

YOUR MANAGEMENT SUCCESS FORMULA

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Have you ever had difficulty managing a subordinate? Have you ever asked a team member to do something and they did it wrong or didn't do it at all? Have you ever wanted to move quickly on a project decision and found that the people you were working with wanted to be more cautious?

Answering yes to any of these situations means you've run across a subordinate or team member whose way of operating in the world is different from your way of managing. To be more successful you need to learn to adapt your management style to fit that person's communication style. By "reading" your team members behavioral style and communicating to that person in their terms, you can actually increase your management successes dramatically.

In the early 1930's, a concept was developed by William Marston which was later elaborated upon by Dr. John Geier in the 1960s while he was Chairperson of the Behavioral Science Department at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. This concept divided people into four basic personality or behavior types. It's your understanding of the different types of people you are managing that will allow you to be more effective.

There are three steps to this process. The first is discovering your own management style. The second step is recognizing your subordinates or team member's behavior style, and the final step is applying this information when appropriate in order to effectively modify your present way of communicating.

DETERMINING YOUR STYLE

There are four basic styles or behavior categories in which you could be placed. They are called: DOMINANCE (D); INFLUENCE (I); STEADINESS (S); and CONSCIENTIOUS (C). An important point to keep in mind is that no style is better than another; rather the key to being a successful manager *is* being able to adapt your management style to fit the other person's communication style.

To determine your own style you'll need to answer the following questions. In selecting your answers it *is* important to focus in on the behavior you do the most when you are wearing your "management hat". Even though you may see yourself in each part of the questions below, you will need to make a choice. Pick the answer that you do at least 51 percent of the time.

QUESTION: Is your management behavior style more active and outgoing or is your management behavior style more reserved?

If you answered active and outgoing, then answer the next question that says D OR I QUESTION. If you answered more reserved, then you need to skip down to the question that says S OR C QUESTION.

D OR I QUESTION: Are you more concerned with directing of others or relating to others?

If you answered directing, then you are a D (DOMINANCE) behavior style. If you answered relating, then you are an I (INFLUENCE) style.

S OR C QUESTION: Are you more concerned with the accepting of others or with assessing or judging of others?

If you are more concerned with accepting of others, then you are an S (STEADINESS) behavior style. If

you are more concerned with assessing of others, then you are a C (CONSCIENTIOUS) behavioral style.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STYLES

Now that you know which of the four styles you are, let's take a look at the characteristics of each of the styles.

If you are a D, Dominance style, you like getting immediate results, causing action, and accepting challenges. You prefer to make quick decisions to solve problems, and you enjoy taking charge.

If you are an I, Influence style, you enjoy contacting and entertaining people while making a favorable impression. You are very verbal. You like generating enthusiasm, and creating a motivational environment. You want to help others, and you enjoy participating in a group.

If you are an S, Steadiness style, you like staying in one place while concentrating on the task at hand. You are loyal and have tremendous patience which allows you to be a good listener in order to calm excited people.

If you are a C, Conscientious style, you prefer following standards and procedures, concentrating on details, and working under controlled circumstances. While you can be diplomatic with people, you like accuracy and will criticize someone's performance, if necessary. You are a critical thinker, and believe in authority.

YOUR SUBORDINATE OR TEAM MEMBER'S STYLE

Now that you know a bit more about your style, let's explore your subordinate or team member's style.

The Dominance Style

If the person is a D style, she is highly interested in focusing on developing new and innovative directions and solutions. They usually possess a fairly strong ego, and do not like to waste time. To convince these highly individualistic go-getters you need to get right to the bottom line of what they will need to be doing. Don't waste their time with a lot of facts and figures. They just want to hear the high points of what you want them to do and let them go do it.

The D style prefers an efficient, no-nonsense business manner to developing friendships. They would rather leave detailed research to others.

Do's and Don'ts Based on the Subordinate or Team Member's Communication Style

There are several DO's and DON'Ts for each of the styles which are important to understand. Here are the DO's for communicating with the D subordinate or team member:

DO be efficient and omit details.

DO be strictly businesslike as they will let you know if they want to chat.

DO stress how important what they are doing is to the group's mission.

DO flatter their ego.

DO make sure you give them direct answers.

DO summarize what they are agreeing to do and the time limit involved.

DON'T explain too many details unless they ask for them.

DON'T give your opinions rather give them plenty of options.

DON'T be evasive or indecisive; just give them clear direct answers.

The Influence Style

If your subordinate or team member is an I style, he is the friendly, gregarious type who wants to talk and socialize. He'll make a great salesman. He tells jokes and stories and is less concerned about business details.

With an I style, spare them the details as they are not interested in them. They love new and innovative ideas, concepts and projects. An I is fairly easy to convince of the direction you want them to go if you are sociable with them. This also means they can easily change so give them plenty of reinforcement and follow-up for having them continue working with you.

DO let them talk, and give them compliments about their accomplishments.

DO use their own words to direct the discussion back to the business you want to accomplish.

DO tell them how higher ups in the organization have endorsed the project.

DO be enthusiastic and friendly.

DO summarize what you want them to focus on.

DON'T give them a lot of facts (you'll create confusion).

