



INNOVATIONSTYLES
the success booster

History of Innovation Styles

Innovation Styles® is a proven, practical approach to help optimize your innovativeness as an individual, group and organization.



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The Beginning of Innovation Styles



The Innovation Styles model was first developed in 1986 by William Miller when he was head of the Innovation Management Program at SRI International (formerly Stanford Research Institute).

His primary work was to conduct “Innovation Searches” where he would bring together 20-30 technology, market, and other specialists from the SRI staff, along with appropriate senior executives and management from client companies, to produce innovative solutions to client challenges.

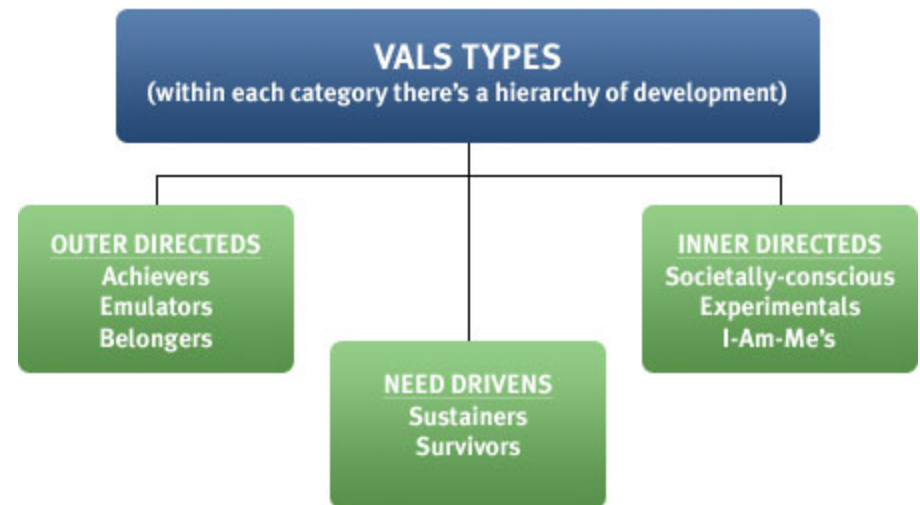
His projects included developing innovative business strategies for DuPont’s spun-bonded materials business (Tyvek, etc.), and for Brunswick’s new line of bowling equipment.

SRI's "VALS" Typology

At SRI International, some of William's colleagues were key staff members of the proprietary "Values and Life-Styles" (VALS) Program, a major competitor to Yankelovich for psycho-demographics of the USA adult population.

They asked William to do a study of how the 8 different VALS segments exercised their creative and innovative abilities.

Values And Lifestyles (VALS) Program from SRI International



The Pioneering Work of Michael Kirton

A starting point for William's thinking was the pioneering work of Michael Kirton in the late 1970's, who first established that people could be equally creative yet have two different "Creative Problem Solving Styles" – which he called "Adaptor" and "Innovator." Kirton had conducted a study showing the relationship between his "Kirton Adaptor-Innovator" (KAI) self-assessment survey and the "Myers Briggs Type Indicator" (MBTI).

Kirton's study showed that Adaptor and Innovator scores correlated well with the combination of the MBTI's *Sensing-Intuiting* (S-N) and *Judging-Perceiving* (J-P) scales. (The MBTI Thinking-Feeling and Introvert-Extrovert scales were not highly correlated.) Adaptors were "SJ's" and Innovators were "NP's."

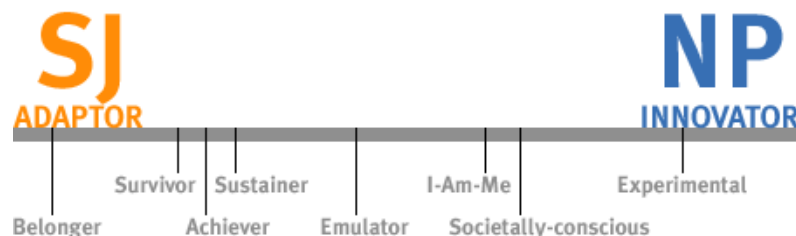
SJ
ADAPTOR

NP
INNOVATOR

KAI, MBTI and VALS

VALS had done the first-ever entirely random sampling of the USA adult population using the MBTI, along with their VALS questionnaire – so William had extraordinary data about the MBTI preferences of the statistically distinct VALS segments. William began to lay out the eight VALS groups along the axis of SJ to NP, which simulated the KAI Adaptor-Innovator continuum.

