Don’t Just Talk, Communicate!

“The greatest problem with communication is the assumption that it has taken place.”
—George Bernard Shaw

4 important factors in communication

1 Intent
  Purpose—what you want to have happen

2 Criteria, Expectations or Needs
  Relevant factors to be taken into consideration

3 Content
  Subject—what we end up talking about

4 Process
  How we look _____ %
  How we sound _____ %
  Words we choose _____ %

IF our message is incongruent!

........................................................................
........................................................................
........................................................................
Communication style self-assessment

**DIRECTIONS:** Working across each horizontal row of four words, place a 4, 3, 2 or 1 in the space in front of each word. Numbers range from 4 being most like you to 1 being least like you. For accurate analysis, it’s important that you use each number only once in each horizontal row of words. Move quickly and write down your first reaction. When you have written a number in the space in front of each word, total the columns vertically; write the total in the space at the bottom.

You’re focusing on which role?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>__________</th>
<th>__________</th>
<th>__________</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Accurate</td>
<td>3 Direct</td>
<td>2 Friendly</td>
<td>1 Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Systematic</td>
<td>3 Adventurous</td>
<td>2 Persuasive</td>
<td>1 Loyal</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Judgmental</td>
<td>3 Stubborn</td>
<td>2 Impulsive</td>
<td>1 Passive</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Competent</td>
<td>3 Self-reliant</td>
<td>2 Confident</td>
<td>1 Neighborly</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Conventional</td>
<td>3 Forceful</td>
<td>2 Optimistic</td>
<td>1 Gentle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Restrained</td>
<td>3 Quick</td>
<td>2 Colorful</td>
<td>1 Even-tempered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Practical</td>
<td>3 Outspoken</td>
<td>2 Emotional</td>
<td>1 Predictable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Perfectionist</td>
<td>3 Impatient</td>
<td>2 Talkative</td>
<td>1 Easy mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Law-abiding</td>
<td>3 Self-directed</td>
<td>2 High-spirited</td>
<td>1 Good listener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Cautious</td>
<td>3 Risk-taker</td>
<td>2 Playful</td>
<td>1 Content</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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What’s your style—what’s their style?

**Task Focus**

**GREEN**  
- Accuracy
- Thoughtful pace
- Ask specific questions
- Precise—detail-oriented
- Weigh pros and cons—researcher
- Conscientious—thorough
- Creative—great brainstormer
- Private
- Get bogged down in details
- Perfectionist—impatient with self and others
  - Detached, aloof, nitpicking
  - Impatient, unfriendly, superior
  - Want appreciation of a job well done

**RED**  
- Results
- Fast pace
- Decisive—make quick decisions
- Risk-taker—learn from trial and error
- Rely on experience-based intuition
- Accept challenges—like to take charge
- Find practical uses for ideas and theories
- Self-starter—intense worker
- Difficulty in recognizing needs of others
- Forget to take people with them
  - Impatient, blunt
  - Demanding, abrasive
  - Want to know what you think

**BLUE**  
- Stability
- Cautious pace
- Great listener—patient
- Use systematic approach—deliberate
- Learn from hands-on experience
- Perform in a consistent, predictable manner
- Calming amid tension
- Adhere to key directives and standards
- Keep thoughts and feelings to themselves
  - Frustrated by lack of structure
- Overly concerned about details and procedures
- Resist change; avoid conflict
  - Indecisive, hesitant
  - Resentful, focused on negatives, stubborn
  - Cherish people and things they care about

**YELLOW**  
- Contact with People
- Quick pace
- Animated facial expressions and gestures
- Flexible—adaptable; balk at structure
- Positive—adaptable; balk at structure
- Creative—great brainstormer
- Articulate—persuasive
- View things from a variety of perspectives
- Create a motivating environment
  - Inattentive to detail
- Overly concerned about pleasing others
- Emotional, impulsive, come on strong
  - Undisciplined, excitable, flaky
  - Opinionated, sarcastic, argumentative
  - Want to be liked—public recognition

**People Focus**
Adjusting your style to influence the response you receive

Task Focus

Green

Want **Accuracy** =
Answer **Why** questions

- Cautious pace
- Thoroughly prepare your facts in advance
- Support ideas with accurate data
- Show you’ve carefully researched …list pros and cons, analysis
- Present in written form
- Focus on accuracy rather than personal connection!
- Be brief and concise

Red

Want **Results** =
Answer **What & When** questions

- Fast pace
- Support ideas with experience
- Focus on bottom line…be specific
- Show how it solves a problem
- Tell them your opinion/conclusion
- Demonstrate mutual goal achieved
- Show use of trial and error
- Emphasize *cutting edge* aspects
- Stop talking…they’ve decided!

Indirect - Ask
(Logical/Sequential)

Blue

Want **Consistency** =
Answer **How** questions

- Slow pace
- Be sincere and personable
- Be patient in drawing out their goals
- Present ideas for change in a non-threatening manner
- Emphasize how risk is minimized
- Show practical and realistic applications using specific examples—let them touch it, feel it
- Focus on benefits and continuity

Yellow

Want contact with **People** =
Answer **Who** questions

- Quick pace
- Focus on ideas and people
- Offer interpretations rather than specific details
- Focus on instincts rather than logic
- Present broad issues first …invite them to brainstorm
- Offer novel and unusual suggestions
- Focus on connecting with them
- Use entire body to communicate

People Focus
Adjust your style—a specific style and situation

Then decide:

1. What do I want to accomplish—what’s my intent?

2. What will influence or persuade them / their criteria?

3. What about my content? What should I say or write?

4. What do I need to focus on regarding the process?
   My nonverbals—if face-to-face.
   My tone—either of my voice or the tone of my email

5. What will be the greatest challenge for me when communicating with a person of this style?

Directions: Think of a communication style/color you may have some difficulty communicating with effectively in person, by email or over the phone.

Style: ..........................................................

Think of a situation with a coworker or customer of this style in which you could have some difficulty meeting your goal/intent for the communication.

Situation: ..........................................................

Review: Adjusting your Style for that color on page four.
Your action plan

Something I would do well to

...keep doing

...stop doing

...start doing

An aspect of my communication style that I may need to adjust to get a more positive response from customers and coworkers

_identify an aspect for each style—room to the left

Suggested Reading:

What Makes a Leader? by Daniel Goleman. $8.95 at hbr.org

Goldsmith, Marshall. What Got You Here Won’t Get You There

Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, Switzler. Crucial Conversations

Pease, Barbara & Allan. The Definitive Book of Body Language

Seligman, Martin E.P., Ph.D. Learned Optimism

Tannen, Deborah. You Just Don’t Understand

Talking from 9 to 5

_check out Jan’s blog posts, tweets & articles for ongoing support