

















STRAIGHT TALK® LESSON 2: THE SIXTEEN SPECIFIC COMMUNICATION STYLES

This lesson includes extended profiles of all 16 Straight Talk communication styles. Drawn from the book *Straight Talk: Turning Communication Upside Down for Strategic Results*, it describes how each style communicates, how each style manages, how each style deals with conflict, and each style's compatibility with other styles. This is an invaluable tool for managers, consultants and trainers.

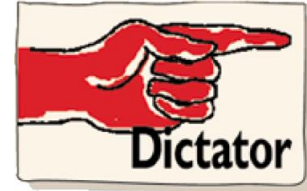
 Dictator	 Initiator	 Charmer	 Entertainer
 Explorer	 Persuader	 Diplomat	 Socializer
 Investigator	 Organizer	 Counselor	 Nurturer
 Analyzer	 Supporter	 Provider	 Pleaser

DIRECTORS

DICTATOR

Primary style: Director

Secondary style: Director



As a Dictator, you thrive on being in control. You bristle when someone else is in charge. When you communicate with other people, it's typically to discuss things you want to accomplish. Personal issues and emotional situations are awkward for you. You'd rather talk about a new business venture or a new car.

At work, you seem to have amazing energy to get things done. But you can also seem insensitive and manipulative. You're valued for your leadership skills and "take charge" attitude. But you also tend to make decisions quickly – much more quickly than other people do. So not everyone may be on board when you say: "Listen up, here's what we're going to do."

The Dictator has a hard time with interpersonal communication. You typically talk in abrupt sentences and don't volunteer a lot of information. You have a short attention span, which makes it difficult for people to be around you. The way you're perceived makes it hard for people to open up. You enjoy dealing with other "bottom-liners." But you'd much prefer to be doing something – not talking about it.

To be a more competent communicator, the Dictator needs to be much more patient and self-disclosing. Dictators should set aside time in their day simply to practice making casual conversation with other people.

Start by disclosing how you feel about a particular situation or current event. Talk about your feelings and reactions. If it involves some juicy controversy, state your opinion but then emphasize that your mind is open. Invite other points of view ("What do you think about it?") Then give other people plenty of time to talk. Above all, ask questions and listen. Don't conduct an interrogation!

Dictators need to make people feel they're really interested in their point of view. Try using empathic listening: Say: "I understand you," or "you make a good point." Paraphrase and play back what people say. Once you learn to control your snap judgments, you'll be far more likely to find your troops behind you when you yell "Charge!"

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Dictators tend to feel most compatible with people as assertive and task-focused as themselves. This includes the Initiator, Charmer, Explorer, and Persuader. Complementary styles would be those with a high score on the Harmonizer scale e.g., the Counselor, Supporter, Provider and Pleaser.

INITIATOR

Primary style: Director
Secondary style: Expresser

As an Initiator, you're happiest when leading a group of people or on your own. You don't like it when someone else is in charge. Your energy and ingenuity inspire admiration. But your desire to make others conform to your way of doing things can undermine the respect you desire. You tend to be private with your own feelings. In your best moments, you're charismatic and enthusiastic – in your worst moments, arrogant and bossy.



At work, the Initiator can display great vision about the needs of an organization. You may undertake too much at times; yet you somehow manage to get the job done. You are often regarded as having impossible standards and making snap judgments about people. This can make the people around you feel uneasy and anxious.

The Initiator has the potential to be a good communicator. You like people and prefer a direct, honest approach. But you tend to jump to conclusions about what people mean without checking your facts. To be more successful a communicator, the Initiator needs to soften his or her style, to ask more questions, to be less assertive.

Because the Initiator is perceived as aggressive, your questions can appear patronizing or demanding. You need to make it clear that you want to increase the level of understanding for everyone involved, not gain the upper hand. You should try to restrain yourself from drawing conclusions too quickly. It also might help if you control your body language and reduce the amount of direct eye contact. By paraphrasing what other people say, you will show more respect for them. They'll respond more positively once they see you're willing to take the time to understand what they're saying.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Initiators are assertive people, so they tend to be compatible with styles as assertive as themselves, particularly the Dictator, Charmer, Explorer and Persuader. For a complementary style, they should look to people with high scores in the Thinker and Harmonizer scales, particularly the Provider and Supporter. Other complementary styles include the Organizer, Counselor, Investigator, Analyzer, Socializer, Nurturer, and Pleaser.

EXPLORER

Primary style: Director
Secondary style: Thinker

As an Explorer, you enjoy complex challenges, whether it's developing a new business or climbing a mountain. You pride yourself on how much you can accomplish compared to other people. People view the Explorer as logical and independent. They also think of you as unemotional. In relationships, you tend to be a perfectionist. You're not always easy to get along with.



At work, the Explorer is known for doing things on his own and conceiving new theories or solutions. You enjoy taking the long-term perspective and meeting large challenges. At the same time, the Explorer can become lost in the theoretical, forgetting about other people's concerns.

To communicate better, the Explorer needs to suppress his natural instinct to look at everything logically. Instead, practice disclosing your personal feelings and reactions to a situation. Don't say: "Conditions look favorable for making this transaction." Say: "I would really like to close this deal."

You're careful in gathering facts before presenting a solution. But you need to spend more time getting buy-in, letting other people talk about their approach to the problem. Expressing frustration at how much time it takes to reach a solution won't help. You should practice listening for the assumptions in other people's statements, and then gently help them see things more objectively. By focusing your attention on how other people see a situation, you'll find they respect and respond to your insights far more readily.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Explorers are compatible with people who share their desire to think analytically and focus on getting a job done e.g., the Dictator, Initiator, Investigator, Persuader, and Organizer. A nice complement to the Explorer is a person with high scores in the Harmonizer and Expresser scales e.g., a Nurturer or a Socializer. Other complementary styles include Diplomat, Charmer, Entertainer, Counselor, Provider and Pleaser.

