

Project Report

IGNITING TUTOR POTENTIAL

**CREATING A HIGHER STANDARD OF QUALITY
TUTORING**

Prepared for the Kellogg Rural Leadership Course 2008

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

The most telling measure of effectiveness as a tutor is the quality of a students learning. In recent years on average only 37% of Agriculture ITO trainees are actually completing their qualifications. There seems to be some potential barriers around a lack of emphasis being put on tutors capability or technique to deliver information. There is no formal evaluation process in place that focuses on accelerated learning and deliverance of that technique. There also appears to be no national facilitation for tutor improvement that delivers professional and personal development. This issue needs to be addressed if New Zealand agriculture wants to secure the future of their industry by attracting and developing highly skilled and motivated people.

The objectives of this report are

1. Establish the meaning of Tutor/Tutoring
2. Build student awareness of their learning style
3. Personal Review: What is my teaching style
4. Determine a course of action for tutor improvement to help the Agricultural Industries of New Zealand

The basis of this report has been centred on student evaluations, Industry representatives, self reflection and literature. I feel this adds a sense of transparency and factual information.

The main conclusions drawn are:

Industry Involvement

1. Currently at this stage there is no affiliation between training providers to help tutors: Prepare teaching programs, Create resources, Transfer Technology, Professional/ personal development, Technique training
2. Potential barriers for accelerated learning that I have identified are that no value or measure has been adopted to report on tutors capability or technique to deliver information. Industry seems to only be focusing on content of learning material.
3. Adult education and formal training is still strongly based around audio/visual information intake. Research suggests that learning by listening is the least preferred and hardest way for most students to remember complex or difficult information.

Student Review

1. For a student to develop and accelerate in their learning they need to recognise the value of their individual self knowledge.
2. Understanding style preferences and their differences can lead to a greater tolerance, decreased conflict, improved team work and greater productivity.

3. You cannot visually interpret an individual's learning style. For students to find out their learning style they would need to complete a 'learning styles Analysis'. This is currently not provided by training providers or Training organisations
4. when surveyed 65% of the students displayed some understanding of the indicators that helped them learn
5. 31% displayed a partial understanding of their own learning style in their answers
6. 69% acknowledged that they had learnt but had not shown any description towards understanding their own learning style
7. All students agreed that people did learn differently
8. Students had a clear idea of what they valued in their ideal Tutor

Tutor Review

1. It is imperative that tutors deliver the total package it is apparent that this is not happening.
2. Students identified that other tutors they had experienced lacked in Friendliness, energy, respect, values, Encouraging open discussion or student input, unclear explanations, unwilling to help
3. Comparison of characteristics emphasised that tutors need to be reviewed by their peers and students on more than just course content.
4. Information suggests Tutors have 3 important roles to signify:
 - To match students learning style with an appropriate teaching style
 - To be flexible – Confidence in choosing methods and strategies that will perform but also being prepared to try something else when usual methods don't work
 - Build on team Dynamics - Classes are made up of a group of individuals who have different levels of expertise. I have observed that when the power of those different perspectives and skills are combined and are engaged into effectively solving a problem or challenge the results can be very creative and decisive.
5. A course of action for Tutor improvement would include:
DESIGNING A TUTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
 - Creating Focus Group with representation from lead training providers
 - Adopt purpose of the group
 - Construct targets to be achieved
 - What resources will be needed
 - Review Process

Recommendations

1. Industry needs to lead the way and inspire new advances of improved knowledge into unlocking human potential and capability within New Zealand.

1. Emphasis needs to primarily be directed into tutor development.
2. Industry needs to endorse the creation of a focus group whose main purpose is to advance adult education and formal training to a new level.
3. Financial contribution from leading Industry organisations will be encouraged in support of method and strategy required to help extend resources and infrastructure
4. Intellectual property developed from focus group to only be used in conjunction with training providers who are contracted to Agriculture ITO to strengthen our competitive advantage

2. Begin Shifting Barriers and Creating Bridges.

1. Implementation of Tutor Development Programme designed for Tutor Improvement to help the Agricultural Industries of New Zealand
2. Encourage lead training providers to adopt and support on going review by conducting the original Student Survey on a larger scale involving all lead providers.
3. Initiate the process of style analysis for Tutors and Students at all levels of training
 - Thinking and working style preferences in conjunction with left and right brain thinking (Thinking Style Questionnaire)
 - Individual Characteristic and favoured sensory Preferences (VARK)
4. Gather information and review for intention of attaining future funding

INTRODUCTION

This report has been developed with the intention of creating a better understanding of a tutor's role and what effect it has on the students learning ability and potential.

I believe insufficient emphasis has been put on recognising the importance of creating a higher standard of quality tutoring. The key driver focuses on improved tutor development and technique.

We need to ensure we have the correct infrastructure and resources in place to add value to all those involved in extending knowledge into human potential and capability.

