

Welcome to T.I.M.E.
Tips for Innovative Meetings/Events
Issue 10
TOPIC: What's your style?
April 2001

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Welcome to T.I.M.E., Tips for Innovative Meetings/Events. If you are a new subscriber to T.I.M.E., welcome! We hope you enjoy this monthly e-newsletter that we fill with ideas for experiential, innovative meetings, training events and conferences.

An index of our past issues is included in the last section.

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For your ease, sections are numbered and separated with “###’s”; Scroll down or use Ctrl +f to locate a specific section.

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From the Mouths of Babes....

This issue of T.I.M.E. addresses learning styles – how people learn and in turn process information and communicate.

Why are learning styles important to YOU?

Understanding how people learn will help you

- Be a Better Communicator
- Be a Better Manager
- Be a Better Team Member
- Plan Better Meetings
- Be a Better Presenter

- Be a Better Sales Person

And finally, understand yourself better!

As babies, our preferred mode of learning is gustatory and tactile evident in the fact that everything to be explored goes into a baby's mouth. As we grow older, our learning style moves more into three styles of learning:

- Visual
- Auditory
- Kinesthetic

People have a blend of learning styles but typically one style is predominant.

If Visual...

Predominant sense is sight/vision.

If Auditory...

Predominant sense hearing

If Kinesthetic...

Predominant sense is touch

Proportions of preferred learning styles:

- Visual 60%
- Auditory 30%
- Kinesthetic 10%

(To some extent these statistics should not be a surprise as the predominant way our society “teaches” is visual. This accounts for why many very intelligent people struggle through traditional school.)

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Pathway to Successful Communication

The pathway to successful communication ... in Meetings, One-on-One, during Sales Presentations depends upon your ability to establish a two-way path between yourself and the audience.

People enter a communication through a certain sensory pathway – either visual, auditory or tactile. You have your own preferred style. But your receiver, the person or persons

receiving the communication, in turn, has their own style. Based upon their own personality, they filter the messages in such a way that is most efficient for them.

You can improve your communication if you respond to a person in a way that is in “sync” with the way they view the world.

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The Clues

How can you tell what is the learning and preferred communication style of a person?

Watch for:

- Behavioral clues
- Language clues
- Body language

Behavioral indicators

Visual

- Organized
- Neat and orderly
- Observant
- Quiet
- Appearance oriented
- Deliberate
- Good speller
- Memorizes by picture
- Less distracted by noise
- Has trouble remembering verbal instructions
- Would rather read than be read to

Auditory

- Talks to self
- Easily distracted
- Moves lips / says words
- Can repeat back
- Math and writing difficult
- Spoken language easy
- Speaks in rhythmic pattern
- Likes music
- Can mimic tone, pitch and timbre
- Learns by listening
- Memorizes by steps, procedure, sequence

Kinesthetic

- Responds to physical rewards
- Touches people and stands close
- Physically oriented
- Moves a lot
- Large physical reaction
- Early large muscle development
- Learns by doing
- Memorizes by walking, seeing
- Points when reading
- Gestures a lot
- Responds physically

Listen to their language

Visual Learners will Say:

- Are you clear about it?
- I see what you mean.
- I get the picture.
- I am picturing...
- The way I see it...

Auditory Learners will Say:

- I hear you.
- What I heard you saying...
- It sounds to me like ...

Kinesthetic Learners will Say:

- I can get in touch with that.
- Can you grasp the concept?
- I found that...
- This feels like...

Body Language

Visual Learners adopt an open body position with head up and shoulders back

Auditory Learners may even turn their ear toward you when you are speaking. They tend to sit with their shoulders forward.

Kinesthetic Learners are often fidgeters. They often adopt a posture of rounded shoulders and arms crossed in front with their hands folded.

