

Communicating for Results

Presentation Notes



April 2018

Part One: Asking for Cooperation

Despite the increased use of technology in the workplace, interpersonal communication is still the most effective method of sharing ideas. Increase your collaboration success by applying the following rules for asking:

1) Ask yourself, “What’s really preventing me from requesting what I want?”

- *Are you unwilling to deal with a refusal?*
- *Will a refusal precipitate a difficult decision for you so you postpone the decision by postponing the request for help?*
- *You are less likely to hesitate if you first deal with the true cause of your reluctance*

2) Ask yourself, “What will it cost me to ask?”

- *You’ll be in debt to your colleagues*
- *You will damage your reputation by asking someone who is less experienced than you*
- *You fear a negative response*
- *Weigh possible advantages against disadvantages so you will feel more comfortable in asking for help*

3) Ask specifically for what you want

- *Overcome disadvantages of asking from rule #2 so you can ask specifically for what you want*
- *Don’t be vague; you can end up being misunderstood*

4) Ask in a positive way

- *A hesitant approach makes it easier for you to be refused*
- *Be confident in what you are asking*
- *Mentally accept the cost of asking, if you don’t you won’t ask in a positive way*

5) Ask the right person

- *Ask someone who has knowledge of the task at hand*
- *Don't ask third parties to ask for you, it could lead to miscommunication*
- *Collaboration requires trust, and colleagues will have more confidence in what you say when they can see your face and read your body language*

6) Ask at the right time

- *Determine if the circumstances are right to ask*
- *Don't ask for help if they are busy, even if you need their help right away*

7) Ask for a definite answer

- *Don't accept a "Maybe" answer; you don't want to be left in limbo*
- *Postponing answers just prevents you from making critical decisions and getting things done one time*