The basis of this report has been centred on student evaluations, Industry representatives, self reflection and literature. I feel this adds a sense of transparency and factual information.

In context to the self reflection, I believe it was important to evaluate and develop a better understanding of my own teaching style and what the value is to my students learning. It has the ability to strengthen the belief that there is a strong correlation between the students learning and the way the information is being delivered.

I believe the significance in these findings will not only be of value to all persons involved with in the Agricultural Industry sector, but will also help the industry forward into the future. DairyNZ has predicted that there will be an increased demand for 25% more quality dairy farm employees by 2015.

I envisage and hope that this project will be recognised as a working document that will grow and be utilised. It has been developed as a tool for generating a starting point into strengthening the link between both students and tutors ability to work together. The outcome will increase personal growth, well being and knowledge skill that will enhance the Agricultural industries in to the future, not only for the industry but also for the individual.

For the interest of the reader please note: Every intention has been made to quote and reference work to the original owner. Where no referencing has been made I have stated my own opinion or understanding of that information.

OBJECTIVES

1. Establish the meaning of tutor/tutoring

2. Student awareness of their learning style

- What are learning styles
- Do they know what their learning style is
- How do the students find out their learning style/what is the advantage
- How does the tutor use the information?

3. Personal review what is my teaching style

- Student review
- Comparison of characteristics of the ideal tutor vs. Kylie Welsh
- Why my students want me and the information I am giving them
- Identify teaching method/ style of teaching
- Do teaching styles matter

4. Determine a course of action for tutor improvement to help the Agricultural Industries of New Zealand

- Develop Action plan
 - Creation of Focus group
 - Purpose of Group
 - Targets to be achieved
 - Resources required
 - Review Process

1. Establish the meaning of tutor/tutoring

1.1 What is a tutor?

Definition: A tutor is someone charged with the instruction and guidance of another (linguaLinks Library 1999)

1.2 What is tutoring?

The dictionary definition describes a tutor as a person who gives individuals, or small groups, instruction. The purpose of tutoring is to help students help themselves, or assist or guide them to a point at which they become an independent learner, and thus no longer need a tutor.

Content knowledge is an essential ingredient for a tutor; however, to be truly effective, a tutor must combine content knowledge with empathy, honesty, humour, and a caring attitude.

Empathy requires a tutor to “read” the emotional states, attitudes and perceptions of their students. Empathy is the ability to see others from their personal frame of reference, and to communicate this understanding to the person involved.

In order for tutors to establish a supportive relationship with their students, tutors must be open and honest. Students are often reluctant to talk with a stranger about their academic problems.

If a tutor is perceived as genuine and having a strong desire to listen, students will become more willing to open up and discuss their problems.

Humour can also play an important part in a tutoring session. Humour can reduce tension, set students at ease and increase rapport. It can also be used to compliment, to guide or to provide negative feedback in a positive manner. Shared laughter is a powerful way to reinforce learning.

In addition, a successful tutor demonstrates a caring attitude. Caring consists of being organised for the tutoring session, being punctual, establishing a learning relationship with the student, developing unique teaching strategies, and becoming familiar with the learning process. Ultimately, tutoring is sharing yourself with another student in a way that makes a difference in both your lives.

KNOWN BENEFITS TO TUTORING

- Heightened sense of competency
- Encourages higher levels of thinking
- Increases motivation to learn in order to maintain new role
- Increases ability to manage own learning and study strategies
- Increases specific subject / general knowledge

KNOWN BENEFITS TO THE STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE TUTORING

- Offers more individualised, systematic, structured learning experience
- Provides greater resemblance between teacher and learner, closer role model
- Improves academic performance and personal growth
- Improves attitude toward subject area
- Motivates self-paced and self directed learning
- Provides intensive practice for students who need it
- Improves self esteem

The main findings in a report prepared for The Agriculture Industry Training organisation (Agito) (Project Champion July 2007) showed that:

- Agricultural training returns qualitative and quantitative value to trainees, the farming businesses they work for, the wider community and the economy.
- In the Dairy Industry the improvement in the skills and knowledge of employees due to training per farm (128 cows per trainee) in 2005 was \$690 in improved mastitis management, \$925 in reduced lameness, \$4437 in better feed management and \$2280 in improved heat detection. **The total value to dairy farm businesses as a result of improved management and skills resulting from training was an average \$8332 per annum per trained employee**
- **The Report Value Added(including costs) in training for the dairy industry in 2005 was 3.4 : 1**
- In the Sheep and Beef Industry the average improvement in stock and pasture management from training in 2005 equated to \$60 per hectare of area of responsibility (290 hectares per trainee). **The average gain to individual farms per trainee per annum was \$17,400**
- **The Report Value Added in training (including costs)for the Sheep and Beef industry in 2005 was 4.9 : 1**
- **THE COMBINED DAIRY AND SHEEP AND BEEF INDUSTRIES REPORT VALUE ADDED (INCLUDING COSTS) FOR 2005 WAS 3.8 : 1**
- Data gathered from Nimmo-Bell (2005) showed that trained employees are likely to reach a position of 'strategic farm management' – effectively making the decisions a farm owner does – seven years before a non-trained worker would.

