

Theory of Learner Agency



Definition of Learner Agency

Learner Agency is possessing the mindset and know-how to act in a manner which empowers and positions learners for a life-time of learning.

Key Characteristics of Learner Agency

Mindset (Who I Am as a Learner)

Characteristics	Description	Evidence
Belief in Oneself and One's Capacity	Confident perspective of who one is and what one can do	Learner's manner and behavior demonstrated as self-assurance and evidenced in output/results
Love of Learning or Intrinsic Motivation	Passionate, curious interest in learning which is driven from inside an individual rather than external rewards	Learner's manner and behavior reflect focus and energy when engaged in learning
Resilience	Ability to properly adapt and rebound from stress and adversity or when confronting overwhelming obstacles	Learner's manner and behavior reflect strength and fortitude when confronted with challenges or setbacks with learning
Learning Style	Approach to learning which recognizes the unique strengths, gaps, and preferences of a learner	Learner's disposition and approach to learning reflect nuances associated with and characteristic of this particular learner

Know-how (What Tools, Models, and Methods I Utilize when Engaged with Learning)

Characteristics	Description	Evidence
Strategies (including problem solving and decision making)	Approach to and processes for how to learn and how to use learnings to solve problems and be successful	Learner's approach and engagement reflect deliberate means and methods for pursuing and applying learning
Ownership and Accountability	Responsible for and ownership of one's role in the learning process	Learner's approach and engagement reflect deliberate involvement and personal responsibility for learning
Adaptability	Can flex and adapt in response to how one perceives the conditions of the learning environment and/or in how one interacts with other learners	Learner's approach and engagement reflect flexibility and adjustments in response to context of the environment or interaction with other learners

Actions (How I Structure, Participate, and Monitor My Learning)

Characteristics	Description	Evidence
Goal Setting or Planning	Mapping out short and long term goals for learning in a manner that values and relates to personal aspirations	A set of clear and meaningful short and long term expectations which reflect consideration for individual aspirations
Engagement	Active and meaningful involvement in learning processes so the learner is invested and energized by the learning experience	Learner's involvement with learning reflects a deliberate and active participation of one's mind and/or one's senses
Follow-Through	Capacity to persist and adapt during the learning process so the learner accomplishes outcomes	Learner's experience reflects ongoing commitment and discipline which supports continuous improvement for reaching outcomes
Reflection	Processing learning experiences as a means for a learner to deepen, enhance, value, and grow their learnings and thinking skills	A learner log or portfolio which provides evidence or demonstrates increased knowledge and thinking skills

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Mindset Profile (Who I Am as a Learner)

