

Lesson 4: Attitude and Learning



Ms. Chan: Have you ever been in a situation where you had to learn a new skill but for some reason you had very negative feelings about learning that skill?

Ashley: When I was five, my mother enrolled me in swimming lessons. I was terrified of the water.

Ms. Chan: How did your feelings affect your learning experience?

Ashley: I hated the lessons. It took me forever to learn how to swim but once I learned how, I really enjoyed swimming. I even joined the swim club.

Ms. Chan: Now recall a situation where you were eager to learn a new skill. How did your feelings affect that learning experience?

Ashley: I've always wanted to learn sign language, so last summer I took lessons. In September, the instructor asked me to help teach the course. I really enjoyed the lessons and the language was easy for me to learn.

Ms. Chan: Your attitude influences how you view your experiences.

A person's attitude affects how their experiences are defined and interpreted. Both negative and positive attitudes have an impact on learning. A positive attitude will enhance the learning experience. The enhanced learning experience will positively reinforce the experience of learning itself—the learner becomes more willing to continue to learn. For both of these results, students need to know how to create, within themselves, as positive an attitude as possible towards learning.

Positive learning attitudes include

- a belief that one is capable of learning
- a belief that the task is possible
- a belief that one can be successful and proud of that success
- a respect for the importance of learning itself, if not the specific material to be learned
- a willingness to make time and find a place suitable for learning and studying
- a dedication to spending time at this place for the purposes of learning and studying
- a sense of success and accomplishment from having learned something
- **perseverance**—the unwillingness (within reason) to be defeated when learning something new

perseverance:
sticking to a purpose or task; not giving up

Of course, the same positive attitude that can lead to success in learning can be applied to other areas of life. Positive approaches to new situations, to people, and to challenges lead to success.

Your attitude plays a large role in how you feel about your life. Many psychologists say that you can choose to be positive, or you can choose to be negative. If you choose to look at situations positively, you then see the good in each situation. Things can only become better and better.

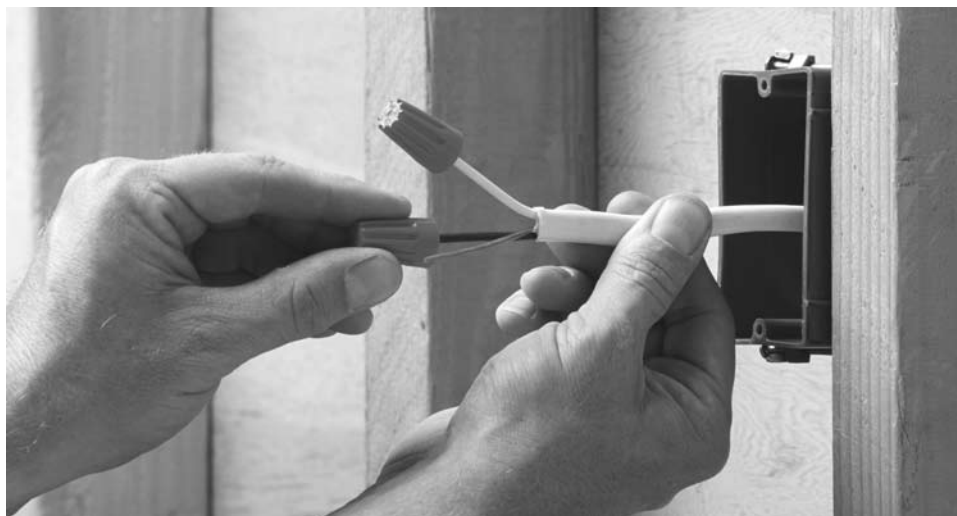


¹ Judith Campbell *Lifechoices: Careers Teacher Resource* (Scarborough: Prentice Hall Ginn Canada, 1999), 25–26. Reprinted with permission by Pearson Canada.

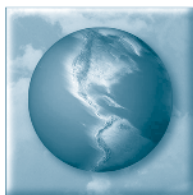
Learning Styles

In Module 1 you were introduced to learning styles and how they affect you when you learn new skills and information. What does your learning style have to do with your future career?

Different careers require different skills and different methods of acquiring information and using it. A physicist or chemist needs to use learning techniques different from those used by an artist or musician. So, your learning style can affect the types of careers or activities that appeal to you. People who like to analyze problems may want to pursue careers in science or mathematics. An imaginative learner may want to become a graphic designer or a writer. Perhaps a kinesthetic learner would prefer a hands-on job such as that of an electrician. Once you understand how you learn, you can better understand what types of careers may better suit your learning style.



To learn more about learning styles and learning preferences, read “Great Minds Think Differently” on pages 30 and 31 of *Careers*. The article encourages you to look at your strengths when learning. Read also “The Many Ways We Learn” on page 31 of *Careers*, which describes the different ways people learn.



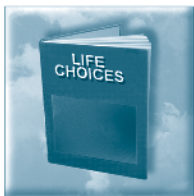
The Internet offers a number of sites that provide learning style self-assessments and inventories. Try some of the learning style inventories that are provided online. Use your favourite search engine and the following terms to search the Internet for websites related to learning styles:

- learning styles
- learning inventories

When you’ve completed your exploration, use what you discovered to answer the following question.

1. Create a chart like the one that follows. Use it to record information from two different websites.

Site Address		
What kind of information does this website provide?		
What self-assessment tools are provided on this site?		
What I Learned		



In Module 1: Section 1, Lesson 4 you completed the “Learning Style Checklist” on page 32 of *Careers* to assess the way you learn. Review your assessment, and then respond to the following question.

2. Create a collage to describe the way you prefer to learn. Your collage can be made up of drawings, photographs, cartoons, or images cut from magazines—or a combination of any of these visuals.

Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.



The article “Great Minds Think Differently” as well as the different learning inventories or self-assessment tools you may have found elsewhere suggest that people use their strengths to learn.

Go to page 5 of Assignment Booklet 3A and respond to question 3 of Section 1.

Looking Back; Looking Ahead

In this lesson, you examined the roles that attitude and learning styles play in learning. Gathering more information about yourself will help you decide the career best suited for you. In the next lesson, you will begin to put all of this information together in a personal profile to include in your career portfolio.

Suggested Responses

1. Responses will depend on the websites you accessed. Were the sites you investigated easy to navigate? Were they informative? What did you learn about yourself from each self-assessment or inventory? Do you now have a better understanding of the way you learn?
2. Your collage will depend on the learning style that is most relevant to you. Consider the following questions:
 - Have you identified the learning style that is your strength? It is possible for you to identify more than one.
 - Do your visuals include the types of activities as well as the different settings in which you prefer to learn? For example, if your strength is in verbal/linguistic intelligence, you may provide examples that involve writing at a desk or presenting a project in front of the class. If your strength is in interpersonal intelligence, your examples may show you working with other students on a school project, playing on a team, or working with a group on a community cleanup campaign.
 - Have you used the descriptions of each intelligence from “The Many Ways We Learn” on page 31 of *Careers*?

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