2. Student awareness of their learning style

2.1 What is a learning style?

“According to Drs. Rita and Kenneth Dunn, two of the leading researchers in this field, Learning Style is the way in which human beings begin to concentrate on, absorb, process and retain new and difficult information,” (Prashnig 1998, p.7)

You will also find an importance of knowing ones working style which has a lot of similarity to learning style with the way in which they absorb and retain new and difficult information, think or concentrate, progression with there daily work and effectively problem solve(Prashnig 1998, p.7)

It is my opinion that from research done, the majority of learners often don't know why they have certain preferences or when or where they acquired them; but it is acceptable to say that they stay with us for life.

It is well documented that from a young age, the way we learn is determined by our genetic make up and environment.

According to Barbara Prashnig “research dating back to 1979 reveals that 3/5 of learning style is genetic; the remainder, apart from persistence is developed through experience.

The way people tend to take in information, process and store it seems to depend more on preferences which are inherent rather than acquired and, despite conditioning in schools or work environments, these preferences don't seem to change.

For students and Tutors to get a better understanding of learning there is a need to interpret how our brain actually interacts with our learning style.

The physical structure of the brain that relate to learning can be broken into six areas. Although theses areas are all interesting in their own right it is my opinion that the two that required the most understanding and interest are:

- The cortex
- Brain chemistry

The cortex

The cortex which covers the mid brain is the most highly developed thinking part of the brain. The cortex can be broken up into two hemispheres, the left and right.

The two hemispheres are electrically connected together with a column of neurons that is known as the corpus callosum.

For most people it is believed that the left hemisphere is used for analytical operations, language, symbols and logical processes. The right hemisphere however is involved in visualisation, synthesis, and creativity.

The cortex has the ability to sort the information and combines it with what we already know including memories and recall

As we are all aware none of us are born the same and therefore all our brains are also not created equally. Some will have a strong preference to the left side, others maybe to the right. However there is also those of us who have no strong dominating preference and have the ability to be a **balanced thinker**, meaning we can access both sides when needed.

Historically formal education establishments traditionally only encouraged development of the left side of the cortex's capabilities, but due to on going study there is now an awareness on the important role that the right side plays towards an improved rate of academic development.

Ward, Daley (1998) believe that "probably our greatest unused resource is our creativity and the infinite possibilities for visualising and synthesising."

Unfortunately for all of us to be able to get access to the creativity, it needs to be processed through the left side of the brain in the form of language and symbols. This now illustrates the importance of the sides working together and that the links are created as strong as possible.

If we are successful in combining the two together we create what is termed as either **whole brain learning** or **accelerated learning**.

Brain Chemistry

It is my opinion that being able to understand our brain chemistry has its complexities, but well founded information suggests that that the mixture of chemical in our brain at any one time determines how it operates.

Mood, memory, motivation, reasoning, creativity, and all behaviour seem to be controlled by our brain chemistry. However, our thoughts and actions have the capability of being able to change the chemical mix.

The more positive we feel the more likely we are to think rationally and contain memories. Regrettably on the negative side, the more stressed, threatened or intimidated we feel can produce chemicals which will have a detrimental effect or even suppress natural thinking and learning.

Research suggests that humans are only using 10% of our Brain Potential

2.2 Do they know what their learning style is?

The approach to this area was done by the means of a:

- Student survey (questioning sheet) APPENDIX A

The purpose of the student survey was to gather information in three main areas

1. Self knowledge
2. Learning Environment
3. Tutor Qualities

The students who were selected to take part in the survey where

- Students who had been in training for more than a 12 month period
- Tutored by Kylie Welsh for more than a 12 month period
- Had at some stage had access to other tutors.

58 students took part in the survey;

These were the students that were present in class the day the survey was presented.

The classes consist of students ranging between the age of 17- 45 and has a mixture of male and female who a studying towards various levels of a National Certificate in Agriculture/ National Certificate in Production Management.

The survey was completely voluntary and anonymous.

All students who were present on the day took part.

Area One: Self Knowledge

The students were asked to answer a range of questions around **Class attendance, learning techniques, learning environment.**

The students were asked firstly why they come to class.

