

WORK STYLES INVENTORY

Understanding Work Styles

Self-awareness – a clear understanding of your personality and how others perceive you – is an essential tool for successful leadership, and a trait all good managers should strive to attain.

Managers who foster self-awareness develop tools for leveraging their strengths and understanding their weaknesses. They earn credibility and cultivate relationships based on trust and respect. And they remain open to new ideas, inquiry, and constructive criticism. Another compelling argument for self-awareness is managers who practice it model the same values for employees and the organization as a whole. An organization that values self-awareness gains credibility and respect. It is open to change when necessary, and rewards flexibility, inquisitiveness, and innovation.

If you have not done so already complete the Work Styles Inventory online.

Work Styles Inventory: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/workstyle>

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WORK STYLE

The ability to relate well to people has become a critical factor for success in every position in a modern organization. The manager’s job has become much more difficult over time. What was once achieved through authority now must be accomplished through influence. At work there are “task” problems and there are “people” problems. Most people would choose to work on a task problem over a people problem any day. People problems take a toll on us personally, causing significant stress. Fortunately, it is possible to manage differences to enhance your work relationships thus reducing the “people” problems.

Dr. David Merrill, an industrial psychologist, developed a model that focuses on differences between people’s outer behaviors rather than on differences in their inner states. Merrill’s model is based on behaviors that are directly observable by others. Behavior is about what a person does; it is the outer expression of a person’s life. It is about body language. How fast do they walk, talk, and gesture? How loud are they? It is about the words they choose. Are they more likely to ask your opinion or tell you their point of view? Are they more likely to talk about tasks or relationships? The model groups people into four different styles, none of which is better or worse than any of the other styles.

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What is a style? Simply put, your style is the way other people see you behave. A person's style is their pattern of assertive and responsive behavior. In this model, a person's level of assertiveness is the degree to which their behaviors are seen by others as being forceful or directive. A person's level of responsiveness is the degree to which they are seen by others as showing their emotions or demonstrating awareness of the feelings of others. The model will distinguish if our behavior is either high or low in assertiveness or responsiveness. It places us on a continuum for each of these.

CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE MODEL

This model describes differences and similarities in people's natural behaviors and work preferences, with the goal of teaching people how to manage those preferences for increased productivity and effectiveness. Over many years of research and data collected across the world, the TRACOM Group found that regardless of a person's ethnicity, age, nationality, etc. they will have behavioral preferences that result in a particular work style.

Norms, or normative comparisons, provide a mechanism for people to compare themselves with one another. Norms reflect the culture and behavioral standards of individual countries and geographic regions. TRACOM's research shows the four styles are a global concept; they exist across all nationalities. However, every culture is unique, and this is sometimes reflected in the way the styles are displayed.

When people act and react in social situations, they exhibit behaviors that help define their behavioral styles. We can identify behavioral styles by watching for the observable patterns in people's behavior – those verbal, vocal, and visual traits people display when relating to others. Understanding the behavioral styles concepts can increase the power of a diverse workforce. One of the most important ways it contributes to success is through its ability to help people from different cultures and societies understand and interact with one another. In the modern world, working across cultures is not only unavoidable, but also necessary. Common barriers to success include language differences, cultural nuances for appropriate behavior, global politics, and differing concepts of authority structures and relationships. Misunderstanding any of these things can make working together difficult. By understanding other people's styles, it will help you to get to know them and learn how to work effectively with them.

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To understand the different behavioral styles, we need to generalize, while being very clear about the differences between generalizing and stereotyping.

Generalizing is the grouping of elements to form logical categories to make sense of a complex world. We simply cannot respond to all the isolated and disparate elements we encounter or observe in our interactions with different groups and types of people, so we group information into categories. When observing different styles, we can make general observations based on our knowledge and experience.

When we take these categorizations of general observation and apply them to whole groups of people, ignoring individual differences, we stereotype everyone in those groups.

