

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO LEARNING THEORISTS**

### **Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy**

In 1956 Bloom and his colleagues classified learning into three domains: cognitive (intellectual skills and acquisition of knowledge), affective (feelings, values, attitudes and preferences, and psychomotor (physical skills). From this Bloom created a taxonomy for categorising levels of abstract thinking and questioning. The taxonomy ranges from basic thinking skills (knowledge, comprehension, application) through to more higher order thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).

### **Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences**

Gardner suggests that we each possess a unique blend of nine intelligences that we use in our everyday functioning. The nine intelligences are: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, naturalistic, emotional/intuitive. He describes each in terms of three categories: how we think or solve problems, what we love to do and what we need to do to be successful.

### **Edward deBono's thinking hats**

de Bono has actually developed many theories and activities to promote abstract, creative and critical thinking. His *Six Hats* concept is perhaps his most popular with its assumption that under different situations we are able to draw upon a variety of 'hats' to deal with given situations. The suggestion is also made that we tend to favour certain hats or ways of addressing and dealing with issues or situations - sometimes to our detriment.

### **William's taxonomy of divergent thinking and feeling**

Williams speaks of eight skills divided into two groups of four, the cognitive and affective domains. Namely cognitive skills (fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration) and affective skills (risk taking, complexity, curiosity, imagination).

The four cognitive skills relate to the basic skills of creativity

- Fluency: the generation of many possible ideas, solutions, responses, answers to a given situation, issue or problem.
- Flexibility: the generation of a range of different adaptations, alternatives, variations, ideas, options and solutions.
- Originality: the generation of unique, new and novel responses or solutions.
- Elaboration: the enrichment, embellishment, expansion or enlargement of an idea to make it more interesting or easier for others to understand.

The four affective skills are:

- Risk taking: trying new challenges & experimenting.
- Complexity: the ability to bring logical order to a given situation and/or see the missing parts, and to create structure and order out of chaos.

- Curiosity: the ability to puzzle, contemplate, wonder and ponder.
- Imagination: the ability to build mental pictures, visualise possibilities and new things or to reach beyond practical limits.

### The Six Universal Questions

Idea generators should be aware of a simple universal truth - there are only six questions that one human can ask another:

What?  
Where?  
When?  
How?  
Why?  
Who?

Creating a mind map with the six questions as nodes on the map is a great way to start to unpack a problem or issue.

