What’s Your Preference?
Discovering Your Learning Style
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N OUR PROFESSION, there’s never a shortage of things to learn. The nice thing about being an adult is that you often can choose how you learn. Most people have a primary or preferred learning style — it’s the way they feel most comfortable taking in and understanding information. The trick is to figure out which way you like to learn.

Here’s a quick quiz that can help you zero in on your learning style. Choose the option that best describes you:

1. When I have to learn a new procedure, I like:
   a. another person to explain the protocol to me.
   b. to do practice exercises.
   c. to watch a how-to video.

2. I am most involved with applications training when:
   a. the trainer talks about how the machine operates.
   b. I can be at a console working the controls.
   c. I watch the trainer demonstrate how to use the equipment.

3. During a department in-service lecture, I am happiest:
   a. discussing important information in a small group.
   b. participating in a hands-on practice session.
   c. following the speaker’s handouts and highlighting key concepts.

4. When I have a technical or positioning challenge, I:
   a. talk to a coworker about different options.
   b. keep trying various alternatives on a phantom until one works.
   c. go online and read in professional journals about possible solutions.

5. When I prepare my department’s monthly work schedule, I get distracted by:
   a. sounds or noises in the hallway.
   b. people walking by my office door.
   c. an untidy desk.

If you selected option A three or more times, you prefer learning through listening; you are an auditory learner.

If you picked option B three or more times, you would rather learn by touching, moving or doing. In other words, you are a kinesthetic or a tactile learner.

If you chose option C three or more times, you tend to be a visual learner. You like to take in information by sight.

It’s important to know that people don’t always fall into one category or another. And people with more than one strong learning preference can be described as “multimodal.” Nevertheless, you usually will feel more in sync with one particular way of learning.

In radiography school, I was completely bored in lab practice. But I took amazing notes — very thorough and (most of the time) neat — with key points underlined. Only when I was close to taking the Registry exam was I interested in studying with friends. As a young student, I was a visual learner with a hint of auditory mixed in. Kinesthetic learning was not my strong suit.

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