In considering the diversity within workforces and among customers and clients, we do and must generalize as a starting point for understanding, being open to modify our perceptions as new information about groups comes to us. At the same time, we must recognize and challenge our own and others' stereotypical views if we are to understand and effectively work with and manage diversity.

The information contained in the rest of this section is focused on the North American norms and culture. The styles are generalizations and only provide a partial description of a person. It is up to each of us to make sure to not stereotype people and to understand each of us are different and to respect those differences when you are communicating and working with others.

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THE FOUR WORK STYLES

- **Analyticals:** Analytical people are those who have a tendency towards perfectionism. They deal in facts, data, logic, and details. They are sometimes slow to make decisions because they want to be sure before taking action. As a result, they may appear overly cautious and not good risk-takers. On the other hand, the decisions and information they provide are usually accurate and thoughtful. Feelings and emotions are kept inside and not revealed to others.
- **Amiables:** Amiables are those more inclined towards social contracting. People and friendships mean the most to these people. They like to see others involved in any process and are typically good at recruiting others as well as juggling multiple tasks. They are genuinely concerned with the feelings of others and go out of their way to not offend. They are just as opinionated as those on the right side of the model—though they may not be as inclined to tell you what is on their mind. They send out lots of cards for all occasions and are personally hurt or offended when others do not show similar considerations.
- **Drivers:** Drivers are strong, decisive, results-oriented types. They provide strong guidance for those who need it (and, unfortunately, for those who do not). They can appear to be overly pushy at times and demanding of themselves and of others. They, like “Analyticals,” tend to keep their emotions to themselves, are highly self-critical, and resent those who waste their time with idle chitchat and non-business-oriented gossip.
- **Expressives:** Expressives are highly enthusiastic and creative, and they operate primarily by intuition. They have little tolerance for those who are not like themselves and find it a great martyrdom (overly dramatic) sacrifice to put up with these others. Because expressives are easily bored and creative, keeping them on-task can be a task in itself. They have a tendency to go off on tangents, and as a result, can be distractible.

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IDENTIFYING A PERSON'S STYLE

Even though human behavior can seem random, you can learn to predict how people will behave in most situations. They tend to follow patterns of behavior which have become habitual for them. You will not be able to predict every move, but you will be able to establish probabilities of behavior.

You can identify another person's style because style identification is based on observable behavior. The key to identifying a person's style is to focus strictly on behavior – on what the person says and does. When you are observing behavior, make sure to avoid the tendency to read meaning into what you see and hear. Don't make inferences or judgments. A person's style is determined by their level of assertiveness and responsiveness.

Assertiveness

There are seven behavioral patterns that are useful in determining a person's level of assertiveness.

	LESS ASSERTIVE	MORE ASSERTIVE
Amount of Talking	Less	More
Rate of Speaking	Slower	Faster
Voice Volume	Softer	Louder
Body Movement	Less, Slower	More, Faster
Energy Expressed	Less	More
Posture	Leans Back	Leans Forward
Forcefulness of Gestures	Less	More

Here are some characteristics and behaviors of **more** assertive people. More assertive people tend to:

- Exude more energy and move faster.
- Gesture more vigorously and have more intense eye contact.
- Be erect or lean forward, especially when making a point.
- Speak more rapidly, louder, and more often.
- Address problems quicker.
- Decide quicker and are more risk oriented.
- Be more confrontational.

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- Be more direct and emphatic when expressing opinions, making requests, and giving directions.
- Exert more pressure for a decision or for taking action.
- Demonstrate anger quicker.

Here are some characteristics and behaviors of **less** assertive people. Less assertive people tend to:

- Demonstrate less energy and move more slowly.
- Gesture less vigorously and have less intense eye contact.
- Lean backward even when making a point.
- Speak less rapidly, more softly and less often.
- Be slower to address problems and decide less quickly.
- Be less risk oriented.
- Be less confrontational.
- Be less direct and less emphatic when expressing opinions, making requests, and giving directions.
- Exert less pressure for making a decision or taking action.
- Demonstrate anger less quickly.