Part Two: Types of Social Styles

Assessment Tally Sheet

	Blue	Green	Red	Yellow
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Total				

Two Dynamics of Social Styles

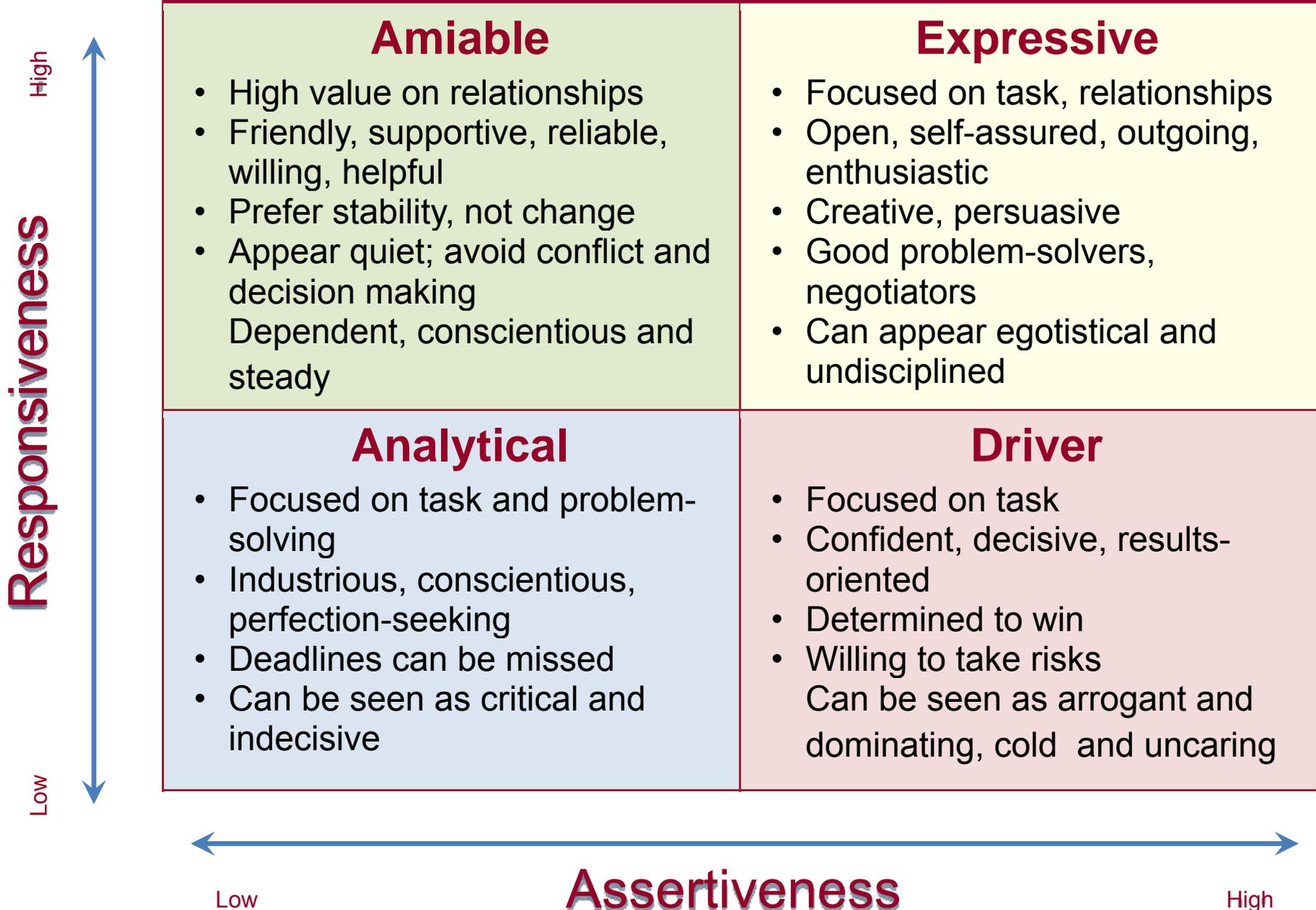
Assertiveness

Less Assertive	More Assertive
“Ask” oriented	“Tell” Oriented
Go-along attitude	Take-charge attitude
Cooperative	Competitive
Supportive	Directive
Risk avoider	Risk taker
Makes decisions slowly	Makes decisions quickly
Lets others take	Takes initiative
Leans backward	Leans forward
Indirect eye contact	Direct eye contact
Speaks slowly, softly	Speaks quickly,
Makes few statements	Makes many statements
Expresses moderate	Expresses strong
Few gestures	Lots of gestures
Weak handshake	Firm handshake

Responsiveness

Less Responsive	More Responsive
Controls emotions	Shows emotions
Cool, aloof	Warm, approachable
Task oriented	People oriented
Uses facts	Uses opinions
Serious	Playful
Impersonal, businesslike	Personable, friendly
Moves stiffly	Moves freely
Seldom gestures	Gestures frequently
Formal dress	Informal dress
Disciplined about time	Undisciplined about time
Controlled facial expressions	Animated facial
Monotone voice	Many vocal inflections
Not very talkative	Talkative
Little eye contact	Lots of eye contact

Types of Social Styles



Part Two: Types of Social Styles

The Driver Social Style:

A person who has a driver social style is high on assertiveness and low on responsiveness. They are also sometimes referred to as directors because they like to direct their own work without help. Driver can be seen as arrogant and dominating, which means they like to focus on the tasks at hand rather than relationships in the workplace.

When Communicating with Drivers:

- Speak specifically, clearly, and briefly.
 - If you do not sound professional and logical, drivers will not respect you.
 - Stay focused on the required results.
 - Avoid vagueness.
 - When responding to a driver's questions, give direct answers, and don't get defensive or emotional. Present the goals and objectives, and explain how to achieve them in a business-like manner. Don't get too friendly or personal – drivers aren't interested.
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The Expressive Social Style:

Expressives are high on assertiveness and responsiveness. They are open, self-assured, and outgoing, with an enthusiastic approach that makes them friendly, and therefore, are sometimes referred to as socializers. Expressives are also very creative and innovative, so they are great at developing ideas for projects.

When Communicating with Expressives:

- Don't provide too much detail.
- Allow them freedom in planning how to accomplish what is required.
- Acknowledge their accomplishments; give them an opportunity to express their ideas and turn those ideas into action.
- Your communication should reflect their enthusiasm and positive attitude.
- Provide opportunities for expressives to interact with and motivate others.

The Analytical Social Style:

A person who has an analytical social style is both low on assertiveness and responsiveness. Their focus on tasks makes them very hard working, diligent, and does their work thoroughly. However, sometimes their search for perfection can cause problems with deadlines.