PERSUADER

Primary style: Director

Secondary style: Harmonizer



As a Persuader, you possess a pragmatic, people-oriented approach that enables you to get other people to do the things you want. For the most part, you can be warm and friendly. But when your back is up against the wall, you can also seem cold and dictatorial.

At work, the Persuader likes to run and organize activities. You make a good leader because you tend to consider everyone's point of view, not just your own or a select group's. Your pragmatic approach enables you to communicate effectively and honestly – though sometimes with a degree of cynicism. While balanced in your approach to people and the requirements of the situation, you can be imprecise in spelling out exactly what you want. This can limit your potential as a leader.

Most of the time the Persuader communicates effectively and honestly. To communicate better, you need to work on two things: First, precision. The Persuader tends to leave out crucial details, leaving your audience uncertain about what to do next. You should organize your thoughts in advance and make sure everyone has the same information.

Second, while you recognize the need to listen and gather input, you tend to make assumptions about what needs to be done before gathering enough data. This can undermine the process and cause people to respond half-heartedly to your agenda. The Persuader will benefit by making clear that your mind is open to suggestions and alternative strategies. Only after enough input is gathered should you apply your persuasive powers. Given your ability to listen, this will make you a very effective communicator.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Persuaders can get along with anyone, so consider any of the 16 styles compatible, particularly the Initiator, Explorer, and Dictator. In terms of a complementary style, the Persuader might seek someone whose strength is in the Expressive and Thinker scales e.g., Diplomat or Organizer. Other good complements to the Persuader are the Analyzer, Investigator, Supporter, Charmer, Socializer, and Entertainer.

Directors' Approach to Management

As someone whose primary style is Director, you're at your best when boiling a complex situation into a few key goals. You have that big picture vision that enables you to see what others cannot – what needs to be done, by when, and by whom. But you don't like to be bothered with details, so your planning efforts may fall short when it comes to actual implementation.

Directors tend to want to do everything themselves. So delegating can be a challenge! Once they delegate a task, Directors tend to assume that other people will do the job quickly and efficiently. But that's not necessarily the case. Directors need to practice checking in, making sure people have the resources they need, answering questions, weighing priorities, and monitoring progress.

Directors excel at setting big, bold goals. They can be inspiring and charismatic. Directors often make good leaders. But they can also be perceived as self-interested, even ruthless. So Directors need to warm up their style in order to manage people successfully. Take the time to ask questions, make casual chitchat, and invite other people's input.

As a Director, you'll be tempted to step in and take control if a project goes off course. Try to avoid taking dramatic action that causes everyone to feel confused and resentful. By planning carefully and communicating in a sensitive manner, you can prevent management mayhem from ensuing.

As a Director, your approach to time management is to try to do everything now. You view time as a rare commodity, always in short supply. You tend to impose short deadlines, not allowing enough room for unexpected changes. You also tend to view deadlines as hard and fixed rules. So when a project misses its deadline, ask questions before you do or say something you'll regret later.

The key for you is to carve out enough time to involve everyone in the planning. By involving others, you'll gain invaluable buy-in. You'll also set more realistic schedules for yourself and others.

The Director's Approach to Conflict

With other Directors:

It's natural for you to butt heads with other Directors, since you're both forceful personalities, focused on your own agendas and tasks at hand. Conflicting priorities cause many conflicts between Directors. To resolve the conflict, you need to take the time to state your case, cite supporting evidence, and then ask good questions. Keeping an open mind until all the evidence is in will enable you to resolve it.

Another source of conflicts between Directors is poor listening skills. Since neither of you takes the time to listen carefully, you both tend to jump to conclusions. Only to find to your surprise later that you completely misunderstood one another! That's why it's so important for Directors to set aside enough time (difficult as it is) to listen, ask questions, and clarify your assumptions.

In negotiating with another Director, remember to lay all your cards on the table. Directors would prefer to get the deal done now, rather than engage in long, protracted negotiations. If your progress is blocked, remember that Directors like to horse trade: Offer to give way on your issues if he'll give way on his.

When delivering bad news to another Director, follow your instincts. Lay it out clearly and directly. Then ask if there's anything that you can do to help.

With Expressers:

In a stressful situation, Directors need to let Expressers vent their feelings. Avoid your first thought, which is to cut the conversation short. Let the Expresser talk it through. Then help the Expresser organize his or her thoughts. Use your skill at seeing the big picture to round out the Expresser's view of the situation. Help him or her review the long-term consequences. Remember, the Expresser wants to open up to you, so be patient.

In negotiating with an Expresser, Directors should remember not to assume the Expresser has determined his or her priorities. The Expresser may appear to know what's most important, when in fact he's still trying to assess the situation. Again, by clarifying the situation for the Expresser, you can become an ally.

The Director's instinct is to deliver bad news right away. Make sure you show sensitivity when you do. When you've got bad news to tell an Expresser, tell it in human terms: "I feel really bad about this, but here's what happened."

With Thinkers:

The Director wants things done right away, and the Thinker wants things done right. So a major source of conflict for these two is over time. Typically, the Director will say: "Finish this by Friday." When the Thinker protests, the Director will listen with only half an ear. The Thinker will be reluctant to ask more questions because of the Director's obvious lack of patience.

Once a conflict arises, Directors need to be careful in handling it. Both of you can be stubborn – you don't want to cross the line to an unacceptable level of conflict. Set aside time at the end of the day or on a weekend when the two of you can dissect what went wrong and reach clear agreements on the steps you're going to take. Failure to invest time in understanding what went wrong will leave the Thinker with the clear impression you don't really care about the process – or the outcome – and cannot be trusted in the future.

The same rules apply to a Director delivering bad news to a Thinker. You'll need to explain exactly what happened and analyze all possible outcomes. Calculate in advance the time that you expect it to take. Then double it! That's what it will take.

