



opq32

> Maximising Your Learning

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INTRODUCTION

Individual learning is increasingly seen as important in the development of the human capital essential in today's constantly changing world of work. This report is designed to help you understand how you typically approach learning. Understanding your preferred approach allows you to choose and organise learning opportunities more effectively and, thereby, maximise your personal development.

The report is based on your responses to OPO32™ that, along with all self-report questionnaires, is not infallible. The accuracy of this report will depend on the frankness with which you answered the OPO32 questions. However, while this report is not intended to be definitive, it does provide a starting point for you to consider development needs that are key to both personal and organisational success.

ENGAGING IN LEARNING

This report has been structured to provide straightforward and easy to interpret information, initially describing your preferred approach when engaging in learning and then moving on to describe how this and other aspects of your profile are likely to impact on your personal development. Your route through learning will be influenced by the following learning preferences:

Analytical - Intuitive

- **A Stronger Preference for Analytical:** People with a strong preference for taking an analytical approach like to use reasoning in their learning, and approach learning opportunities from a more rational and objective perspective.
- **A Stronger Preference for Intuitive:** People with a strong intuitive preference are more likely to follow their instincts in the way they engage in learning, and their perception of the learning process will be influenced by how they feel about a learning event and the other people involved in that event.

Hands On - Observation

- **A Stronger Preference for Hands on:** People with a hands-on approach prefer taking an active and involved approach to learning. They discover by doing and seeing. The tangible results of an action provide the opportunity to learn from the *outside-in*; i.e. by internalising and remembering those actions that have been shown from direct experience to work in the external world.
- **A Stronger Preference for Observation:** People with a strong preference for observation are more likely to seek opportunities to watch and listen to others before getting involved in a learning activity or experience. People with this preference tend to learn from the *inside-out*; i.e. by first gaining an understanding of what is involved in an activity before directly engaging in it.

MAXIMISING YOUR LEARNING

Most significant learning experiences take place in the context of work through acquiring and developing skills to meet workplace challenges. This report has been specifically designed to reflect learning in the work context.

While this report will provide you with information on your natural learning preferences, it is also important that you review those approaches that are not perhaps a natural preference or, at least, not a strong preference. Challenging yourself to use less preferred approaches will lend a more rounded approach to personal development by bringing into play a greater self-awareness.

YOUR PREFERRED APPROACH TO LEARNING

Based on your responses to the OPQ32, the following graphs summarise your learning preferences.



Analytical/Intuitive

Your responses suggest that, while not strongly characteristic of your approach to learning, you may take the time to reflect on what you want to achieve from your learning, and how you will realise whether or not you have reached the learning objectives you set yourself.

At times you may be guided by what feels right to you but in other situations you will be less comfortable trusting your intuition. As such, you may wish to involve others and their views to help guide you in your learning.

Hands on/Observation

Your responses suggest that you like to learn by experimenting. You are more likely to be comfortable with development opportunities that allow you to be actively involved and that are action-orientated. While your natural approach may be to engage in a learning experience directly with little hesitation, you may also tend to be reluctant to learn by watching others. Flexibility in how you engage in learning is also likely to be more appealing to you than high structure and detailed guidance.

LEARNING COMPETENCIES

The previous section of the report described your preferences when engaging in the learning situation. The following section describes four key learning competencies that, when combined with your preferences, will help you to understand better how to learn-to-learn and make your development more effective.

| Competency | Definitions |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Seeking Opportunities to Learn | Active in identifying learning opportunities and being creative in taking advantage of them |
| Seizing Opportunities to Learn | Open to trying things out and taking on challenges, even if they involve some risk |
| Planning your Learning | Taking a pro-active approach to planning and structuring learning |
| Learning from Feedback | Being open to seeking and building on feedback from others |

Your scores on these competencies, again taken from your responses to the OPQ, are summarised as follows; those that are likely to be an area of strength, those where there may be some scope for further development and those which flag up a potential development need. You also need to consider these in the light of your current motivation for learning. For example, while you may generally prefer to take a fairly open approach to planning your learning, you may recognise the need for, when motivated, investing the energy in greater planning and organising. Similarly, you may be someone who has a preference for reflecting before acting, but may also realise the need on occasion to get directly involved in learning situations before having had the chance to fully think things through.

