

My Cognitive Styles

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EXAMPLE

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1. WHAT ARE COGNITIVE STYLES (thinking styles)?

A thinkingstyle reflects a person's preference in dealing with information, including observation and processing. We all have, in greater or lesser degree, consistent patterns in the way we take in and process information. Thinkingstyles are extensively studied by scholars. Research has shown that thinkingstyles have an important influence on the way we observe, make decisions, communicate and solve problems.

A strong thinkingstyle does not necessarily mean that you are better or smarter in this thinkingstyle than others. Thinkingstyle and intellectual capacity are different from each other in several aspects. However, a strong thinkingstyle does mean that this style of thinking is easily accessible to you. A thinking style that is so strong that it differentiates you from the 'average' person, is what we call a 'mental disposition'.

We are all capable of using different thinking styles. But using a thinking style which is not our mental disposition will cost us more energy and effort.

1.1 What kind of thinking styles can a person have?

We apply two basic dimensions of dealing with information.

Two bipolar, cognitive dimensions:

- 1) **Concrete versus abstract**
Describes what type of information we prefer to take in (input).
- 2) **Structured versus organic**
Describes how we prefer to process this information (processing).

In this report, we use a model with two cognitive dimensions. These allow us to define 8 thinking styles: 4 singular thinking styles and 4 combined thinking styles.

Four singular thinking styles:

A singular thinking style describes how a person deals with information in one cognitive dimension, that is, what type of information someone is perceiving (observation) or how someone is processing this information.

The observation dimension: what type of information do we take in ?***a) The concrete thinking style:***

A concrete thinker prefers to use sensory specific information, i.e. information that he can observe with his senses (see, hear, taste, sense, smell). For a concrete thinker, data is only information when he can perceive it with his senses; all the rest is just fantasy to him.

b) The conceptual thinking style:

A conceptual thinker will mainly focus on the meaning he perceives. He constructs mental links between his observations, and hence creates abstract concepts out of them. These abstract concepts are for the conceptual thinker as real as the sensory specific information is for the concrete thinker.

The processing dimension: how do we process the information?***c) The structured thinking style:***

A structured thinker has a preference for convergent thinking. He/she delimits the information and creates order within it. When he processes a lot of information, he will use a logic that brings structure to the mass of information.

d) The organic thinking style:

An organic thinker has a preference for divergent thinking. When he/she processes information, he uses a growth logic. He welcomes additional information, and creates endless new options and thinking paths with it.

Four combined thinking styles:

A combined thinking style describes how one deals with information in the two cognitive dimensions, that is, how one takes in information (observation) and how one processes this information.

Each of the combined thinking styles is a specific combination of a certain preference in perceiving information and a certain preference in processing this information.

a) The methodical thinking style (organize)

Concrete observation and structured processing

A methodical thinker prefers to deal in an organized and structured way with practical and concrete information. Words that describe the 'methodical thinking style' include organized, orderly, accurate and punctual.

b) The flexible thinking style (improvise)

Concrete observation and organic processing

A flexible thinker prefers to deal in a flexible way with practical and concrete information. Words and phrases that describe the 'flexible thinking style' include improvisational, creative, and easily adaptable.

c) The strategic thinking style (plan)