With Harmonizers:

Directors need to check their desire to be blunt and direct when dealing with Harmonizers in stressful situations. Understanding the root of the conflict is the only sure way to repair a rift in the relationship. Unlike the Thinker, who might only require an analysis of what happened, followed by a change in process or policy, the Harmonizer needs to believe his value to you hasn't diminished. You will need to talk through the problem, and re-establish trust. This will not be easy for you, because once the Harmonizer has pinned the label of "insensitive" or "disrespectful" on you, it will require a major investment of your time to change his feelings.

When negotiating with a Harmonizer, start the conversation with lots of small talk and banter. If your goal is to make the negotiation bear fruit, then you've got to take the time to find out about his family, his background, and his interests. Only after a framework of friendship has been established will you be able to negotiate successfully.

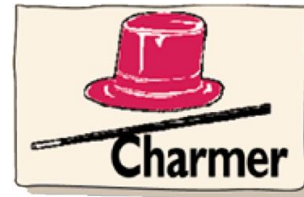
If you have bad news, underscore your sensitivity to the situation. Make sure you choose a moment when the Harmonizer has plenty of privacy in which to react and plenty of time to discuss his or her feelings about what ought to be done. Above all, show empathy!

EXPRESSERS

CHARMER

Primary style: Expresser

Secondary style: Director



As a Charmer, you're happiest when you're expressing yourself or doing something creative. You're not happy with humdrum day-to-day activities. Details are not the province of the Charmer. Instead of preparing in advance for important situations or meetings, you tend to rely on the force of your personality to carry the day. This can make you popular and well-liked, but can also make you appear inconsistent or superficial. You especially like people you've just met, revealing to them your inner feelings and secrets. This can vex the people closest to you, who wonder why they don't get such special treatment.

At work, the Charmer is well suited to providing a creative spark to an organization and its people. At the same time, you may not be patient enough, or sufficiently well organized, to provide the necessary structure and stability. Because you tend to be assertive and demanding, you can appear insensitive to others. But in fact the Charmer is tuned to how other people feel.

The Charmer tends to leap to conclusions, especially about people's intentions. You're quick to feel slighted if people don't communicate with you. You're sensitive to signs of disrespect. This can make you seem difficult to get along with.

The Charmer has the potential to be a competent communicator, especially if her or she can learn to pay more attention to details and process. When important situations arise, you should give yourself plenty of time for preparation and focus your attention on the details of planning. Decide on two or three objectives. You should rehearse and allow other people to critique your presentation. In meetings, you should ask more questions and paraphrase people's responses. And you should tell people when you're thinking aloud. It helps them to distinguish your finished thoughts from "works in progress."

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Charmers are compatible with people like themselves, people who like to express ideas and prefer bold, adventurous action. They'll be compatible with the Dictator, Explorer, Persuader, Diplomat, Entertainer and Socializer. In terms of a complementary style, a nice balance for the Charmer is someone with high scores in the Harmonizer and Thinker scales e.g., Provider and Supporter. Other complementary styles include Investigator, Counselor, Organizer, Analyzer, Provider, Nurturer, and Pleaser.

ENTERTAINER

Primary style: Expresser
Secondary style: Expresser



As an Entertainer, you're happiest when the spotlight is on you – least happy when someone else is getting all the attention. In business, you're good at public speaking and sales presentations, maybe even one of the performing arts. But your sensitivity and desire to be liked make it difficult for you to deal with awkward situations and make tough decisions.

At work, you're at your best in a creative environment that requires on-the-spot improvisation and imagination. Brainstorming meetings are where the Entertainer shines, not analyzing financial reports or preparing a work plan.

To communicate better, the Entertainer needs to round out his or her skills by learning how to listen more carefully, to ask more detailed questions, and to think more analytically. Practice the art of asking questions, gathering data, and analyzing what additional information is needed before drawing a conclusion. When you have the spotlight, try to focus on the situation rather than on other people or yourself. Thinking out loud can get the Entertainer into trouble, so rehearse what you're going to say – especially in sensitive situations. This can help prevent you from developing a sudden case of "foot-in-mouth disease."

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Entertainers are compatible with people like themselves who enjoy self-expression e.g., the Charmer, Initiator, Diplomat, and Socializer. A good complement to the Entertainer is someone with a high score on the Thinker scales e.g., Analyzer, Supporter, Investigator, and Organizer.

DIPLOMAT

Primary style: Expresser
Secondary style: Thinker



As a Diplomat, you're a bit of a contradiction: fun loving and jovial, yet aloof and analytical. You revel in pleasurable things, people, and places – and love talking about them, which makes you a magnet for other people. Yet you can be very analytical and sober-minded. Taken together, this can make the diplomat something of an enigma. People can interpret you as masking your calculating nature with your social skills.

At work, the Diplomat is perceived as personable, versatile, and analytical. You are drawn to situations and organizations where your people management skills can be used. You are competent at leading people through complex projects. At times the Diplomat's focus and determination can be overwhelming to others, especially those less articulate. The Diplomat may need to learn to temper his drive for perfection with sensitivity to other people's feelings.

The Diplomat can be a skilled communicator. Your ability to ask detailed questions nicely complements your expressive side. To communicate better, you may need to allow other people to contribute equally to the discussion. You may need to remind people that your mind is open – that you're genuinely looking for ideas and input. You should remember to begin persuading only after everyone has had a chance to say his or her piece. And you may need to temper your drive for perfection with sensitivity for other people's concerns.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Diplomats can get along with anyone, so consider any of the 16 styles compatible, particularly the Charmer, Socializer, and Entertainer. A nice complement to the Diplomat is a person with high scores in the Director and Harmonizer scales e.g., Persuader or Counselor. Other complementary styles include Initiator, Explorer, Dictator, Nurturer, Provider, and Pleaser.