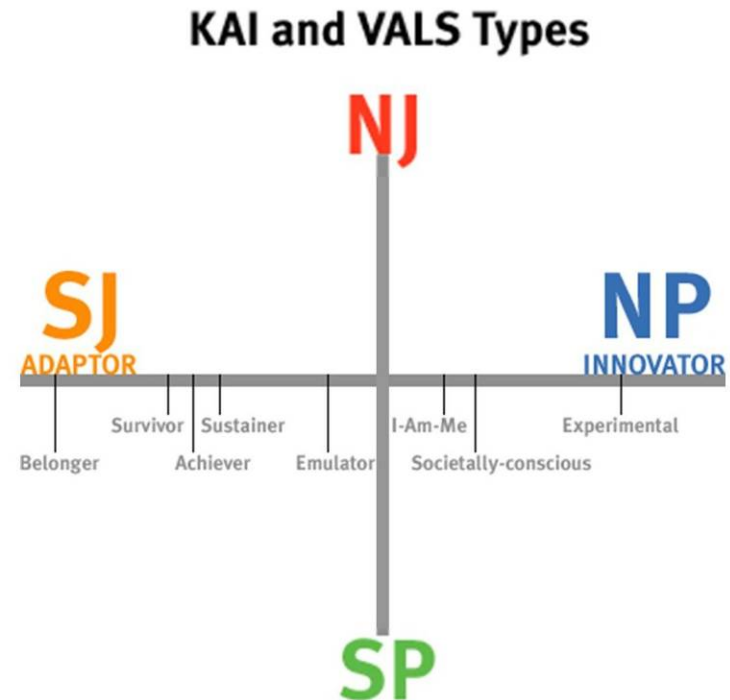
He noticed that there were very distinct VALS groups that had almost the same point along this axis (see below: Achievers and Sustainers; I-Am-Me's and Societally Conscious). He knew that by VALS data, they just weren't that similar, so he suspected something was being hidden in using this axis alone.



KAI, MBTI and VALS

William experimented with the other two combinations of the S-N and J-P scales: the SP and the NJ.

These would be perpendicular to the other combinations, so he put them on a vertical axis and then tabulated the NJ and SP scores for the VALS groups so that he could plot their points in two dimensions instead of one.



The First Breakthrough

William observed how the Sustainers went *down* due to their SP orientation, while the Achievers went *up* with their NJ orientation – and how the I-Am-Me's went *down* with their SP orientation, whereas the Societally Conscious went *up* with their NJ orientation.

This was William's first breakthrough: that the KAI Adaptor-Innovator survey didn't measure a second important dimension. *It is more complete and accurate to say that there are FOUR styles of creative problem solving rather than two.*

