

LEADERSHIP 101: *Are you in the right (or left) brain?* (But don't believe everything you read. Just think about it!)

First, here's something fun to introduce "thinking styles" and lateral brain research. (Bogus? Intriguing?)

Take a left/right brain-dominated test.

Directions: Every time you read a description or characteristic that applies to you, check the box. There is no certain number of characteristics you must choose. After you are done, examine the key on the reverse side. Next to every box (only those you checked below), write whether it was an "L" or an "R." Count up the number of L's and R's. Whichever number is higher represents your dominance. If the numbers are close (under 23), that means you use both sides of your brain equally.

1. ☐ _____ I constantly look at a clock, wear a watch, or check my phone for the time
2. ☐ _____ I keep a journal or diary of my thoughts
3. ☐ _____ I believe there is either a right way or a wrong way to do everything
4. ☐ _____ I find it hard to follow directions precisely
5. ☐ _____ The expression "Life is just a bowl of cherries" makes no sense to me
6. ☐ _____ I frequently change my plans and find that sticking to a schedule is boring
7. ☐ _____ I think it's easier to draw a map than tell someone how to get somewhere
8. ☐ _____ To find a lost item, I try to picture it in my head where I last saw it
9. ☐ _____ I frequently let my emotions guide me
10. ☐ _____ I learn math with ease
11. ☐ _____ I'd read the directions before assembling something
12. ☐ _____ People tell me I am always late getting places
13. ☐ _____ People have told me that I'm psychic
14. ☐ _____ I need to set goals for myself to keep me on track
15. ☐ _____ When somebody asks me a question, I turn my head to the left
16. ☐ _____ If I have a tough decision to make, I write down the pros and the cons
17. ☐ _____ I'd probably make a good detective
18. ☐ _____ I learn music with ease
19. ☐ _____ To solve a problem, I think of similar problems I have solved in the past
20. ☐ _____ I use a lot of gestures
21. ☐ _____ If someone asks me a question, I turn my head to the right
22. ☐ _____ I believe there are two ways to look at almost everything
23. ☐ _____ I have the ability to tell if people are lying or guilty of something just by looking at them
24. ☐ _____ I typically keep a "to do" list
25. ☐ _____ I am able to thoroughly explain my opinions in words
26. ☐ _____ In a debate, I am objective and look at the facts before forming an opinion
27. ☐ _____ I've considered becoming a poet, a politician, an architect, or a dancer
28. ☐ _____ I always lose track of time
29. ☐ _____ When trying to remember a name I forgot, I'd recite the alphabet until I remembered it
30. ☐ _____ I like to draw
31. ☐ _____ When I'm confused, I usually go with my gut instinct
32. ☐ _____ I have considered becoming a lawyer, journalist, or doctor

KEY TO TEST (reverse side)

1. L	9. R	17.L	25.L
2. L	10.L	18.R	26.L
3. L	11.L	19.R	27.R
4. R	12.R	20.R	28.R
5. L	13.R	21.L	29.L
6. R	14.L	22.R	30.R
7. R	15.R	23.R	31.R
8. L	16.L	24.L	32.L

Do you seem to be more left-brained, right-brained, or neither side dominates the other? (Disclaimer: a true test of hemispheric brain dominance would take hours, MANY MORE questions, and still only offer a few generalizations!)

Other left/right brain websites: <https://www.mentalup.co/blog/right-brain-left-brain-test> and <https://openpsychometrics.org/tests/OHBDS/>.

Why is any of this important in becoming a LEADER... a VISIONARY... a COACH... a MANAGER... or even developing better skills as a SELF-LEARNER?

LINEAR vs. HOLISTIC
SEQUENTIAL vs. RANDOM

LOGICAL vs. INTUITIVE
SYMBOLIC vs. CONCRETE

VERBAL vs. NONVERBAL

“Left-brain dominant individuals are more orderly, literal, articulate, and to the point. They are good at understanding directions and anything that is explicit and logical. They can have trouble comprehending emotions and abstract concepts; they can feel lost when things are not clear, doubting anything that is not stated and proven.”

“Right-brain dominant individuals are more visual and intuitive. They are better at summarizing multiple points, picking up on what's not said, visualizing things, and making things up. They can lack attention to detail, directness, organization, and the ability to explain their ideas verbally, leaving them unable to communicate effectively.”

“According to Darwinian Theory, optimal evolution takes place with random variation and selective retention. The “evolution savvy” individual will try many different approaches when faced with a problem and select the best of those approaches. Many historical intellectuals have confessed their advantage was simply considering/exploring/trying more approaches than others. The left-brain dominant type suffers from limited approaches, narrow-mindedness. The right brain dominant type suffers from too many approaches, scatterbrained. To maintain balanced hemispheres, you need to exercise both variability and selection. Just as a company will have more chance of finding a great candidate by increasing their applicant pool, an individual who considers a wider set of options is more likely to make quality decisions.”

Now apply this to the “types” of people you may lead. The lefty “analytics” will want meetings to start and end on time, keep to the agenda, follow Robert’s Rules of Order, receive written documentation, etc. “Righties” (a.k.a. “spatials”) may arrive late, prefer more time for free discussion, enjoy more charts/graphs, demonstrations, and “hands-on,” offer good brainstorming... but please don’t restrict them with too many rules, etc.