

Personality and learning styles in communication and collaboration



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There are four personality types: they are the Organizer, Giver, Adventurer, and Thinker. There are eight learning styles, or intelligences they are: Verbal/Linguistic, Musical/Rhythmic, Logical/Mathematical, Visual/Spatial, Body/Kinesthetic, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Naturalistic (Carter, Bishop, & Kravits, 2007). Of these traits there are an unlimited number of combinations, a person would need to take a brief survey to determine or reaffirm their own traits. Each one of these traits have distinctive characteristic.

Once a person understands what the specific characteristic are, then the communication exercise will have a much better result. Of the personality styles, take a look at two, the Giver and the Thinker and how these styles can impact the communication and collaboration efforts of a team. A Giver can have a calming effect on a team, as a giver will express thoughts and feelings with clarity and honesty. A Giver will seek out peaceful and harmonious resolutions; they will negotiate with great passion looking for that perfect compromise, often convincing people of different mind sets to agree. A Giver often has creative solutions that are not immediately apparent to others.

On the other side a Giver can be extremely disruptive to the team effort, as they are idealist, and overly emotional in their desire to resolve the immediate the problem, often missing the big picture. A Giver can be overly sociable, bringing in too much personal information, which has no real relevance to the project at hand. They can easily cause side-bar dialogue, distracting team members from the team agenda (Carter, Bishop, & Kravits,

2007). A Thinker is an asset to any team, the thinker will analyze the available information in a dispassionate, logical, scientific manner.

A Thinker is a person who sees everything in a literal, realistic view, giving the team a clear cut, precise and logical plan of action to resolve the situation. Thinkers are people who see the big picture, but often miss the smaller parts of the whole. The Thinker can be rigid in their preceptions, allowing for no emotional influence, this type of personality can convey a facade of coldness and indifference to their fellow team members, leading the team members to feel he/she is cold and unapproachable, thus creating communication barriers. As thinkers only see hard data, significant effort will need to be made by the other team members to bridge this preceived communication collapse. Successful communication is paramount to the goals of a team, and is accomplished with open and honest dialog between all team members.

Compromises can and should be made, most barriers can be overcome (Carter, C., Bishop, J., & Kravits, S. (2007)). Then there is the learning style, it is called Multiple Intelligence (Smith, 2002, 2008 and (Carter, C., Bishop, J.

, & Kravits, S. (2007)). The following is a brief discussion of two of those styles, the Interpersonal and the Naturalistic. The Interpersonal learning style is a person who sees other people's perspective, often appearing as if they are not sure of their own perspective, he/she are often good listeners and will ask intelligent well thought out questions. The constructive influence is felt almost instantly, creating bonds with the other team members. The

Interpersonal person is an excellent communicator, using both verbal and non-verbal forms.

He/she will enhance the team's overall confidence and general good outlook about themselves. Conversely, the Interpersonal learning style persona, often becomes overwhelmed by the other team members' expectations, and has great difficulty expressing his/her true thoughts and feelings. He/she is reluctant to distress anyone; consequently they keep their thoughts to themselves, thus robbing the team of contributions (Carter, Bishop, & Kravits, 2007). The Naturalistic learning style, is a person who is in tune with their environment; they are usually quiet, low-key, deep thinkers and passionate in his/her beliefs.

The Naturalistic will look for a balance, a middle ground where all concerned will feel they have been heard and understood. The naturalistic is often perceived as indecisive and can easily be ignored or overlooked. The Naturalist will pay attention to detail and follow the assignment to completion. The Naturalist is a procrastinator, which if not kept in check will delay the team effort. According to Carter, Bishop, and Kravits (2007), the naturalistic learning styles like to participate in groups of people with like interest. (Carter, C., Bishop, J., & Kravits, S.

(2007)). There are many barriers to successful communication and collaboration, Barrier usually means any condition that makes it difficult to make progress or to achieve an objective: intolerance is a barrier to understanding. WordNet Dictionary To communicate and collaborate is a significant undertaking. The finest approach to excellent communication, is a

combination of verbal and written shared information, this may include but not limited to electronic mail, phone calls, text messaging. Some of the barriers could be language; educational, gender, personality and technological. In all cases the barriers must be addressed and resolved as soon as they become known. In conclusion, a team needs to indentify the objective, set goals to meet their objective.

Identify and resolve barriers. Caution needs to be taken to insure that all team members feel their contributions have been heard and considered. A team consensus needs to be maintained for all members to feel they have made valuable contributions to the goal of the team. Sensitivity to the inert differences of each team member must be the first line of defense; bear in mind that all people process information differently.

All barriers can be overcome with communication; you may have to exercise some patience and a dose of humor. Be opened minded and willing to compromise. ReferencesIn WordNet Dictionary. Retrieved from <http://www.webster-dictionary.org>Carter, C.

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