- **34% confirmed that they chose to.**
- **66% confirmed that they chose to and that their employer supported them to go**
- **No student had been forced to attend**

They were then asked if they had been **learning new things in class. How did they think they had been learning** them and did they believe that **people learnt differently?**

- **All students agreed that they had all learnt new things**
- **31% displayed a partial understanding of their own learning style in their answers**
- **69% acknowledged that they had learnt but had not shown any description towards understanding their own learning style**
- **All students agreed that people did learn differently**

When describing their **ideal learning environment** and what they **felt was important**:

- **65% of the students displayed some understanding of the indicators that helped them learn**
- **35% of the students had no preference.**

2.3 How do the students find out their learning style/ what is the advantage

As shown in the data retrieved from the student survey only **31% of the students displayed a partial understanding of their learning style.**

You cannot visually interpret an individuals learning style. For students to find out their learning style they would need to complete a **learning styles Analysis**. This is currently not provided by training providers or Training organisations.

There are numerous ways to identify learning styles how ever we need to take note that these are only to be used as a guide to your preferred style as they are not 100% proof.

It is my opinion that the testing models that looked appropriate and user friendly were the **thinking style questionnaire** and the **VAK, VAKT, VARK** models. They are simple and easy to understand and are relatively easy to obtain via the internet. The **preliminary test** for evaluating learning style should be done at the **initial enrolment for study** and then reviewed at a later date as they develop their accelerated learning techniques.

The thinking style questionnaire is about thinking and working style preferences that are in conjunction with either left brain or right brain thinking (Analytical/Holistic)

VAK, VAKT, VARK refers to an individual characteristics and favoured sensory preferences.

Please refer to Appendix B for overview of learning style models

For a student to develop and accelerate in their learning they need to recognise how valuable the understanding of their individual self knowledge is.

Identifying self knowledge would include knowing oneself, identification of individual learning style, potential and probable outcomes.

When they are equipped with this knowledge they can begin to benefit from the learning experience and really accelerate with no limit to what they can or will achieve. Currently on average **only 37% of Agriculture ITO trainees are completing their qualifications.**(McLennan 2008)

Understanding style preferences and their differences can lead to a greater tolerance, decreased conflict, improved team work and greater productivity. It also encourages students as employees or owners of a business to select roles which provide the best 'fit' for their learning strengths.

Prashnig (1998) identified that when human beings know their potential, their unique style and how to go about effective information intake, they will naturally become what they are meant to be as a species: **Successful lifelong learners in their own style.**

Guide to kick starting the brain

It is my opinion that to use our brains full potential to benefit our learning style strength and weaknesses we need to encourage both sides of our cortex. To enable this, we need to strengthen our corpus callosum and this will encourage the two halves to become integrated.

Research suggests that women generally seem to prefer their right side to men with the left and therefore have developed a thicker corpus callosums.

Relaxing physically, Educational kinesiology, using creativity and imagination are three ways we can encourage both sides of our brain to develop and strengthen as shown in the following examples.

Relaxing physically

Those of us that are predominate left side user will find this method great of creating access to the resources of our right side. Relaxation helps alter the chemical mixture in the brain which in turns helps with the flow of electrical messages through the cortex.

Educational Kinesiology

Certain types of physical movements will strengthen the brain communication networks through the corpus callosum. Movements that cross the middle of the body will encourage both side of the brain to work together more effectively. Lengthening movements will help release tension so that the emotions that control motivation are stimulated. You can also integrate some energising movements in to this also this requires you to touch or use certain parts of your body that help revitalise your neural connections encouraging your emotional and thinking parts of the brain to work together.

Using creativity and imagination

Knowingly working certain skills located in the right side of your brain such as musical, creativeness, artistic or imagination will help strengthen the links between both sides of the brain helping reinforce your accelerating learning

2.4 How does the tutor use the information?

When a student has identified their individual learning, thinking and working styles they then have the opportunity to pass this information onto their tutor. That information will then help form a better understanding of their students true learning needs which in turn encourages lifelong learning by adapting and utilising their unique style preferences.

In my opinion potential barriers for accelerated learning that I have identified are that no value or measure has been adopted to report on tutors capability or technique to deliver information. Industry seems to only be focusing on content of academic material. I believe tutors need to be evaluated on ability to not only being directive but also supportive. Tutors need to be encouraged and supported in achieving new skills and competencies to become more effective.

It is imperative for tutors to cater for individual preferences. Individual learning needs to take into account style differences not only in tutoring practices but also in class preparation. When individuality is accepted motivation goes up and self esteem increases. This helps study skills improve and a positive feeling of well being with an increased desire to learn.

When students cannot learn in the way we teach them, we must learn to teach them in the way they can learn.

Tutors need to develop a better understanding of how to help students expand specific skills or knowledge strengths.

Tutors need to remember that professional skills are a work in progress therefore we need to continually keep evaluating and developing new and improved learning strategies, tools, and techniques.

It is my opinion that understanding your role and responsibilities will encourage you to grow professionally but still maintain your distinct identity that makes you a tutor.

Intelligence alone does not indicate success as a tutor; but what kind of person, or what kind of student you are does. You need to reinforce the commitment into developing students understanding and growth. Having a clear definition helps you stay focused and on task, making you and your knowledge a very valuable asset.

