Unit 520 workbook:
Personal and Professional Development

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Personal and Professional Development

Introduction

This unit will provide the knowledge to enable learners to develop a personal development plan based on their preferred learning and behavioural styles and reflect on the impact of their performance on others. They'll be able to act as a role model of their organisation's values.

This workbook has been written to support the knowledge elements of Unit 520: Personal and Professional Development of the ILM Level 5 Diploma for Operational Leaders and Managers. These workbooks as a whole also support the Level 5 apprenticeship standard.

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Section 1: Understand personal learning, behaviour and working styles

Introduction

In this section, we are going to examine the following:

- **theories and models of learning style** – how we learn and take information in, and its impact on the personal learning journey

- **behaviour styles and theories** – how we behave in the workplace, and its impact

- **working styles** – how our personal style of leading impacts on our teams and working environments – and their impact on teams and organisations

- **applying leadership styles to workplace situations**

- **role modelling** – and the behaviours that support this

Learning styles and learning style theories

As part of self-awareness, it helps to understand our different learning styles. We all have our own preferences, and it is useful to understand which learning styles apply to us so that we use them during our personal development planning.

There is high value in frequently checking:

- **where we are** – examining the current role in detail and identifying any skills gaps

- **where we need to be** – working out where we need or want to be, deciding and defining ambitions in a clear way

- **how we plan to get there** – identifying the learning and development activities and resources that we need to achieve our goals

We will look at:

- a range of learning styles

- addressing learning styles in training and development

- identifying learning styles

A range of learning styles

People often have preferred styles when developing skills, experience and knowledge – e.g. some people like to learn by reading, some need to see a demonstration and others may need to try the activity themselves.

There are many theories about learning styles. The following is an overview of six of the most commonly used theories:

Visual, Auditory, Read/write and Kinaesthetic (VARK)

According to this theory, although people can learn in different ways, they tend to have a dominant or preferred learning style. These four styles are:

- **Visual** – seeing and reading – e.g. seeing pictures of how to make the product, and reading the accompanying instructions
- **Auditory** – listening and speaking – e.g. being told how to make the product
- **Read/write** – reading and writing – e.g. reading a book or using written instructions
- **Kinaesthetic** – touching and doing – e.g. touching the components and actually making the product under supervision

A combination of all four styles needs to be delivered when training so that everyone's learning style needs are met.

A visual learner will take in information by looking at pictures, graphs, diagrams and videos. Just being told what to do will not register.

An auditory learner will absorb the information by listening to their tutor or colleague, asking questions, then listening carefully to the answers.

A read/write learner learns through reading texts and written instructions. They will benefit from writing up their ideas and making their own notes.

A kinaesthetic learner needs to touch and do the activity. They may absorb a reasonable amount of information from listening to the tutor or watching a demonstration, but they will not truly understand the subject or activity until they do it for themselves.

Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory

Gardner's book *Frames Of Mind* (1993) established his multiple intelligences theory, for which he offered eight different intelligences. His model not only highlights different types of intelligence, it also raises the question of how we use them. This in turn affects and influences how we learn.

Gardner's eight intelligences are:

- **Linguistic** – ability to effectively use both spoken and written language and recall information
- **Logical-mathematical** – ability for logical thinking and working with numbers and mathematical concepts
- **Musical intelligence** – ability to appreciate the patterns and forms in music, sound and rhythm; to be able to perform and compose music
- **Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence** – ability to control our body movement such as motor skills, balance and hand-eye coordination
- **Spatial-visual** – ability to recognise differences in sizes of spaces (spatial awareness) and understanding of visual images
- **Interpersonal** – ability to understand other people and their motivations and feelings and to develop effective relationships
- **Intrapersonal** – ability to know ourselves and our own motivations and feelings, a link with emotional intelligence
- **Naturalistic** – the ability to identify and distinguish among different types of plants, animals, and weather formations found in the natural world

Gardner is highlighting that intelligence is broader than simply IQ. These intelligences reflect people's strengths and also how they interact with the world.

People with high levels of linguistic intelligence may prefer to write reports and work with texts. Those with higher levels of interpersonal intelligence may prefer to work in sales, or as coaches.