When Communicating with Analyticals:

- Provide facts and figures if you wish to convince them of your point of view
 - Minimize risk: They are not risk-takers, so whenever possible demonstrate why your preferred option involves the least risk.
 - Provide details: Give them as much detail as you can, using a direct, low-key approach to presenting ideas. It's essential that all of your facts are accurate and precise.
 - Deal with questions: Be patient with analyticals' thoroughness and need for information. They often will ask a lot of questions. Make yourself available to answer them.
 - Deal with answers: If you have questions, don't expect immediate answers or decisions – the analytical needs time to think things over.
 - Set deadlines: When assigning tasks, set specific time limits, and specify that you want the person's best work within the given time constraints.
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The Amiable Social Style:

A person with an amiable social style is not assertive but is highly responsive to suggestions and outside ideas. They like other people and are supportive, reliable, willing, and helpful. As this suggests, amiables are very friendly and relationships mean a lot to them.

When Communicating with Amiables:

- Show that you care
- Provide adequate structure
- Give positive attention when assigning tasks

Making Appropriate Communication Choices

The situation:

Your department is launching a new online service. This is a huge undertaking requiring your project team to design an interface for a multinational audience. You meet with Ben, Rajesh, Niki, and Malaya to explain what you want them to do. They are all veteran employees; this is what you know:

- **Niki** is very ambitious and sees her part in this project as an opportunity to show off her range of skills and abilities.
- **Rajesh** isn't very easy to get along with, but he is very good at what he does. You have to be careful what you give him to do because he tends to take forever to finish.
- **Malaya** is very willing but lacks confidence. She needs all your support.
- **Ben** is great to have on any team. His enthusiasm is contagious and he keeps morale high.

Your task:

Within your group, select the best response for each individual in the following interactions. Your goal is to engage and motivate the individuals. Keep in mind each person's style based on what you know from their description above.

Niki's Social Style: _____

Niki: "OK – so what would be my part in all this?"

- a) We need to brainstorm a design for an online currency converter. Have you got any thoughts on what would be the best approach to take, Niki?
- b) Niki, I need you to design an online currency converter. Don't worry, it's all mapped out in the specs, and I'll help you every step of the way.
- c) Niki, I want you to design an online currency converter. It's critical to the development and effectiveness of the whole web site, so it must be done quickly and accurately."

Reasons for this selection:

Rajesh's Social Style: _____

Rajesh: "Why have I been asked to work on this project? It's really not my kind of thing."

- a) I thought you'd like to chart the project methodology and then you could identify what improvements could be made next time.
- b) You don't need to worry. Experience isn't necessary. In fact, we need to take a more risk-taking and daring approach.
- c) I thought you'd like the chance to work with a project team again. It will be quite an achievement.

Reasons for this selection:

Malaya's Social Style:

Malaya: "What do you want me to do? I don't mind what you give me"

- a) We have 12 weeks exactly to take this from initial design to finish tested program. There'll be plenty for everyone to do. If we work as a team, there shouldn't be a problem.
- b) I'll tell you what your duties will be when I've worked out the schedule.
- c) There are a lot of things you can do, Malaya, but don't concern yourself with the schedule. We'll do that together.

Reasons for this selection:

Ben's Social Style: _____

Ben: "I think that this is really exciting. I guess that the results of this assignment will be the key to success of the whole project."

- a) Yes, that's true and it won't be easy to achieve. But as long as your work is of the high quality that you usually produce, there'll be no problems.
- b) That's why you're perfect for this. I need you to effectively communicate with everyone and keep morale high. The rest of the team will handle the details of the project itself.
- c) Sure it's important, but I wouldn't say that it was key. Any accolades should go to the established project managers.

Reasons for this selection:

Part Three: Persuasion Techniques

In your role as an employee, you may benefit from learning persuasion techniques when asking co-workers or your supervisors for help.

You can reduce the likelihood of getting a refusal or getting a more enthusiastic answer by expressing yourself in the most convincing way. You have a better chance of success if you present your ideas persuasively. Some common methods of verbal persuasion are:

- problem and solution
- comparative advantage
- reason giving
- motivated sequence

These techniques are designed to lead the listener to a specific conclusion, and thereby help you to achieve the decision or support that you desire. You use these techniques all of the time without realizing it.

Problem and solution

Problem and solution has only two parts, so it is quite simple. First you describe the problem and then you outline your suggested solution. For example, you might point out that vital supplies are running low, and suggest that you call the supplier for an immediate delivery.

There may be several elements to both the problem and to the solution, but the basic structure remains the same.

Comparative advantage

The comparative advantage technique directly compares and contrasts the benefits of two or more items, solutions, or options.