Characteristics	No Awareness	Early Stage	Promising Stage	Agency Stage
Belief in Oneself and One's Capacity Description: <i>Confident perspective of who one is and what one can do</i> Evidence: <i>Learner's manner and behavior demonstrated as self-assurance and evidenced in output/results</i>	Nearly every day, I feel others are much more confident and capable than I am in learning situations.	I am tentative about my confidence and capabilities, but a time or two each week I sense myself feeling or even responding more confidently in learning situations.	Most days of the week, I experience myself feeling or even responding more confidently and capably in learning situations.	I am confident and capable consistently in a diversity of learning situations.
	In most learning situations, I sense that I'm unlikely to succeed.	In most learning situations, I depend on the support or modeling of others for success.	With encouragement from others, I am apt to succeed in most learning situations.	I believe I can succeed in most learning situations.
Love of Learning or Intrinsic Motivation Description: <i>Passionate, curious interest in learning which is driven from inside an individual rather than external rewards</i> Evidence: <i>Learner's manner and behavior reflect focus and energy when engaged in learning</i>	Nearly every day I am indifferent or even resistant about pursuing new subjects at school.	Often I am hesitant or tentative about learning new subjects at school.	More and more I am experiencing a growing interest in pursuing new subjects.	I am curious and find myself thinking about or even posing questions as I pursue new subjects.
	Nearly every day I am not interested or motivated about completing required assignments.	On a typical day I complete required assignments to satisfy others more than myself.	I complete required assignments willingly and sometimes sense value beyond the classroom.	I like working and learning beyond required assignments and I consider applications beyond the classroom.
	Seldom does a learning opportunity at school engage or energize me.	Certain subjects or learning opportunities at school engage and energize me.	I find myself initiating particular learning activities at school because they engage and energize me.	Repeatedly I am so engaged and energized with learning at school that I lose track of time.
Resilience Description: <i>Ability to properly adapt and rebound from stress and adversity or when confronting overwhelming obstacles</i> Evidence: <i>Learner's manner and behavior reflect strength and fortitude when confronted with challenges or setbacks with learning</i>	I react with resistance or avoidance when faced with problems or obstacles.	With the encouragement and support of others, I consider alternatives when faced with problems or obstacles.	I can coach myself to consider and pursue alternatives when faced with problems or obstacles.	I identify and pursue alternatives when faced with problems or obstacles.
	I am easily discouraged by setbacks.	With the encouragement and support of others, I can address setbacks constructively.	With diligence, I can coach myself to work through setbacks constructively.	I persist through setbacks comfortably and productively.
	In most situations, I am uncomfortable asking my facilitator or peers for assistance when confronted with a problem.	Sometimes I am comfortable asking my facilitator or peers for assistance when confronted with a problem.	Mostly, I am comfortable asking my facilitator or peers for assistance when confronted with a problem.	I pursue my facilitator or peers for assistance when confronted with a problem.
Learning Style Description: <i>Approach to learning which recognizes the unique strengths, gaps, and preferences of a learner</i> Evidence: <i>Learner's disposition and approach to learning reflect nuances associated with and characteristics of this particular learner</i>	In most situations, I am not aware of my preferences of learning.	I am gaining an awareness of some of my preferences of learning.	I recognize many of my preferences of learning.	I understand and apply my preferences of learning and how they can impact my learning.
	I struggle when it is not my preferred learning format.	I am gaining an awareness of other learning formats.	I recognize and use another learning format which is not my preference.	I adapt to many learning formats using a variety of strategies.

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Know-how Profile (What Tools, Models, and Methods I Utilize when Engaged with Learning)

Characteristics	No Awareness	Early Stage	Promising Stage	Agency Stage
Strategies (including problem solving and decision making) Description: Approach to and processes for how to learn and how to use learnings to solve problems and be successful Evidence: Learner's approach and engagement reflect deliberate means and methods for pursuing and applying learning	In most situations, I would rather work on my own than collaborate and communicate with others.	I occasionally collaborate and communicate with others.	Depending on the situation, I can work independently or collaborate and communicate with others.	When appropriate, I pursue and provide leadership to collaborate and communicate with others.
	When something is not working, I need prompting or support to problem solve.	When something is not working, I sometimes problem solve to find an alternative strategy.	I know and apply problem solving strategies.	I know and apply problem solving strategies and can support others in problem solving.
	My decisions are made primarily on my own perceptions rather than objective information.	With encouragement and support from others, I consider objective information along with my own perceptions before making a decision.	I coach myself to consider objective information along with my own perceptions for making an informed decision.	I make informed decisions based on objective and compelling data which empowers me to achieve my learning outcomes.
Ownership and Accountability Description: Responsible for and ownership of one's role in the learning process Evidence: Learner's approach and engagement reflect deliberate involvement and personal accountability for learning	I do not like to take risks as failure is uncomfortable for me.	I realize mistakes are part of the learning process and I am willing to take a risk, with support.	I accept and consider informed risks as a challenging part of the learning process.	I am a responsible risk-taker with my learning and view setbacks as opportunities to grow.
	I am not often aware of my role in the learning process.	I am aware of my role in individual learning processes with guidance from others.	I am aware of and apply my individual learning processes and can explain strategies used in decision-making.	I consciously reflect on which learning processes work and which ones don't, adjust accordingly, and explain the process to others.
	With strong support, I can complete tasks daily.	I sometimes need reminders from others to complete tasks daily.	I own my own learning and am accountable daily.	I own my own learning, am accountable daily, and value the perspectives of others about my learning.
Adaptability Description: Can flex and adapt in response to how one perceives the conditions of the learning environment and/or in how one interacts with other learners Evidence: Learner's approach and engagement reflect flexibility and adjustments in response to context of the environment or interaction with other learners	I prefer to follow a structured plan that is developed by others.	I prefer to follow a plan, but am open to change with guidance.	I consider new information and adjust my thinking and planning as appropriate.	I consider new information, adjust my thinking and planning, and extend learning to new situations.
	It is hard for me to think flexibly and adapt to new situations in my learning.	I sometimes think flexibly and adapt to new situations in my learning.	Most of the time I think flexibly and adapt to new situations in my learning.	Routinely I think flexibly and adapt to new situations in my learning.
	It is hard for me to work with others when their ideas are different than mine.	I consider the ideas of others and am open to working with them.	In working together, I value the ideas of others.	I seek the input and ideas of others for meaningful collaboration.

