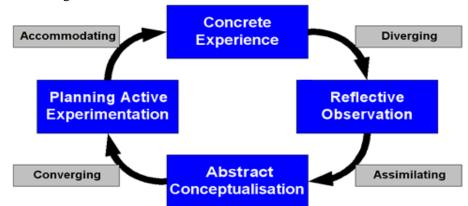# David Kolb's Learning Cycle

Kolb's Learning Cycle is based on the <u>John Dewey's</u> claim that learning must be grounded in experience, <u>Kurt Lewin's</u> ideas of the importance of active learning, and <u>Jean Piaget's</u> emphasis on the interaction between person and environment on intelligence.



The four larger boxes in the diagram above represent the four stages that Kolb claims must be fulfilled in order for learning to take place.

**Concrete Experience**—actually doing the activity
**Reflective Observation**—reflecting on performance in the activity, considering successes and failures
**Abstract Conceptualization**—apply theory to the experience of doing the activity
**Planning Active Experimentation**—consider theory and reflection to guide planning for subsequent experiences

### *Soccer Example*

**Concrete Experience**—player takes part in a training match, attempting to score goals
**Reflective Observation**—player considers his/her performance, especially her/his scoring attempts
**Abstract Conceptualization**—player talks to trainer who provides insight concerning scoring techniques
**Planning Active Experimentation**—player uses insights from the trainer as well as experience from the first match to plan for the next match

The smaller boxes refer to the four learning styles that encompass all learners based on an individual's preferred point of entering the learning cycle

**Diverging/Reflectors**—Like to think about the activity/concept and observe other peoples' takes on the matter
**Assimilating/Theorists**—Relate the task at hand to other experiences or concepts
**Converging/Pragmatists**—Like to think about how to apply theory in practice
**Accommodating/Activists**—Like to jump in to trying the activity

### *Software Example*

How would you first approach learning to use a new software program?

**Activist**—immediately begin using the software, experimenting with its tools and capabilities
**Reflector—**Think about your experience with similar software or consult someone who has used this program
**Theorist**—Read the manual to get a clear grasp on the operations of the program
**Pragmatist**—Start the software and turn to the help feature to get expert tips