It is imperative that tutors deliver the total package it is my belief that this is not happening.

3. Personal Review – What is my teaching style/ is it effective?

Tutors are given a tremendous amount of responsibility and can play a major part in whether a student becomes a successful life time learner.

In my opinion, any tutor who wants to add value to their qualities needs to be prepared to continuously increase skill and knowledge. To enable us to do this we must use student/peer evaluations and ongoing reflection to determine our effectiveness into the quality of student learning. The way we perceive lessons have been conducted may actually be the exact opposite of what we want to achieve.

It is my belief that for me to be a proactive high quality tutor I need to understand my role as a tutor and what it really means to be a tutor. I have a passion for knowledge and ongoing learning, a desire to connect with the students in a way that enhances synergy of the learning experience. I enjoy sharing information with others and I have immense pleasure learning from others.

To achieve the level of effectiveness that will benefit my students I need to have a better understanding of my own self knowledge. The value of self knowledge for a tutor and person is unlimited.

I would like to have a better understanding of the characteristics that I am displaying and using with my students. Are they the ideal characteristics that are going to help my students develop and grow? Are the methods I am using in effect as good as they could be? Does it really matter what teaching style I am using?

3.1 Student Review

The information for this section was acquired from the student survey covering the areas of:

- Learning Environment
- Tutor Qualities

Area Two: Learning environment

The students were asked to answer a range of questions around their **class environment, expectations of class members, Tutor length and choice, and ideal learning environment.**

When asked to describe their **current class environment** the majority of students **identified six main influencers** described as the following;

They felt that the class environment Was a **positive, friendly, and enjoyable** place to learn where they felt **relaxed** enough to be able to have **interactive** sessions that were **easy to contribute to** and **felt comfortable** doing so.

When asked about what they expected from their class members, their philosophy was that they needed to be **friendly** and treat each other with **respect**, work together in **cooperation** to **share knowledge**, be **honest** and be a **support to each other.**

When asked if given a choice would they prefer to have the same tutor throughout their duration of study or change every year

- **86% of the students said they would keep the same one because we know their teaching methods**
- **7% of the students would change to get new knowledge and a different view on things**
- 7% of the students had no preference.

When asked to describe their ideal learning environment and what they felt was of importance, the main denominator was they would prefer to have more **hands on (physical) learning** incorporated with in the sessions. They believed **structure** was important and that the atmosphere would be **comfortable, relaxed** with a **friendly positive attitude** towards learning that would be **fun.**

Area three: Tutor Qualities

The students were asked to answer a range of questions around expectations for an **ideal tutor, Tutor comparison, Tutor Characteristics**.

The students were firstly asked what they expected from their Tutor.

They were given a selection of 25 words with no boundaries on how many or how few qualities they could choose.

For the purpose of this report I have ranked them in preference order from most required to least required.

Table One

TYPE OF QUALITY (Ideal tutor)	Ranking	Student Agreement
Knowledgeable	1	93%
Friendly	2	84%
Positive Attitude	3	82%
Sense of humour	4	79%
Energetic supportive	5=	72%
Good listener Likeable	6=	68%
Honest	7	65%
Effective	8	58%
Caring attitude	9	51%
Genuine	10	48%
Trustworthy	11	44%
Loud bubbly	12=	31%
loyalty	13	27%
Rude, Disruptive, Bully	14=	0.01%
Negative, Untrustworthy, Over powering, Non caring, Doesn't listen, harsh	15=	0%

The students were then asked the question “**in comparison to other tutors they had experienced, what did Kylie Welsh do differently?**”

Kylie is very **friendly** and **energetic**, she **respects** and **values** the **student input** by **encouraging open discussion** and lets the **students be themselves**.

Kylie makes **learning fun** by playing games

She is still on the farm which gives **current knowledge**. Her **explanations** are always **thorough on all levels**; she is **always willing to help**.

The students were then asked, that if they had to **describe Kylie** to a new student what words would **best portray her**

They were given a selection of the same 25 words used in table one and once again, no boundaries were required on how many or how few qualities they could choose.

Table Two

TYPE OF QUALITY (Kylie Welsh)	Ranking	Student Agreement
Sense of humour Positive Attitude	1=	96%
Knowledgeable Friendly	2=	93%
Likeable	3	86%
Good listener Honest Trustworthy Energetic	4=	82%
Supportive Caring Attitude Genuine	5=	79%
Bubbly Effective	6=	75%
Loud	7	72%
Loyal	8	65%
Harsh Doesn't Listen	9=	5%
Disruptive, Over powering	10=	2%
Bully, Non caring, Untrustworthy, Negative, Rude	11=	0.01%

3.2 Comparison of characteristics of the ideal Tutor vs. Kylie Welsh

The Third table is a comparison of what the students **expect from their ideal tutor** and the **qualities** that would **best describe Kylie as a tutor**. The table has been put in order of rankings that the students first picked when they selected their ideal tutor.

