

# The 4MAT Model

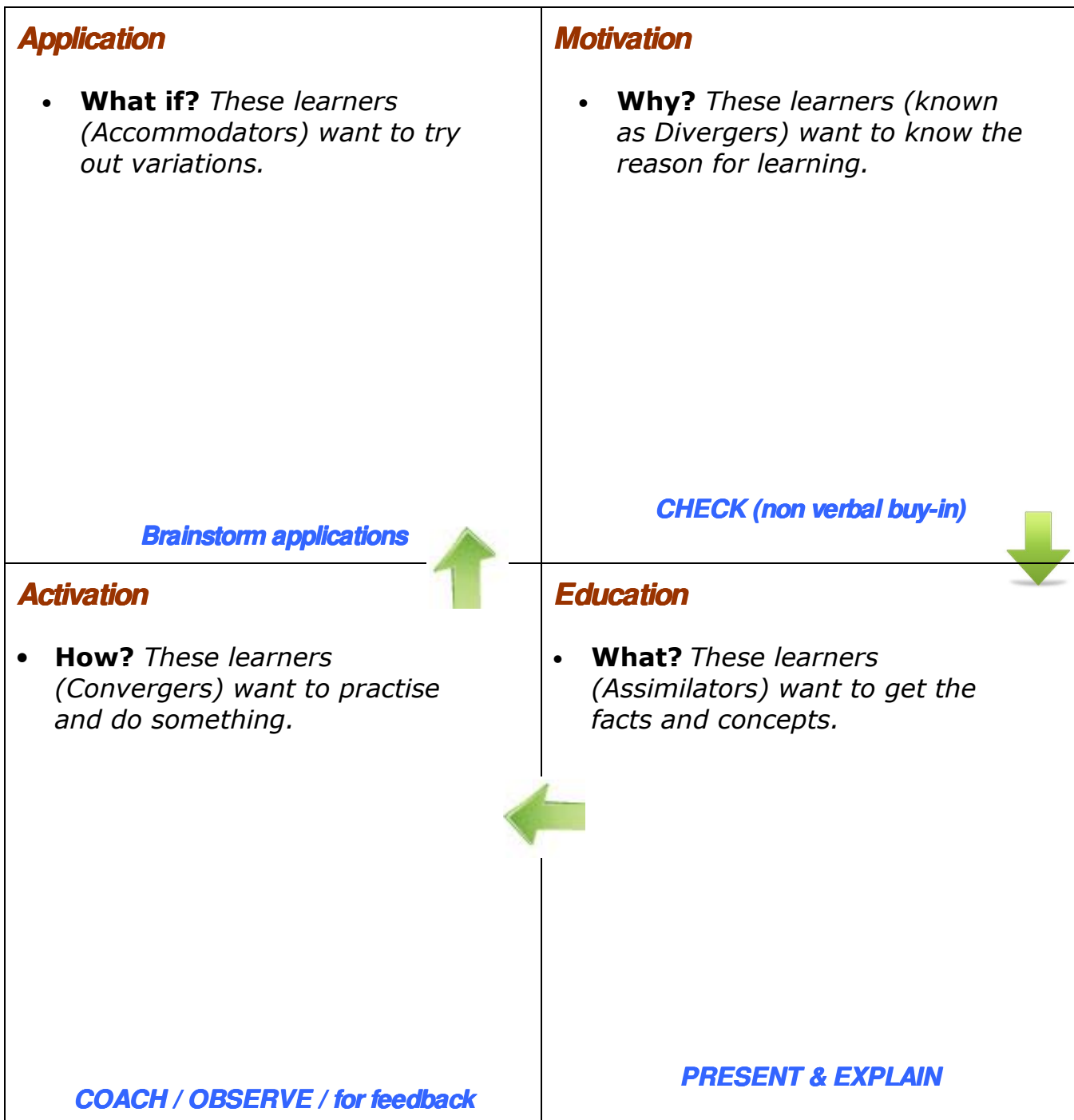
(Use this to plan your presentation or talk)

Here is a system that can help you format your presentation rapidly and make it understandable to the largest number of people.

Bernice McCarthy developed the 4-MAT model, which is based on NLP and the work of David Kolb. Kolb noticed that learners have different preferred learning styles.