DON'T let there be so much chatting that you don't focus on explaining the mission

The Steadiness Style

The S subordinate or team member may be a bit shy, but does want to be your friend. She is not suspicious, but is slow to make changes. She needs to feel she can trust you. When you are giving her new tasks to do show her how it fits into the current mission and direction of the group.\

With an S subordinate or team member, take it slow and easy in explaining a project because speed can lose them. They will want to understand the entire project and they will want to think about their role in it before committing completely. To earn their trust in you spend some time asking about their family and hobbies. Emphasize the traditional about the direction you are proposing and schedule follow-up times.

DO be low key.

DO keep your explanations simple, but loaded with details.

DO provide them with a complete picture, including all the unknown difficulties.

DON'T go too fast or omit details.

DON'T get too friendly too quickly.

Conscientious Style

The C subordinate or team member will initially be suspicious of you. He can become solidly faithful to you, but only after you have proven yourself to him. While he is a tough employee to get to buy in on a project, he will stay committed longer than most others. He is not a great talker or innovator.

With this style subordinate or team member, give him solid background information. If another C, who is higher in the organization, supports the project, let him know about it. They need time to absorb details and digest the *facts* thoroughly before taking the next step. They will want to see all the details of the project. They are suspicious of new and innovative project directions.

DO emphasize how their part will fit in with the bigger picture.
DO stress the need for them to buy in now.
DO be patient, answer their questions fully, and ask them “how” questions to get their opinion.
DO give a complete detailed picture of the project.
DO be sure what you say to them is consistent with the written materials you are giving them.

DON'T push the C too hard to make an immediate decision.
DON'T get personal about their family, if you don't know them well.
DON'T physically pat them on the back.
DON'T answer their objections lightly.

BLENDING WITH THE MANAGER AND THE TEAM MEMBER

Now that you understand yourself and your subordinate or team member more clearly, we need to put it all together. To be truly effective you'll need to blend your communication style with that of your subordinate or team member. If your subordinate or team member does not know the information in this article, then they may not know to change their style to match yours. To create a more effective relationship you will need to temporarily change your style to better match your subordinate or team member's style in order to meet their and needs and desires.

BLENDING YOUR STYLE

Let's now examine how you can go about blending your style to the different styles of your subordinates or team members to convince them of the direction you want them to go or action you want them to take.

BLENDING FOR THE D MANAGER

You're strong-minded and confident. You like to deal with new, innovative projects, and you become bored with needing to focus on details.

To convince a D: Be yourself. One D communicates well with another.

To convince an I: Be a little friendlier than usual, not quite as businesslike. You should get along fairly easily with an I subordinate or team member.

To convince an S: Slow down, give assurances, give more details, be friendlier, give them a chance to digest facts, and don't overstress the new or innovative aspects of a project.

To convince a C: Present plenty of facts about the project, make sure all questions are answered, take it much slower than your usual pace, and don't push them too hard.

BLENDING FOR THE I MANAGER

You're friendly and like to focus on new projects. You lack attention to details, become easily bored, and are very social and people-oriented.

To convince a D: Don't joke or make small talk. Stay businesslike, and don't waste time.

To convince an I: No problem. Just remember to ask him or her for their commitment to the project.

To convince an S: Spend time earning his or her trust. Stick to the facts and figures. Some socializing and small talk about their family or hobbies is acceptable. You will need to show a great deal of knowledge about the project.

To convince a C: He or she is probably your most difficult subordinate or team member.

They're not impressed by story-telling or socializing. Give them facts, figures, and proof. The

best you can do is to attempt to act like another C. It's won't be easy, but it is the only way to succeed with a C.

BLENDING FOR THE S MANAGER

You're steady and dependable, but easily discouraged. You can lack confidence in your abilities when placed in new and difficult situations.

To convince a D: Assert more confidence, and don't be intimidated or scared off by the strong-willed and challenging D. Come back strongly with the answers they want.

To convince an I: You may not like their over-friendly, time-wasting approach but you should get along fairly well.

To Convince an S: Like you, he or she will require lots of assurances. Watch what you say and how you say it.

To Convince a C: You'll have a fine rapport as long as you can confidently answer all their questions and firmly present specific facts and figures. Don't be intimidated by their initial skepticism to an idea or project.

BLENDING FOR THE C MANAGER

You're a well-organized facts-and-figures person who prefers working on established, time-proven projects and services.

To convince a D: Be careful; don't overwhelm him or her with all your facts and figures. Just hit the high points about a project. You'll need to focus on the new and innovative aspects of a project.

To convince an I: Again, resist the urge to lay out all the facts; just hit the high points about a project, being as friendly as possible. Have a few good jokes ready to deliver. Focus on the new and innovative aspects of a project.

To convince an S: Just don't talk too *fast* and you'll get along well. Give him or her plenty of time to digest the facts you present. Talk about their family a little, too.

To convince a C: This is your easiest style to communicate with. You'll see eye to eye with him or her from the start.

CONCLUSION

While few of us are pure "D, I, S, or C" you will find that blending your style will be one of the most effective and successful management techniques you can do.

To help you develop your skills, use the people in your office with whom you already have a good relationship as a resource to help you communicate more effectively with that difficult team member. You'll find that the more you use these techniques, the easier it will be to identify subordinates and team members, and the more successful your communications will be. Happy relating!

About the Author: Dr. Teplitz is an author, attorney and has a Ph.D. in Wholistic Health Sciences. He is author of *Managing Your Stress*, *Switched-On Living* and *Brain Gym for Business*. He speaks and consults on management, leadership, sales and personal development issues. Contact him at 800 77-RELAX (777-3529), Email Info@Teplitz.com or go to www.Teplitz.com.