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Actions Profile (How I Structure, Participate, and Monitor My Learning)

Characteristics	No Awareness	Early Stage	Promising Stage	Agency Stage
Goal Setting or Planning Description: Mapping out short and long term goals for learning in a manner that values and relates to personal aspirations Evidence: A set of clear and meaningful short and long term expectations which reflect consideration for individual aspirations	I have had few opportunities or guidance to set learning goals.	With guidance, I can set my learning goals.	I have the needed skills and play a role in defining and setting my learning goals.	I routinely set my short and long term goals and play an active role in revising them, as appropriate.
	Most times my learning goals are not connected to my personal likes and interests.	Sometimes my learning goals are connected to my personal likes and interests.	I see value in learning goals and am able to connect them to my likes and interests.	I base the learning goals that I set on my interests, prior knowledge, and what I want to be able to achieve.
Engagement Description: Active and meaningful involvement in learning processes so the learner is invested and energized by their learning experience Evidence: Learner's involvement with learning reflects a deliberate and active participation of one's mind and/or one's senses	Nearly every day, I am disinterested and neither my mind nor my senses are stimulated by the learning opportunity.	With encouragement, I find my mind and/or particular senses drawn into participating in particular learning opportunities.	Several times a week, I find my mind and/or particular senses drawn into participating in a range of learning opportunities.	I routinely find my mind and/or particular senses fully involved in learning opportunities and even wanting more.
	I sense or experience little, if any, personal interest or energy from my participation in my learning opportunities.	With encouragement, I am discovering personal energy from participation in particular learning opportunities associated with my interests.	Several times a week, I am energized by the learning that I am experiencing from meaningful participation in the process associated with my learning opportunities.	I am routinely energized by the learning that I am experiencing from meaningful participation in the process and it spurs me to invest even more of myself in learning opportunities.
Follow-through Description: Capacity to persist and adapt during the learning process so the learner accomplishes outcomes Evidence: Learner's experience reflects ongoing commitment and discipline which supports continuous improvement for reaching outcomes	It is hard for me to stay on task and complete content work, especially if I am not interested in the topic.	With some type of daily monitoring, I am able to stay on task and finish content work even if my interest is limited.	Most days, I am able to remain on task, complete content work, and stay on schedule with required work.	I independently check my progress, complete content work, and adjust my schedule when needed.
	In general, I do not feel comfortable asking for guidance when trying to complete content work.	Sometimes I will ask questions of others to help me complete content work.	Most of the time, I will share my thinking and ask questions to help me complete content work.	I readily engage in conversations with others and actively extend my thinking beyond the required content work.
	Most of the time when faced with new learning, I feel like giving up.	When faced with new learning, I need support with strategies and guidance from others to succeed.	When there is new learning, I stay focused, and utilize strategies to help me succeed.	I welcome new learning as it energizes me. I utilize appropriate strategies and can work both independently and with others.
Reflection Description: Processing learning experiences as a means for a learner to deepen, enhance, value, and grow their learnings and thinking skills Evidence: A learner log or portfolio which provides evidence or demonstrates increased knowledge and thinking skills	On nearly an-every-day basis, I do not think about what I know or don't know. At best, I just want to get my work done.	Once or twice throughout the week, I reflect on my learning when given an appropriate checklist or rubric.	Several times throughout the week, I reflect on my learning, based on the mastery of content and skills.	I routinely self-reflect on my learning and monitor my progress based on the mastery of content and skills.
	In general, I do not have the skills to help me process what I am learning.	When given a plan or checklist, I am able to show evidence of my learning.	I can show evidence of my learning in one or more ways.	I assess my progress and show evidence of my learning using a variety of methods.
	Most of the time, I do not engage with others when processing my learning.	Sometimes communicating with others helps me reflect on my learning.	I am able to reflect on my learning both independently and with others.	I self-reflect and value the feedback of others. I seek out opportunities to collaborate on my learning.

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