# LEARNING HOW TO LEARN AT UNIVERSITY

## Deductive and Inductive Learning

Broadly speaking, there are two types of opportunities that universities provide when it comes to learning – deductive and inductive.

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| **Definitions: Deductive and Inductive Learning**  *Deductive learning* involves the presentation of information to the student by an educator. The educator knows the information and the student is the recipient. It is seen as ‘teacher-centred’.  *Inductive learning* involves analysing experiences and information, and developing ideas and concepts based on those experiences and that information. The educator facilitates the learning. It is seen as ‘student-centred’. |

Most of the tools used at university (especially in the earlier years of study) and covered below are deductive. A lecture for example is the situation where the information is delivered by an expert in the field – your lecturer – and presented to you. This is valuable where experiences are limited and therefore the opportunity for you as a student to develop thinking and ideas independently is not as prevalent as if you were already working as a manager.

The facilitation of inductive learning, however, tends to occur where individuals have some experiences and maybe some thinking, but need the chance to put those experiences together in order to develop some ideas about how the world works. This is particularly the case where students are studying on an MBA programme or attending some management training. The lecturer then has a different role – namely, to facilitate the learning of the group and enable individuals to understand why certain things work – or don’t work – in the way they do (or don’t). The tools listed below cover both approaches, but the further you move through your degree, the more likely you are to be expected to develop your own ideas about business (or your discipline) from information given to you – rather than relying on your lecturer to tell you how things work.