SOCIALIZER

Primary style: Expresser
Secondary style: Harmonizer



As a Socializer, you're happiest being with other people, engaged in animated conversation; you're least happy when alone. You love social activities – going to parties, attending meetings, engaging in conversation. To your friends, you're loyal to the end. But when you feel unappreciated, you can become depressed and withdrawn. In relationships, the Socializer is a true friend, sensitive to other's needs. The only downside is that the Socializer may not examine a situation logically, and therefore may make decisions without considering all the information or implications.

At work, the Socializer is a born team member, always looking to inject a creative idea and motivate people. When inspired, he or she can work endless hours. When you feel unappreciated, you can become withdrawn and unproductive. The Socializer may need to work on handling conflict more directly by remembering that conflict is natural in any organization.

To communicate better, the Socializer needs to be more logical and analytical in his or her communications. You should work on asking logical questions and pursuing a rational line of inquiry, especially in disagreeable situations. By avoiding painful feelings and situations, the Socializer is only half a communicator – the easy half. You should try to analyze a difficult situation in terms of the missing information. What assumptions are you making? What assumptions are other people making? What could you be missing? In a difficult situation, it will help if you rehearse what you're going to say. The more practiced you gets at addressing the things that don't feel right, the more effective a communicator you will be.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Socializers are compatible with people who like to express themselves and are people oriented e.g., Charmer, Entertainer, Diplomat, Nurturer, Pleaser and Provider. In terms of complementary styles, they should look to people with high scores in the Director and Thinker scales e.g., Explorer and Investigator. Other complementary styles include Initiator, Persuader, Dictator, Investigator, Organizer, Supporter, and Analyzer.

The Expresser's Approach to Management

As someone whose primary style is Expresser, you excel at brain storming. You love to imagine possible scenarios and come up with bold, creative solutions. You'll leapfrog from idea to idea, hoping to latch onto an idea that gets people excited. You can dazzle people with your ability to think on your feet. But if none of your ideas catch fire, you may become frustrated and turn to something else.

Expressers aren't natural delegators. They're so busy that they don't take the time to plan carefully what resources are required or who's best for the job. When conceiving a project, they tend to describe it one way on Monday, only to describe it differently on Tuesday.

To prevent havoc, the Expresser needs to commit to a specific set of outcomes and deadlines. By writing a detailed draft of a project, the Expresser can learn to edit his ideas and develop a final set of specs. Putting the project into words also compels a certain level of logical analysis – an invaluable exercise for an Expresser.

When projects go awry, the Expressers' natural enthusiasm and optimism may blind them to the damage done. They may need to seek the counsel of others to grasp the full impact of a situation. By not focusing on the full ramifications, the Expresser may be setting the stage for further failure later on.

The Expresser is seen as a charismatic, charming leader, with lots of energy and inspiration. People enjoy your company. But to become a more effective manager, the Expresser needs to buckle down and do the detailed analysis, rather than leave it to others. Practice organizing a task so that everybody has their work clearly spelled out with a detailed timeline. Make lists! And monitor people's progress with periodic check-ins.

In terms of time management, the Expresser has two different clocks. One applies to himself; the second to everyone else. When he's talking, he'll let the clock run on. But when listening, he may grow impatient. This double standard is a trademark of Expressers. To become a successful manager, he needs to put everyone, including himself, on the same clock.

The Expresser's Approach to Conflict

With other Expressers:

Expressers want to express themselves. That means controlling the conversation. So conflicts typically revolve around maintaining control. In a meeting of Expressers, for example, the group leader should emphasize the need to balance listening with advocating. Make it a ground rule. By doing so, you set the stage for a productive meeting.

Another source of conflict surrounds commitments. Expressers tend to make vague commitments and consider deadlines "flexible." People are likely to be frustrated by the Expresser's lack of follow through. A good rule is for Expressers to force themselves to make written agreements whenever possible. And remember to go "the last mile" to finish a project completely.

When negotiating, two Expressers will tend to think out loud, to brainstorm, and to think out of the box. Which can be very productive. But it can also lead to a very disorganized conversation. Expressers may need an outside party to help steer the conversation. Again, when agreements are reached, it is very important to write them down.

When delivering bad news to an Expresser, do what comes naturally. Say: "I'm terribly sorry to upset you. But..." Then proceed to lay out the story with as much evidence from other people as possible. But don't forget to ask questions and listen!

With Directors:

If you're an Expresser, you have three challenges in dealing with a Director. First, you like to think aloud, which only confuses the Director. You need to train yourself to listen carefully – and then respond after you've had a chance to analyze the situation.

Second, you should rein in your emotions as much as possible. If you know there's going to be a confrontation, pick a time when you feel in control. Directors want tough-minded analysis and action. Show them the numbers. Prepare two or three alternatives. Negotiate from a position of knowing what's most important to you. This is hard for Expressers. But force yourself to make choices.

Finally, Expressers tend to focus on people, the Director on tasks and projects. To resolve a conflict with a Director, get on the same wavelength. Don't say: "I'm teed off that our sales staff doesn't seem to be using our new software." Say: "Our sales team's failure to adopt our sales management software is having a serious impact on our sales revenues this month." Then offer two or three solutions.

With Thinkers:

For Expressers, a major source of conflict with Thinkers is being imprecise. Expressers often portray things in broad, general terms: "We need to penetrate the market for organic foods." Or: "We need to set aside money for the children's education." The Thinker prefers much more detail and precision. They'll ask many questions. "What do we know about the market? How is it defined?" Typically, the Expresser will grow

frustrated by all these questions. He'll ask the Thinker to figure out a solution. This may leave the Thinker thinking: "Boy, is he lazy!"

When a conflict occurs, Expressers need to ask questions and find out exactly what went wrong. Again, it's going to require an investment of energy and concentration that the Expresser will find taxing. But in order to maintain trust with a Thinker, the Expresser must show respect for the Thinker's way of doing things. Only then can you reach an agreement on what to do next.

