



CHALLENGING LEARNERS & SUPPORTING THEM

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

GDC OUTCOMES B & D

 Provide efficient chairside assistance including the use of extended competencies to support the foundation dentist encouraging best practice during every patient case

 LEARNING CONTENT - during this session we will:

 Review Adult Learning Theoretical Principles in terms of motivation and reflective learning;

 Explore Learning Styles;

 Summarise practical steps in supporting clinical education in the workplace

The Adult Learner

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

- ▶ Learners must have basic physiological and psychological needs met (safety, belonging, esteem) before achieving self-actualisation.
- ▶ A supportive, respectful, and safe learning environment enables confidence and professional growth.



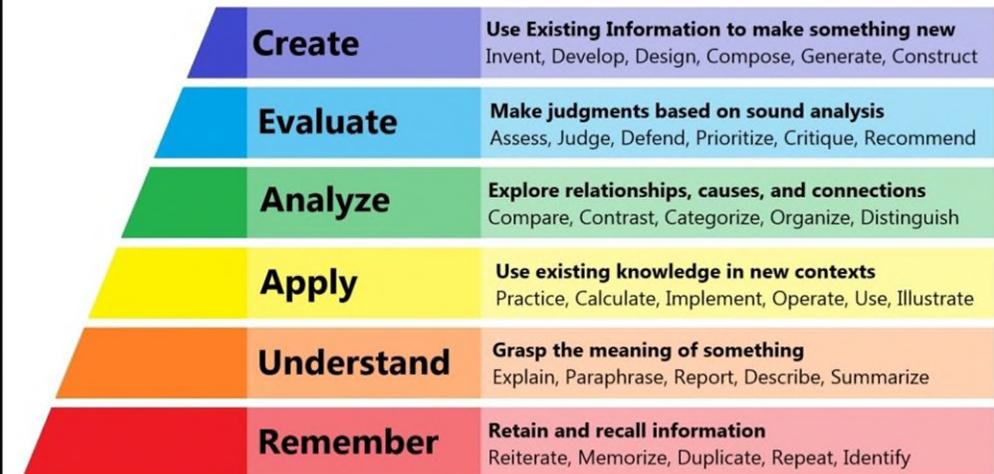
Maslow's hierarchy of needs

The Adult Learner

Bloom's Taxonomy

- ▶ Encourages progression from remembering and understanding to applying, analysing, evaluating, and creating.
- ▶ Clinical educators promote higher-order thinking through case discussions, simulations, and reflective practice.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

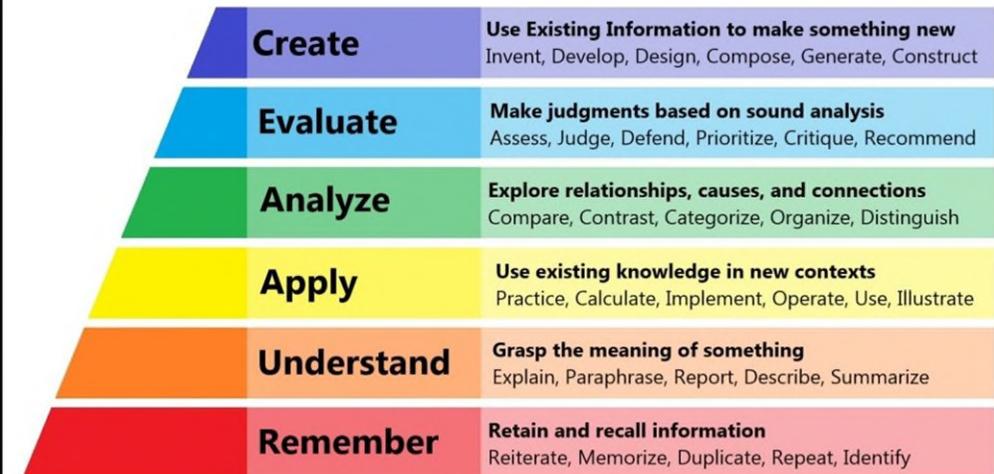


The Adult Learner

Bloom's Taxonomy

- ▶ Piano example
- ▶ moving from basic recall to complex creation.
- ▶ For example, a student might **remember** a scale, **understand** its structure, **apply** it by playing a song, **analyse** its composition, **evaluate** their performance, and finally **create** an original piece using that knowledge.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY



The Adult Learner

Bloom's Taxonomy example

- ▶ Knowledge -recall *Define the term caries*
- ▶ Comprehension- understanding *Describe the outcome of the carious process*
- ▶ Analysis- interpretation *What factors influence the carious process?*
- ▶ Synthesis-application *A 56yr old patient presents with multiple active carious sites and a poor fitting upper acrylic denture. Construct a treatment plan based on the additional info provided.*
- ▶ Evaluation- contextualisation *Develop guidelines for use in the management of dental caries identifying any differences between management in elderly VS fit, healthy adults ?*