Table Three

TYPE OF QUALITY (Ideal tutor would have)	Ranking	Ideal Tutor	Kylie Welsh
Knowledgeable	1	93%	93%
Friendly	2	84%	93%
Positive Attitude	3	82%	96%
Sense of humour	4	79%	96%
Energetic supportive	5=	72%	82% 79%
Good listener	6=	68%	82%
Likeable			86%
Honest	7	65%	82%
Effective	8	58%	75%
Caring attitude	9	51%	79%
Genuine	10	48%	79%
Trustworthy	11	44%	82%
Loud bubbly	12=	31%	72% 75%
loyalty	13	27%	65%
Rude, Disruptive, Bully	14=	0.01%	0.01% 2% 0.01
Over powering harsh Negative, Untrustworthy, Non caring, Doesn't listen,	15=	0%	2% 5% 0.01% 0.01% 0.01% 5%

Students were given a list of 8 characteristics and asked which ones they had seen Kylie displayed in class.

All the students agreed 100% that Kylie had shown:

- **A positive outlook:** The belief that things can be changed through action
- **A desire to help others:** The willingness to become involved with people at first hand and in depth
- **An even disposition:** Patience, gentleness, understanding and fairness
- **An open mind:** A willingness to accept other people and their point of view
- **Enthusiasm:** A liking for the subject, and a wish to share it with others

99% of the students agreed that she had displayed:

- **Initiative:** The ability to see what needs to be done and to do something about it.

97% of the students agreed that she had displayed:

- **Empathy:** The ability to feel what another person is feeling
- **Reliability as a worker:** Punctual, dependable, steady

3.3 Why my students want me and the information I am giving them

My interpretations of the results show that in all the categories of importance, I have scored well above average. The findings in this information has shown me that I have been demonstrating a fairly good understanding of what my students require to help them feel secure with in their learning environment and am providing them with what they feel a tutor should be. There are some identified areas at the bottom of the scale that will need attention and improvement.

3.4 Identify Teaching method/style of teaching

Identification was established by five methods

- Thinking style questionnaire(left/right brain dominance)
- VARK(sensory modalities)
- How I feel about learning survey(Pre/Post testing)
- Leadership survey
- Student survey

Results

Thinking Style Score	Strong Preference Holistic	
	Analytical (Left) 6	Holistic (Right) 14

Vark	No Preference can use all senses			
	Visual 5	Aural 9	Read / Write 9	Kinaesthetic 11

Learning Survey	Learning Attitude Average	High Learning Motivation
	Pre Test +1	Post Test +10

Leadership Survey	Leadership Emergence 23.21	From Possible 30.5
	Leadership Effectiveness 18.18	From Possible 23.0
	Lead by example 4.00	Average 4.45
	Participative Decisionmaking 4.83	Average 4.04
	Coaching 4.45	Average 3.96
	Informing 4.5	Average 3.85
	Showing concern/ Team interaction 4.40	Average 4.07

3.5 Do teaching styles matter?

In my opinion everyone should be made aware of how learning and teaching style interact. Tutors need to focus on student centred teaching. If we do not reach the students who need it the most they will be lost forever as life long learners. **Most tutors will teach with their own learning style.**

New Zealand is traditionally known as hands on learners (tactile and Kinesthetic) we are not big listeners. Adult education and formal training is still strongly based around audio/visual information intake.

Research suggests that learning by listening is the least preferred and hardest way for most students to remember complex or difficult information.

- Strong preference Audio learners can only remember approx 75% of what they learn.
- Less than 30% of adult learners in New Zealand are Audio
- Less than 30% of adult learners in New Zealand have visual preference.
- Over 30% of New Zealand have a preference for either tactile and/or Kinesthetic methods

It is my opinion that tutors have 3 important roles to signify:

1. To match students learning style with an appropriate teaching style
2. To be flexible – We need to feel confident in choosing methods and strategies that will perform but also being prepared to try something else when usual methods don't work
3. Build on team Dynamics – Our classes are made up of a group of individuals who have different levels of expertise. I have observed that when the power of those different perspectives and skills are combined and are engaged into effectively solving a problem or challenge the results can be very creative and decisive.

Fulfilling these roles can take a lot of time and energy and for tutors that do not have a good support network they can very easily become burnt out.

The world is changing at an incredible rate and things are constantly changing therefore as tutors we must keep up on latest developments.

Currently at this stage there is no affiliation between training providers to help tutors:

- Prepare teaching programs
- Create resources
- Transfer Technology
- Professional/ personal development.
- Technique training

Traditionally it has been up to the individual training providers to offer this to their staff. Reluctance can often happen due to lack of a facilitator, Intellectual property, high cost, and tutor availability.

