



The Creative Workplace Update

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“Speech is power: speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

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The Importance of Learning Modalities and Styles

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Many trainers and educators have heard of learning modalities and styles. In some instances they have even taken the time to research the topics. Most simply accept that people have a preference for the manner in which they perceive and process information so that they are able to retain and later recall and use it. On the other hand, professional trainers and educators generally want to know the “why” behind strategies and tactics that they use in a learning environment. By researching how the brain gains, retains, recalls and uses information, you can enhance the quality of information that you share with your learners. Additionally, by self-assessing and learning about your own preferences and approaches to learning, and those of others, you will be able to design, develop and deliver content that really matters to learners.

In this article, you will briefly explore why learning modalities and styles are so important to trainers and learners alike.

Significance of Modalities

There are three primary means or modalities that people use to receive information, which the brain then processes – visual (seeing), auditory (hearing) and kinesthetic/tactile (doing). These are rooted in research on psychological type classifications that try to show how people perceive and process stimuli differently based on their environment and personal background, heritage, and other factors. The three modalities tie directly to the learning style preferences of those who attend your sessions and classes. Since knowledge is gained through the senses, it is important to know how to best provide stimuli to your learners. Some researchers believe that about 20% to 30% of learners are auditory, 40% are visual and the remaining 30% to 40% are some combination of all the senses.

Focus on All Modalities

Like many things in life, people resist change and tend to gravitate to situations and people who are similar to them. Trainers and educators sometimes do this related to their own modality preference. They build in an abundance of materials and strategies that they feel comfortable with and from which they would personally gain the most if they were a learner. This can create challenges for you as a trainer or educator in a learning environment.

To avoid leaning too much toward your own learning preferences, it is a good idea to find a self-assessment tool that will help you determine your preferred modality, if you have never done so. This will increase your self-awareness. Once you have identified your own learning modality preference(s), you are more likely to be successful in designing and delivering program content. This is because by recognizing what you like, you can potentially avoid focusing on that preference when creating materials and strategies. For example, if you are primarily a visual learner, you may have a tendency to use a lot of slides, videos, graphs, handouts and other visual training or job aids. The downside of this is that while auditory and kinesthetic/tactile learners can also benefit from visual products, their preferred modality is neglected. As a result, they might become bored or distracted. It is better to build in activities and approaches that periodically target a different modality preference in order to engage all learners at some point on a regular basis.

Relationship to Learning Styles

According to David Kolb's Experiential Learning Model, which is based on a four-stage learning or training cycle, there are four learning styles that fall into two categories.

Perceptions

- **Concrete Experience (CE).** During this phase learners absorb information through direct experience, by acting, feeling, and feeling. Their physical senses aid them in better understanding themselves and their world.

- **Abstract Conceptualization (AC).** By observing, analyzing and thinking about the stimuli they receive related to personal experiences, learners are able to plan ways to use their new information or ideas developed from what they experienced.

Processors

- **Active Experimentation (AE).** Many learners make sense of their experiences by “jumping right in” to apply new knowledge and skills. During this phase of the model, they actually begin to use and test their ideas in the real world in which they live and work.
- **Reflective Observation (RO).** By observing others involved in an experience and then organizing their new knowledge into some structure or organizational format, they can gather meaning.

Kolb’s cycle can easily provide a basis for creating learning events that address the needs of all your learners while strengthening learning outcomes. By taking each of his styles into account when designing and delivering information, participants are more likely to be able to grasp, process and use what they experience.

Strategies for Enhanced Learning

By building variety into your learning events, you create a more stimulating and brain-friendly environment. To increase your success in working with people who prefer all learning modalities and styles, conduct research on how the brain best processes information. Make sure that you periodically engage people through as many senses as possible and that you create ways where they are actively engaged in the learning process as possible. Regularly incorporate a wide variety of stimulating and experiential elements into the classroom as possible and focus on experience, observation, conceptualization, and experimentation. For example, use sound, motion, demonstrations, case studies, movement, music, role plays, visual aids, small group activities, and discussions.

Conclusion

Successful learning events do not occur by chance. Trainers and educators who research and address learning modalities and styles are more likely to create experiences in which learners quickly see the value, importance and application of what they learn. By setting up an environment in which learners are able to more effectively grasp concepts and skills in a way that is effective for them, they succeed and so do you.

The Musical Side of Accelerated Learning

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You may already know from earlier articles that “accelerated learning” means finding ways to optimize the activity of the mind to enhance the learning experience. A proven method of doing so is to incorporate music in the accelerated learning curriculum.

Some types of music may not aid the learning process, and could even be detrimental. Music which contains a prescribed number of beats per minute, however, has been shown to accelerate the learning process. This is because that kind of music actually 'entrains' brainwave activity to open the mind to learning.

When we discuss brainwave activity, we're talking about the frequencies emitted by the neo-cortex (learning center) as having the greatest effect on learning acceleration.

One of the pioneers of accelerated learning, Dr. Georgi Lozanov, determined through his research that music played at 60 beats per minute resulted in the type of brainwave activity needed for learning. Mozart's Sonata for Two Pianos in D Major K 448, for example, is written in this meter.