Your responses to the OPQ have been used to suggest actions against these competencies that would benefit your personal development. Where you should focus is summarised as follows:

KEY TO COMPETENCY RATING SYMBOLS AND COLOUR CODINGS

| | |
|-----|---|
| ●●● | = Point indicating potential area of strength |
| ●● | = Point indicating scope for development |
| ● | = Point indicating potential development need |

In addition to providing information on where you sit overall on each of the four learning competencies, you will find specific behavioural feedback. If the competency is shown as 'Scope for Further Development' (something to focus on) or as a 'Potential Development Need' (something to work on), specific questions and suggested actions for you to consider in strengthening your approach to learning and development are given.

To maximise your learning potential, it is important to identify opportunities that might change your perspective or provide the opportunity to learn new things.

- Likely to generate ideas and alternatives for how to meet your learning and development needs, but also likely to seek ideas and suggestions from others.
- More comfortable with conventional approaches so less likely to recognise learning opportunities outside formal training and development programmes.
- May be open to some change and novelty but may also experience some discomfort with new and different learning experiences.

Possible development activities for further discussion:

- Investigate whether it would be possible to set up a learning group or set within your work environment. As well as the benefits of creating more opportunities to learn, such groups can have positive benefits in networking with colleagues from other areas within the organisation and bouncing creative ideas off each other, as well as adding to your organisational knowledge.
- With a colleague, coach or mentor, review your recent work. Were there any times where you wish you had taken a more radical approach? What would the subsequent benefits have been? How can you make sure that you incorporate some radical thinking into your future work?
- You may miss some learning opportunities as you value stability and predictability. Consider arranging regular meetings with a coach, mentor or supportive colleague to periodically review what you have learned and to help identifying future learning opportunities.

Seizing opportunities to learn involves taking risks and sometimes making mistakes. This is critical to learning, introducing challenges and providing an invaluable insight into what leads to success as well as understanding what doesn't work as well.

- Definitely prefer to follow your own approach so very likely to set your own agenda for your personal development and act upon it.
- Sometimes seek demanding targets so on occasions will set and reach challenging objectives for your personal development.
- May sometimes worry about key events so you are likely to feel positive and energised by certain new opportunities to learn and develop.

Your responses indicate that this is an area of relative strength for you so it is one that you should seek to maintain in your future personal development. The behaviours summarised above are provided to help you maintain this as a strong area. You may also find it useful to consider the extent to which your current and future roles enable you to demonstrate your likely competence in this area.

To get the most from your learning, it is important to take a planned approach, setting out both how and when you will achieve milestones and objectives in your development.

- Tend to deal with things as they happen, so less likely to set deadlines and timescales for your personal development.
- Tend not to get immersed in details so unlikely to work through the specifics of how you will achieve learning and development objectives.
- May be prepared to leave some tasks unfinished so may persevere with the most attractive elements of a learning plan or personal development programme.

Possible development activities for further discussion:

- Instead of focusing on the immediate, write down your longer-term goals for your learning and spend time ensuring that these are given sufficient priority in your activities and resourcing decisions. Try to regularly review progress against your learning goals and incorporate the lessons learned to your future learning.
- Identify a couple of colleagues who work in a similar environment who have an organised approach to their learning. Discuss with them their techniques for planning their learning. Is there anything you can adapt and apply to your own situation to increase the opportunities you have to learn?
- Consider introducing deadlines and outputs for your learning objectives. Identify ways of making these deadlines important, for example by presenting the results of a learning project to senior colleagues so that you shift priorities to the more important and urgent learning tasks.

Getting feedback on performance is one of the most powerful ways of learning about personal effectiveness and of identifying further opportunities to learn and develop.

- Likely to see feedback from others for its information value rather than as a possible source of criticism.
- May sometimes modify your behaviour to suit the situation and thus adapt your approach to learning and development as a result of feedback from others.
- May place a realistic level of trust in those providing feedback so sometimes comfortable sharing your learning experiences, good or bad, with others.

Your responses indicate that this is an area of relative strength for you so it is one that you should seek to maintain in your future personal development. The behaviours summarised above are provided to help you maintain this as a strong area. You may also find it useful to consider the extent to which your current and future roles enable you to demonstrate your likely competence in this area.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report was generated using the SHL Expert Assessment System. It includes information from the Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ32). The use of this questionnaire is limited to those people who have received specialist training in its use and interpretation.

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