COMMUNICATION | LISTENING | PSYCHOLOGY | RELATIONSHIP

Misunderstood Behaviors

The Four Key Behavioral and Social Styles

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The key in any relationship is to understand why people act and react the way they do towards each other. By understanding behavioral social styles and identifying which best describe yourself and those around you, you can create better communication and understanding between family, friends, co-workers and business associates.

Although creating a productive and cohesive team is the goal in most business relationships, it is not always the easiest thing to accomplish. One reason companies send their management teams for training is so they can understand the different social behaviors so that they can help to create a better work environment for co-workers and their employees. Sales people and business owners who desire to improve their sales and management skills and earn a better living have learned that the art of relating could be the difference between making the sale, not losing a good employee to getting that promotion; even getting along with your spouse better.

One of the greatest secrets giving you an advantage when dealing with people is the ability to understand why others respond to the way you respond during conversations.

Once you understand the different social styles you will have a better idea of how to not only successfully get your point across but also increase your chances of getting a favorable response.

The more you can mirror a person's social style when delivering your message, the greater the chances that they will be able to receive it favorably, therefore, respond favorably. Improving your ability to relate with each person you deal with will increase personal and business success.

Wouldn't it be great if everyone could learn to just understand one another's behaviors and social styles? It would make this world a happier place.

The Four Different Social Styles:

All of us can be put into one of the following four social style categories:

The Analytical style, ***The Driver*** style, ***The Amiable*** style, and ***The Expressive*** personality styles. As you learn more about each of the four social styles you will gain the insight needed to increase your ability to create stronger relationships and much better communication skills.

> **It is extremely important to first identify your own personal social style and then be able to identify the people you are communicating with.**

The Analytical

The first is ***The Analytical*** social style. The ***analytical*** type person likes to ask questions assertively while controlling his or her emotions. He or she will also tend to spend less time on communication and prefers to focus on the task at hand going through an informational or fact finding process rather than just getting the job done. As you watch and listen to the ***analytical*** you will discover they offer fewer words during their conversations and will often speak slowly. They also tend to show less body language, becoming silent when those who are more aggressive show themselves.

When dealing with an ***analytical***, don't be intimidated when they start asking questions. It is because they focus on facts not feelings. They are not intentionally testing your knowledge – they have a need to know all the facts before making a decision. Decisions do not come quickly or easily for the ***analytical***. Most times thorough research is involved. They are very organized and methodical, being very neat and tidy within their personal space.

So if you are an ***analytical*** type, you may tend to get frustrated when you can't get all the answers right away. You may wonder why others get so emotional about different things (especially when they don't have all the facts).

> **Getting all the facts and knowing all there is to know (pros and cons) is usually the primary goal of an *analytical*, not necessarily accomplishing the task or making a final decision in a timely manner.**

This makes the ***analytical*** more of a thinker than a doer. The saying, "knowledge is power" might be their battle cry.

Would you consider yourself the analytical type? Yes____ No _____
Who in your personal life would you consider to be an analytical?

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Who in your professional life or at your job would you consider to be analytical?

_____

The Driver

The next social style is the ***driver*** social style. The ***driver*** likes to assertively tell people what to do while controlling their own emotions. They tend to make more statements rather than ask a lot of questions. You will find a ***driver*** speaks fast and direct when communicating their point. They may not be so expressive but they speak louder than most. He or she also likes to focus on results and will show less signs of being

patient with those who are “taking too much time” getting the job done. Making decisions usually comes quickly for drivers and they often feel everything should have been done yesterday. They have little tolerance for those who are emotional.

An extreme ***driver*** personality, because they are so driven by results, often leave casualties in their path. They usually have the tact of a steamroller, lacking the patience or compassion with their associates, friends and relatives. And most of the time they are pretty oblivious to that.

You rarely have to wonder where a ***driver*** is coming from. They are always ready and willing to give their opinion. They have little tolerance for those who do not share their opinion and often relentlessly attempt to change the minds of others to see their point of view.

They care mostly about the bottom line. All the details in the middle are insignificant to the ***driver***. A ***driver*** can be considered to be bossy. Therefore, when putting a team together putting a ***driver*** and an ***analytical*** on the same team is a great balance as long as they are aware of each others strengths and can appreciate them.

A ***driver*** always gets the job done. It is much easier for them to stay focused on a goal or tasks. They are great at keeping things moving in order to meet deadlines not letting emotions get in the way.

Would you consider yourself a driver **personality*? Yes____ No_____***

Who in your personal life would you consider to be a driver?

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Who in business or in your professional life would you consider to be driver?