Dr. Alfred Tomatis, in his 1991 essay, "Pourquoi Mozart?", coined the term "Mozart Effect" when he shared his research conclusion that Baroque music, particularly Mozart's, was written in the perfect meter to stimulate the brainwave activity necessary to accelerate learning.

Additionally, though controversial, research by the University of California, Irvine, also concluded that specific pieces of music composed by Mozart, when played in a controlled learning environment, could enhance the student's ability to absorb new information quickly, and even raise certain IQ test results temporarily.

A phrase that cropped up during the expansion of this field of research is "accessing the genius mind", or putting the mind into the best state for unfettered learning, in part by using music.

An intriguing offshoot of this field is the work of Dr. John Diamond of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. Diamond's work with subjects whose hearing he artificially restricted proved what many scientists in this field believe, that even the hearing impaired can benefit educationally from the introduction of music of varied patterns into accelerated learning curriculum.

One final giant in the field of music and accelerated learning must be included in our discussion. The late Dr. John-David created three brilliant works which include music to entrain the brain waves of the listener. Those works-Environmental Learning, Brain-Mind Expansion Intensive and Eliminating Self Sabotage, can be investigated further at the BrainSpeak.com.

The inclusion of music, whether to create the best environment for learning, or to entrain the very activity of the brain, is an essential part of your best accelerated learning program.

Peter Julian is the CEO of the Whole Brain Learning Institute and the Official Accelerated Learning Guide at SelfGrowth.com. Let us help you and your learning goals find Accelerated Learning Programs and Accelerated Learning Techniques that are perfect for you and your learning goals! To contact the author, visit www.BrainSpeak.com or at 453 East Wonderview, PMB 193, Estes Park, CO 80517. 888-437-4569.

Survey Help Request

We are continually trying to find new ways to upgrade this publication and the content to make it more valuable to you...our readers; to do that we need your help. Would you please go to this link <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CGPZB88> and complete a brief survey about the newsletter? It will only take a couple minutes and at the end you can download a coupon code that can be used for a 20% discount off any order total (excluding shipping and taxes) from Creative Presentation Resources. This website has over 1,000 creative toys, games, books, videos and products that can be used to enhance any learning environment and workplace.

Also the code entitles you to a 20% discount off the standard professional fee for any one workshop delivered by Global Performance Strategies LLC when delivered by June 30, 2010.

Thanks in advance for you assistance.

Featured Program of the Month

Global Performance Strategies LLC offers a variety of professionally designed and facilitated workplace learning events that focus on enhancing employee performance and increasing organizational effectiveness. Each month we spotlight one of proven workshops or programs. This month's program is:

The Creative Trainer Boot Camp: Brain-Based Strategies for Engaging Learners

The Creative Trainer Boot Camp incorporates strategies such as the use of color, sound, motion, music, light, movement, magic, novelty, incentives, fun and much more to show participants how to gain and retain learner attention so that effective recall and use can occur later.

This workshop can be done in a single or multiple day format. The one-day program provides opportunities to experience numerous strategies for incorporating energy and learner engagement into training. The multi-day versions provide opportunities for video-based taping and feedback and can lead to certification and licensing to teach the program at your site.

Learners will see demonstrations and have a chance to discuss and use a variety of techniques which can be transferred back to their own learning environments later. For example, participants will learn to juggle silk scarves in pairs and to coach one another on the technique. They will then discover ways to incorporate this fun and invigorating technique into their own workplace learning events.

Session Objectives: At the end of this session and when using strategies learned, participants will be able to:

1. Create training environments that stimulate learning.
2. Incorporate the latest learning brain research into their training design and delivery.
3. Design learning events that result in higher levels of attention and retention.
4. Use techniques and strategies experienced in their own learning events.
5. Add pizzazz and novelty to their learning events.
6. Immediately apply what they learned.

For more information about this program or to schedule an event for your employees, contact Steve Tanzer at Global Performance Strategies (stevetanzer@globalperformancestrategies.com). To learn more about the programs and performance consulting services offered by the organization, visit www.globalperformancestrategies.com.

Anagram of the Month

An anagram is a phrase created by using the letters from other words. These are great for challenging the mind. See if you can unscramble the following words to identify this popular fictional military figure from the television and the movies.

parka nick it

Answer at the end of the newsletter....**NO PEEKING!**

Activity: **Treasure Hunt**

Time: 15-20 minutes, depending on group size

Group Size: 25 participants

Purpose: To provide an icebreaker activity that allows learners to share information related to the session topic and get to know one another.

Objectives: Through use of this activity, learners will be able to:

- Network with others
- Gather information useful in the session
- Brainstorm ideas

Process:

- Provide each participant with a list of information to seek from others related to your session topic (e.g. if you were facilitating a session on performance coaching, they might look for someone who has recently coached a sports team or some other topic related to coaching. In a program on time management, they could search for someone who has recently changed their

behavior to make more effective use of time or otherwise incorporated the topic into their life).

