



What's My Communication Style?

Interpretive Report

Report prepared for

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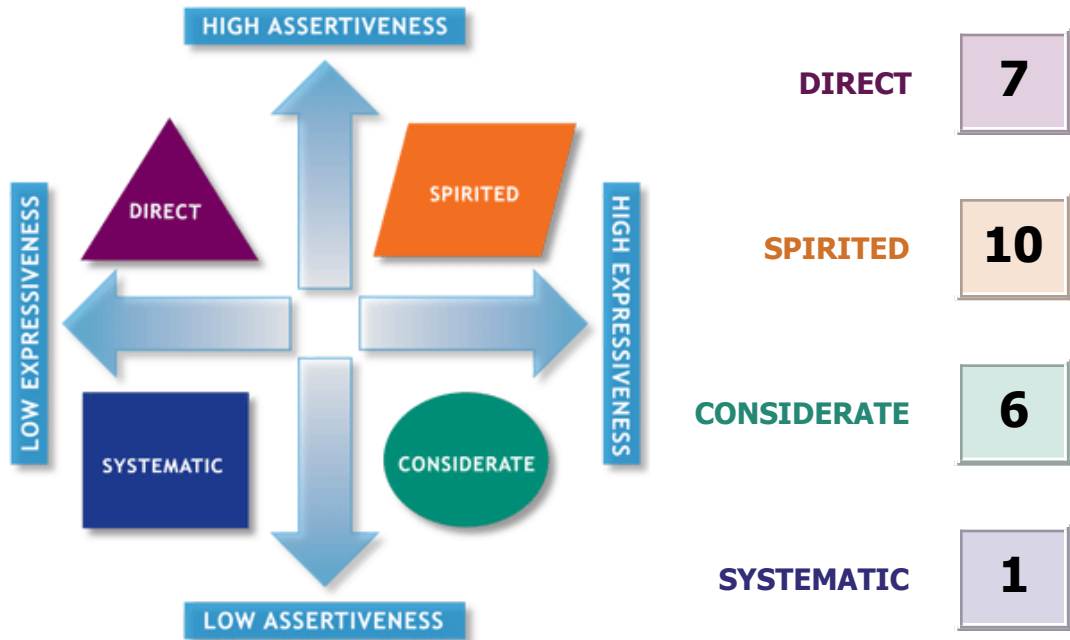
September 17, 2006

This report presents your results from the **What's My Communication Style?** assessment. It includes interpretive information about your scores, a discussion of communication styles, reference charts, and reflection questions.





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Your Communication Style Profile

What Is Communication Style?

It is impossible not to communicate. Every minute that you spend with others you are communicating. Even if you are silent, your body and facial expressions send a message. Over the years people develop specific communication styles or ways of communicating. You may have noticed that you like to be the center of attention or that you prefer to step back and observe others. Your conscious and unconscious decisions about how to communicate are determined to a large degree by your communication style.

Every time you communicate you send a message to another person and he or she receives a message. The other person does not necessarily receive the exact message that was sent. That is because the person receiving your message has his or her own interpretation. Misinterpretation often occurs when people with different styles communicate. For example, if you have a reserved or calm style, but the person you are talking to has a warm and lively style, what you say may be interpreted as being negative, unless the person understands that being reserved and calm is your way of communicating.

Your first step in ensuring that your messages are received well and that you understand others is understanding how you communicate. This report will help you to analyze all aspects of your **SPIRITED** style so that you can be more aware of how you are communicating and be alert to others' styles as well.



Your Communication Style

Although each individual is unique, there are commonalities in personal style. In fact, most research has found two basic dimensions of style, assertiveness and expressiveness.

Assertiveness is the effort that a person makes to influence or control the thoughts or actions of others. People who are assertive tell others how things should be. They are task-oriented, active, and confident. People who are less assertive ask others how things should be. They are process-oriented, deliberate, and attentive.

Expressiveness is the effort that a person makes to control his or her emotions and feelings when relating to others. People who are expressive display their emotions. They are versatile, sociable, and demonstrative. People who are not expressive control their emotions. They are focused, independent, and private.

One's personality style is determined by his or her assertiveness and expressiveness. Four styles result from combining assertiveness and expressiveness.

Direct = High Assertiveness, Low Expressiveness

Spirited = High Assertiveness, High Expressiveness

Considerate = Low Assertiveness, High Expressiveness

Systematic = Low Assertiveness, Low Expressiveness

Your communication style comes through whether or not you are aware of it. The style that you use most often is called your dominant style. Dominant styles are typically indicated by scores of 9 or higher.

Your dominant style is **SPIRITED**.

Although many people have a clearly dominant communication style, others communicate using several styles. Or they may also use different styles in different situations. Because communication takes many forms (e.g., language, facial expressions), there is sometimes more flexibility in people's styles.

If your dominant style score is below 9, you are probably comfortable using more than one style to communicate.





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Four Areas of Communication

Most people think of communication as merely talking. But this is only a part of what it means to communicate. Communication involves not only what you say but how you say it, your body language, and your use of physical space. For example, the words “oh my” can communicate very different ideas. “Oh my, don’t you look nice,” is certainly different than, “Oh my, what large teeth you have.”

Controlling what you say and how you say it are easier than controlling the other aspects of communication, such as your body language and how you use physical space. You may not realize that you have folded your arms or raised your eyebrow, but those actions communicate something about what you are thinking. Even the way you set up your office or how your desk looks communicates something about you.

