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## Learner Styles by Brian Lillos

Have you ever found yourself in a teaching situation where you are speaking slower and slower to your student? Have you ever, after speaking slower and slower, had to raise your voice to get your point across? Have you ever found yourself in a learning situation that, no matter how often the material was explained by a certain teacher, you just didn't understand?

Have you ever as a student, in a 30 minute private lesson, wondered how you're going to get through the next 28 minutes of the lesson, because you can't understand what is being taught and you couldn't the week before either? Have you ever, as a teacher, looked out the window in the middle of a lesson, and seeing your vehicle, wondered if you made a run for it, would you actually get away? Have you ever thought to yourself, "you just can't fix stupid"? Have you ever done a "Sam Kynaston" on your ensemble? Have you ever had your supervisor state that some of the students had expressed concerns because you were moving too fast or too slow for them? While this may sound like a warm-up to a Jeff Foxworthy or Dave Chappell routine, the stress of situations like this can be overwhelming. We all have coping mechanisms and there are a plethora of stress management seminars available. The reality is however, that some people learn differently than you. If you can discover their learner type and adapt to it you are headed for success. If you cannot, or are unwilling, you are in for a lot of pain and frustration.

**There are four basic learner types:**

*The Reflective Observer tends to be tentative and impartial to learning. They rely heavily on careful observation in making judgements, and prefer learning situations such as lectures that allow them to take the role of impartial objective observers. Reflective Observers tend to be introverts. (David A. Kolb, 1976)*

*The Abstract Conceptualist is analytical and relies heavily on logical thinking and rational evaluation. They tend to be more oriented towards things and symbols and less towards other people. They learn best in authority-directed, impersonal learning situations that emphasize theory and systematic analysis. They are frustrated by and*