4. Determine a course of action for tutor improvement to help the Agricultural Industries of New Zealand

TUTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

OBJECTIVE	ACTION PLAN
Create focus Group with representation from training providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact representative from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agriculture NZ ○ Agriculture ITO ○ Agribusiness Training ○ Dairy NZ training ○ Rural Tec • Organise central meeting point • Stipulate who will cover cost for initial setup • Who will best suit Facilitator role
Adopt purpose of Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss current issues with in industry • Who is this group targeting • What value will be added to Industry • SWOT • Discuss possible outcomes • Establish Key Drivers
Construct targets to be achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current situation • How best to capture Tutor Intellectual Property • Set milestones • Adopt best practice targets • Stipulate time frames
What resources will be needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure that will be needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Location/Regions ○ Costs • Physical resources • Funding Sources • General Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Survey tutors/Students ○ Motivational speakers ○ Education Specialists ○ Communication Expert • Facilitator requirements • Membership • How will information be transferred
Review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual Property • SWOT • National Industry Involvement • Evaluate targets • Focus Group • Future Funding

CONCLUSIONS

INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT

- Currently at this stage there is no affiliation between training providers to help tutors: Prepare teaching programs, Create resources, Transfer Technology, Professional and personal development, Technique training

Traditionally it has been up to the individual training providers to offer professional and personal development to their staff. Reluctance can often happen due to lack of a facilitator, Intellectual property, high cost, and tutor availability.

- Potential barriers for accelerated learning that I have identified are that no value or measure has been adopted to report on tutors capability or technique to deliver information. Industry seems to only be focusing on content of learning material.
- Adult education and formal training is still strongly based around audio/visual information intake.
Research suggests that learning by listening is the least preferred and hardest way for most students to remember complex or difficult information.

STUDENT REVIEW

- For a student to develop and accelerate in their learning they need to recognise the value of their individual self knowledge.
- Identifying self knowledge includes knowing oneself, identification of individual learning style, and potential. When equipped with this knowledge a huge beneficial gain can be achieved within the learning experience.
- Understanding style preferences and their differences can lead to a greater tolerance, decreased conflict, improved team work and greater productivity. It also encourages students as employees or owners of a business to select roles which provide the best 'fit' for their learning
- You cannot visually interpret an individuals learning style. For students to find out their learning style they would need to complete a 'learning styles Analysis'. This is currently not provided by training providers or Training organisations
- When surveyed 65% of the students displayed some understanding of the indicators that helped them learn
- 35% of the students had no preference.
- All students agreed that they had all learnt new things

- 31% displayed a partial understanding of their own learning style in their answers
- 69% acknowledged that they had learnt but had not shown any description towards understanding their own learning style
- All students agreed that people did learn differently
- Data gathered from Nimmo-Bell (2005) showed that trained employees are likely to reach a position of 'strategic farm management' seven years before a non-trained worker.
- Students had a clear idea of what they valued in their ideal Tutor
- Students were very clear on Characteristics that Kylie Welsh had demonstrated

TUTOR REVIEW

- Comparison of characteristics emphasised that tutors need to be reviewed by their peers and students on more than just course content.
- Students identified that other tutors they had experienced lacked in Friendliness, energy, respect, values, Encouraging open discussion or student input, unclear explanations, unwilling to help
- It is imperative that tutors deliver the total package it is apparent that this is not happening.
- The purpose of tutoring is to help students help themselves, to a point at which they become an independent learner
- Information suggests Tutors have 3 important roles to signify:
 - To match students learning style with an appropriate teaching style
 - To be flexible – Confidence in choosing methods and strategies that will perform but also being prepared to try something else when usual methods don't work
 - Build on team Dynamics - Classes are made up of a group of individuals who have different levels of expertise. I have observed that when the power of those different perspectives and skills are combined and are engaged into effectively solving a problem or challenge the results can be very creative and decisive.
- Most tutors will teach with their own learning style.

RECCOMENDATIONS

1. Industry needs to lead the way and inspire new advances of improved knowledge into unlocking human potential and capability within New Zealand.

- Emphasis needs to primarily be directed into tutor development
- Industry needs to endorse the creation of a focus group whose main purpose is to advance adult education and formal training to a new level
- Financial contribution from leading Industry organisations will be encouraged in support of method and strategy required to help extend resources and infrastructure
- Intellectual property developed from focus group to only be used in conjunction with training providers who are contracted to Agriculture ITO to strengthen our competitive advantage

2. Begin Shifting Barriers and Creating Bridges.

- Implementation of Tutor Development Programme designed for Tutor Improvement to help the Agricultural Industries of New Zealand
- Encourage lead training providers to adopt and support on going review by conducting the original Student Survey on a larger scale involving all lead providers.
- Initiate the process of style analysis for Tutors and Students at all levels of training
 - Thinking and working style preferences in conjunction with left and right brain thinking (Thinking Style Questionnaire)
 - Individual Characteristic and favoured sensory Preferences (VARK)
- Gather information and review for intention of attaining future funding for continuation of Tutor Development Programme.