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Ideas for Your Next Meeting, Training Event, Conference or Communiqué

Understanding these different styles will allow you to be a better communicator. This will translate into more effective relationships

At Work

- With your fellow coworkers
- With your manager
- With your subordinates
- With customers or suppliers

In Your Personal Life

- With friends
- With your kids (if applicable)
- With a spouse, partner or significant other

By thinking through how a person learns and processes information, you will be able to better communicate with that person. You will appear to put yourself in the other person's shoes – think about how more easily you will be able to establish rapport and make the other person feel that you are effectively communicating with them

When challenged with a variety of different learning styles – when speaking in front of a group, when making a sales presentation to a group, when planning a meeting or event, use the following suggestions to improve your effectiveness:

- Use a variety of styles to reach everyone in the audience
- Read the audience by studying their body language
- Respond more effectively to questions by answering the question using the same language as the question was posed
- Diagrams, charts, pictures, films, and written directions benefit Visual Learners in an audience. Written notes also benefit Visual and Kinesthetic learners (the latter because the very movement of writing the words helps them learn).
- Regulating voice tone, inflection, and body language will help the Auditory Learners in the audience maintain interest and attention.
- Kinesthetic learners are most successful when totally engaged in the presentation or meeting. They acquire information fastest when participating; they like toys, things to manipulative, other "props," and a more hands-on approach.

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Freebies: Take the Learning Style Quiz

Not sure what your learning style is? Use these two websites for a quick and easy analysis of your personal style.

<http://vak.free.fr/us/usa20110.htm> -- 10 questions

<http://www.fln.vcu.edu/Intensive/AVstyle.html>-- select from a list of personality traits

If you are speaking in front of an audience – whether a prepared presentation at a meeting, a sales presentation or simply trying to be persuasive – as the main speaker you have many things to concentrate on. The points in your presentation, how people are reacting to what you are saying, questions, objections....How can you find the time to also observe learning styles?

Here is a suggestion that allows you to involve more people in the presentation and allow you to focus on the audience.

Ask people to play different roles during a meeting. These roles enable all members to take an active part in the group process.

Facilitator/Main Speaker:

Leads the meetings and makes sure that all relevant topics are covered.

Time Keeper:

This person makes sure that the team sticks to at time limit.

To do this, the group should allocate each agenda item a specific amount of coverage time.

Record Keeper:

This person takes the meeting notes.

Gate Keeper:

This person makes sure that everyone has had a chance to contribute and be involved.

Devil's Advocate:

This person in this role finds weaknesses in the group's ideas and questions them.

The facilitator/main speaker will benefit by focusing on his or her communication with the audience. As appropriate, the other roles serves the purpose of preventing a "groupthink" mentality where everyone agrees with an idea, it improves the dynamics of meeting so that all are encourage to participate and it offers up other points of view.

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Getting In Sync with Learning Styles

Every One of Us is Both A Student and A Teacher. We Are At Our Best When We Each Teach Ourselves What We Need To Learn

Nobody can teach you anything. You learn on your own, in your own particular, individual way.

Let us help you get in sync with your audience. In this Age of Information where our lives depend more and more on being adept learners, our goals must include becoming effective lifelong learners. Let us help insure your meetings promote effective communication and lifelong learning.

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Future T.I.M.E.

Please forward this newsletter to your associates and colleagues! Your recommendations are key to our success. Or anyone can subscribe by sending an email to Stinnish@ameritech.net

Past issues of T.I.M.E. can be requested by emailing us. Here is an index of topics and “freebies” offered in the past:

May: Teambuilding and (freebie) New York Times reprint and summary on why teambuilding programs miss the mark.

June: Green Meetings and (freebie) list of books that have 20-30 minute exercises for meetings and events.

July: American (Values) and (freebie) Meeting Analysis, a 1-page document that will outline the scope and needs analysis for your next meeting.

August: Minimum/Minimal Meetings and (freebie) Web Winners (web resources to make you and your meetings more productive).

October: Evaluations and (freebie) sample evaluation questions.

November: Politics and (freebie) on-line experiences.

December: Toys and (freebie) brainstorming ideas.

January: Sales, Award Presentations and (freebie) sales tips.

February: Change, Change Management and Communicating change and (freebie) Change Bombs (reasons change management fails),

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