Responsiveness

Now that you have gauged a person’s degree of assertiveness, it’s time to figure how responsive they are. Here the question to ask is “Does the person show more or less emotion”? There are three behavioral patterns that are useful in determining a person’s level of responsiveness.

	LESS RESPONSIVE	MORE RESPONSIVE
How much facial animation?	Less	More
How much voice variation?	Less	More
How flowing are their gestures?	Less	More

Here are some characteristics and behaviors of **more** responsive people. More responsive people tend to:

- Express feelings more openly.
- Appear friendlier.
- Be more facially expressive.

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- Gesture more freely.
- Have more vocal inflection.
- Be comfortable with small talk.
- Use more anecdotes and stories.
- Express more concern about the human aspect of issues.
- Prefer working with people.
- Dress more casually.
- Be less structured in their use of time.

Here are some characteristics and behaviors of **less** responsive people. Less responsive people tend to:

- Be less disclosing of feelings.
- Appear more reserved.
- Have less facial expressiveness.
- Gesture less often.
- Have less vocal inflection.
- Be less interested in and less adept at “small talk.”
- Use more facts and logic than anecdotes.
- Be more task oriented.
- Prefer working alone.
- Dress more formally.
- Be more structured in their use of time.

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WORKING WITH OTHER STYLES

Do's and Don'ts for Working with Expressives

DO'S	DON'TS
1. Plan interaction that supports their dreams and intentions.	1. Legislate or muffle.
2. Leave time for relating and socializing.	2. Be curt, cold, or totally impersonal.
3. Talk about people and their goals.	3. Drive facts and figures, alternatives, or abstracts.
4. Stick to general ideas. Put details in writing. Tie down modes of action and deadlines.	4. Leave things hanging in the air.
5. Ask for their opinions and ideas regarding people.	5. Dream with them; you will lose time.
6. Provide ideas for implementing actions.	6. Kid around too much or stick to the agenda too much.
7. Use enough time to be stimulating, fun-loving, fast-moving, and entertaining.	7. Talk down to them.
8. Provide testimonials from people they view as important or prominent.	8. Be dogmatic.
9. Offer special, immediate, and extra incentives to acknowledge their willingness to take risks.	

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Do's and Don'ts for Working with Drivers

DO'S	DON'TS
1. Be clear, specific, brief, and to the point.	1. Ramble on or waste time.
2. Stick to business.	2. Spend excessive time with personal relations.
3. Come prepared with all the data, objectives, and support materials in a well-organized package.	3. Be disorganized; confuse or distract them from business.
4. Plan your presentation efficiently; present the facts logically.	4. Leave loopholes or cloudy issues.
5. Ask specific questions.	5. Ask pointless or rhetorical questions.
6. Provide alternatives and choices to allow them to make their own decisions.	6. Come with your mind made up or make decisions for them.
7. Provide facts and figures about probability of success or effectiveness of options.	7. Speculate wildly or offer guarantees or assurances.
8. Take issue with the facts if you disagree.	8. Take issue with the person if you disagree.
9. Support the results if you agree.	9. Give personal support if you agree.
10. Motivate and persuade by referring to objectives and results.	10. Try to convince by personal means.
11. Depart quickly and graciously after talking business.	11. Offer an epilogue after finishing business.

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Do's and Don'ts for Working with Amiables

DO'S	DON'TS
1. Start, however briefly, with a personal comment. Break the ice.	1. Rush headlong into business or the agenda.
2. Show sincere interest in them as people; find areas of common involvement; be candid and open.	2. Stick coldly or harshly to business, but do not be too personal, either.
3. Patiently draw out their personal goals and work with them to help achieve these goals; listen; be responsive.	3. Force them to respond immediately to your objectives or say, "here's how I see it...."
4. Present your case softly and non-threateningly.	4. Be domineering or demanding; do not threaten with power.
5. Ask "how" questions to draw out their opinions.	5. Debate about facts and figures; they may become quiet.
6. Look for possible areas of disagreement or dissatisfaction if you have early agreement on an issue.	6. Manipulate or bully them into agreement; they may not fully buy-in.
7. Look for hurt feelings and personal responses if you disagree with them.	7. Patronize or demean.
8. Move casually, informally.	8. Be abrupt or move too quickly.
9. Define clearly (preferably in writing) individual contributions.	9. Be vague or offer opinions or probabilities.
10. Provide guarantees that their decisions will minimize risks and will provide them with benefits.	10. Offer assurances or guarantees you cannot fulfill.

