this time. It will be important for you to be clear about what exactly you want to learn (staying open to the unexpected) and how you feel this will benefit you in your present context. This approach will give you a focus for your learning.
  - You may want to review our section on [Top 5 learning challenges](#) to help you clarify the steps you may need to take to reach your goals.
3. Learn new things or new ways of looking at things I already know.
  - You seem to be taking a reflective approach to your learning at this point. You are likely less concerned about the practical aspects related to grades and assessment and more interested in the impact that learning will have on you.
  - You will likely want to plan time for reflection and self-assessment into your study schedule, check out [Top 5 learning challenges](#). You may also want to expand your learning to get the most out of your university experience – check out this 2-part blog post series about [How to Get the Most Out of Your University Experience](#).



### Question 7: I most often approach brainstorming activities by:

1. Drawing a diagram.
  - You likely approach new learning from a diverging point of view - considering the options. You will likely benefit with the use of models, frameworks and diagrams which can visually help you to organize your thoughts and ideas.
2. Sharing my ideas with others.
  - You likely approach new learning from an activist perspective. You may find that you will benefit through the use of real time chat or instant messaging to communicate with peers or your instructor on collaborative projects. This way of communicating tends to lend itself to a quick sharing of ideas and brainstorming on a particular issue.
3. Writing down my thoughts.
  - Your reflective approach to brainstorming suggests that you may find it useful to offer to record the thoughts of others (as well as your own) during a brainstorming session online, via telephone or in person. Refer to our [Taking Notes Toolkit](#).

### Question 8: When I need more information, I usually:

1. Ask for clarification from the instructors.
  - You likely appreciate structure and guidelines for coursework and discussions. Asking for clarification is a good strategy for getting what you need. Review our tips for [Interacting with Profs](#) for more suggestions.
2. Do more research on my own.
  - You likely choose to reflect on what you are learning, observe others and gather your data. You may find it helpful to develop strategies for organizing your research and observations so that you can share with others as the need arises.
  - You may want to review [The Reflection Process](#) for some strategies for [Reading, Reflecting and Organizing](#).
3. Discuss my questions with as many people as possible.
  - You are likely action oriented in your approach to learning and will benefit with involvement in collaborative learning situations and group projects.

### Question 9: In dealing with a roadblock, either technical, academic or personal, I tend to:

1. Reflect on the event and try to sort it out myself.
  - You will benefit by giving yourself enough time to problem solve, however remember to ask for help when you need it.
  - You may also benefit from reviewing some of our tips on [UBC's Health page](#), or checking out the [UBC Wellness Centre](#).
2. Leave the problem for a while and come back to it later.
  - You will benefit by giving yourself enough time to problem solve, however remember to ask for help when you need it.
  - You may also benefit from reviewing some of our tips on [UBC's Health page](#), or checking out the [UBC Wellness Centre](#).
3. Push through until I have solved the problem - usually with help from others.
  - You're very practical in your approach to learning. The upside is that you're probably highly productive, but the downside is that you might get impatient and try to rush through projects. You might benefit from taking a step back, and looking at the problem



again when you can devote some time to thinking about it and talking with other people.

- You may also benefit from reviewing some of our tips on [UBC's Health page](#), or checking out the [UBC Wellness Centre](#).

#### Question 10: When I am learning something new, I prefer:

1. Practical examples that relate to my experience.
  - Grounding your learning in practice is likely important to you. You may benefit by finding ways to implement what you are learning in your community.
  - You may want to check out some options for [AMS Club Involvement](#) to get the most out of your university experience. The [Centre for Student Involvement and Careers](#) also has some excellent resources (Toolkits: [Job Search](#), [Networking](#), or [book a career advising service](#)).
2. Theories that challenge my ways of thinking about something.
  - You likely approach learning from a more abstract or theoretical perspective. You may benefit greatly from involvement in learning activities or projects which challenge your current ways of thinking and encourage you discuss your thoughts with others who may hold very different opinions.
  - You may want to check out some options for [AMS Club Involvement](#) to get the most out of your university experience. The [Centre for Student Involvement and Careers](#) also has some excellent resources (Toolkits: [Job Search](#), [Networking](#), or [book a career advising service](#)).
3. Models that give me a concrete way to organize my thoughts.
  - You may benefit by exploring concrete strategies for organizing what you read and discuss.
  - You will likely want to search out diagrams and models to illustrate concepts discussed in your courses. Refer to our [Taking Notes Toolkit](#).

#### Question 11: In describing me, my closest friends and relations would describe me as:

1. A thinker.
  - Thinkers may also be described as people who tend observe and reflect. Your observations are likely highly valued among your friends and associates - provided you are willing to share them.
2. A doer.
  - Doers are likely people who "get things done". Doers usually prefer a practical approach to learning, typically prefer to have clear direction and will benefit by asking for clarification when needed. Doers may benefit by taking a more patient and thoughtful approach to projects, rather than rushing to get them done.
3. A talker.
  - Talkers typically have a high need for social interaction and learn a lot through discussion with others. Online or in person discussion or study groups are great resources for talkers. Talkers may also benefit by practicing listening and observation skills as well. Good teachers and facilitators require these skills as well.

Thanks for taking the assessment!