Further information is available from:

http://www.businessballs.com/howardgardnermultipleintelligences.htm

https://mypersonality.info

Felder–Silverman Learning Style Model

In this model there are four dimensions of learning styles. Each dimension has two opposite poles, or two different ways of learning, on each end of a continuum.

The four dimensions are as follows:

- **Sensing–Intuitive** – individuals with a preference for sensing take information in through the five senses looking for facts. A person with an intuitive preference prefers to be innovative or imaginative and work through new ideas.

- **Visual–Verbal** – it has been said 'that a picture is worth a thousand words' and whilst this may be true for broad understanding, words and text are still very much the most common way information is presented. Verbal learners love speaking and listening and hearing and reading words. Even though the opposite of a visual learner, the verbal learner may be able to learn to use diagrams and graphs to aid their learning.

- **Active–Reflective** – the active person, in order to process learned information, wants to get on and try it. The reflective person wants to observe and process what they have observed before taking action.

- **Sequential–Global** – when organising information a person with a sequential preference has a high capacity for logic and doing things in a specific order. The global learner, as the name suggests, takes a broader and wider view.

The implications of these dimensions are not that any preference is good or bad – all eight of the learning styles are valuable. Knowing how we prefer to learn means we can take advantage of our preferred style. However, if we also discover how we least like to learn we raise awareness of the potential limitations to our learning.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

David Kolb developed this theory in 1979. It looks at four activities that identify the way people learn:

- **Experiencing** – learning and what was felt during the period of learning – e.g. having a first driving lesson and assessing it afterwards

- **Reflecting** – thinking about how useful the session was – e.g. learned to stop and start safely, learned to change gear smoothly

- **Thinking** – looking at ideas and theories that relate to the learning experience – e.g. the functions of the car and the Highway Code

- **Acting** – testing the learning – e.g. practising using the gears smoothly when out with an experienced driver

Part of Kolb's theory was that this process represents a circle or a spiral where people touch all of the bases – i.e. a cycle of experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting.

Gregorc's Mind Styles

Anthony Gregorc, in his Mind Styles model, denotes four quadrants of learning preferences, based around how we perceive information and how we process it, using the continuums of perception (concrete or abstract) and ordering (sequential or random):

- **concrete perceptions** engage all the senses, are linear and organised

- **abstract perceptions** involve your imagination and intuition to make sense of hidden information

- **sequential ordering** uses logic to organise information in a step-by-step fashion

- **random ordering** has no specific order, with the parts coming together in a random manner

These are mapped onto a grid capturing the two continuums, which creates a quadrant of learning preferences.
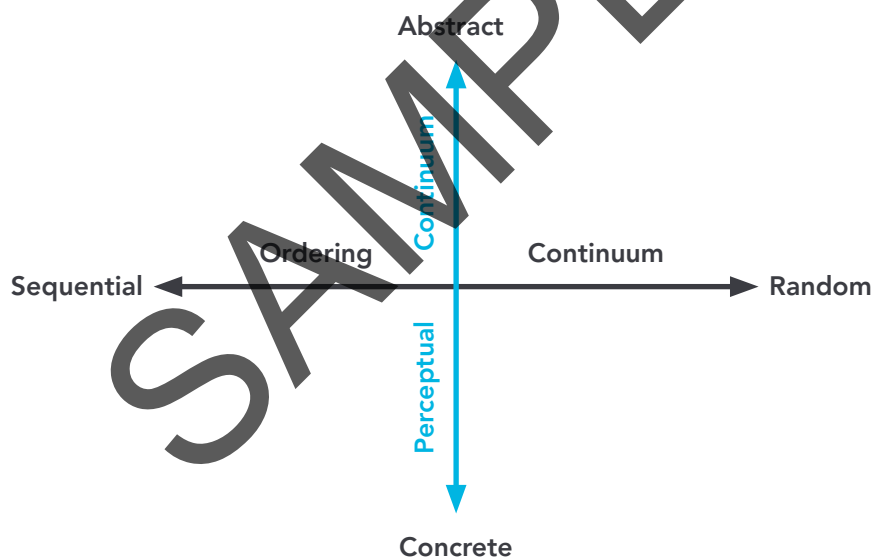
Concrete sequential learners prefer structured, hands-on learning that engages all the senses.

