



the
cognitive thinking
style report

Cognitive Thinking Style Sample Report



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Cognitive Thinking Style

INTRODUCTION

What are Cognitive Thinking Styles?

Cognitive styles are the preferences that individuals have for thinking, relating to others, and for various learning environments and experiences. According to Noah Webster, "cognitive" or "cognition" refers to the faculty of knowing; the act of acquiring an idea. This profile will help explain one of the many thinking style models in existence today.

Cognitive Thinking Styles are based on a few simple principles worth remembering:

- People are Different.
- Different thinkers are motivated to learn in different ways.
- Different learners will respond differently to a variety of instructional methods.
- Individual differences among us should be respected.
- People with different styles can be equally intelligent.

Research has shown that thinking characteristics can be grouped into four patterns or styles. People with similar thinking styles typically prefer similar types of homework, exams, study environments, and are motivated to learn in similar ways. The four different modes of thinking are broken down in the following manner:

L = These people are organised, direct, practical, factual, and efficient. We call them **LITERAL THINKERS**.

I = These people are imaginative, sentimental, perceptive, and adaptable. We call them **INTUITIVE THINKERS**.

T = These people are analytical, logical, deliberate, and thorough. We call them **THEORETICAL THINKERS**.

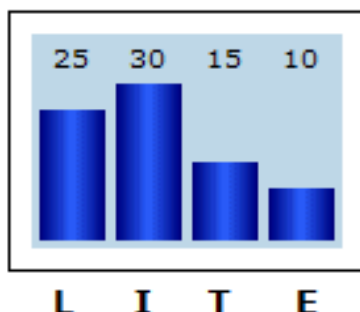
E = These people are curious, realistic, innovative, and challenging. We call them **EXPERIENTIAL THINKERS**.

Cognitive Thinking Style

GRAPH PAGE

This Cognitive Style graph is a wonderful tool that helps you visualise your cognitive style. You can see the intensity of each of the four core styles. The higher the number value (8-32) in each column, the greater the energy expressed towards that particular style. You should be most concerned with the points above the midline (20+). These are your cognitive style strengths. The remainder of this profile focuses on the qualities and characteristics of each of the four core styles. If you have only one point above the midline, you have a pure cognitive style. However, pure cognitive styles are rare.

The cognitive styles of most of the population is a combination of two or more styles above the midline. Take a look at your highest point and where it falls in relation to the other three points on your graph.



Your primary style at a glance

The Intuitive Thinker

- Believes that life and learning are personal experiences.
- Tunes into feelings and attitudes around them.
- Learns from others in a friendly, cooperative way.
- Uses their imagination to make learning real.
- Responds easily to friendly people.
- Asks for personal opinions from others before deciding.
- "Reads into" what is said.
- Is unpredictable and spontaneous.

Intuitive Thinkers Tend to be...Sensitive in their thought.

- impressionable
- sympathetic
- sentimental
- adaptable
- instinctive
- imaginative
- sensitive
- perceptive

Your secondary style at a glance

The Literal Thinker

- Keep his/her thoughts and work space well organised.
- Is very direct, literal, and to-the-point in his/her communication.
- Views things in terms of their usefulness
- Thinks in a linear manner, enabling him/her to follow step-by-step directions well.
- Likes tangible rewards
- Takes people "at their word" and doesn't look for hidden meanings in conversation.
- Likes to complete one task before moving to the next.

Literal Thinkers Tend to be...Practical in their thought.

