IO2 - UNIT 3 – Critical Thinking
Subunit 3.1.2 – Thinking Styles

Introduction

In this subunit we will distinguish some of the most frequent **Thinking Styles** and give you tips on **how to deal with people with different ways of thinking**.

What do you think are Thinking Styles?

Thinking Styles

We employ different ways of thinking — some of us take a creative approach, while others are more analytic; some are focused on the short-term, while others think about the long-term. The approach we will present you was created by Robert Bramson and sums up **five thinking styles:**

Synthesist **Idealist** **Pragmatist** **Analyst** **Realist**

Synthesist

The creative thinkers

They stand out with their **creativity** and **curiosity.** Instead of leading with logic, they love to explore more **abstract ideas**. They ask "what if?" and consider a **range of views** and possibilities.

They're quick to bring attention to opposing views, acknowledging others' ideas before presenting alternatives.

Synthesist

Synthesist

"Listen appreciatively to their speculation and don't confuse their arguing nature with resistance."
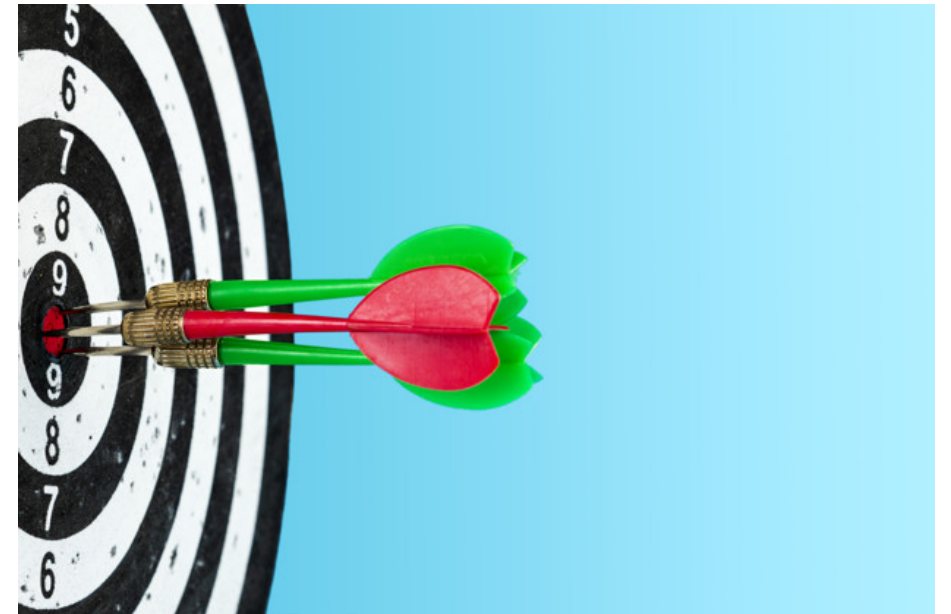
Idealist

The goal-setters

They always work toward **big goals** — they set **high standards** and expect others to do the same and **work hard**.

They are **future-oriented** and **value teamwork**. It is important for idealists to realise that others have their own standards and expectations, that might not match up with the idealist's goals.

Idealist

How to connect with them?

Idealist

"**Associate what you want to do with these goals of quality, service, and community good.**"

Pragmatist

The logical thinkers

They **tackle problems logically**, step by step. They **focus on immediate action and results**, rather than considering what's best in the long-term

They aren't interested in understanding the big picture like idealists are. While pragmatists focus on getting things done, they can benefit from taking a step back and reflecting on big ideas.

Pragmatist

Pragmatist

"Emphasize short-term objectives on which you can get started with resources at hand."

Analyst

The rational intellectuals

They are interested in gathering all of the **facts and data**, measuring them along the way. They have **clear procedures** for doing all things and are always looking for a formula for solving problems.

They are **thorough and accurate**, working methodically. They tend to discount other ideas, but should open their minds.

Analist

How to connect with them?

Analyst

"Provide a logical plan replete with back-up data and specifications."

Realist

The perfect problem-solvers

They do whatever it takes to solve the problems and are **quick** on their feet. **They don't feel challenged** by everyday problems, boring easily. Yet, they want to be challenged.

Realists can benefit from looking at a problem from different angles and taking more time to gather more information and find the best solution.

Realist

How to connect with them?

Realist

"Focus on the challenge and your solution."

Watch and discuss!

Watch the video "**Introducing the Whole Brain Thinking Model**".

- **Why is it important to understand other people's thinking preferences at work?**

- What do you understand by Whole Brain Thinking Model?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iorLxwD6T5E

Why are Thinking Styles important at work?

If you communicate with a person at work that has a different thinking style than you do, but using your kind of thinking, you will probably do not get their attention!

