Workstyles & Learning Preferences Self Assessment Worksheet

Assess your learning & workstyle preferences

Workstyles: How do you feel organized, think & communicate?					
Feel Organized					
Early Starter: Starting early gives me the time to do it right				**Pressure Prompted:** Thoughts crystallize as I get closer to the due date	
Strong Preference	**Preference**	**Neutral/No Preference**		**Preference**	**Strong Preference**
Structured: Let's look at the calendar now and pick dates to meet. At our first meeting we can assign roles, determine tasks and how we'll track everything.				**Free Form:** Let's agree to meet. Next weekish? We don't need to figure out everything now.	
Strong Preference	**Preference**	**Neutral/No Preference**		**Preference**	**Strong Preference**
Think & Communicate					
Internal Processor: Let me think about that and organize my thoughts.				**External Processor:** My ideas & decisions will emerge & reveal themselves as I speak.	
Strong Preference	**Preference**	**Neutral/No Preference**		**Preference**	**Strong Preference**
Systematic:				**Organic/Richly Associative:**	

Let me walk you through each step so you have a thorough understanding of what happened.			It's all connected and it all comes together at the end	
Strong Preference	**Preference**	**Neutral/No Preference**	**Preference**	**Strong Preference**
Concrete: You prefer to think & communicate about the physical and specifics around you. Facts!			**Abstract:** You prefer to think & communicate using analogies & comparisons.	
Strong Preference	**Preference**	**Neutral/No Preference**	**Preference**	**Strong Preference**

Learning Styles: How do you best learn new information & skills?

Say you need to learn how to change a tire. How would you like to learn this skill?

	Strongly prefer NOT to learn this way	Prefer NOT to learn this way	Neutral	Prefer to learn this way	Strongly prefer to learn this way
Visual: Let me watch you do it					
Aural: Talk me through it					
Reading/Writing: Is there a manual?					
Kinesthetic: Step aside and let me play around with it to try to figure it out.					

What is your most preferred way to learn? It's likely that this will also be your preferred way to teach/train a new employee.

When bringing on a new employee, determining their learning preference (especially which is their least preferred way to learn), can ensure that you provide resources that will most effectively promote their learning and productivity.

A big part of success in supervising others is being aware of your own preferences and your concerns about working with other preferences. This will help you create a plan to counter your own biases against certain preferences, and put in place check-and-balances.

After completing the above self assessment:
- **What are your preferences? Do you have any strong preferences?**
- **What value would someone from an opposite preference bring to your work, to your team, to your success?**
- **In the past, how have your preferences made it difficult to work with other preferences, especially student employees? Are there any preferences that you tend to avoid because you don't know how to effectively work with them?**
- **What strategies have been effective for you when working with other preferences?**
  - **To build trust and cultivate respectful relationships, you begin with transparent, authentic, and civil negotiated agreement.**
  - **Examples:**
    - If you're an early starter, but your employee is pressure prompted you could:
      - Inquire about and acknowledge their concerns
      - Assign them earlier tasks
      - Signal when you plan to work on your tasks and let them organize their schedule around it
      - Appreciate them for their "early work" if they are working out of preference
    - If you're pressure prompted, but your employee is an early starter you could:
      - Ask them when they plan to take up tasks in earnest
      - Clarify what specific tasks they will need to work on
      - Mutually agree to earlier deadlines
      - Appreciate the results, not the timeline

- **What processes could you put in place to counter your biases against these preferences in your role as a supervisor (at the hiring level, at the evaluation level, at the recommendation level,...)?**

How assessing & accommodating for different workstyles & learning preferences increases inclusivity:

1. ***Valued:*** Recognizing and appreciating that each person brings values, perspective, knowledge and skills that improves the community and all your endeavors
2. ***Authenticity***: Finding ways to signal to others that their presence and contribution will be welcomed, recognized and rewarded.
3. ***Transparency***: Having self awareness about your own preferences, being upfront about your own preferences, and being willing to negotiate with your approach when you work with others.
4. ***Accountable***: Recognizing that you must be proactive in considering others' optimal workstyles and taking responsibility when you are asking people to operate out of their workstyle or are intentionally or unintentionally favoring or hindering other's work style preferences.
5. ***Psychological Safety*** and ***Trust***: Being intentionally mindful of when you might be pathologizing or making a false correlation between someone's workstyle preference and their productivity (performance or conduct) and/or their potential for success.