Concrete random learners prefer trial and error when learning, making intuitive jumps to reach conclusions.

Abstract sequential learners learn through a variety of forms, with visual elements important to embed the learning.

Abstract random learners gather information randomly, with a preference for verbal information. They utilise reflection time to embed the learning.

Honey and Mumford's Learning Cycle

Peter Honey and Alan Mumford created Learning Cycle as a variation of Kolb's theory in 1986. It is based on four approaches to learning:

- **activists do something** – these people actively enjoy challenges and learning new things

- **reflectors think about it** – these people like to review learning experiences in a thoughtful manner

- **theorists make sense of it** – these people like to think things through in logical steps

- **pragmatists test it out** – these people like to try new ideas and enjoy solving problems and making decisions once they have reviewed instructions/information, as part of the learning process

These are not seen as fixed personality characteristics. They can be changed at will or through changed circumstances, so each person can go through all four stages:
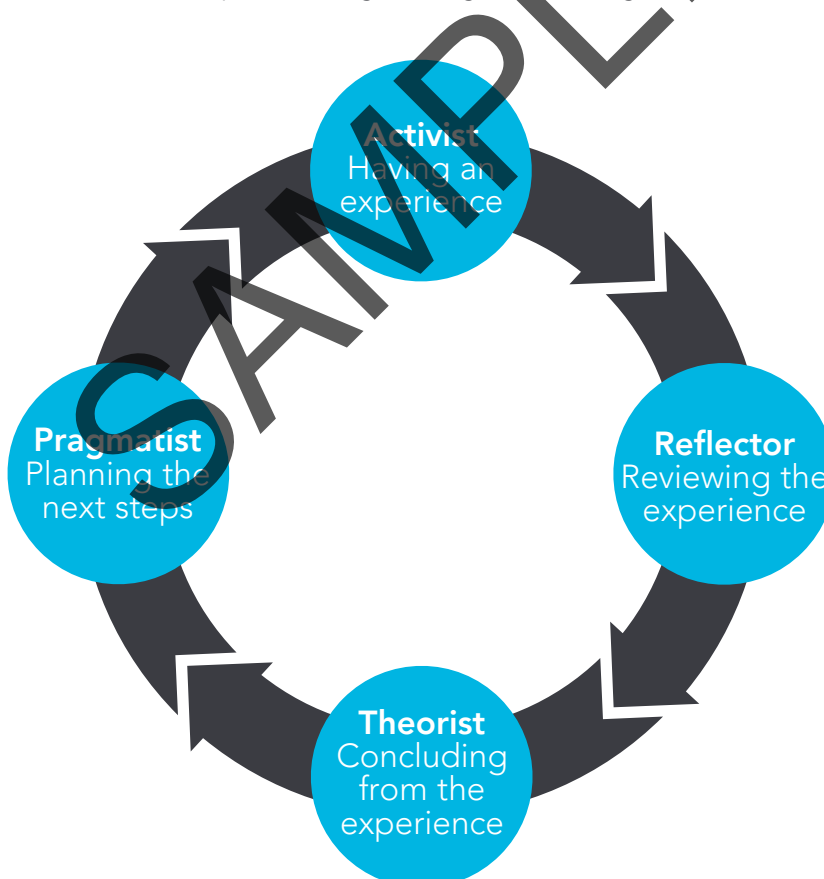
Putting knowledge into practice – Activity 1: Make a few notes about which learning style or characteristic from these theories is the most important and dominant one for you, and why.

1. VARK
2. Felder–Silverman
3. Kolb
4. Honey and Mumford

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Addressing learning styles in training and development

An awareness of our preferred learning styles enhances any opportunities we have for working towards achieving our goals. For example, we can:

• get the most out of learning and development activities

• enjoy the learning process more

• increase the chances of successful completion of training courses and programmes

To support our preferred learning styles in training and development, we need to:

• find out about the development activities available for our particular learning objectives

• select the best ones for our preferences

A combination of activities can be put together to suit the individual's needs. Activities may include:

• **delegation** – e.g. taking on tasks for a challenge and the opportunity to develop our skills and experience

• **demonstrations** – e.g. watching demonstrations about how a new piece of equipment is used, then trying it out