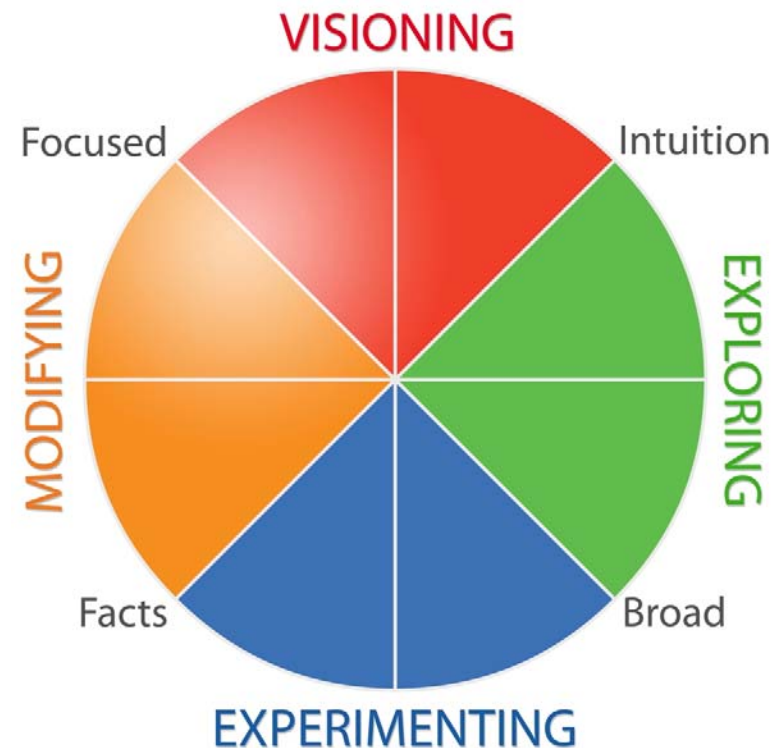
KAI and VALS Types



Two Dimensions, Four Styles

The Innovation Styles model has the two key variables (the “X”) similar to the S-N and J-P scales of MBTI:

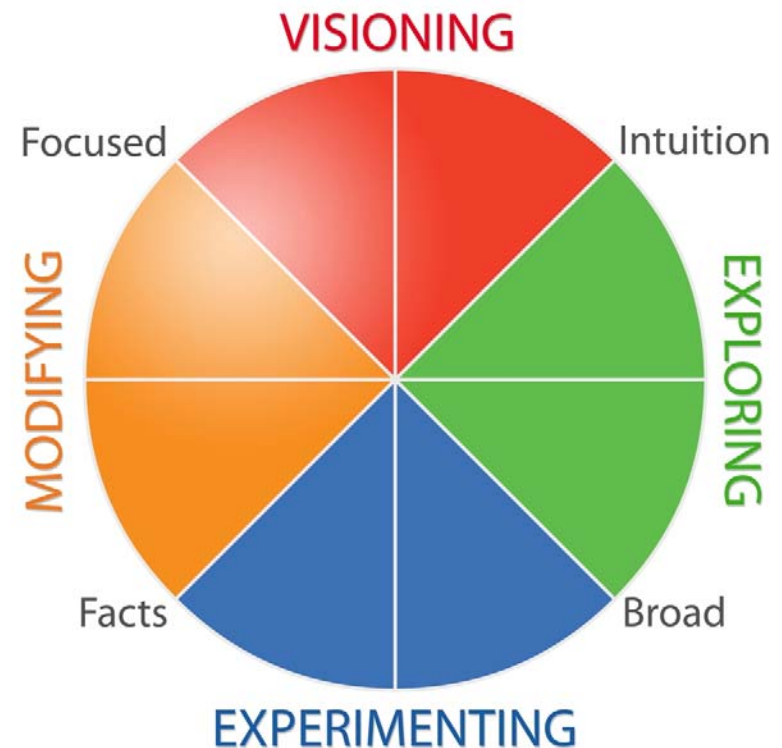
1. What kind of information stimulates your innovative thinking – Facts, details, and analysis or Intuition, insights and images?
2. How do you approach challenges – Focused, well-planned, and outcome-oriented or Broad, perceptive, and learning-oriented?



The Second Breakthrough

In 1987, William left SRI and started his own consultancy, the Global Creativity Corporation. As he finished formulating the model, he realized a second breakthrough: that the four styles *apply to more than just creative problem solving*.

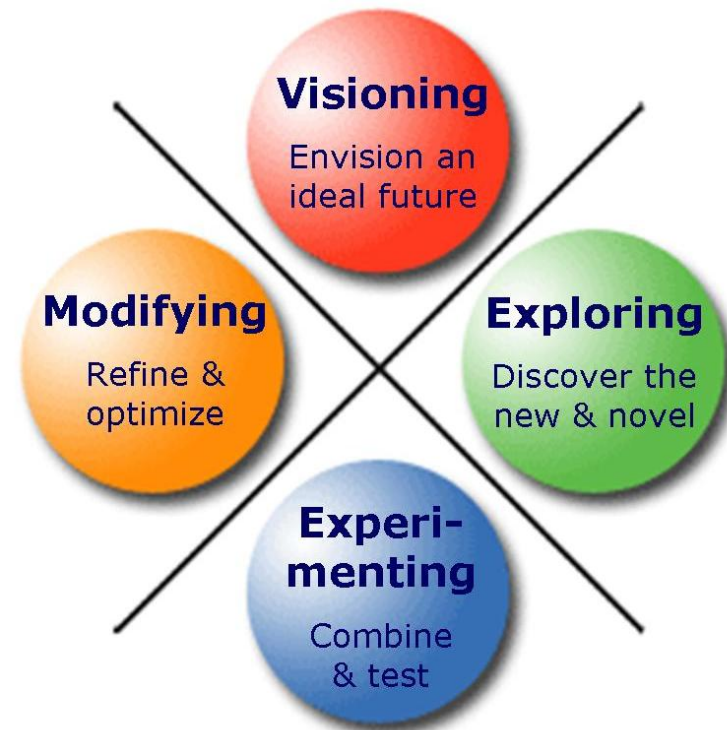
The four styles are *integral to the entire process of innovation*, which includes steps such as: setting a goal, assessing risks, developing confidence, analyzing key issues, generating creative options, making decisions, implementing solutions, and evaluating results.