- organised
- genuine
- traditional
- steady
- a dedicated worker
- hands on
- precise
- practical

Your primary style characteristics

The Intuitive Thinker

- senses, experiences, expresses, cooperates, imagines, appreciates, interprets, and communicates
- is ruled by emotions and feeling; wears heart on sleeve; volunteers feelings easily
- can easily get discouraged by a teacher's criticism
- likes personal attention from a teacher
- draws upon past feelings when deciding, and looks seriously at past consequences
- helps others out of friendship rather than needing to get the task done
- does well on tests where he/she has the opportunity to explain in his/her own words
- learns from others by watching and talking informally
- explains knowledge through stories, metaphors, and personal experiences
- prefers reading interpretations of ideas rather than the ideas themselves
- adjusts easily to changes in routines
- can have many projects in the works at once; goes back and forth between projects
- is not affected by a messy work space
- may have difficulty with objective tests
- gets bored with details and "busy work"
- likes to learn about human nature; work with people

Key Words that apply to a Intuitive Thinker are:

Emotional, Subjective, Interpretive Sensitive, Sociable, Understanding, Caring, Empathetic, Imaginative, Flighty, Colourful, Adaptable, Media-Oriented, Idealist, Good Negotiator

Your secondary style characteristics

The Literal Thinker

- arranges, classifies, lists, categorises, orders data, information, ideas, time, and items
- prefers desks, books, and things to be in their place
- does things the same way; has consistent habits and routines
- tries to sequence random assignments--"How many pages should this be?"
- is fascinated with mechanical and technological things and how they work
- may get bored with lectures; likes to be involved
- learns easily when shown a concrete example
- does well on objective tests
- keeps lists and schedules to divide their time
- is good with exact, structured work, i.e. map-making and workbooks
- likes to finish one task before starting another
- wants instructor to check that his/her work is correct
- doesn't read hidden meanings into body language; takes things as they are stated
- accepts things as are seen; "seeing is believing"
- shows creativity by producing physical products from general ideas
- likes to memorise and repeat to learn
- can be counted on to do what he/she says
- adapts to change only when prepared in advance

Key Words that apply to a Literal Thinker are: Organised, Efficient, Thorough, Precise, Detailed, Perfection-Oriented, Task-Oriented, Direct, To-the-Point, Blunt, Factual, Literal, Structured, Predictable, Dependable, Honourable

The Intuitive Thinker:

Thinking and Working in your primary style

Where Your Thinking Excels

Your strengths are...

- Staying optimistic when others are negative
- "Reading into" the communication of others
- Negotiating effectively
- Mediating when two sides are at odds
- Cooperating with others to achieve a goal
- Networking during social gatherings

Where Your Thinking is Limited

You may have difficulty with...

- Remembering precise details and facts
- Receiving any type of criticism
- Keeping schedules and deadlines
- Focusing on the task at hand
- Giving in to peer pressure
- Aggressive personalities

How You work in a Group

- Contribute understanding, imagination, and optimism to the group
- Sense what others need
- Adapt to change, different situations, and different people
- Bring harmony to a group in the midst of conflict
- Are supportive of another's role in the project

How You Work Alone

- Like to use imagination and increase communication skills through reading
- Try to interpret the overall theme of a book
- Relate to the experiences of characters
- Enjoy colourful metaphors; can take three or four meanings from a passage
- Keep an open mind when reading
- Enjoys fiction, literature, poetry, novels, self-help, psychology, science fiction, magazines, editorials, and biographies

The Literal Thinker:

Thinking and Working in your secondary style

Where Your Thinking Excels

Your strengths are...

- Focusing on a project until it is completed
- Clear, no-nonsense communication
- Working hard to keep a deadline
- Being practical about complex issues
- Designing systems to make things work smoothly, efficiently, and economically

Where Your Thinking is Limited

You may have difficulty with...

- Abstract words or hidden meanings
- Communication with no agenda
- Functioning in a cluttered work space
- Requests to "elaborate on feelings"
- Depending on others in a group
- Visualising things that can't be seen
- Incomplete or vague directions

How You work in a Group

- Contribute consistency, organisation, and security to the group
- Pay close attention to detail
- Organise everyone in the group
- Make sure the project follows through to the end
- Communicate clearly and concisely--get to the point, stick to the facts, and keep emotion out of the project

How You Work Alone

- Like reading about practical subjects
- Would rather "do something" than read
- Don't like to read about abstract concepts
- Use common sense instead of emotions to form opinions about what you read
- Don't mind reading about the details as long as they are concrete and factual
- Like to read nonfiction, autobiographies, how-to manuals, history, science, and technology