- Allow 10-15 minutes for participants to locate others who meet the criteria established.
- Afterwards, ask everyone to introduce themselves and then share some tip they have related to the session topic.

Materials

Needed:

List of topic to search.

Option:

Instead of searching for topic information, have learners brainstorm ideas related to the session topic.

Fact Me – *Most Literate City in the United States*

Ever wonder which city has the most literate population? USAToday answered that question in a survey:

1. Seattle
2. Washington
3. Minneapolis
4. Pittsburgh
5. Atlanta
6. Portland, Ore.
7. St. Paul
8. Boston
9. Cincinnati
10. Denver

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-12-21-literate-cities_N.htm

Free Stuff

Help your visual learners by using flash cards with key concepts on them. To create these cards free on your computer, or to download others created by trainers and educators around the country, visit www.flashcardmachine.com.

Creative Product Review – *Henrietta the Screaming Chicken*

Raised in a quaint little chicken farm in America's Heartland, Henrietta showed a flair for performing at an early age. As an adult, she moved to Las Vegas with dreams of fame and fortune. She quickly took the town by storm and was cast as a genuine Vegas Showgirl. During her twenty year career she danced in numerous shows and even headlined the now infamous burlesque show Wild Chicken.

Now retired, Henrietta lives a quiet life, far from the Vegas footlights, in a swanky trailer park near Fort Lauderdale.



Professional Resources

- *The American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE)* provides leadership for the field of adult and continuing education by expanding opportunities for adult growth and development. They publish journals and sponsor an annual conference. For additional information visit <http://www.aaace.org>.
- *American Evaluation Association (AEA)*. AEA is an international professional association of evaluators devoted to the application and exploration of program evaluation, personnel evaluation, technology, and many forms of evaluation. For more information, visit <http://www.eval.org/eval2009/>.
- *American Society for Training and Development (ASTD)*. A premier professional association and resource on workplace learning and performance issues. The ASTD International Conference and Expo will be held May 16-19, 2010 in Chicago, Illinois. For more information, visit www.astd.org.
- *Annual Impact Conference*. Hosted by the Lake Buena Vista Chapter (Orlando, Florida) of the International Association of Administrative Professionals, this educational, fun-filled day is designed for all professionals. It will be held at SeaWorld on March 17, 2010. For more information, visit www.lbviaap.org.
- *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)*. ASCD is a community of educators, advocating sound policies and sharing best practices to achieve the success of each learner. The Annual Conference and Expo will be in San Antonio, Texas from March 6-8, 2010. For more information or to register, visit www.ascd.org.
- *Central Florida ASTD*. Monthly networking meeting and presentation for trainers, presenters and educators. For more information and visit www.astd-cf.org to register.
- *Central Florida International Customer Service Association (ICSA) Chapter*. Monthly meetings for call center professionals at various locations around Central Florida. Visit www.centralfloridaicsa.com for details.
- *Central Florida Human Resources Association*. Meets on alternating Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays each month. For dates and locations, visit www.cfhra.org.
- *CustomerServiceKnowledge.com*. A resource website dedicated to sharing information and ideas to improving the quality of customer service within your organization. Articles and resource concepts written by Robert W. Lucas, author of *Customer Service Skills for Success*. Visit www.customerserviceknowledge.com

- *Free newsletter on Self-Publishing.* If you have written a book or ever thought about doing so and are interested in self-publishing, here is a great free monthly e-newsletter that might prove valuable for you - DanPoynter@ParaPublishing.com.
- *Greater Orlando Organization Development (GOOD) Network* is an organization for Organization Development (OD) professionals who are dedicated to continuous learning and sharing of best practices, tools, and techniques. Meetings are held bi-monthly. For additional information visit www.goodnetwork.us.
- *International Alliance for Learning (IAL) Conference.* The International Alliance for Learning is a non-profit professional membership organization for Accelerated Learning practitioners and others who wish to improve the quality of learning for all. For more information visit <http://www.ialearn.org/conference.php>.
- *National Business Educators Association (NBEA).* The NBEA is an excellent resource for secondary and post-secondary educators, trainers and organizations affiliated with these groups. For more information about the organization and their annual conference, visit www.nbea.org.
- *International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI).* The 2010 ISPI Conference will be held at San Francisco Marriott Hotel, San Francisco, California from April 19-22, 2010. For more information, visit <http://www.ispi.org>.
- *National Speakers Association/Central Florida.* Typically meets the third Saturday of each month. Call (407)622-5305 for information and registration or visit www.nsacentralflorida.com.
- *The Training Registry.* A comprehensive online training and consulting resource directory of trainers, consultants, products and services. Covers several hundred technical and non-technical topics. You will also find speakers, coaches, facilitators, books, learning products, training facilities by location, and more. For more information <http://www.trainingregistry.com>.

Answer(s) to Reader's Challenge:

Unscramble the following names of animals. When you complete them, the letters underlined in blue will spell out the name of the loudest insect known to man.

Male Cicado

1. camel
2. chinchilla
3. turtle
4. turkey
5. rhinoceros
6. rabbit
7. peacock
8. kangaroo
9. squid
10. buffalo

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