• **role play** – e.g. to practise how to deal with angry customers' complaints

• **job rotation** – e.g. receiving training on all the tasks performed by the team so that we can develop our skills, and keep our interest and motivation levels up – and be able to cover for colleagues

• **shadowing** – e.g. arrange to follow an experienced member of staff

• **coaching and mentoring** – e.g. receiving intensive one-to-one support and guidance; having a senior member of staff as a role model

• **project work** – e.g. expanding knowledge and experience by following through all aspects of a project, and not just isolated tasks

• **classroom-based training courses** – e.g. a first-aid course at the local college

• **computer-based/online training** – e.g. induction courses to give an overview of the organisation and its policies and procedures

• **blended learning** – a mixture of different methods – e.g. a computer-based course in Spanish as well as conversation lessons at the local college

• **distance learning** – e.g. a course done at work or at home, with the assistance of an assessor or a tutor who may be based in a different location

• **workplace training** – e.g. internal training sessions on equality and diversity given by colleagues or external trainers

Identifying learning styles

We take into account our preferred learning styles to help us select the most effective learning and development activities. The following table gives some examples of which activities may suit learners from different categories of the learning style theories covered:

VARK	Very likely to appeal	Quite likely to appeal
Visual **– benefit from seeing materials and watching others**	Demonstrations Shadowing Computer-based/online training	Delegation Role play Classroom-based training courses Blended learning Distance learning Workplace training
Auditory **– benefit from being able to listen and discuss training**	Demonstrations Shadowing	Classroom-based training courses Blended learning Workplace training
Read/write **– benefit from reading training materials and making notes**	Training manuals Reference books and journals Taking notes Computer-based/online training	Classroom-based training courses Blended learning Distance learning Workplace training
Kinaesthetic **– benefit from being able to touch and handle items**	Demonstrations Role play Computer-based/online training	Job rotation Blended learning Workplace learning

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences	Very likely to appeal	Quite likely to appeal
Linguistic **– like to use words, sounds and rhythms**	Delegation Demonstrations Role play Shadowing Coaching and mentoring	Classroom-based training Computer-based/online training Blended learning Distance learning Workplace training Job rotation Project work
Logical-mathematical **– like to use reasoning, numbers and abstract patterns**	Training manuals Reference books and journals Taking notes Computer-based/online training	Classroom-based training courses Blended learning Distance learning Workplace training
Spatial **– use spatial awareness and mental visualisation**	Role play Demonstrations Project work Delegation	Classroom-based training Blended learning Workplace training Job rotation
Bodily-kinaesthetic **– benefit from being able to touch and handle items**	Delegation Role play Demonstrations Taking notes	Classroom-based training courses Job rotation Blended learning Workplace learning
Musical **– benefit from responding to beats, rhythms, tones and music**	Role play Demonstrations Shadowing	Classroom-based training courses Blended learning Workplace training
Interpersonal **– benefit from being able to communicate with other people and develop relationships**	Role play Coaching and mentoring Delegation Job rotation Project work	Demonstrations Shadowing Classroom-based training courses Blended learning
Intrapersonal **– benefit from self-reflection and understanding their own emotions**	Computer-based/online training Coaching and mentoring	Computer-based/online training Distance learning
Naturalistic **– able to make distinctions in the world of nature**	Demonstrations Shadowing Project work	Blended learning Delegation

Felder-Silverman	Very likely to appeal	Quite likely to appeal
Sensing **– prefer practical thinking, facts and procedures**	Demonstrations Classroom-based training Workplace training Job rotation Project work Delegation	Computer-based/online training Blended learning Distance learning
Intuitive **– prefer conceptual thinking, theories and meanings**	Classroom-based training courses Role play Computer-based/online training	Blended learning Workplace learning Distance learning
Visual **– benefit from seeing materials and watching others**	Demonstrations Shadowing Computer-based/online training	Delegation Role play Classroom-based training courses Blended learning Distance learning Workplace training
Verbal **– benefit from written and spoken explanations**	Delegation Demonstrations Role play Shadowing Coaching and mentoring Classroom-based training Workplace training Job rotation Project work	Computer-based/online training Blended learning Distance learning
Active **– like to work things out and work with others in a group**	Delegation Demonstrations Role play Job rotation Project work	Classroom-based training Computer-based/online training Blended learning Distance learning Workplace training
Reflective **– like to think things through and work alone or with a familiar partner**	Computer-based/online training Coaching and mentoring	Computer-based/online training Distance learning Workplace training
Sequential **– prefer linear thinking and small, incremental steps**	Computer-based/online training Blended learning Distance learning Coaching and mentoring	Workplace training Shadowing Demonstrations
Global **– prefer holistic thinking, systems and learning in big steps**	Shadowing Demonstrations Workplace training Delegation Role play	Computer-based/online training Blended learning Distance learning