REFERENCES

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'Coaching people' Harvard business School Press

'The Smart Study Guide' Louise Tamblin and Pat Ward

'Psychology Demystified' Anna A. Romero, Ph.D. and Steven M. Kemp, Ph.D.

'Making Teams Work' Michael Maginn

'The Power of Diversity' Barbara Prashnig

'Reporting Value Added by Agriculture Training' Fred Hardy

'Everybody's Different' Neil D Fleming

APPENDIX A

Student questionnaire

1. Why do you come to class?

- I choose to
- I choose to and my employer supports me to go
- I am made to come

2. How would you describe your class environment?

3. What are your expectations from your tutor?

supportive	Sense of humor	Over powering	trustworthy	harsh
Good listener	rude	honest	Non caring	effective
loyal	negative	knowledgeable	Doesn't listen	genuine
Caring attitude	untrustworthy	bubbly	Positive attitude	bully
friendly	loud	disruptive	energetic	likeable

4. What do you expect from your class members?

5. Compared to other tutors you have had, What does Kylie do differently?

6. Do you think that you have been learning new things in class?

7. How do you think you've been learning them?

8. Do you believe that people learn differently?
9. If given a choice would you prefer to have the same tutor through out your study or change every year? (can you explain your answer please)
10. If you had to describe Kylie to a new student from the words below what would they be? (cross out the ones she's not)

supportive	Sense of humour	Over powering	trustworthy	harsh
Good listener	rude	honest	Non caring	effective
loyal	negative	knowledgeable	Doesn't listen	genuine
Caring attitude	untrustworthy	bubbly	Positive attitude	bully
friendly	loud	disruptive	energetic	likeable

11. What characteristics have you seen Kylie display in class? (cross out any you haven't seen)

- **A positive outlook:** The belief that things can be changed through action
- **A desire to help others:** The willingness to become involved with people at the first hand and in depth
- **Empathy:** The ability to feel what another person is feeling
- **An even disposition:** patience, gentleness, understanding and fairness
- **An open mind:** A willingness to accept other people and their point of view
- **Initiative:** The ability to see what needs to be done and to do something about it.
- **Enthusiasm:** A liking for the subject, and a wish to share it with others.
- **Reliability as a worker:** Punctual, dependable, steady

12. Describe your ideal learning environment, and what you feel is really important

Appendix B

OVERVIEW OF LEARNING STYLE MODELS

Extract from the book "The power of Diversity" Barbara Prashnig 1998

The VAK model (Bandler-Grinder)

The V-A-K Model is the basis for Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP- the study of words and nerves), taking into account through which modalities (senses) people process and store information. Created in the seventies, it is now widely used for counselling, learning and communication training.

The 4mat system Model (McCarthy)

The 4mat system was developed in the early eighties and is based on right and left brain dominance, giving insight into how humans first perceive and then process information. It functions as a model for teaching and is used in schools for enhancing instructional Techniques.

The Dunn & Dunn Model (Dunn & Dunn)

The Dunn and Dunn model was developed to help educationally disadvantaged children. Research began in the late sixties to identify individual preferences in students during the learning process. It is the most comprehensive and best researched learning style model and is available in two versions: LSI(Learning Styles Inventory) for school children and PEPS(Productivity Environmental Preference Survey) for adults

Herrmann Brain Dominance Model (Herrmann)

The brain quadrants of the Herrmann brain dominance model describe preferences for mental functioning and brain dominance. Based on brain related research, it was created in the late seventies and is being used in management training to enhance creativity and productivity of people.

The Gregorc Energic model (Gregorc/Butler)

The Gregorc Energic model of mindstyles created in the mid seventies, provides an organised way to consider how the mind works. It identifies four qualities found within four basic meditation channels. Butler refined it, and it is used for instructional strategies to enhance classroom teaching.

The Working Style Analysis (Dunn & Prashnig)

The working style analysis (WSA) is based on the original Dunn & Dunn model but has been extended in to two areas: sensory and left/right brain dominance. It was co-created in 1993, computerised in New Zealand in 1994, and is particularly applicable for people in the workforce and for career planning.

VARK

VARK was developed from VAK by Neil D Fleming (NZ) IN 1987. Neil's findings from research indicated that there was a need to include a fourth dimension being that the visual sense was split into two preferences – V for graphics(those who like patterns, colour, different formats and layouts) and R for read/write (those who like text in all its various forms(diaries, filofaxes, lists, power points, the internet, quotations, books)

The acronym VARK stands for the four sensory modes that we use everyday – visual, Aural (auditory), Read/write and kinaesthetic. These are particularly important in learning and as humans we are learning numerous things each day. (Fleming)