



Thinking Styles

By Robert J. Sternberg PhD

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In our society, the recognition of talent depends largely on idealized and entrenched perceptions of academic achievement and job performance. In *Thinking Styles*, psychologist Robert Sternberg argues that ability often goes unappreciated and uncultivated not because of lack of talent, but because of conflicting styles of thinking and learning. Using a variety of examples that range from scientific studies to personal anecdotes, Dr. Sternberg presents a theory of thinking styles that aims to explain why aptitude tests, school grades, and classroom performance often fail to identify real ability. He believes that criteria for intelligence in both school and the workplace are unfortunately based on the ability to conform rather than to learn. He takes this theory a step farther by stating that "achievement" can be a result of the compatibility of personal and institutional thinking styles, and "failure" is too often a result of a conflict of thinking styles, rather than a lack of intelligence or aptitude. Dr. Sternberg presents his revolutionary ideas in a way that is accessible to any educated reader. This provocative book suggests a real change in how we measure achievement and will inspire educators, employers, and parents alike.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Sternberg is a prolific and insightful writer. The ideas contained in this book may be useful to educators, employers, and psychologists. The information provided may help those in a position to make decisions about the value of others' contributions more aware of stylistic differences that may have a great deal of impact on performance, but have very little to do with ability...[and] may help sensitize people to recognize the value of differences in mental self-government to help capitalize on those differences." Contemporary Psychology

"[Sternberg's] examples are vivid and practical...Sternberg manages a clear, relatively jargon-free style and has organized his material in a user-friendly way." The Providence Sunday Journal

"[Sternberg's] ideas are provocative...They help explain why some of the very brightest kids flourish only after they've left their days of drab schooling far behind." Teacher Magazine

"A very readable book, which should interest a wide audience including upper-division undergraduates in education, psychology, and sociology." G.C. Gamst, Choice

"This is a thoughtfully constructed book that undertakes a fresh look at cognitive styles....The book is enjoyable and essential for all students, educators, employers, researchers and others interested in cognition and intelligence." Roseanne L. Flores, Readings

"In this stimulating and thought-provoking book, one of today's best-known psychologists provides a fascinating discussion of the many different ways people think and work today." Library and Information Science Annual

About the Author

Robert J. Sternberg is Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Psychology at Tufts University. Prior to being at Tufts, he was IBM Professor of Psychology and Education, Professor of Management in the School of Management, and Director of the Center for the Psychology of Abilities, Competencies, and Expertise at Yale University. This center, now relocated to Tufts, is dedicated to the advancement of theory, research, practice, and policy advancing the notion of intelligence as developing expertise, as a construct that is modifiable and capable, to some extent, of development throughout the lifespan. The Center seeks to have an impact on science, education, and society. Sternberg was the 2003 President of the American Psychological Association and is the 2006 2007 President of the Eastern Psychological Association. He was on the Board of Directors of the American Psychological Association and the Board of Trustees of the APA Insurance Trust. He is currently on the Board of Trustees of the American Psychological Foundation and on the Board of Directors of the Eastern Psychological Association as well as of the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Sternberg received his Ph.D. from Stanford University in 1975 and his B.A. from Yale University. He holds honorary doctorates from eight universities. He is the author of over 1,100 journal articles, chapters, and books. He focuses his research on intelligence, creativity, and wisdom and has studied love and close relationships as well as hate. This research has been conducted on five different continents.

Users Review

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