In other words, they ask four different questions in relation to the learning process:

**START HERE**



# Presenting (even at short notice)

*Much advice and training on presentations assumes that you have plenty of time to prepare. But suppose you need to put together a talk within minutes? It is perfectly possible.*

## The 4-MAT system

*Here is a system that can help you format your presentation rapidly and make it understandable to the largest number of people.*

*Bernice McCarthy developed the 4-MAT model, which is based on NLP and the work of David Kolb. Kolb noticed that learners have different preferred learning styles.*

*In other words, they ask four different questions in relation to the learning process:*

- **Why?** *These learners (known as Divergers) want to know the reason for learning.*
- **What?** *These learners (Assimilators) want to get the facts and concepts.*
- **How?** *These learners (Convergers) want to practise and do something.*
- **What if?** *These learners (Accommodators) want to try out variations.*

*Each of the four groups is focusing on one section of a learning cycle that covers*

- *Identifying a reason to learn*
- *Formulating concepts about the subject*
- *Actively using the concepts*
- *Speculating about the results of using the concepts and trying them out in life elsewhere*
- *Identifying new reasons to learn more.*

*The fact that learners are spread across the four types carries implications for a presenter:*

- *Different teaching styles are required for each stage of this learning cycle*
- *Accelerated learning models seek to provide the tools to meet the needs of all four groups.*

*Those who lack motivation are often Divergers, whose 'Why are we listening to this?' question has not been answered. In their case, you will need to focus on motivation first – by explaining why the subject is worth listening to.*

*You can check that the why question has been answered for Divergers by asking, 'So would this be of use to you?' If not, it makes sense to continue demonstrating or explaining why until they are motivated.*

*The percentage of people in the US population with each learning style is shown below. (If you say these figures out loud, the people who write them down are likely to be in the What category). Particular cultures or groups may have a bias towards one style, but there will always be people in each category.*

<b>4-MAT</b>	<b>Learning style</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why?</li><li>• What?</li><li>• How?</li><li>• What if?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion</li><li>• Teaching</li><li>• Coaching</li><li>• Self-discovery</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 35%</li><li>• 22%</li><li>• 18%</li><li>• 25%</li></ul>

*The **Why** group learn best after exploring the reasons for taking action before actually doing so.*

- *Why do we need to know this stuff?*
- *Why bother to use it?'*

*The **What** group learn best when you give them information orally or on the printed page. In presentations, these people are happiest when they almost can't take notes fast enough to keep up with all the information.*

## Tip

*You will have people in all four categories. If you start by giving a lot of information for the What group, you will find that the Why people aren't taking it in because they don't have a good reason for doing so.*

*The **How** people learn best by doing. They are not too bothered with theory or reasons; they want to try things out, to get the feel.*

*The **What if** people learn best through self-discovery. If you observe them doing an exercise, it may bear no resemblance to what you asked them to do: 'I wonder what would happen if we just leave that step out?'*

## Example

*Here is an example of the way the 4-MAT model can be put into practise, in this case for selling.*

Start your sales presentation with: 'This is what we can do for you', which puts a frame around it. Then deal with each group in turn:

- This is why you would want to know what we can do for you.
- This is what we can actually do for you. Here are the details.
- This is how it will work for you. This is how you can use it in your business right now to get results.
- And these are the consequences if you do and the consequences if you don't.

Then you close.

## The instant presentation

If someone unexpectedly asks you to give a ten-minute presentation on the research you have been doing, there's no need to panic and think 'But I haven't done any preparation. I don't know what to say!' Instead, you just need to ask yourself: 'How do I structure this information, using the 4-MAT system to get through to everyone in the group?'

Here's is how you do it:

- Get yourself into the presenting state, and start by giving a brief overview of what is to come: 'This is what I have been researching. This is the information I'm going to give you.'
- Put in the whys: 'Now here is the reason why you would want to know about this. Let me tell you why this research is so important.'
- Go on to the what: 'So let me give you the information on this. These are the facts and figures... Here are the essential points... '
- Next, tell them how they can implement this: 'Using this information, this is how, within the company, we could get these particular results.'
- And finish by exploring the what ifs: 'Let's think about some of the consequences of applying this information. If we were to start using this knowledge in the company right now, this is likely to happen. Let's explore some possible benefits... And let's consider what will happen if we don't use this right now'.

You have now put together a presentation that will match the learning style of everyone in the group, and you have nicely structured all of your information. It doesn't matter whether you have five minutes, twenty minutes or two hours – you can instantly deliver something that will work.

Source & modified from: <http://www.alchemyformanagers.co.uk>