

Beyond the Horizons Consulting

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Communication Skills, Part VII

This is the seventh article in a series about communications in the workplace. In our July Newsletter we continued our series on how different personality types communicate. As promised, in this Newsletter, we give you some tips on how two very different aspects of personality type — the Thinking and the Feelings types — can improve their communication. We then examine the last category in the MBTI personality inventory, which is a crucial one in promoting teamwork. If you are new to our Newsletters, feel free to send along comments or questions to info@beyondthehorizonsconsulting.com.

How Can Feeling and Thinking Types Work Together on a Team?



Feeling and thinking types make decisions based on different value sets. This set of preferences can become one of the most contentious in business communications. Feeling persons are often regarded as “illogical,” which then becomes an epithet to put down their gifts and their approach. The fact is, however, that each preference can learn from the other.

Feeling persons would do well to

- ◆ Choose brief and concise communication when there are time constraints.

- Be aware of and temper their natural tendency to display favoritism.
- Study the pros and cons of various alternatives.
- Choose to engage creatively in conflict rather than smothering or denying it.

Thinking persons would do well to

- Make it a rule in their formula to ask themselves how a particular action will affect others, both practically and emotionally.
- Recognize that budget cuts and layoffs have far-ranging implications, besides possibly improving the bottom line.
- Begin their communication process by checking in with others about how things are going for them.
- Preface suggestions with a word of appreciation when that is appropriate.
- Choose personal communication at times over e-mail.

Questions for Reflection

- 1 Are you more a thinking or a feeling person?
- 2 Who on your team is more a thinker? More a feeler?
- 3 What function, T or F, is more valued in your organization? At what times?
- 4 How would you go about incorporating more F into a T organization?
- 5 How would you go about incorporating more T into an F organization?
- 6 How can written communications incorporate both the T and the F perspectives?

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The Judger-Perceiver Preferences

This last category of opposites was not posited by Carl G. Jung. Instead, after many years of working with Jungian concepts, the mother-daughter team of Katharine Briggs and Isabel Myers came up with what is called a “life style category.” Let us look at what Myers and Briggs meant by this category.

Judgers are people who prefer a more scheduled, organized day-to-day routine. They like to know when certain things will occur and plan accordingly. They enjoy being given or creating their own goals and long-term projects. Judgers are serious people “with a mission.”

Judgers like to maintain a sense of control and often do so by gathering evidence expeditiously, making their decision, and moving on to implement it. You might say that with Judgers “time is of the essence.” An animal kingdom representative of the Judger type might well be the beaver. The goal of this “engineer” is to produce a comfortable lodge of mud and timber. He selects his site, goes about cutting down the right-sized logs, guides them over to his building site, and muds up his residence like an adobe. He’s goal-oriented and serious about it!

Perceivers, on the other hand, prefer flexibility and synchronicity. They allow things to happen without apparently needing much sense of control. Unlike Judgers, they bring a certain playfulness and spontaneity to every task. They are open-minded both about people and situations, and are always waiting for more input before they make up their minds. This kind of attitude allows them at times to be quite creative, but it also opens the door to procrastination. Perceivers indeed feel trapped and begin to second-guess themselves if they are rushed into making a decision.

I of ten think of the river otter as the Perceiver *par excellence* in the animal kingdom. Seemingly without a care in the world, he jumps off a log into the water, effortlessly swims to the bank, reverses direction like a ballet dancer, and slides up on the log again to sun himself. Without really trying, he often manages to catch a fish or two and then thoroughly enjoys his delicious meal! Playful, perceptive, procrastinating, flexible, spontaneous — making life seem a totally enjoyable moveable feast.

Which do you more resemble, Busy Beaver or Ozzie Otter? Either way you will bring certain advantages to your team. Let’s look at what they are.

What Do Judgers and Perceivers Bring to a Team?

Judgers bring

- ◆ Clarity of purpose, with stated goals and dates of completion.
- ◆ Seriousness of purpose.
- ◆ Responsibility for individual parts of the team objective.

Perceivers bring



◆ Openness to new ideas which can be incorporated into the process.

◆ Flexibility when “things go bump in the night.”

◆ Enjoyment of the process to counteract the Judgers’ serious goal orientation.

Questions for Reflection

- 1 Are you more of a Judger or more of a Perceiver?
- 2 Who among your teammates/colleagues are Judgers? Who, Perceivers?
- 3 If you are a Judger, how could you encourage a Perceiver to use goal-oriented thinking to work toward a deadline?
- 4 If you are a Perceiver, how could you convince your Judger boss to set aside a half day for a team picnic and morale-building event?
- 5 In what ways might you want to incorporate more of the opposite way of behaving into your own style?

Keep in Touch

We at Beyond the Horizons Consulting would love to hear from you. Have we been giving you some information you can put to good use? What questions might you have about improving management and teamwork? We are only a phone call or an e-mail message away.

Next month we will complete this series of articles on communications in workplace by looking at personality types of organizations themselves and some cautions in using MBTI with your employees.

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 by using role play, among other practical, hands-on experiences.

- ◆ 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!

Take a look at our May and June, 2005, Newsletters to see our new, serene home, a place we invite you to take advantage of!

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

Our helpful Office Administrator, Stan, will work with you to schedule a meeting time that fits your schedule.

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