How You May Improve Learning

The Intuitive Thinker (primary style)

- Create opportunities to study in a group or with another person (but not another random style--you may get off track). A "dependent" learner; you need to be pushed or pulled by someone else.
- Ask for frequent feedback from leaders, but develop a thicker skin regarding criticism. Don't let discouragement or rejection get the best of you.
- Choose projects that allow you to use your creativity and imagination. You will excel in these areas.
- Choose oral exams, essays, and opportunities to elaborate. Black/white, yes/no formats restrict you.
- Get in the habit of keeping a calendar, a schedule, and exact records of important things you need to accomplish, or you may likely forget them.
- Pay more attention to a lecturer's content and less attention to his/her presentation skills.
- When writing papers, begin with broad concepts and then narrow down to more detailed information. If you try to pick out details first, you may have difficulty.
- Practice objective thinking. Take your feelings and opinions out of your work when necessary.

The Literal Thinker (secondary style)

- Before beginning a paper or a project, ask the leader if he/she has an example to show you. You work well when you can see or feel a concrete (tangible) example of an assignment and then use that knowledge to guide you through your assignment.
- Choose a study/work area that is quiet. Your style has a low tolerance for distraction.
- Ask for frequent feedback from the leader. You feel better when you know what is expected of you.
- Ask people to "put it in writing" when explaining or giving instructions. You have difficulty following unclear, incomplete, or abstract directions. Putting it in writing reduces the chance for misunderstandings.
- You may be more likely to succeed on multiple choice or true/false exams than on essay exams. You tend to see things as either "right" or "wrong."
- Practice flexibility. You feel most comfortable doing things the same way, but many times, a class or assignment requires that you innovate and find new ways of doing something.
- Rely on your common sense; this is your strength. But also encourage your creative, imaginative side.

Being Aware...

Hopefully, you will become more aware of how your thinking style is in many ways different from others, yet, somehow similar to others. The thinking styles of you and your peers have been grouped according to their similarities. Taking the profile, discovering your style, and understanding different thinking characteristics has, at the least, made you aware of the various thinking preferences. Now you can better appreciate the diversity in others.

Maximise Strengths; Minimise Weakness

Your mind has distinctive qualities and preferences that differ from the person next to you. The exercises on the next page will help you further pinpoint your mind's preferences. Once you can identify and appreciate your strengths and limitations, you can maximise or minimise them in all types of learning situations.

Know Yourself...

To *know yourself* sometimes requires that you *stand outside yourself* and observe the internal processes that prompt your behaviour. Your profile has indicated that you "lean" toward one or two Cognitive Thinking Style(s). Now, it's your turn to admit, "yes, I *think* like that," "I *do* that," or maybe you'd rather say, "No, that's not *exactly* me." Please answer the following questions in the Mind Exploration Exercise to the best of your ability.

Mind Exploration Exercise

1) Please list your primary and secondary cognitive styles.

2) What is your reaction to your thinking style scores? Do you agree or disagree with the characteristics attributed to your dominant style? If you disagree, with what aspects in particular?

3) Which set of style characteristics describes you best? Are there any characteristics you would add?

4) Looking back at your dominant cognitive style, do you feel this thinker represents your thinking fairly?

a) Where does your thinking excel? *"I know I am good at..."*

b) Where is your thinking limited? *"I know I have difficulty..."*

c) What are your strengths in a group project? *"I prefer to contribute to a group project by..."*

d) How do you approach an independent task like "reading?" What motivates you to read? What kinds of materials do you prefer to read?

5) What comes naturally to you? *"I currently practice the following strategies..."*

6) What practices will you have to force yourself to do? *"I don't look forward to..."*

7) What style characteristics, which you listed in question three, will help you in the profession you plan to enter?

8) What characteristics from other styles do you "wish" you had?

9) Explain what you can do in the future to develop the characteristics you wish you had?