

LEARNING STYLES FOR DANCING

Compiled by Dottie Welch, revised February 2013 for Effective Teaching Interest Session

TYPES OF MOTIVATION:

- ACHIEVEMENT – Desire to achieve some goal
- POWER – Desire to obtain power or status
- SOCIAL – Desire to enhance social recognition

GREGORC MODEL OF LEARNING STYLES: (from Dr. Anthony F. Gregorc)

PERCEPTION:

CONCRETE – This mind is most comfortable registering information directly through the five senses of sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing. This mind prefers to deal with the tangible and obvious.

ABSTRACT -- This mind is most comfortable using the intellect to conceive ideas, and using intuition and the imagination to look beyond what is obvious to understand the more subtle implications.

ORDERING:

SEQUENTIAL – This mind prefers to organize information in a linear, step-by-step manner, to follow a logical train of thought and to have a plan and follow it.

RANDOM – This mind prefers to organize information by chunks with no particular sequence. This type may skip steps or begin at the middle or end and work backward to achieve the desired result.

CONCRETE SEQUENTIAL:

- want facts
- work step by step
- pay attention to details
- prefer having a schedule
- interpret literally
- like an established routine
- like a neat, orderly environment

ABSTRACT SEQUENTIAL:

- want exact, correct information
- gather data then decide
- want to know the source of facts
- need sufficient time for a thorough job
- use logical reasoning
- want an opportunity for analysis
- organized filer of information

CONCRETE RANDOM:

- want to test for themselves
- solve problems creatively
- learn only what is necessary
- work in a general time frame
- use insight and instinct
- act on the spur of the moment
- like frequent changes in environment

ABSTRACT RANDOM:

- want broad, general principles
- decide with the heart, not the head
- ask for advice
- unstructured and free-flowing
- consider other's feelings
- spontaneous and flexible
- people are more important than things

LEARNING STYLES FOR REMEMBERING INFORMATION:

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VISUAL LEARNERS (65% of the population):

- primarily gather information by sight
- tend to say "I see ... [what you are doing]"
- take detailed notes
- learn well from diagrams, pictures, and written information
- like to read for themselves rather than be read to

AUDITORY LEARNERS (30% of the population):

- primarily gather information by hearing
- tend to say "I hear ... [how to do it]"
- listen first, take notes after if at all, or rely on printed notes
- learn well from the spoken word
- tend to look up or down or close their eyes when trying to absorb information because they are shutting out the visual environment

KINESTHETIC / TACTILE LEARNERS (5% of the population):

- primarily gather information through touch and movement
- tend to say "I feel ... [how this goes]"
- tend to watch the teacher very closely
- need a self-determined learning environment (usually involving action)
- exceptionally good at learning skills by imitation and practice
- need physical information so want to know how it feels to do something
- since each different formation and position feels different, these dancers must experience a call from each position in each of its applications

WITKIN MODEL OF APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING: (From Herman Witkin)

ANALYTIC

- focus is on details
- prefers learning alone
- need neatness to concentrate
- can ignore distractions
- dislikes interruptions
- works on one thing at a time
- wants to be prepared
- self-motivated
- wants a way to evaluate quality
- wants to correct mistakes
- logical and organized

GLOBAL

- focus is on the overall picture
- cooperates in group efforts
- can function amid clutter
- easily distracted
- tempted to procrastinate
- does several things at once
- flexible and goes with the flow
- learns by discussion
- avoids individual competition
- takes criticism personally
- may skip steps and details

Analytic learners listen first for details and often remember exact words but sometimes miss the grand plan. They figure you have to clearly understand the parts to eventually understand the whole. Global learners listen first for what is to be done then want to find out how to do it. They view all the parts as being related and only clarify details after they understand where it fits in the whole picture. Therefore, directions need to be given in a general sense first, then in specifics, and then summarized if both are to benefit.

CONCENTRATION:

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SOUND -- Some need quiet and solitude, others need music and action.

LIGHT-- We need enough light to avoid eyestrain without it being too bright.

HEAT -- Being too hot or too cold can interfere with concentration.

FOOD -- Hunger or thirst can interfere with concentration.

TIME OF DAY -- Peak performance hours vary from person to person.

Are you a morning person or a night owl, what about your students?

PHASE OF THE MOON -- Full moons often coincide with poor concentration.

PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES:

LEFT-HANDED VERSUS RIGHT-HANDED

-- Which hand do they normally use?

-- Which way do they instinctively turn?

MALE VERSUS FEMALE

-- What expectations of their abilities have been imposed by society?

TALL VERSUS SHORT

-- What can they actually see?

AGE DIFFERENCES

-- Are some of the senses impaired?

-- What is the energy level?

-- How long has it been since they were in a learning environment?

-- What experiences do they bring to learning?

ACTIVE VERSUS SEDENTARY LIFE STYLES

-- How long should the tip be?

-- How energetic should the music be?

SUCCESSFUL TEACHERS REACH STUDENTS BY LEARNING HOW THEY LEARN:

1. Observe the conditions that lead to success.
2. Listen to the way a person communicates.
3. Experiment with various approaches.
4. Focus on strengths.
5. Learn to recognize various learning styles.

SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS USE THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES:

1. Understand the underlying idea.
2. Translate the action into a personal set of words, or mental picture, or feel.
3. Review frequently.
4. Group like things together so that knowledge can be transferred.
5. Apply a known concept to help learn a related skill.
6. Find ways to differentiate similar concepts.
7. Experience error-free practice and avoid repeating mistakes.

REFERENCE:

The Way They Learn, by Cynthia Ulrich Tobias, Tyndale House Publishers, 1994,
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