Abstract observation and structured processing

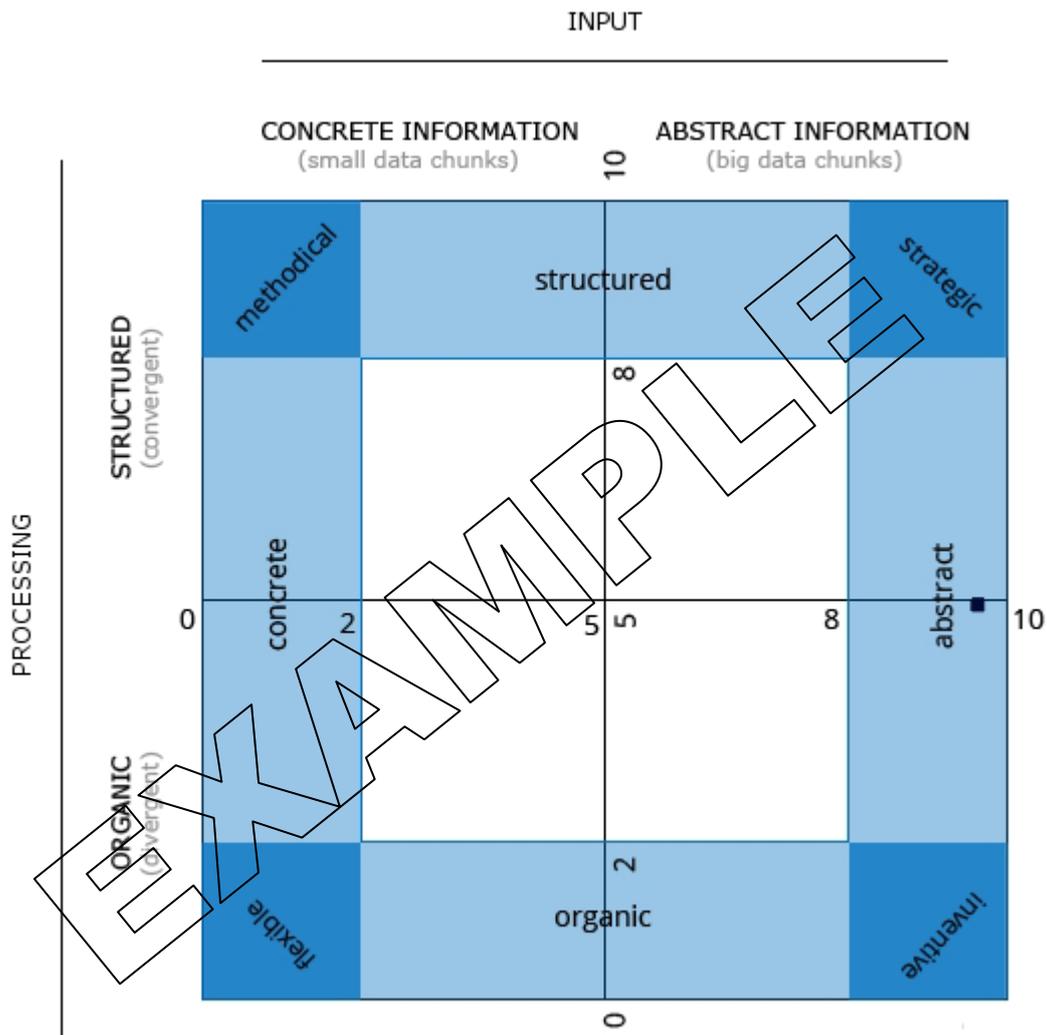
A strategic thinker prefers to deal in a structured and planned way with complex and abstract information. Words that describe the 'strategic thinking style' include planning, analysis, fathom complex information.

d) The inventive thinking style (think up)

Abstract observation and organic processing

The inventive thinker prefers to generate ideas in a spontaneous and organic way. Words that describe the 'inventive thinking style' include imagination, inspirational and brainstorming.

2. YOUR COGNITIVE STYLES (thinking styles)



My cognitive styles score: (9,6 ; 4,9)

The smaller blocs represent your team members (only in case of a team report).

Your score reflects your position compared to all professionals in the database. When your score falls in a light-blue area, you have a mental predisposition for a singular thinking style. When your score falls in a dark-blue area, you have a mental predisposition for a combined thinking style.

A predisposition means that your score discerns you from the 'average' professional, i.e. 80% or more of the professionals have a weaker score than you in this thinking style.

3. YOUR TALENTS

A talent is a gift that discerns you from others.

There are three types of talents:

- 1) Your emotional talents or your passions.
Passions are your strongest drives. They are your energy sources.
- 2) Your rational talents or your mental predispositions.
Your strongest thinking styles are your mental predispositions.
- 3) Your physical talents or your physical predispositions.
Your specific body characteristics that make it easy to do certain things are your physical predispositions.

Combinations of the above talents determine your potential.

This potential can be seen as a rich soil.

Only by investing in your potential (plowing and sowing) will you harvest abundantly.

WORKing talents :

A WORKing talent arises when passion and predisposition work together and reinforce one another.

A WORKing TALENT = PASSION + PREDISPOSITION

When using your WORKing talents:

- You feel that you really enjoy performing a particular activity.
- Your brain very quickly adopts the most suited thinking style.

Some examples:

- A passion for 'care' and a thinking style 'methodical'
Talent: to take care of others in an organized way
- A passion for 'attention' and a thinking style 'flexible'
Talent: to improvise in front of an audience
- A passion for 'dominance' and a thinking style 'strategic'
Talent: strategic leadership

With this MCS-test, you discovered your thinking styles and mental predispositions. With the NWS-test (www.nws-test.com), you can discover your passions. Combining both results allows you to discover your WORKing talents. You will find more information about this unique concept in the book "Discover your WORKing talents" by Peter Monsieurs.