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Do's and Don'ts for Working with Analyticals

DO'S	DON'TS
1. Prepare your case in advance.	1. Be disorganized or messy.
2. Approach them in a straight forward, direct way; stick to business.	2. Be circuitous, giddy, casual, informal, or loud.
3. Support their principled, thoughtful approach; build your credibility by listing pros and cons to any suggestions you make.	3. Rush their decision-making process.
4. Make an organized contribution to their efforts; present specifics and do what you say you will do.	4. Be vague about what is expected of either of you; do not fail to follow through or explain changes.
5. Take your time but be specific.	5. Dilly-dally.
6. Draw up a scheduled approach to implementing action with a detailed timetable; assure them there will not be surprises.	6. Leave things to chance or luck.
7. Follow through—if you agree.	7. Provide special incentives.
8. List your reasons in an organized manner if you disagree.	8. Threaten, cajole, wheedle, coax, or whimper.
9. Give them time to verify the reliability of your actions; be accurate and realistic.	9. Use testimonies of others or unreliable sources; do not be haphazard.
10. Provide solid, tangible, practical evidence.	10. Use someone's opinion as evidence.
11. Indicate guarantees over a long period but provide options.	11. Use gimmicks or clever, quick manipulations.

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HOW OTHERS RESPOND TO THE STYLES

The following tables show how each style is perceived by the other styles, including the strengths and weaknesses of the style and how adjustments can be made to complement other styles for productive task accomplishment.

How Others Respond to a Driver

ANALYTICALS	OTHER DRIVERS
<p>Relate to your efficiency, logic, command of data, and task orientation.</p> <p>Question your haste, decisiveness, competitiveness, and risk taking.</p> <p>To work better with analyticals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring them detailed facts and logic in writing. • Be patient while they evaluate and check the accuracy of the data. • Help them reach conclusions by encouraging them to set deadlines after you have provided time for review. 	<p>Perceive you as action oriented, in a hurry, manager, commanding, efficient, stubborn, disciplined, tough, independent, secretive, logical, demanding, non-listening, quick, decisive, and unfeeling.</p> <p>To work better with fellow drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree in advance on specific goals and provide freedom to work within these limits. An unproductive deadlock can occur when there is too much dominance and no allowance for independence and individuality.
AMIABLES*	EXPRESSIVES
<p>Relate to your efficiency and discipline.</p> <p>Question your lack of feeling, tough mindedness, bottom-line orientation, impatience, and secretiveness.</p> <p>To work better with amiables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show concern for them and their interests. • Slow down and provide details and specifics about how to accomplish objectives. • Support efforts and accomplishment with personal attention. <p>*Working with this style will require you to exercise your versatility.</p>	<p>Relate to your accomplishments, independence, and decisiveness.</p> <p>Question your coldness, lack of playfulness, critical nature, and discipline.</p> <p>To work better with expressives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more open about yourself, feelings, and opinions. • Relax time constraints within structure; provide incentives. • Provide public recognition for accomplishments (let them win in front of others).

