

## **Abstract**

Research on the career paths of airport management professionals included an assessment of learning styles to better understand the psychological profile of those in this career field. The Kolb Learning Styles Inventory, Version 3 (LSI-3) was used for the study for participants to self-assess their preferences for learning. General research on the validity and reliability of the (LSI-3) indicates that a roughly equal number of the general population categorize themselves in one out of four categories (Accommodators, Assimilators, Convergers, or Divergers). In the research involving airport management professionals, more than two-thirds of the respondents categorized themselves as Divergers. Another 22% categorized themselves as Accommodators. With almost 90% of the sample population represented within two of the four LSI groups, the evidence strongly suggests that airport management professionals prefer to learn by carefully evaluating definitive outcomes in a social environmental as opposed to action-based experimentation. Curiously, these results are diametrically opposite of similar research for another aviation related career path - military pilots, most of whom (44.2%) categorized themselves as Convergers (Kanske, 1999). This research may have implications in aviation education, particularly for recognizing that some students in collegiate aviation programs may have learning styles that are aligned with airport management professionals as opposed to other technically oriented aviation careers (e.g., commercial pilot). This understanding may be helpful in counseling students, particularly those struggling to find an aviation career path that better fits their preferred learning environment.