When delivering bad news, the Expresser should take time to organize his thoughts. Give the Thinker ample warning that you need to discuss something important. Find out when it will fit into his schedule. Then make sure you've given yourself enough time to answer all his questions.

With Harmonizers:

Expressers enjoy free-flowing conversations filled with imaginative ideas and have a high tolerance for ambiguity. The Harmonizer likes order, structure, and predictability. Put these two together and you have a recipe for conflict.

For example, the Expresser may think he's being clear when he says: "We need to totally rethink the way we're handling this client. Put the team together and give me your best thoughts at the sales meeting tomorrow." But the Expresser has failed to define the issues or the goals. As a result, the Harmonizer is baffled about how to approach the problem.

When a conflict occurs, the Expresser needs to handle the situation gingerly. You need to recognize that your preference for loose talking and ambiguity won't serve the situation well. You need to take responsibility for your lack of clarity. You should point out to the Harmonizer exactly where the misunderstanding occurred. You should state your resolve to change your style of communicating. And then the two of you should decide what steps to take.

In presenting bad news to a Harmonizer, demonstrate your concern for everyone involved. If you have a solution, show how it minimizes damage to other people.

THINKERS

INVESTIGATOR

Primary style: Thinker

Secondary style: Director

As an Investigator, you like to be viewed as an encyclopedia of information, a walking expert. You're happiest when someone asks you a question or taps you to perform a logical task. You're not very focused on people's feelings, preferring to observe life and all its curious ways with an air of detachment. Your logical, focused personality is at its best during times of crisis, when you're known for calmly analyzing the situation and keeping your head while all about you are losing theirs.



At work, the Investigator is perceived as cool, calculating, and competent. You may make an excellent engineer because you enjoy figuring out how things work and using your knowledge to improve them. You enjoy being called upon to provide solutions on the spot; as a result, you make a good trouble-shooter.

To communicate better, the Investigator needs to curb his or her desire to dissect everything and everybody. You are by nature a good listener and communicator when the subject is a task, or a process, or a piece of equipment. But you may resist using the same skills of inquiry when it comes to people. By being more willing to expose yourself to other people's feelings and points of view, and by being willing to disclose your own feelings, you'll find that you can solve organizational problems, too.

Because you have a naturally cool demeanor, you might try using facial and hand gestures more often to make your points. Above all, you should train yourself to think about how other people feel. If you succeed, you'll make a great communicator.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Investigators are compatible with people who share their desire to think and communicate in logical, precise terms e.g., Analyzer, Explorer, Organizer and Supporter. A nice balance for the Investigator is someone with high scores in the Expresser and Harmonizer scales e.g., Socializer or Nurturer. Other complementary styles include Charmer, Entertainer, Diplomat, Counselor, Provider and Pleaser.

ORGANIZER

Primary style: Thinker

Secondary style: Expresser

As an Organizer, you enjoy getting people to do things together, which makes you effective in almost any social situation. Your compassion and dedication to other people is apparent. The Organizer is comfortable talking about other people, but not particularly comfortable talking about himself. Your relationships tend to be varied and well rounded – if a bit lacking in passion. Your style



of communicating is to avoid trouble spots, which may make you less of a leader than you could be.

At work, the Organizer is respected for your principled and conscientious way of doing things. Compassionate toward people, you enjoy helping them interact and work together, which makes you a good manager. You at times need to go someplace where you can be focused and alone.

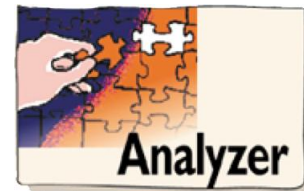
The Organizer has the ability to be a strong communicator. You know how to ask questions and analyze a situation. You also know how to say things in a sensitive, understanding way. Your challenge is to communicate when there's a potential conflict. You may be reluctant to take a position or raise an issue that you feel may be a magnet for controversy or criticism. You need to be willing to step in and find out what people think and get their opinions. By asking for input, you can build ownership in the decision. By beating around the bush, you'll only leave everyone feeling frustrated.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

The Organizer will be compatible with any of the 16 styles, particularly people who share their careful approach to solving problems e.g., Analyzer, Investigator, and Supporter. A nice balance for the Organizer is someone with a high score in the Director and Harmonizer scales e.g., Persuader or Counselor. Other complementary styles include Dictator, Initiator, Explorer, Nurturer, Provider and Pleaser.

ANALYZER

Primary style: Thinker
Secondary style: Thinker



The Analyzer is painstaking and thorough with detail, valued for following a logical process and getting tasks done the correct way. You are happiest using your logical abilities to solve problems, and least happy when forced to engage in social activities. To others, the Analyzer can be viewed as something of a social misfit. You tend to avoid showing your feelings or asserting your own desires. This makes you an enigma to those around you, who don't know how to get close to you or offer help when needed.

At work, the Analyzer can be counted on to respond positively to accomplishing a specific task – so long as it falls into your area of expertise and can be tackled using a tried and true approach. The Analyzer is adept at collecting information, but not at seeing the bigger picture. So in your communications, you may appear to be prematurely focused on details when the goal remains unclear. At times your style may appear too conservative and inflexible.

To become a more effective communicator, the Analyzer needs to be willing to open yourself up to outside input and ideas. Your biggest barrier to being an effective communicator is holding back too much. You should try expressing your point of view and asking other people whether they see it the same way – or whether there's another equally valid interpretation. You should force yourself to solicit a full spectrum of opinion.

As you open up and people feel more comfortable around you, you'll discover you're more apt to become a far more successful communicator.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

The Analyzer will be most compatible with people who think logically and carefully e.g., the Investigator, Explorer, Organizer, and Supporter. A good complement to the Analyzer is a person with a high score in the Expresser scale e.g., Entertainer, Charmer, Diplomat, and Socializer.