Why are Thinking Styles important at work?

For example, imagine that you have a Realist boss that tells you to prepare a short report describing briefly an issue and how you propose to fix it. You become an expert in their eyes if you assemble facts in which they are interested, and if you propose actions that they believe are the best things to do.

Having a synthesist approach here wouldn't help!

Write!

Take time to **place your boss or a colleague with whom you interact more often within one or two of the five thinking-style categories**. Once you've identified the categories, **figure out how can you change your approach to better suit their style**.

Keep in mind!

- One or two styles predominate for most people, **but many use all five styles equally**. Those who do it, are usually more approachable.

- A little insight can go a long way when it comes to connecting with people. If you can **bridge the gap between their thinking style and yours**, you'll have more rapport and get better results!

Final tips on Thinking Styles

✓ **Seek first to understand, then to be understood**. The more you understand somebody, the better you can adapt your style. In addition to the thinking style, try to also understand somebody's learning style, their motivation, their values, whether they are more "task-centered" or "people-centered", etc.

✓ **Establish rapport**. Rapport is the key to communication, influence, and trust.

Final tips on Thinking Styles

✓ **Know the anti-patterns**. It is so important to know how to avoid rubbing somebody the wrong way, as getting the ideal communication style exactly right.

✓ **Wear different "hats"**. Wear your "hat" based on who you are working with. Each hat you put on or take off can represent a different thinking style.

Thinking Styles Self-assessment
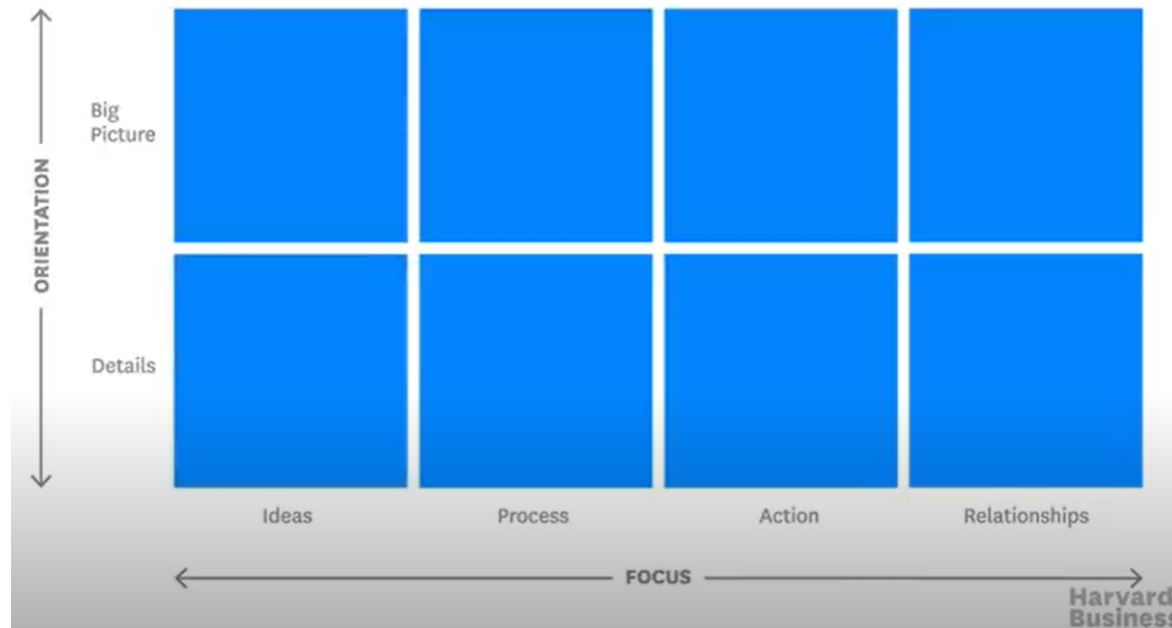
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdaWFQyM_c0

It is time to identify your Thinking Style(s)!

Watch the video **"Identify your Thinking Style"** and map your Thinking Style according to your focus and orientation at work!

References

Websites

- https://thriveworks.com/blog/what-are-the-five-thinking-styles/ What are the five thinking styles?

Videos

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iorLxwD6T5E Introducing the Whole Brain Thinking Model (3.5 mnts.)

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdaWFQyM_c0 Identify your Thinking Style (1.5 mnt.)

Further reading

Websites

- http://sourcesofinsight.com/five-thinking-styles/ 5 Thinking Styles

Videos

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wwLyyILMN8 Introduction to Thinking Style Preferences (13 mnts.)

"We cannot solve problems with the same thinking we used when we created them"

Einstein

Project partners

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