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Create | Use Existing Information to make something new Invent, Develop, Design, Compose, Generate, Construct |
| Evaluate | Make judgments based on sound analysis Assess, Judge, Defend, Prioritize, Critique, Recommend |
| Analyze | Explore relationships, causes, and connections Compare, Contrast, Categorize, Organize, Distinguish |
| Apply | Use existing knowledge in new contexts Practice, Calculate, Implement, Operate, Use, Illustrate |
| Understand | Grasp the meaning of something Explain, Paraphrase, Report, Describe, Summarize |
| Remember | Retain and recall information Reiterate, Memorize, Duplicate, Repeat, Identify |



The Adult Learner

Promoting Deep Learning through engagement

- ▶ Biggs 1987
- ▶ Biggs believed effective teaching should discourage surface learning and actively encourage deep learning.
- ▶ This is achieved by designing teaching activities and assessments that require students to think critically, make connections, and demonstrate understanding beyond mere memorisation



The Adult Learner

Promoting Deep Learning through engagement

- ▶ **Surface learning:** focuses on rote memorisation, fear of failure, or minimal effort.
- ▶ **Goal:** To complete the task with minimum effort, often for a grade.
- ▶ **Approach:** Rote learning, memorisation, and reproduction of facts



The Adult Learner

Promoting Deep Learning through engagement

- ▶ Deep learning: driven by curiosity, understanding, and linking theory to practice. Clinical teaching should foster deep learning through problem-based learning, reflection, and meaningful feedback.
- ▶ **Goal:** To genuinely understand the material and its meaning.
- ▶ **Approach:** Active engagement, critical thinking, and relating new ideas to existing knowledge.



The Adult Learner

Active Learning

- ▶ promotes a deeper understanding and application of medical knowledge
- ▶ improves clinical reasoning
- ▶ increases student engagement and motivation
- ▶ develops interpersonal skills essential for healthcare practice.
- ▶ bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, better preparing students for modern medical practice



The Adult Learner

Reflective learning & practice

Reflective learning is the process of thoughtfully considering your experiences in order to learn from them and improve future practice.

In clinical education, it allows students and trainees to critically examine their clinical decisions, skills, and interactions with patients



The Adult Learner

Reflective learning & practice

Enhances Clinical Competence

- Helps identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Encourages improvement in technical and diagnostic skills.

Supports Professional Development

- Builds critical thinking and decision-making abilities.
- Promotes ethical and patient-centred care.

Facilitates Lifelong Learning

- Encourages ongoing self-assessment and continuous improvement.
- Aligns with CPD (Continuing Professional Development) requirements.

