

Beyond the Horizons Consulting

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Communication Skills, Part VI

This is the sixth article in a series about communications in the workplace. In our June Newsletter we offered readers basic guidelines on how different personality types communicate. We asked you to identify your own type. A fun exercise as you continue to work with personality type in the workplace is to “type watch.” You will soon be able to guesstimate a colleague’s type and use some of the suggestions below to communicate better with that person. If you are new to our Newsletters, feel free to send along comments or questions to info@beyondthehorizonsconsulting.com.

How Can Extroverts and Introverts Work Together on a Team?



The first step for all categories of opposites is to understand each other’s preferences and to accept the gifts that each person brings. The next step is to make accommodations for those differences. Thus **extroverts would do well to**

- Understand that introverts may have a wealth of creative ideas and concepts that need to be shared and “mined.”
- Control their need to fill up every silent moment.
- Respect the introvert’s need not to be interrupted when working on a project by frequent telephone,

- e-mail, or personal communications.
- Allow the introvert time to respond to questions.
- Appreciate the complexity of the introvert’s personality, even while not completely understanding it.
- Refrain from “steamrolling” other extroverts.

Introverts would be wise to

- Request a specific time when they feel comfortable discussing an issue.
- Make sure that they don’t avoid but actually address the issue, especially when dealing with another introvert.
- Learn to utilize face-to-face communication and not always rely on memos, letters, and e-mails.
- Practice communicating with team members and even with larger groups.
- Remember not to interpret extroverts’ statements as fact, but rather as possibilities the extrovert is considering during verbal processing of an issue.

Questions for Reflection

- 1 Are you more extroverted or introverted?
- 2 Which of your teammates are more extroverted? Which, more introverted?
- 3 How might such a difference — or similarity — make communication between you more difficult?
- 4 What changes in behavior or attitude might you make to communicate better with specific colleagues?

How Can Sensors and Intuitives Work Together?

Sensors and Intuitives can work well together if they

recognize each other's gifts. Sensors need intuitives to provide vision for a long-term project and to promote out-of-the-box thinking.

Intuitives need sensors to review their ideas critically in terms of practical implementation and to point out *non sequiturs* and blocks. Sensors are also the ones who most likely will implement step-by-step the long-range goals.

Sensors would do well to

- Ask intuitives about what general patterns they see emerging.
- Utilize the intuitive's grasp of the overall purpose of the team to keep everyone on track.
- Engage intuitives in brain-storming sessions when new approaches are called for.
- Attempt to find a common description of facts when a sensor is in conflict with another sensor.
- Utilize an intuitive's insight to identify recurrent themes.

In conflict resolution it is important to identify the underlying themes, not just put out the current fire.

From the opposite perspective, **intuitives would do well to**

- Agree with sensors on a conflict resolution process that allows sensors to present facts before the intuitives move to analyzing the pattern.
- Not overlook the straightforward, feasible, and practical solution.
- Digress from an agenda only when it will serve a useful purpose.
- Limit their use of metaphors and analogies.
- Use a step-by-step approach in presentations to a mixed audience of sensors and intuitives.

Since the largest proportion of the U.S. population (75%) are sensors, intuitives would do well to adjust their communication to a largely sensing audience by

- 1 Presenting evidence, facts, and details first.
- 2 Giving practical and realistic applications of data.
- 3 Making an orderly, step-by-step presentation.
- 4 Referring to specific examples.
- 5 Following an agenda and its time frames.

Questions for Reflection

- 1 Are you more a sensor or more an intuitive?
- 2 Which of your colleagues are more sensors? Which are

more intuitive?

- 3 What frustrations might you have with a person of opposite preference?
- 4 How might you appreciate and learn from a person whose perceptive preference is opposite to yours?
- 5 Which type is represented in each of the following vignettes?

VIGNETTE A



Drive north on Rte. 285 and turn left when you see the sign for Avenida Eldorado. After making the turn, continue on to the first large tree, which is quite noticeable, and then turn right and follow the dirt road to the

lookout point. (Sensor or Intuitive?)

VIGNETTE B

Drive 0.5 miles north on Rte. 285 and turn left, or west, onto Avenida Eldorado. Continue for 1.5 miles. At the sign for Sonny's Fresh Fruits, where there is also a large Ponderosa pine tree, turn right and continue on the dirt road for three miles until you reach the lookout point, which is designated by a historical marker. (Sensor or Intuitive?)

The Feeling-Thinking Preferences

The eminent psychologist, Carl G. Jung says that this set of preferences has to do with the way in which we value the world and thus the way in which we make decisions about things. The **feeling** preference values the world in terms of individual, subjective logic. Note that Jung says that a feeling person uses logic, but that it is his/her own personal, subjective valuing of an event. Extending this logic to others, the feeling person will generally opt for decisions that honor the preserve human wellbeing. The feeling person will also look at individual situations in their unique context before making a decision. Thus a feeling person will take into consideration an individual's or a group's "handicaps." People are never a means to an end for this preference type, who will always demand to know how a situation will impact the persons involved.

The **thinking preference** is characterized by the use of *impersonal*, or objective, logic. Thinkers rely on universal principles as much as possible. They are not so much concerned with **harmony** in human relationships but **fairness**.

The thinking function, especially when combined with the sensing function, is realistic, practical, consequential, and concerned mainly for the bottom line. When making a strategic decision, thinkers will not take into account how it will affect the people involved, either practically or in terms of their emotions. Although thinkers will probably never be accused of being biased, they also will not necessarily promote a well-functioning team unless they develop their feeling preference to some degree.

Next month we will continue offering suggestions on how feeling and thinking types can learn to communicate better with each other, and also with others of the same type! We will conclude this part of our series on communications in the workplace with discussing what judging and perceptive types can learn about each other to promote better relationships.

Stay tuned to Beyond the Horizons Consulting Newsletters for timely information to solve your management challenges! Please feel free to write us at

info@beyondthehorizonsconsulting.com

or to call us at 505-466-4990 to schedule a free, complimentary coaching session or consultation for your business needs.

Beyond the Horizons Consulting offers a variety of services for individuals, teams, and organizations.

- ◆ **Individual coaching for managers is a process that begins by identifying your style, what you want to retain and strengthen, and what you want to modify. Objective assessments are part of the process, as are also a mutual give-and-take process of creative problem solving and supportive guidance.**
- ◆ **We offer group seminars on identifying and dealing with stress in a relaxing and supportive environment.**
- ◆ **Our team building seminars will help your team or department run more smoothly, whether it is a brand-new team or one that has been put together after a reorganization.**

- ◆ **Our communication seminars identify crucial parts of the communication equation and help you put them all together using role play and other hands-on experiences.**
- ◆ **We also offer group seminars utilizing excellent tools, including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or the DISC.**
- ◆ **Our conflict resolution services help opposing parties identify mutual purpose(s) and restore harmony to your workplace environment.**
- ◆ **It is our pleasure to tailor a seminar to your company's, department's, or team's needs!**

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Call us to schedule a complimentary consultation for yourself or your business!

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**Stan and Jean Eva can be reached at
(505) 466-4990**