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How Others Respond to an Analytical

OTHER ANALYTICALS	DRIVERS
<p>Perceive you as thoughtful, wanting more facts, conservative, quiet, critical, logical, cool toward others, thorough, cooperative, distant, reserved, stern, austere, dependable, and accurate.</p> <p>To work better with fellow analyticals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the need for making timetables and for reaching decisions. • Reinforcing one another’s desire for more information may form a self-perpetuating cycle that does not produce results. 	<p>Relate to your logic, command of data, accuracy, and dependability.</p> <p>Question your overabundance of facts, lack of decisiveness, and lack of risk taking.</p> <p>To work better with drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize the facts and various outcomes; let them decide. • Depend on self-discipline rather than on excessive reports or precise instructions. • Recognize results with monetary rewards.
AMIABLES	EXPRESSIVES*
<p>Relate to your cooperative and conservative nature, accuracy, and patience.</p> <p>Question your lack of warmth and close relationships and your dependence on figures.</p> <p>To work better with fellow amiables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show your interest in them as people, rather than as workers. • Use their skills as mediators to build relationships inside the organization. • Help them to perceive the big picture and how they relate to it. 	<p>Relate to your cooperativeness and dependability.</p> <p>Question your dependence on facts, criticalness, stuffy nature, impersonal approach, and lack of fun.</p> <p>To work better with expressives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend informal time with them. • Recognize their need for package sales, incentives, and contests. • Ask for their opinions and input on a noncritical, accepting basis. <p>*Working with this style will require you to exercise your versatility.</p>

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How Others Respond to an Amiable

ANALYTICALS	DRIVERS*
<p>Relate to your cooperative, careful, quiet, thoughtful, and willing ways.</p> <p>Question your soft-hearted, easygoing nature, emotional responses, and compliance with others.</p> <p>To work better with analyticals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress the need for facts and data rather than emotions to build a case but let them do the work-up with a time limit. • Provide added opportunities for class work and study in return for meeting activity standards. • Build confidence in the relationship through demonstrated technical competence. 	<p>Relate to your supportive, helpful, team-oriented, and careful nature.</p> <p>Question your lack of initiative, need for detail, small thinking, and responsive side.</p> <p>To work better with drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be businesslike; let them tell you how to help and what they want. Do not try to build a relationship or friendship. • Stay on schedule; stick to the agenda; provide factual summaries. • Let them make decisions based on options you provide. <p>*Working with this style will require you to exercise your versatility.</p>
OTHER AMIABLES	EXPRESSIVES
<p>Perceive you as supportive, quiet, friendly, shy, retiring, team-oriented, helpful, kind, thoughtful, slow to act, nonthreatening, soft-hearted, easygoing, complying, responsive, open, willing, careful, and cooperative.</p> <p>To work better with fellow amiables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be hard-nosed, insistent, and directive (an uncomfortable role but a necessary one in this situation); otherwise, it is likely that no one will take the necessary initiative, and the result will be unsatisfactory. 	<p>Relate to your supportive, friendly, responsive, and helpful characteristics.</p> <p>Question your slowness to act and your careful, complying, non-competitive stance.</p> <p>To work better with expressives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to bring them definite opinions, backed by third-party endorsement; do not waver. • Publicly recognize and praise their accomplishments. • Stand your ground when challenged about rules and previously established procedures.

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How Others Respond to an Expressive

ANALYTICALS*	DRIVERS
<p>Relate to your imaginative, stimulating, and thought-provoking nature.</p> <p>Question your ability to perform as stated, your follow-through, and your loud, flashy, emotional side.</p> <p>To work better with analyticals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about facts, not opinions, and break down component parts, preferably in writing. • Back up your facts with proof from authoritative sources. • Be quietly patient while they discover for themselves what you already know. <p>*Working with this style will require you to exercise your versatility.</p>	<p>Relate to your outgoing, imaginative, competitive, and personable aspects.</p> <p>Question your “rah-rah,” demonstrative, impulsive, emotional side.</p> <p>To work better with drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back up your enthusiasm with actual results; demonstrate that your ideas work. • Be on time and keep within agreed-on limits; provide materials promptly. • Provide choices of action whenever possible and let the drivers select the course of action.
AMIABLES	OTHER EXPRESSIVES
<p>Relate to your warmth, enthusiasm, and stimulating and personable nature.</p> <p>Question your outgoing, loud, dramatic, and impulsive sides.</p> <p>To work better with amiables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow down the pace and volume; allow time to build a relationship. • Work on one item at a time, in detail; avoid the confusion of too many tasks or ideas at one time. • Encourage suggestions, participation in team activities, and supportive roles. 	<p>Perceive you as outgoing, enthusiastic, warm, opinionated, talkative, intuitive, emotional, stimulating, imaginative, impulsive, excitable, loud, flashy, dramatic, personable, competitive, and caring.</p> <p>To work better with fellow expressives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the discipline in this relationship, or all the fun and creativity may accomplish nothing. Keep on-track and emphasize the basics, allowing carefully limited experimentation as a reward for results.