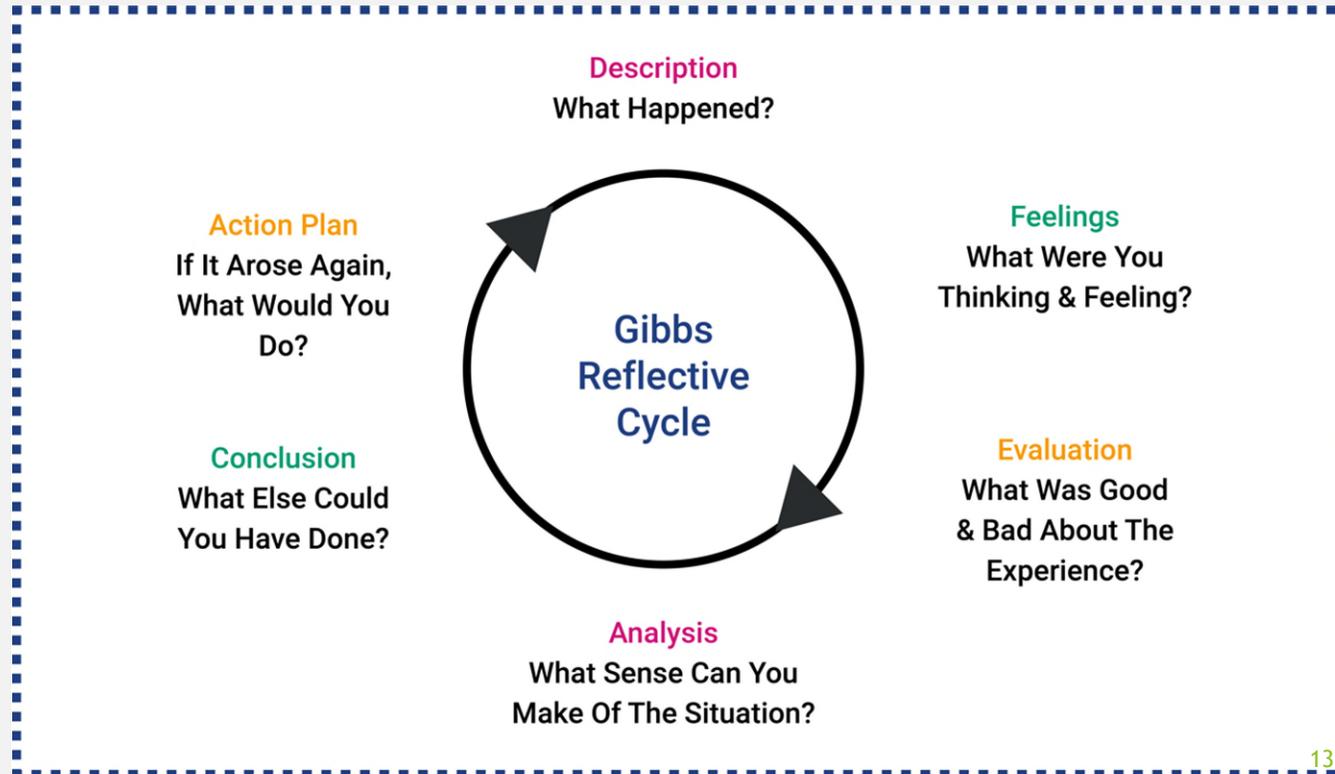
Improves Patient Care

- Reflection on patient interactions enhances communication and empathy.
- Leads to safer and more effective clinical outcomes.

The Adult Learner

Reflective learning & practice

Gibbs 1988





The Adult Learner

Reflective learning & practice

- ▶ **Opportunities to reflect:**
- ▶ Debrief
- ▶ During or after feedback
- ▶ Critical incidents
- ▶ Self evaluation
- ▶ **Triggers for reflection:**
- ▶ Something new
- ▶ Something uncertain or not known
- ▶ Feelings of unease
- ▶ Something that went well
- ▶ Completed event



The Adult Learner

What do all these theories mean?

- ▶ **Key Takeaway: Effective adult clinical education integrates motivation (Maslow), cognitive challenge (Bloom), meaningful engagement (Biggs), and reflective practice (Gibbs) to build competent, reflective practitioners.**
- ▶ Learners build understanding through active learning. This highlights the importance of connecting new knowledge to past experiences and using reflection to apply key principles to future situations.



The Adult Learner Summary

- ▶ Adult learners are self-directed, problem-focused, and motivated to apply knowledge in real-world clinical contexts.
- ▶ Educators acting as facilitators (not a teacher) of active, hands-on, and reflective learning.
- ▶ Learning emphasises autonomy, practical experiences (e.g., workplace learning), and structured feedback to build competence and independence.