SUPPORTER

Primary style: Thinker

Secondary style: Harmonizer



The Supporter's patience with people, and innate kind-heartedness, make you an ideal person to turn to for help. You can be analytical when the situation requires it, but you are always looking out for other people. Cautious and conservative by nature, the Supporter prefers that someone else take the risks. In your communications, you display a high level of loyalty and caring for other people. But you should be on guard that your low-risk approach doesn't land you in hot water – you may stick with something or someone far too long.

At work, the Supporter is patient and kind, preferring to blend a cautious approach with a desire for harmony among your colleagues. You are valued for knowing the rules and traditions, and for paying close attention to the consequences of a given decision on the people involved. You make a good peace-maker or negotiator. You're not likely to be known for your innovative thinking, which may limit you in certain types of jobs.

The Supporter is a natural communicator, especially when discussing an issue or concern outside himself. But you can be reluctant to assert your own feelings and ideas. When you wish to communicate something about yourself, you should try the same patient approach you take with others. You should preface your remarks by saying you want to speak plainly – then say exactly what you feel. You shouldn't worry about appearing too blunt or honest. You run little risk of being thought insensitive. Once you have expressed your views, you'll find it breaks the ice for others to speak honestly about the same issue.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

The Supporter will be most compatible with people who share their careful, concerned approach to solving problems e.g., Analyzer, Investigator, Organizer, and Provider. If you're looking for a complementary style, it would be someone with a high score in the Director and Expresser scales e.g., Initiator or Charmer. Other complementary styles include Explorer, Persuader, Dictator, Socializer, Diplomat, and Entertainer.

The Thinker's Approach to Management

As someone whose primary style is Thinker, you excel at planning. You enjoy knowing that you've covered every contingency. But planning alone cannot guarantee success. You may overlook the kind of bold, creative thinking that allows you to identify the best alternatives. Rather than starting a project by looking at the logistics and timetable, a better approach is to invite creativity first, and only afterwards give rein to your natural planning abilities.

Thinkers are natural delegators. You logically consider the desired outcomes, the deadlines, and the necessary resources. You're capable of setting up a project management plan that spells out a two-year timeline. You're also good at monitoring progress, giving praise to people who've completed their tasks.

To become more effective managers, Thinkers may need to be more open-minded and warm toward others. If you ask people for feedback, don't forget to first affirm the value of their input. Give people the chance to express opposing points of view. Above all, keep an open mind and use your logical gift to sift through and select the best ideas.

As a Thinker, you're aware of time. But you view deadlines as a necessary evil. You're much more concerned about the quality of the work than about the time it takes. In a management role, that can be a fatal error. Thinkers need to be aware that once they've set a deadline, for themselves or anyone else, it costs the organization every day that it is delayed. (Anyone who manages a Thinker should design a compensation system that rewards him for meeting deadlines – and penalizes him when he doesn't!)

As a Thinker, you can be overly reliant on old, proven ways of doing things. You may display reluctance to try out a new technology or embrace a new way of doing things. This conservative approach could limit your growth as a manager. Counter it by promising to teach your staff new techniques and technologies. Keeping that promise will force you to learn them first.

The Thinker's Approach to Conflict

With other Thinkers:

As a Thinker, you are careful, precise and focused. You can also be inflexible. So your conflicts with another Thinker typically arise over the correct approach to accomplishing a task or solving a problem.

The proper approach to resolving a conflict between Thinkers is to analyze the assumptions that underlie each person's approach. Lay out on a sheet of paper each person's rationale. Make sure you capture all of their arguments. Then break down the assumptions reflected in each rationale. Once you've written down each assumption, ask each other: What do we need to know that we don't know in order to resolve this conflict?

By partaking in a collaborative process to resolve the problem logically, Thinkers can overcome almost any conflict.

With Directors:

If you're a Thinker, you share with Directors the quality of following your head, not your heart. Conflicts can arise because you take your time to get something done correctly, whereas the Director is more impatient. When you find yourself at odds with a Director, curb your tendency to dissect things. Instead, get right to the point, state what you think ought to be done, and negotiate an agreement. It's a good idea to follow up in writing. The Director will appreciate your "take charge" approach.

Don't try to gild bad news for the Director. He wants it straight and factual, right away. Your matter-of-fact style will help the Director think you've got everything under control.

With Expressers:

Thinkers are organized, precise and logical. Expressers are free-wheeling, adventurous, and imprecise. Since they view things from opposite poles, conflicts are not uncommon. As a Thinker, you can handle conflict with Expressers by listening attentively, giving logical feedback, and helping the Expresser weigh the options. Once the Expresser calms down, he'll value your thoughtful approach and negotiating style.

Thinkers should beware falling into the trap of trying to come up with creative solutions for the Expresser. Most of the time, the Expresser will have considered hundreds of options, but none of them in great depth. Instead, play the role of sage counselor, reviewing the best alternatives and pointing out the pros and cons.

With Harmonizers:

Thinkers get into conflicts with Harmonizers over process. For example, a Thinker may view a Harmonizer as lacking the necessary precision and attention to detail. "If you had followed instructions, this wouldn't have happened," the Thinker will be tempted to say.

But direct criticism will cause the Harmonizer to become defensive and withdrawn. Instead, the Thinker should strive first to demonstrate his concern for the Harmonizer, taking time to engage in small talk and stressing the importance of their relationship. Having laid a foundation of trust, the Thinker can then focus on the problem. But ask a question rather than state the criticism directly: "Have you figured out what went wrong with the batch process on module number seven?"

The same technique applies when the Thinker is the bearer of bad news to the Harmonizer. Make sure you demonstrate your sensitivity to how each individual will be affected while delivering the message.