ACTION PLANS

Amiable Characteristics	So, You.....
Concerned with stability	Show how your idea minimizes risk
Think logically	Show reasoning
Want documentation and facts	Provide data/proof
Like personal involvement	Demonstrate your interest in them
Need to know step-by-step sequence	Provides outline or one-two-three instructions as you personally walk them through
Want others to notice their patient perseverance	Compliment for their steady follow through
Avoid risks/changes	Give them personal assurances
Dislike conflict	Act non-aggressively, focus on common interest or needed support
Accommodate others	Allow them to provide service or support for others
Look for calmness and peace	Provide relaxing, friendly atmosphere
Enjoy teamwork	Provide them with cooperative group
Want sincere feedback that they are appreciated.	Acknowledge their easygoing manner and helpful efforts, when appropriate

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Expressive Characteristics	So, You.....
Concerned with approval and appearances	Show them that you admire and like them
Seek enthusiastic people and situations	Behave optimistically and provide upbeat setting
Think emotionally	Support their feelings when possible
Want to know the general expectations	Avoid involved details, focus on the “big picture”
Need involvement and people contact	Interact and participate with them
Like changes and innovations	Vary the routine; avoid requiring long-term repetition by them
Want other to notice THEM	Compliment them personally and often
Often need help getting organized	Do it together
Dislike conflict	Act non-aggressively and avoid arguing directly on a personal basis
Look for action and stimulation	Keep up a fast, lively pace
Surround themselves with optimism	Support their ideas and do not poke holes in their dreams; show them your positive side
Want feedback that they “look good”	Mention their accomplishments, progress, and your other genuine appreciation

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Analytical Characteristics	So, You.....
<p>Concerned with aggressive approaches</p> <p>Think logically</p> <p>Seek data</p> <p>Need to know the process</p> <p>Utilize caution</p> <p>Prefer to do things themselves</p> <p>Want others to notice their accuracy</p> <p>Gravitate toward quality control</p> <p>Avoid conflict</p> <p>Need to be right</p> <p>Like to contemplate</p>	<p>Approach them in an indirect, non-threatening way</p> <p>Show your reasoning</p> <p>Give it to them in writing</p> <p>Provide explanations and rationale</p> <p>Allow them to think, inquire and check before the make decisions</p> <p>When delegating, let them check on others' progress and performance</p> <p>Compliment them on their thoroughness and correctness when appropriate</p> <p>Let them assess and be involved in the process when possible</p> <p>Tactfully ask for clarification and assistance you may need</p> <p>Allow them time to find the best or correct answer, within available limits</p> <p>Tell them why and how.</p>

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Driver Characteristics	So, You.....
Concerned with being #1	Show them how to win, new opportunities
Think logically	Display reasoning
Want facts and highlights	Provide concise data
Strive for results	Agree on goal and boundaries, then support or get out of their way
Like personal choices	Allow them to do their thing, within limits
Like changes	Vary routine
Prefer to delegate	Look for opportunities to modify their workload focus
Want others to notice accomplishments	Compliment them on what they have done
Need to be in charge	Let them take the lead, when appropriate, but give them parameters
Tendency towards conflict	If necessary, argue with conviction on points of disagreement, backed up with facts; do not argue on personality basis.