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The Amiable

Next we have the ***amiable*** **social style.** The ***amiable*** tends to be the type that will ask questions without being assertive or opinionated. They tend to show quiet emotion. The ***amiable*** is much more thoughtful and tends to speak slowly. They are very sensitive to the needs of others. They are always concerned about others and how their relationships are going. They can become upset if there is trouble or someone’s feelings

get hurt. They can be considered a little “high maintenance” because of their sensitivity. Their desire is to make everyone happy and not make waves if at all possible.

The ***amiable*** will easily compromise their desires or opinion in order to keep peace. They are very good at going with the flow of things, never becoming overbearing or anxious about the results. Decisions do not come easy for the ***amiable***. Paring up an ***amiable*** with a ***driver*** isn’t necessarily a good idea; but if you include an ***expressive*** (as you will see below) into the mix, they can be a good neutralizer. People like being with ***amiables,*** they are very wonderful companions. But they won’t be the predominant decision maker. You may not hear alot from an ***amiable*** but they’ll get the job done. ***(see diagram #3)***

Would you consider yourself an amiable **personality*? Yes____ No_____***

Who in your personal life would you consider to be an amiable?

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Who in business or in your professional life would you consider to be an amiable?

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The Expressive

And last we have the ***expressive*** **social style.** ***Expressives*** are the type of people that like to assertively share what they know and how they feel showing their emotions much more than the other social styles. People that fit into the ***expressive*** category tend to talk more, speaking faster, using more tones in their voice and tend to be much more animated during conversations.

Expressives also tend to focus on issues, people, and feelings while using stories to make their point. They have been known to “never let the truth get in the way of a good story”. They can be spontaneous and have a lot of energy while being creative. Follow-through, however, can be a challenge with this social style. With an expressive personality, their highs are high and their lows are low. They make life’s journey an adventure.

The *expressive’s* motivation for doing most anything is to have a

good time while doing it, usually wanting to involve others in the process.

That's why an expressive might take on too much, then become overwhelmed because they never took into consideration all the details or all the steps necessary to get the job done.

Would you consider yourself an expressive* personality*? Yes____ No _____

Who in your personal life would you consider to be an expressive?

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Who in business or in your professional life would you consider to be expressive?

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The Dynamics Between Behavioral Styles

Because each social style can be so different from one another, you will find that without understanding each other's social styles, conflicts, misunderstandings and assumptions can easily occur between opposite social styles. By creating awareness and committing yourself to relating better, you can create harmony between members of your family as well as in your work environment.

Diagram #1

Naturally, conflicts will occur between the different social styles that are diagonally opposite on the behavioral social style model. For example, a ***driver*** social style likes people to get straight to the point without all the drama or emotion. And when the ***amiable*** speaks they tend to go all over the place never really focusing on one issue. When this happens the ***driver*** will become more assertive and the ***amiable*** will experience emotional stress in response to the ***driver's*** assertiveness.

Expressives will drive ***analyticals*** crazy because they see no need for facts, just feelings.

Driver personalities have a hard time with ***expressives*** because they take too long, getting caught up in frivolous details.

Amiables like ***expressives*** most of the time, but can get their feelings hurt by the lack of gentleness at times.

Diagram #2
The ***expressive*** is the type of person who comes to a meeting or social event just full of ideas and enthusiasm. The ***analytical*** wants details and facts to support their ideas. The ***expressive*** has lived their life with the ***analytical*** showing skepticism because the ***analytical*** wants proof or some sort of strategy weighing out the different possibilities. ***Analytical*'s** have a hard time buying into some off the cuff idea. The ***amiable*** wants them both to be happy and the ***driver*** says just do it!

Diagram #3
As we said earlier, in order to create a peaceful harmonious environment whether it is at home, in the office, or with your clients, the key to making the environment more harmonious is not to expect the opposite social styles to adjust themselves to you, but for you to modify your own behavior to meet the needs of the other person. This doesn't mean always giving in, but adjusting your social style as a manner of self-presentation to help the other person feel more comfortable with you. Once you have allowed yourself to make the other social styles feel more comfortable the likelihood of having your message accepted is far more likely.

When everyone strives to understand and communicate more effectively with each other, the entire climate will improve and it is more likely everyone will be happier and more productive.

Always remember, if you want to gain the favor of everyone around you making them feel comfortable and understood, the power of being relationally versatile will create that environment. If you invest the time to understand and relate to the people in your life, you can avoid many time consuming conflicts; saving time, money & relationships in the long run.

What negative situations could have been avoided by handling someone differently or responding to the situation differently?

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What can you do to communicate better with the other social styles in your life?

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References

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Jim Bellacera believes most people go to their grave living quite desperate lives without ever really knowing what they could have done to make it more meaningful and full of purpose or what positive contributions they could have made because they were afraid of the unknown. The unknown will always be present but you have to take a step in faith. Jim likes to tell people to draw a line in the sand and step over it and to never look back until you have achieved your goals. See more about Jim at http://successfulthinkersnetwork.com/stn/