HARMONIZERS

COUNSELOR

Primary style: Harmonizer

Secondary style: Director

The Counselor's strong suit is finding out what other people need and then helping them get it. You're better than most at mediating disputes. You may even have played matchmaker. The Counselor is something of a dual personality: happy to go along for the sake of the group, yet at times feeling a strong urge to be very focused and driven. You operate from a deep sense of loyalty to your friends and loved ones. In relationships, you are perceived as caring and competent. You tend to take criticism personally.



At work, the Counselor is likely to be someone people turn to for help. As a communicator, you are gifted in being able to articulate people's concerns and needs. Your ability to empathize with other people's points of view makes you a trusted and respected figure. Because you operate from a deep sense of loyalty to the cause, you can be effective at mediating disputes, since you're rarely seen as operating out of your own self interest.

You may have a tendency to avoid your own personal conflicts. To communicate more effectively, you need to make sure you take the time to figure out your own priorities and goals. Your tendency not to reveal yourself makes it difficult for other people to understand what you need or to help you in times of trouble. This can lead to a dilemma – people want to help you, but they don't know how.

As a starting point, the Counselor should practice stating his or her thoughts and feelings, couching them in terms like: "I know you would be honest with me, so let me try to be honest with you." Guard against being overly optimistic in your communications. Try to be honest and clear about potential problems, not mask them.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Counselors are compatible with any of the 16 styles, particularly people who share their sensitivity to other people's feelings e.g., Nurturer, Provider, and Pleaser. A nice balance for the Counselor is someone with high scores in the Expresser and Thinker scales e.g., the Diplomat or Organizer. Other complementary styles include Charmer, Entertainer, Socializer, Analyzer, Investigator, and Supporter.

NURTURER

Primary style: Harmonizer

Secondary style: Expresser

As a Nurturer, you're easy-going, accepting, and friendly. You're both a good listener and a good talker. People tend to turn to you when they're down. In social situations, the Nurturer is always looking to create cooperation. In relationships, you're viewed as sweet-natured, warm,



and enthusiastic. You like any kind of social activity involving friends and colleagues, whether it's a going to a meeting, planning an event, or attending a convention. At times you may let socializing get in the way of achieving your goals.

At work, the Nurturer is an open-minded and congenial communicator. You get included in a lot of committees, because your enthusiasm and cooperation make you effective at bridging different people and groups. You're perceived as someone who knows the latest gossip, so people turn to you for information. You tend to be happiest in jobs that allow you to use your considerable people skills. Your weakness is that you're prone to not finishing what you start.

The Nurturer can be an effective communicator, especially as a go-between when people need to understand each other's true feelings. To communicate more effectively, the Nurturer needs to spend more time analyzing the financial and pragmatic ramifications of a particular decision or course of action. You should practice following a logical process to its conclusion, and making sure that all information is considered before a decision is reached.

When faced with a tough decision, force yourself to take some action, even if no action at all seems like the easier course. In your communication, you should stress both cons and pros, not just the pros. People will still like you – even if they don't like some of the information you bring to the table.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Nurturers are compatible with people who share their sensitivity to other people's feelings. This includes the Pleaser, Provider, Counselor, and Socializer. If you're seeking a complementary style, it would be someone with a high score in the Director and Thinker scales e.g., the Explorer or Investigator. Other complementary styles include Dictator, Persuader, Initiator, Analyzer, Organizer, and Supporter.

PROVIDER

Primary style: Harmonizer
Secondary style: Thinker

As a Provider, you're in your element doing things for others. You love figuring out just the right gift to buy for someone's birthday; you enjoy figuring out solutions to other people's problems. The Provider is a traditionalist; no one would accuse you of being too daring. Sensitive and careful of others, you are likely to have many friends. In relationships, you're loyal and steadfast – maybe even when it's not in your best interest. You prefer someone else to take the lead. You're very aware of other people's behavior and can show a judgmental streak – especially of people not like you.

At work, the Provider tends to succeed by a combination of people skills and dogged determination. You're very good at figuring out what motivates other people. This can make you effective in preparing sales presentations – though not in presenting them (you tend to be uncomfortable in front of a crowd). Not showy or flashy in temperament



or style, you're valued for your steady contribution to the team. However, you have to keep that judgmental streak under control.

To communicate more effectively, the Provider needs to be more willing to assert his own opinions and feelings. When you're being assertive, you may think you're gone overboard. Not to worry! You can be even more so. An excellent listener, the Provider could easily become a very effective communicator if you would demand for yourself some of that listening time you're so willing to give others.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

The Provider will be most compatible with people who share your deep concern for other people e.g., the Counselor, Nurturer, and Pleaser. A good complement to the Provider is someone with high scores in the Expresser and Director scales e.g., Initiator or Charmer. Other complementary styles include Explorer, Persuader, Dictator, Diplomat, Socializer, and Entertainer.

PLEASER

Primary style: Harmonizer
Secondary style: Harmonizer



The Pleaser is quiet and shy. Your loyalty, patience, and concern for others are your greatest strengths. You live for the comfort of relationships with other people. You are likely to do anything to avoid a scene or an argument, which is why you wouldn't dream of forcing your opinions on others – unless you know they're shared. The Pleaser's happiest moments are spent in quiet conversation. In relationships, you are modest, cautious, and conventional. You prefer to let someone else take the lead, so long as they are mindful of you and don't cause any embarrassment!

At work, the Pleaser likes to spend free time building relationships with other people. With regard to accomplishing tasks, you most likely have a set way of doing things, and may not easily be swayed to another – perhaps more suitable – method. This can make the Pleaser seem stubborn and rigid. You can hold strong opinions, but because you don't like conflict, you withhold your opinions from others. This may limit your progress in the long run.