Consider the following as an example of how to use this technique with someone who believes that access to supplies always takes priority.

- **Good** – You tell your boss that one potential supplier offers a higher discount, but can only deliver once a week.
- **Better** – You go on to say that a second supplier offers a marginally lower discount, but can deliver any day within 24 hours of order.

Reason giving

With reason giving you use a set of three to five reasons why the listeners should think, feel, believe, or act the same as you do.

For example, you might tell a panel of managers that your belief that there should be a designated telephone number for customer service is based on the fact that it will

- enable calls to be handled by trained staff
- prevent call queues on the sales lines
- improve customer relations

Motivated sequence

The motivated sequence technique has five steps and is designed to persuade and motivate people to act. Each of the steps is equally important, and none should be missed out.

The motivated sequence steps entail the following:

- **Attention** – Get attention by describing a situation or fact associated with what you want to achieve.
- **Need** – Explain the need that is precipitated by this negative situation or fact.
- **Satisfaction** – Explain what it will take to satisfy the need.
- **Visualization** – Ask the listener to visualize the positive effect of rectifying the negative situation.
- **Action** – Give instructions on how to act to make the change.

These techniques can be used in conjunction with each other as required. However, think through the more complex ones before you get in front of the senior managers who you wish to persuade.

Some of these tactics to persuade are more effective than others in certain situations; for example:

- **Problem and solution** – The simple problem and solution technique is good for promoting your preferred approach when no other solution is being offered.
- **Comparative advantage** – is good for emphasizing the superiority of your preferred choice by showing it in the best light. This is especially useful when you know that alternatives are being discussed, but you want to show that yours is the best.
- **Reason giving** – is best when you have a lot of expertise and facts to support your position.
- **Motivated sequence** – is for occasions when you want action taken on a negative situation – and you want it now. This method is particularly useful for

those *make or break* occasions when you do not want to lose the impetus of the moment, or you fear that you may not get another chance like it.

If you use these persuasion techniques to promote your ideas to the decision-makers in your organization, you have a greater chance of watching them become a reality.

Part Four: Result-Oriented Meetings

Meetings should offer the same advantages as teamwork in assisting the successful completion of projects. But for this to happen, meetings need to have direction and discipline. Meetings will be more productive if you follow the subsequent strategies:

- **Focus on the goal:** At the beginning of your meeting you need to set and communicate the objective you want to achieve. Each meeting should be called for only one objective. Attendees are more likely to become confused if the objectives are mixed. Without a meeting goal, your meeting will turn into a general discussion. Once you have decided your objective, all associated communication must focus on it. By reviewing your objective at the beginning of the meeting will help keep everyone on track.
- **Collect information:** At your meeting, you need to collect as much relevant information as possible to help you achieve your goal. It is this information that will then enable problems to be resolved, informed choices and decisions to be made, and agreement to be reached. However, the information you collect must be relevant to the objective. So again, in order to meet your objective for the meeting, make sure everyone stays focused on the issue at hand.
- **Solve problems:** Some problems will have been identified and already up for discussion, while others will surface during the meeting. All participants should be encouraged to voice their ideas for potential solutions. As the leader of the meeting, it's up to you to decide if solutions need to be sought immediately, or, if they can be resolved later as a separate issue.
- **Make decisions:** Making decisions is crucial to the success of results-oriented meetings. It's preferable to delay making a decision rather than push the group into a poor one because the meeting is about to end. Avoid the "let's just make the decision and get out of here" mentality by either getting the group to agree to extending the current meeting or arranging another one.
- **Confirm agreement:** It's important to gain the agreement of the people to whom you assign tasks. Don't just announce what you want them to do, ask them to confirm their willingness. Unanimous agreement isn't necessary for every decision, but even the backing of the majority of the group makes solutions easier to implement.

Additional criteria to keep in mind:

- **Stay neutral:** Try to remain neutral on whatever issue is being discussed. It's essential to be impartial; otherwise your decisions will be biased.
- **Take charge:** Accept your position and don't act apologetically. For the course of the project and the meeting, you are in charge- so take charge.
- **Encourage contribution:** When the discussion is dominated by a few, the group may not get the full picture or benefit from everyone's knowledge and experience. Ensure that you get input from everyone by asking for it.

"We are born into a box of time and space. We use words and communication to break out of it and to reach out to others."

- Roger Ebert