The Four Innovation Styles

Thus, William termed his discovery “Innovation Styles” to reinforce how they can be applied throughout the entire innovation process, not just generating creative ideas.

He named the four styles *Visioning*, *Modifying*, *Experimenting*, and *Exploring*.



Validation Studies

As William began to introduce this Innovation Styles model to clients (such as Pillsbury, Procter and Gamble, Shell Canada), he used the MBTI to identify people into style groups. But his clients insisted that he should develop his own questionnaire to assess innovation and change strategies.

In the fall of 1987, while teaching a course on “Creativity” at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, William began to formulate and test an Innovation Styles self-assessment. He gave the questionnaire to an initial 375 people in Canada, England, Singapore, and the USA – all English-speaking, but from different cultures – and had the results analyzed by a well-known specialist in social research: Paul Ray, author of *The Cultural Creatives*.

The result was a well-validated self-assessment with 28 items. (A copy of the validation study is available on the www.InnovationStyles.com website.)

Validation Studies

In 2006, a second validation study was conducted using a data base of over 4,000 corporate professionals who had taken the ISP on-line. The results reconfirmed the Innovation Styles model. New items, based on observations of individual and team tendencies related to the Innovation Styles, are currently being tested as possible additions to the core ISP items.

Applied Internationally

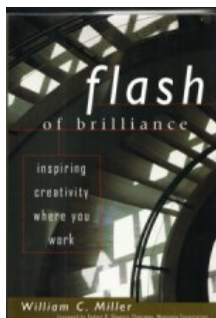
Since 1987 Innovation Styles has been successfully used internationally with a wide variety of corporations and industries, such as:

- ✓ Shell Oil (Canada)
- ✓ Motorola (China)
- ✓ Eli Lilly (England)
- ✓ Marion-Merrill Dow (France)
- ✓ ACC Cement (India)
- ✓ Starwood Hotels (Mexico)
- ✓ Philips Electronics (Netherlands)
- ✓ Overseas Bank (Singapore)
- ✓ Hewlett Packard (Spain)
- ✓ IBM, Kraft, P&G, DuPont, & Schwab (USA)

Based on Sound Expertise



William Miller is an internationally recognised expert on values-driven innovation who has been named from 2004-2007 as one of the top 30 thought leaders worldwide by *Leadership Excellence*. As president of the Global Creativity Corporation since 1987, he has worked with corporations in more than a dozen countries worldwide. He was formerly head of Innovation Management at SRI International and has been a Guest Faculty member at Stanford University Graduate School of Business and business schools in India.



The Innovation Styles have been highlighted in William Miller's book *Flash of Brilliance*, which was selected by Soundview Executive Book Summaries as among the top 30 business books of 1999.

Based on Sound Expertise



In 1996, William Miller began a collaboration and friendship with Alain Rostain, founder of Creative Advantage Inc. Alain Rostain has taken the lead to fully automate and make the Innovation Styles Profile available to corporations around the world. He brings a unique combination of skills from his 20 years of experience in the field of corporate creativity and innovation – including an expertise in designing internet-based tools for innovation assessments, and his use of experiential techniques gained from his background in improvisational theatre.

Alain is the editor of the e-zines InnovAgent and Improv-It, and founder of the Applied Improvisation Network. Combining this experience with his expertise in business innovation and software engineering, Alain stays at the leading edge in bringing innovation consulting, training, assessments and facilitation to his clients in Fortune 100 and 500 companies.

Contact Us

To learn more about how you can put the Innovation Styles to work for your organization, or to take a complimentary assessment, please contact us:

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