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# Coaches & Communication

A coach cannot create awareness for the client.  
Find out why on **page 33**.

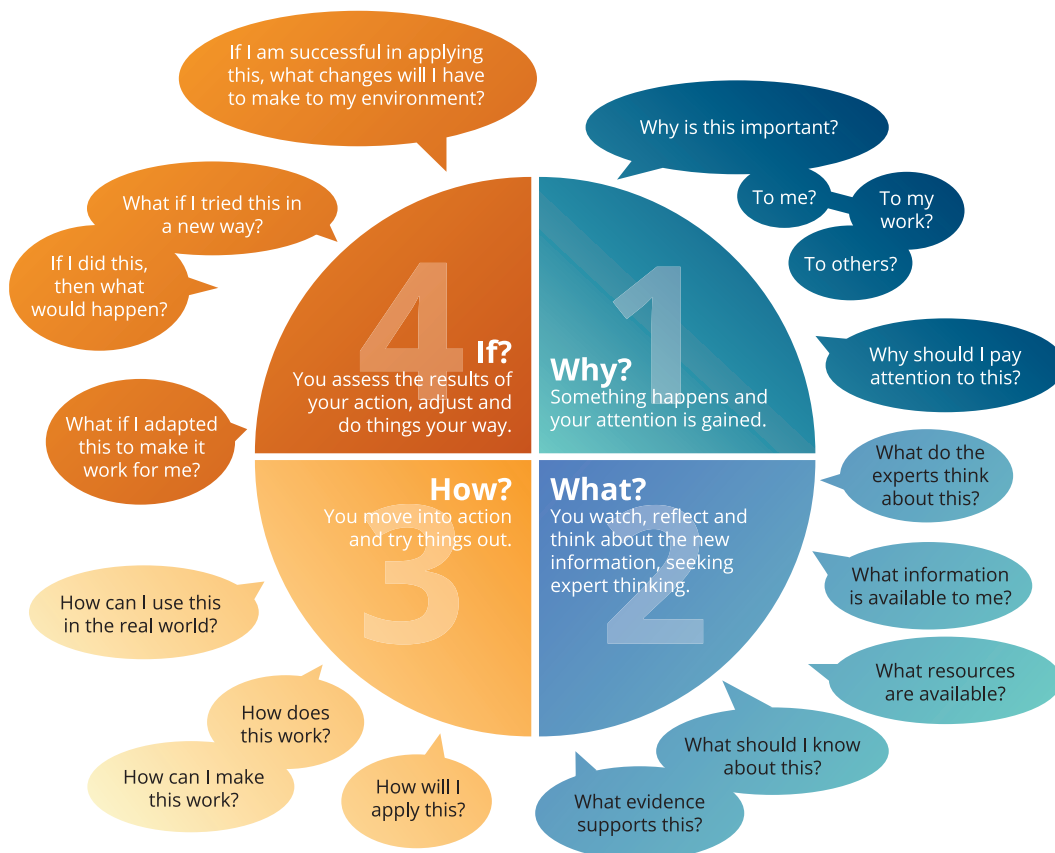
# Coaching to Your Client's Learning Style

To help our clients achieve new results, coaches must support them in learning and implementing new behaviors that will create those results. It's just that simple and just that hard. Every client has a learning style; i.e., a preferred way of taking in and making sense of new information. Coaches who understand what is required to focus the attention of each learning style have an enormous advantage in equipping their clients to achieve success.



## Tapping Into Your Client's Brain

Learning occurs as a result of how we process our experiences and the meaning we make of them. When we learn, our brains move through a cycle of asking and answering four critical questions: why, what, how and if. Reflect on something you learned recently and think about how you moved through exploring these four questions:



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## Recognizing Your Client's Learning Style

There are four primary learning styles assessed in the 4MAT Learning Type Measure® assessment tool. These varied learning styles (outlined on the next page) determine which learning experiences a client finds most useful and most painful, as well as influencing which critical question she focuses the most attention on.

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# 4MAT® Learning Styles

## Type Four: Feelers/Doers

- Seek hidden possibilities
- Need to know what can be done with things
- Learn by trial-and-error, self-discovery
- Enrich reality
- Adaptable to change and relish it
- Enjoy variety and excel in being flexible
- Enjoy taking risks
- Often reach accurate conclusions without logic

**Strength:** action, carrying out plans

**Goal:** making things happen

**Favorite Question:** What if?

## Type One: Feelers/Watchers

- Seek meaning
- Need to be personally involved
- Learn by listening and sharing ideas
- Absorb reality
- Interested in people and culture
- Function through social interaction
- Idea people

**Strength:** innovating and imagination

**Goals:** self-involvement in important issues, bringing unity to diversity

**Favorite Question:** Why?

## Type Three: Thinkers/Doers

- Seek usability
- Need to know how things work
- Learn by testing theories using practical methods
- Edit reality
- Use factual data to build concepts
- Enjoy hands-on experience
- Problem solving
- Need “real-life” correlation

**Strength:** practical application of ideas

**Goals:** bringing their view of the present into line with the future

**Favorite Question:** How?

## Type Two: Thinkers/Watchers

- Seek and examine the facts
- Need to know what the experts think
- Form reality
- Interested in ideas and concepts
- Critique information, collect data
- Thorough and industrious
- Enjoy the traditional classroom
- Function by adapting to experts

**Strength:** creating concepts and models

**Goals:** self-satisfaction and intellectual recognition

**Favorite Question:** What?



## Coaching to Each Learning Style

In order to successfully coach to each client's learning style, you must first be aware of your own learning style and its consequent biases. Stretch to reach clients with styles different from your own.

Explore growth options that work with each client's learning style by tailoring the questions, learning opportunities and "stretches" that you explore with them:

### Type 1

**Questions:** Invite reflection on personal experience by asking questions, such as "When have you had an experience of..." or "What did you notice about how you felt in this experience?"

**Learning Opportunities:** reflection exercises, self-assessments, journals, group learning

**Stretch:** Encourage them to move from reflection into action.

### Type 2

**Questions:** Ask questions that help your client see patterns and models for understanding. For example, you might ask, "What happened? What about this approach worked? What would you do differently if a similar situation showed up again?"

**Learning Opportunities:** models, frameworks, formal classes, articles

**Stretch:** Encourage them to make decisions in the absence of all of the information.

### Type 3

**Questions:** Ask questions that encourage the client to explore application and results, such as, "If you were going to move this into action, what's the first step you might take?" or "What approach have you used in the past that worked?"

**Learning Opportunities:** hands-on activities, role-playing, application-based practice, challenging assignments


**Stretch:** Encourage them to reflect and think through options before moving into action.

### Type 4

**Questions:** Appeal to this client's love of adaptation and possibility. Ask questions such as, "In a perfect world, what outcome would you like to see?" or "If you could choose one thing you could do consistently do create this outcome moving forward, what behavior would you choose?"

**Learning Opportunities:** stretch work assignments, thought-provoking content (videos, articles, books), self-directed learning, experiments ("What could you try...?")

**Stretch:** Encourage them to focus, commit and implement.

Creating new results begins with engaging the client's focused attention and sustaining attention to new ways of thinking and behaving over time. An effective coach can adapt her style to align with the learning style of her client in order to enhance the coaching process. 

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