Communication is a dance in which partners need to alternate taking the lead. To communicate more effectively, the Pleaser should learn to lead. You should ask a friend to give you fifteen minutes of serious, undivided listening time. You should rehearse what you're going to say, then state exactly how you feel about the situation. Then ask them to paraphrase what you said: "Do you understand what I mean?" Through this process, you may come to realize that you can rely on your friends as much as they rely upon you.

Your Compatible–Complementary Styles:

Pleasers will be most compatible with people who share their deep concern for other people e.g., the Provider, Counselor, and Nurturer. A good complement to the Pleaser is someone with high scores in the Director scale e.g., the Initiator, Explorer and Dictator.

The Harmonizer's Approach to Management

As someone whose primary style is Harmonizer, your approach to planning is to do what's best for the people around you. This team approach gives you a natural gift for management. People know you'll go to bat for them, so they'll go to bat for you.

Your drive to please makes you a highly popular manager. But as a manager, one of your responsibilities is to set priorities. The quality of pleasing others may cause inconsistent or contradictory priorities to get incorporated into your plans. Sometimes, these contradictions don't emerge until much later. When they do come to light, you may be genuinely shocked and either look for help – or give up in frustration. All because you allowed yourself to get caught between needing to plan and wanting to please.

One strategy for the Harmonizer is to identify a sage counsel to ask for help in setting priorities. This person should have the hard-nosed, bottom-line approach you lack. By seeking good counsel, you'll learn to set priorities on others and yourself.

Another quality of a good manager is the ability to impart constructive criticism. As a Harmonizer, you may find it difficult to criticize for fear that people will think ill of you. However, once you learn that constructive criticism can help people do a better job, you can become very adept at managing people.

Your approach to time management is to be generally unaware of it. You prefer to focus on whatever it is that you're doing. As a manager, this can set the wrong tone for the people around you. Projects can be delayed; conflicts can be swept under the rug. When the deadline comes, you're likely to feel overwhelmed.

The better strategy, obviously, is to practice time management. Set daily deadlines. Penalize yourself for missed deadlines. If you can couple your natural skill with practice at setting priorities and deadlines, you can be a very successful manager.

The Harmonizer's Approach to Conflict**With other Harmonizers:**

As a Harmonizer, you're not likely to want to deal with a serious conflict – even with another Harmonizer. By nature, you'll want to keep a lid on your feelings and smooth over any problem.

Your desire to avoid confrontation can work against you, however. Harmonizers need to discuss conflicts openly and candidly. You can start by stressing how much you want the conflict to be resolved. Be sure to disclose your personal reactions to what happened.

Ultimately, follow your desire to resolve the conflict by inviting other people to help you assess your options in a logical, objective fashion. Don't let your loyalties to other people cloud your judgment about what's best you, or for all concerned.

When delivering bad news to another Harmonizer, reaffirm the value of the relationship and then gently let them know what's going on. By citing evidence of how other people feel, it will help the Harmonizer grasp the situation.

With Directors:

As a Harmonizer, handling a conflict with a Director can be very stressful. Remember to prepare what you're going to say, keep it short, and be assertive. Don't gloss over the facts or try to hide anything. State the bad news in headline fashion. Cite factual evidence and lay out the major ramifications. Above all, don't dwell on discovering who's to blame for what happened. The Director cares less about whose fault it is and more about whether the problem can be fixed.

In negotiations, follow the same rule: short and emphatic. Look the Director straight in the eye and state your point of view clearly and succinctly. Don't let yourself be ambushed by a Director's abrupt question. Make sure you've got adequate information to support your case.

When dealing with a Director, it's tempting for you to shelve bad news or pretend it's going to get better. Don't succumb. The Director needs to know, and he will help you so long as he's assured you have the interests of the group at heart.

With Expressers:

The Harmonizer typically puts the group's needs above his own, whereas the Expresser is often more focused on his or her own desires. So Harmonizers can get into conflict with Expressers over questions of priority and control.

When a conflict does occur, the Harmonizer should urge the Expresser to see things from the group's perspective. If the Expresser interrupts, the Harmonizer needs to be assertive and say: "I need you to listen until I'm finished." Find ways to praise the Expresser while pointing out how much the Expresser can contribute to resolving the conflict. By keeping a steady hand, the Harmonizer can help defuse a volatile situation.

If a Harmonizer is a bearer of bad news to an Expresser, take pains to underscore how much you value the Expresser's personal contribution. The Expresser will usually respond positively.

With Thinkers:

Harmonizers typically get along well with Thinkers. So a conflict is unlikely to occur. When it does, it may be repressed, because neither Harmonizers nor Thinkers like open confrontation. Signs of repressed conflict might be avoidance, depression, or even forced amiability.

One successful technique is to issue a regular invitation to the Thinker to clear the air. After some initial chitchat, say to him: "I sure hope everything is going smoothly between

us. Is everything okay from your perspective? I really want you to be honest with me.” Having laid the groundwork, it should be easy to get any issues on the table and begin to mend any problems.

As a bearer of bad news, the Harmonizer should inform the Thinker in careful detail about what happened. Keep the conversation focused on what actually happened, rather than conjecturing about how people are reacting. Thinkers like to be told things in chronological order, so start at the beginning and leave nothing out.

EXERCISE 2: CONSIDER A COMMUNICATION LINK

Print out a copy of the Matrix and put your initials in the square that corresponds to your specific style. Now imagine your boss or someone you work closely with. Based on the descriptions in this section, make a guess at his or her style and put that person's initials in that square. Now draw an arrow between the two squares.

Consider your two communication styles. If you were communicating with that person, what would you do to make the communication more productive? If that person were communicating with you, what should he or she do? Jot down your thoughts.

1. Things I should do differently:

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-



-

2. Things the other person should do differently

-

-

-

 Dictator	 Initiator	 Charmer	 Entertainer
 Explorer	 Persuader	 Diplomat	 Socializer
 Investigator	 Organizer	 Counselor	 Nurturer
 Analyzer	 Supporter	 Provider	 Pleaser