Kolb's learning cycle	Very likely to appeal	Quite likely to appeal
Experiencing **– having a go and assessing the experience**	Delegation Demonstrations Role play Job rotation Project work	Shadowing Blended learning Workplace learning
Reflecting **– thinking about how useful the new subject or skill will be**	Coaching and mentoring	Job rotation Shadowing Project work Classroom-based training Blended learning Distance learning Workplace learning
Thinking **– looking for related ideas, theories and different approaches**	Job rotation Shadowing Coaching and mentoring Project work	Demonstrations Role play Classroom-based training Blended learning Distance learning Workplace learning
Acting **– testing the learning and practising**	Delegation Demonstrations Role play Job rotation	Project work Classroom-based learning Blended learning Workplace learning

Honey and Mumford	Very likely to appeal	Quite likely to appeal
Activists **– like to do something**	Delegation Demonstrations Role play Job rotation Project work	Classroom-based training Computer-based/online training Blended learning Distance learning Workplace training
Reflectors **– review progress, analyse and consider options**	Delegation Shadowing Coaching and mentoring	Project work Classroom-based training Computer-based/online training Blended learning Distance learning Workplace training
Theorists **– make sense of the options**	Shadowing Coaching and monitoring Classroom-based training Blended learning Workplace training	Demonstrations Computer-based/online training Distance learning
Pragmatists **– try out the options, evaluate the experience and progress, then decide how to proceed**	Delegation Demonstrations Role play Job rotation Project work Blended learning	Classroom-based training Workplace training

Gregorc	Very likely to appeal	Quite likely to appeal
Concrete Sequential **– hands-on learning experience**	Step by step detailed directions Lesson planning	Classroom-based training Project Management Workplace training
Concrete Random **– spontaneous learner who quickly assimilates facts and knowledge**	Project work Classroom-based training Computer-based/online training	Blended learning Distance learning Workplace training
Abstract Sequential **– quickly learn through a variety of means, decoding verbal, written and visuals**	Shadowing Coaching and monitoring Classroom-based training Blended learning Workplace training	Demonstrations Computer-based/online training Distance learning
Abstract Random **– collects information in a haphazard way, with little to no formal outline or direction**	Delegation Demonstrations Role play Job rotation Project work Blended learning	Classroom-based training Workplace training

Putting knowledge into practice – Activity 2: **Discover your own learning style.**

Evaluate two learning styles. Completing learning style questionnaires and reflecting on the results will support you in doing this. You can use a learning style questionnaire from:

- **your organisation**
- **a training provider**
- **online resources**

If questionnaires are not available from training providers or employers, there are plenty of free tests available online. Further information about tests is available from: http://www.businessballs.com

Once completed, it will be useful to reflect on the outcome of the questionnaires as an additional exercise. Make a few notes about the results and the effects on your approach to learning activities.

My learning style results:

Did I expect this to be my style?

How will this affect the learning activities I choose?

What sort of activities can I access that support this style?

Behaviour styles and theories

We deem particular behaviours to be acceptable or 'good' behaviour in certain social situations. This is also true of the workplace. How people behave at work is another way of talking about what people are like at work. We assess how people behave when they, for example:

- are under pressure

- work with certain people

- are outside work

- undertake tasks they enjoy or don't enjoy

- find themselves in different situations

We are going to look at four approaches to understanding behaviour – DiSC profiles, Berne's Transactional Analysis, Merrill and Reid's Social Styles and Meredith Belbin's Team Roles.

