

VARK LEARNING STYLE

Are you aware of how you learn best? Would you rather listen to a lecture or re-write notes or study charts? Do you use flashcards, record lectures or study with friends? Each student has a preference on which sense best assists their learning. Take the VARK Learning Style quiz to determine your preference in learning style. Utilize your learning style to maximize your strengths during your academic career at Northeastern.

* Click on this link to locate the VARK Questionnaire: <http://vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/>

Visual Learners: This preference includes the depiction of information in maps, spider diagrams, charts, graphs, flow charts, labelled diagrams, and all the symbolic arrows, circles, hierarchies and other devices that people use to represent what could have been presented in words. This mode could have been called Graphic (G) as that better explains what it covers. It does include designs, whitespace, patterns, shapes and the different formats that are used to highlight and convey information. When a whiteboard is used to draw a diagram with meaningful symbols for the relationship between different things, that will be helpful for those with a Visual preference. It must be more than mere words in boxes that would be helpful to those who have a Read/write preference.

- Presenters who use gestures
- Pictures, posters, slides
- Underline using different colors and highlights
- Construct information in different ways
- Use symbols instead of words

Aural Learners: This preference appreciates information “*heard or spoken.*” Learners who have this as their main preference report that they learn best from lectures, group discussion, radio, email, using mobile phones, speaking, web-chat and talking things through. Email is included here because; although it is text and could be included in the Read/write category (below), it is often written in chat-style with abbreviations, colloquial terms, slang and non-formal language. The Aural preference includes talking out loud as well as talking to oneself. Often people with this preference want to sort things out by speaking first, rather than sorting out their ideas and then speaking. They may say again what has already been said, or ask an obvious and previously answered question. They need to say it to themselves and they learn through saying it – their way.

- Attend class, discussions, and seminars
- Discuss topics with others, explain ideas to others, read notes aloud
- Record class lectures
- Spend time in quiet places to study

Read/Write Learners: This preference is for information displayed as words. Not surprisingly, many teachers and students have a strong preference for this mode. Being able to write well and read widely are attributes sought by employers of graduates. This preference emphasizes text-based input and output – reading and writing in all its forms but especially manuals, reports, essays and assignments. People who prefer this modality are often addicted to PowerPoint, the Internet, lists, diaries, dictionaries, thesauri, quotations and words, words, words... Note that most PowerPoint presentations and the Internet, GOOGLE and Wikipedia are essentially suited to those with this preference as there is seldom an auditory channel or a presentation that uses Visual symbols.

- Create lists
- Utilize dictionaries, glossaries, handouts, textbooks, manuals
- Re-write notes, ideas, solutions, diagrams, graphs
- Create images to show connections
- Practice exam questions

Kinesthetic Learners: By definition, this preference refers to the “perceptual preference related to the use of experience and practice (simulated or real).” Although such an experience may invoke other modalities, the key is that people who prefer this mode are connected to reality, “either through concrete personal experiences, examples, practice or simulation” [See Fleming & Mills, 1992, pp. 140-141]. It includes demonstrations, simulations, videos and movies of “*real*” things, as well as case studies, practice and applications. The key is the reality or concrete nature of the example. If it can be grasped, held, tasted, or felt it will probably be included. People with this as a strong preference learn from the experience of doing something and they value their own background of experiences and less so, the experiences of others. It is possible to write or speak Kinesthetically if the topic is strongly based in reality. An assignment that requires the details of who will do *what* and *when*, is suited to those with this preference, as is a case study or a working example of what is intended or proposed.

- Use all senses
- Visit labs, find tangible examples, role play
- Trial and error
- Choose professors who provide real-life examples