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[SELF-ASSESSMENT](#)> [INTELLIGENCES](#)> [LEARNING HOW TO LEARN](#)



**LEARNING HOW
TO LEARN**

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Caption

If we consider what contributes to functional intelligence—intelligence in action—then learning how to learn looks to be very fundamental. Especially because it contradicts a tendency to suppose that some people are intrinsically more intelligent than others, when often this is more a matter of some people being more capable of learning than others.

Learning how to learn is a matter of *how* rather than *what*. How we deliver intelligence, rather than what we know, or remember. It is just as likely to be found among central heating service engineers, or car mechanics, as among professors, teachers or lawyers. And in a world where, whether or not we favour it, an ultra-rapid rate of technological change affects us and how we earn a living and build relationships, learning how to learn appears to be one of the core aspects of mind that shapes intelligence.

[more](#)

An important consideration in learning how to learn is an appreciation of your learning style, several schemes have been proposed:

One points to four sets of contrasting styles

- Active and Reflective
- Sensing and Intuitive
- Visual and Verbal
- Sequential and Global

Another emphasizes

- Visual learning
- Auditory learning
- Tactile kinesthetic learning

Your **creative style** also influences your capacity to learn.

How do you know if you have learned how to learn?
Read through the statements below. Do you have a clear preference for one set over the other? If so, select one of the two buttons below for feedback.
Otherwise choose 'don't know'.

Faced with a new task I tend to check out whether I'm the right person to be learning it.

When learning something I have my own style that I need to follow.

To learn something new I need to have control over the time and place where I do the learning.

I have several tried-and-tested ways of approaching new and unfamiliar tasks, or decisions.

When learning something new I know I have to be careful in managing my time.

While familiarization and introduction by others will be important, I know I eventually need to be 'hands-on' to make a success of new tasks or skills.

When learning something new, from time to time I test, try out and review what I'm doing.

When learning something new I am willing to take risks and tolerate feeling anxious.

yes, this is my style

don't know

The prospect of learning something new frequently fills me with horror.

Faced with the unfamiliar, I tend to panic, or become anxious.

When I need to make a problematic decision I tend to rely on expert advice.

I've already learned enough to get along in the life I lead, and anyway I can always hire someone to handle new challenges for me.

I often start something new but rarely finish it.

When learning something new I find it hard not to get distracted and lose track of what I was doing.

I rely on other people to organise learning something new

When learning something new I tend to get discouraged if it does not work out well right away.

yes, this is my style

FEEDBACK

You identified strongly with a set of statements which suggests that, while you may not think of it consciously, learning how to learn is familiar and a core aspect of your intelligence.

It probably means that, faced with learning a new computer program, or a new system in the office, or moving to a new neighbourhood, you have to hand a set of strategies that enable you to begin to learn what you need to learn.

You also probably know about making lists of tasks, setting priorities, managing your time, asking for help, assembling the resources you need, coming up with creative solutions to difficulties, and not least deciding whether you are the right person to be doing what is asked of you.

ACTION PLAN

If you already know how to learn then what remains is likely to be deepening and/or extending this aspect of your intelligence.

Deepening might include being more conscious of learning how to learn as a process, tuning up your own personal version of this aspect of intelligence.

See if your ability to learn how to learn can be extended to areas of your life that it doesn't at present reach. From home to work, or work to home. Check out whether you get sufficient economic benefit from this ability—which is often very attractive to employers.

[more](#)

FEEDBACK

You identified strongly with a set of statements which suggests that learning how to learn is unfamiliar and not apparently a core aspect of your intelligence.

It probably means that, faced with learning a new computer program or a new system in the office, or moving to a new neighbourhood, you don't have to hand a set of strategies that enable you to begin to learn what you need to learn.

You also probably aren't very familiar with making lists of tasks, setting priorities, managing your time, asking for help, assembling the resources you need, or coming up with creative solutions to difficulties, and it may not occur to you to consider whether you are the right person to be doing what is asked of you.

See also ▾

ACTION PLAN

If learning how to learn is either news to you, or is not securely built in to your approach to being intelligent, you might benefit from taking steps to learn how to learn.

Sign up for a studies skills course; check out the numerous learning how to learn resources on the Internet; the See also menu (opposite) has some relevant links.

Learning how to learn is an aspect of intelligence that is very susceptible to development, so if it is under-done in your life, it may represent a major opportunity for transformation.

more

FEEDBACK

If neither of these sets of statements matches your experience, perhaps this is because, for some us, learning how to learn is patchy, it is only established locally, perhaps at work or in relationships, but in other parts of life we flounder and need more expert help than we'd prefer.

Or that, because learning how to learn is about *how* we do what we do, about *process* rather than content, and you are unused to this perspective on yourself, you don't realize where your learning skills reside. That's OK but as I argue throughout this Assessment section of *The Mind Gymnasium*, knowing what your abilities are, and where you keep them, can be considerable asset.

And anyway, that you are here reading this, navigating these pages means that you do know how to learn but you may not *know that you know*; in a tight corner, faced with a difficult decision—Am I the right person? Is this something I want to do? Why me?—a confident, skilled knowing application of learning how to learn may be vital.

ACTION PLAN

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See also ▾

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