The Adult Learner

Motivating Strategies

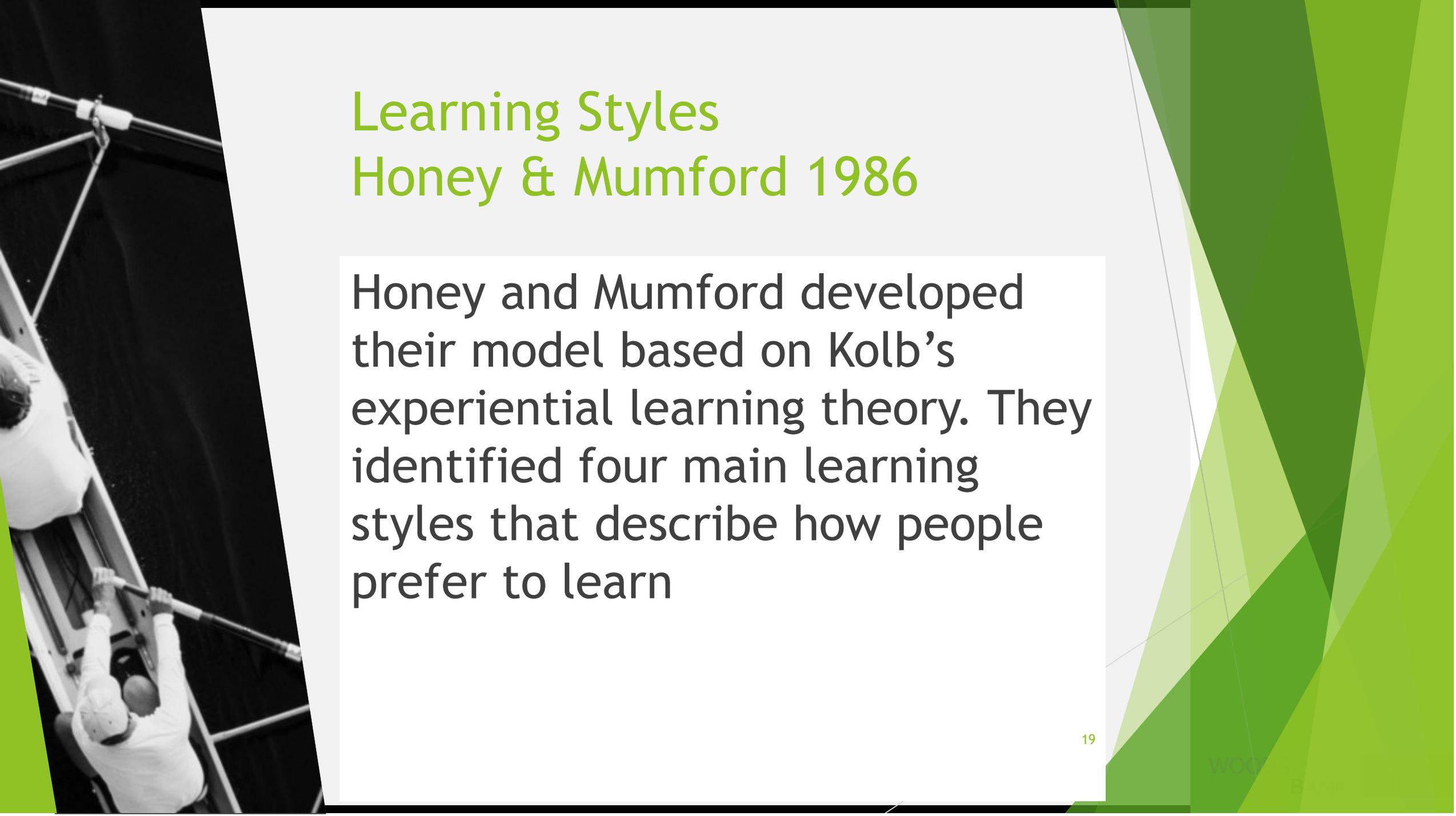
- ▶ Use active learning:
 - ▶ Engage learners with case studies, role-plays, and problem-based tasks to promote critical thinking and real-world application.
- ▶ Foster collaboration:
 - ▶ Encourage peer teaching and group discussions to deepen understanding through shared experiences.
- ▶ Introduce complexity gradually:
 - ▶ Present new information in manageable steps to prevent overload and support comprehension.
- ▶ Encourage questioning:
 - ▶ Create a safe space for debate and reflection to develop higher-order thinking and challenge assumptions.



The Adult Learner

Supportive Strategies

- ▶ Make learning relevant:
 - ▶ Link content to real-world clinical roles and challenges; highlight its practical value.
- ▶ Create a safe environment:
 - ▶ Encourage questions and learning from mistakes without fear of judgment.
- ▶ Build on experience:
 - ▶ Use learners' prior knowledge to personalise learning and identify skill gaps.
- ▶ Foster autonomy and feedback:
 - ▶ Support self-directed learning and provide timely, constructive feedback for growth.
- ▶ Help set goals:
 - ▶ Assist learners to set realistic learning goals. Helps them stay focused on what is important to them. ¹⁸



Learning Styles

Honey & Mumford 1986

Honey and Mumford developed their model based on Kolb's experiential learning theory. They identified four main learning styles that describe how people prefer to learn



Learning Styles

Honey & Mumford 1986

| Learning Style | How They Learn Best | Key Traits | Typical Approach |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Activist | By doing and experiencing | Open-minded, enthusiastic, risk-taker | Jump in, try new things, enjoy group activities |
| Reflector | By observing and thinking | Careful, thoughtful, cautious | Watch, collect information, reflect before acting |
| Theorist | By understanding concepts | Logical, analytical, objective | Seek models and principles, prefer structured learning |
| Pragmatist | By applying ideas in practice | Practical, experimental, problem-solver | Test ideas, focus on practical applications, like problem-solving ²⁰ |



Learning Styles

Honey & Mumford 1986

- ▶ What is your preferred learning style?
- ▶ <https://www.mint-hr.com/mumford/>



How is this relevant to the FD in my practice?

- ▶ MASLOW - environment, team dynamics, interpersonal communications & relationships
- ▶ BLOOM - which rung of the ladder is the FD on? Analyse, Evaluate, Create - higher level. If there is an issue lower down the ladder eg Recall, can they progress?
- ▶ BIGGS & GIBBS - promote deeper learning through reflection and feedback.... Eportfolio; WBAs
- ▶ HONEY & MUMFORD - each FD is different and may favour one particular learning style. One size fits all approach not suitable. Tailor learning activities eg tutorials (hands on practical V audit V case report V case discussion)

References

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