

ARE YOU LEARNING OR GRADE ORIENTED?

It is commonly thought that learning orientation [LO] and grade orientation [GO] in students and instructors are opposite ends of the same continuum. However, psychometric testing has recently shown that LO and GO are two independent orientations. Neither orientation scale is inherently bad in and of itself. Knowing your own orientation and the orientation of your students is an excellent strategy for tailoring your classes to reach a range of learning styles and foster self-motivated learners.

What's your profile? Rate how much you agree with each of the following statements.

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree		
1. Students should withdraw from a class that interests them if they are performing poorly.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. Students learn best with regularly scheduled exams.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. The most important information on my syllabus is the section on assessment [grading breakdown].	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. I want my students to know that I insist on tough marking.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. Students who ask questions that go beyond the material I want them to know for the exam are irritating.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. Studying should be something students look forward to.	①	②	③	④	⑤
7. If studying is enjoyable the students are not working hard enough.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8. In my course outlines several of my learning objectives are personal development oriented.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9. I incorporate a variety of teaching techniques in my classes to spice up the traditional approach to lecturing.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10. Learning new material is enjoyable for students.	①	②	③	④	⑤
11. The best classes are those where I try to relate the material to life outside the classroom.	①	②	③	④	⑤
12. Students will learn best if they discuss classroom material with their friends outside the classroom.	①	②	③	④	⑤
13. I frequently use surprise quizzes to enforce student reading.	①	②	③	④	⑤
14. Even if demands on their time are high, students should make time to read extra material that relates to the course.	①	②	③	④	⑤
15. Writing exams should be difficult or the value of earning a degree is compromised.	①	②	③	④	⑤
16. I enjoy finding creative alternatives to the traditional assignments/exams assessment techniques.	①	②	③	④	⑤
17. Students will not attend classes without being graded for attendance.	①	②	③	④	⑤
18. I always tell students what value there is in completing the assignments I give.	①	②	③	④	⑤

SCORING YOUR RESULTS

For items 6, 8, 9-12, 14,16,18

If you scored an average higher than 3.5 you are **High LO**. If lower than 3.5 you are **Low LO**.

For items 1-5, 7,13,15,17

If you scored an average higher than 3.5 you are **High GO**. If lower than 3.5 you are **Low GO**.

My motivation profile is _____ LO and _____ GO.

WHAT DOES YOUR PROFILE MEAN?

Research has revealed four student motivation profiles. The following table lists the general characteristics for each profile. No individual has the same orientation for all courses and classes. The profile classification can differ both within and between course.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>High LO/High GO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lowest scores on abstract reasoning • tough-minded realistic approach to situations and ideas • relaxed disposition • extroverted manner • attribute the greatest importance to luck and fate as powerful influences in their lives • highest level of debilitating test anxiety <p><i>*Note:</i> This category surprised the researchers. They thought these students would be mostly interested in learning but needing high grades [perhaps pre-professional]. However, this category tends to capture an extroverted, but relatively less able student craving concrete information (grades) about how well he or she is doing.*</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>High LO/Low GO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater abstract reasoning ability • higher levels of sensitivity, self-motivation, and inner directedness • greater interest in new ideas and intellectual matters • lower tension and frustration levels • more inclined to trust personal hunches • acknowledge the highest level of personal responsibility for personal actions • pay least attention to the importance of luck or fate • employ the most effective study methods • hold most positive educational attitudes • lowest levels of debilitating text anxiety • tend to most impress instructors
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Low LO/High GO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong desire to do the right things and to act in conventional ways • tough-minded and realistic approach to personal and social issues • show greatest level of respect for established ideas • highest levels of text anxiety and tension • approach world in non-intuitive and relatively concrete way • lowest degree of internal locus 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Low LO/Low GO</u> (most difficult to identify)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high levels of tension and frustration • lowest level of extroversion, • highest introversion • lowest levels of internal locus of control • place less importance either on chance or on powerful others • midrange levels of test anxiety • average study skills

FOR FURTHER READING ON THE LOGO MOTIVATION PROFILE PLEASE REFER TO:

- Beck, H.P., Rorrer-Woody, S., & Pierce, L.G. (1991). The relations of learning and grade orientations to academic performance. *Teaching of Psychology*, 18, 35-37.
- Eison, J.A., Janzow, F., & Pollio, H.R. (1993). Assessing faculty orientations towards grades and learning: Some initial results. *Psychological Reports* 73, 643-656.
- Eison, J.A. & Pollio, H.R. (1985). A multidimensional approach to the definition of college students' learning styles. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 26, 434-443.