



# So-Short Exercise Guide

## Introduction

To better understand individual differences, there are many validated and reliable measures of personal style including the Kolb Learning Style Inventory or the Myers-Briggs Inventory. Like these devices, most validated measures are quite lengthy and take at least a moderate amount of time to complete and score. The "So-Short" Guide is a very simple tool with two items and is useful in time-limited workshop settings. And, while without extensive psychometric validation, when combined with a contextually appropriate process of inquiry, the "So-Short" Guide helps users to think systematically about individual difference in a wide variety of settings and facilitate learning.

The "So-Short" Guide is based on two dimensions of temperament and individual differences emerging from several decades of research: 1) Style of expressing emotion and 2) Response to Novel Stimuli. The guide has two items. The first item asks participants to rate whether they "let their emotions show easily and often" or "stay cool, calm and collected no matter what the situation". The second item asks participants to rate whether they like to "jump into new things quickly and are impatient waiting" or whether they "like to wait watch and listen to all sides before jumping into new things" The items were written so that the poles of each rating scale are value-free (i.e. it's not better to be "emotional" versus "cool", "jumping in" versus "waiting, seeing all sides").

## How to administer the So-Short Guide

The "So Short" guide is easy to use. First, each user is given the "So-Short" rating sheet and are asked to rate themselves on the two dimensions: handling emotion and reacting to change. Typically, they are then asked to rate someone else. Usually someone they "have difficulty with" find "frustrating to teach or show anything" etc depending upon the situation.

Most often the exercise is implemented by marking out the two scales with masking tape on a large table top, on the classroom floor, large conference hall. When participants have finished rating themselves on the rating sheet everyone gets up and "lines themselves" up along one of the marked scales, then along the second so that everyone finds themselves more or less in one of four quadrants. If there is enough room, participants can then get chairs and sit in the quadrant in which they find themselves. Each of the four styles are reviewed and discussed and extra effort is given to explaining that one style is not better than another.

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