You can also access a working styles questionnaire here: https://www.businessballs.com/pluginfile. php/45958/mod_resource/content/1/Working%20styles%20questionnaire.pdf

DiSC profiles

The DiSC model of behaviour explores behavioural responses to, e.g. conflict, stress, motivation and problem solving. The model consists of four personality styles:

- **Dominance** – focus on bottom-line results and display a high level of confidence in shaping their workplace to achieve those results. This can lead to a paradigm of win/lose and there can be a lack of empathy towards others.

- **Influence** – focus on relationships, open communication and persuading others. Follow through on tasks can be compromised by their energy in persuading.

- **Steadiness** – dependable people who focus on cooperation and peacekeeping. There is a risk of overlooking their own needs when focusing on others.

- **Conscientiousness** – place high emphasis on competency, accurate completion and quality of work. Their focus on logic and perfection can make them overlook wider feelings in the team.

As with all behavioural style models it is unlikely you will be wholly one or other style.

Understanding your dominant style, however, and its likely impact will further your exploration of your behaviour and allow you to deepen your self-analysis (which will be explored in section 3).

Eric Berne's Transactional Analysis

According to Berne (1996), the personality is constructed of three states – the parent, the child and the adult. He observed that people change from one state to another, which causes them to behave differently.

The reason we have these states is due to the impact of what our parents said and did when we were children. In his book *I'm OK – You're OK*, about Transactional Analysis, Thomas A. Harris (2012) refers to these events, and how we remember them as 'recordings'. When we are children, we have no other references and are very impressionable. We therefore 'record' or store these events, both the actual events and how we feel about them. This 'recording' forms the basis of the adult and child states.

Parent – this state involves the adult replaying recordings from their early childhood. The impressionable nature of a child up to the age of five is such that we record the events without any editing. This is why we can automatically say what our parents said in the same way, in the same situation.

These recordings will be a mixture of both positive and negative situations – the positive being the **nurturing parent**, the negative being the **critical parent**.

Child – as we are recording what our parents did and said we are also, simultaneously, recording what our internal responses are to these situations. These will evoke feelings of some kind.

Harris explains that even when children are brought up in a 'good' situation, they will still not avoid negative recordings in the child state. This highlights the burden faced by those who do not have a good childhood. Children do, however, have the positive qualities of curiosity and a desire to explore the world and this is a beneficial part of the child recordings. This is the free or natural child. However, the child that responds to the negative aspects is the adapted child.

Adult – as we make our way through childhood we gain enough experience to begin to rationalise and compare what happens and decide how we respond to different events and situations. As they arise, we compare them against our recordings of what our parents said or did and how we feel. Based on this analysis we might accept or reject the recording.

When two adults have an 'adult' conversation they are talking as equals, and perhaps even agreeing on a solution. This can go wrong when an adult 'contaminates' the adult state with unhelpful aspects of either the parent or child.

Perhaps as a response to something that has gone wrong at work, under pressure one of the adults enters their parent state and criticises the other using words that sound like a parent talking to a child. If the other person feels that they are being spoken to as a child, this may trigger recordings of how they felt when they were young and spoken to in this way.

This provokes a different response than if they had been able to remain in their adult state. We now have two adults, neither of whom is in their adult state, who are no longer communicating and behaving based on reality but instead are communicating and behaving as parent and child.

Awareness of these transactions means we can choose to remain in the adult state regardless of what state the other person moves into. The adult state is one where we:

- learn to become aware of our own parent and child responses
- keep focused on the reality of the situation
- analyse the transaction – what is happening?
- focus on the rational, the objectives, the facts
- remain calm
- think about how to respond based on the reality of the situation

Understanding these states and when they are triggered in us raises our self-awareness about how we behave at work. If we can become more aware of when our parent or child state responds, we can catch ourselves and resist it. We can therefore maintain our adult state and in so doing remain calm and focus on a correct response based on the situation as it is.

David Merrill and Roger Reid's Four Social Styles

Merrill and Reid's (1981) work uses two scales to measure behaviour; these are assertiveness and responsiveness. A person's different levels of assertiveness and responsiveness determine which of the four social styles is adopted.

When talking about assertiveness we are referring to how we ask for things that we want or need from other people. On this scale our levels of assertiveness are either high or low, termed high assertive and low assertive.

We are high assertive when we:

- are being demanding and direct about what we want or need
- face our challenges head on
- see the need to be competitive and push for what we want
- adopt the style of tell over asking