What's My Communication Style? measures all aspects of communication so that you see an overall picture of your style. The chart below shows typical communication behaviors for the four styles.

	 DIRECT	 SPIRITED	 CONSIDERATE	 SYSTEMATIC
Verbal what you say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decisive • direct speech • doesn't stop to say hello 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expresses opinions readily • generalizes • persuasive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listens • close, personal language • supportive language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses on specific details • precise language • avoids emotions
Paraverbal how you say it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • speaks quickly • loud tones • formal speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lots of voice inflection • animated • loud tones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • speaks slowly • soft tones • patient speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little vocal variety • brief speech • even delivery
Body Language the way you use your body to communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • direct eye contact • firm handshake • bold visual appearance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quick actions • lots of body movement • enthusiastic handshake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gentle handshake • likes hugging • slow movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poker face • controlled movement • avoids touching
Personal Space what your use of space communicates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeps physical distance • displays planning calendars in work space • work space suggests power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cluttered workspace • personal slogans in office • likes close physical space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • family pictures in workspace • likes side-by-side seating • carries sentimental items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a strong sense of personal space • charts, graphs in office • tidy desktop



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Communication Style Strengths

Each style has definite strengths that are evident in communication. Knowledge of your strengths allows you to draw on them and to find situations in which your strengths are a benefit.

Place a checkmark beside each behavior that best describes your strengths.

<p>Direct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Gets to the bottom line<input type="checkbox"/> Speaks forcefully<input type="checkbox"/> Maintains eye contact<input type="checkbox"/> Presents position strongly	<p>Spirited</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Is persuasive<input type="checkbox"/> Is a good storyteller<input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on the big picture<input type="checkbox"/> Uses motivational speech
<p>Systematic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Presents precisely<input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on facts<input type="checkbox"/> Is efficient in speech<input type="checkbox"/> Has a well-organized work space	<p>Considerate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Listens well<input type="checkbox"/> Is a good counselor<input type="checkbox"/> Uses supportive language<input type="checkbox"/> Builds trust

Your Communication Style Strengths



Your Style Strengths

Your dominant style(s) are shaded below. It is helpful to read the descriptions of all styles, however, to broaden your understanding of others' styles as well as your own.

Direct

People with a Direct style tend to take charge of their lives. They prefer to be in control and are quite capable of working independently. They are decisive in their actions and are high achievers. Direct people thrive on competition. They enjoy the challenge of a fight and enjoy the win even more. They maintain a fast pace as they work single-mindedly on their goals. Direct people are good in positions of authority in which independence is required. They possess strong leadership skills and have an ability to get things done. They are not afraid to take risks to get what they want.

Spirited

People with a Spirited style are enthusiastic and friendly. They prefer to be around other people and thrive in the spotlight. Because of their positive focus and their lively nature, they are able to generate motivation and excitement in others. Spirited people work at a fast pace because they prefer stimulation. They are well suited to high-profile positions in which public presentations are important. The spontaneity of Spirited people promotes quick and decisive action. They are good at building alliances and using relationships to accomplish work.

Considerate

People with a Considerate style value warm, personal relationships. They often have good counseling skills and others come to them for support because they are good listeners. Considerate people are cooperative and enjoy being part of a team. They are reliable and steady. Because they are considerate, they are always aware of others' feelings. Considerate people work best in an environment in which teamwork is essential. Their ability to help others makes them suitable for any of the helping professions in which they can care for others.

Systematic

People with a Systematic style place a heavy emphasis on accuracy and objectivity. They make their decisions based on facts and attempt to leave emotions out of them. Their reliance on data makes them excellent problem solvers. They tend to be persistent in their analyses, maintaining a critical focus throughout their work. Systematic people are orderly and prefer to work in an organized environment with clear guidelines. Because Systematic people can work independently and follow-through on tasks, they are well-suited for independent, technical jobs.



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Communication Style Trouble Spots

All four styles contain potential trouble spots. Some of these trouble spots stem from the simple fact that any good thing taken to an extreme can become a problem.

Place a checkmark beside each trouble spot that you have.

Direct	Spirited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Is a poor listener<input type="checkbox"/> Is impatient with others<input type="checkbox"/> Does not heed advice<input type="checkbox"/> Likes to argue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Does not hear details<input type="checkbox"/> Tends to exaggerate<input type="checkbox"/> Generalizes<input type="checkbox"/> Can be overdramatic
Systematic	Considerate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Focuses too much on details<input type="checkbox"/> Fears personal disclosure<input type="checkbox"/> Can be terse<input type="checkbox"/> Uses little variety in vocal tones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Avoids conflict<input type="checkbox"/> Gives in easily<input type="checkbox"/> Keeps opinions to oneself<input type="checkbox"/> Overemphasizes feelings

Your Communication Style Trouble Spots



Your Style Trouble Spots

Your dominant style(s) are shaded below. Understanding others' style trouble spots will help you to recognize times when you need to adjust your own style to improve communication.

Direct

Direct people when stressed may cross the line from controlling to overbearing. Their need to get things done quickly may cause them to overlook fine details, which may lead to mistakes. Focusing on feelings is not a strength of Direct people and personal feelings may be pushed aside. People with a Direct style may have a tendency to view every situation as competitive. This view may make others uncomfortable and create needless tension. Direct people also may become workaholics if left unchecked.

Spirited

Spirited people when stressed tend to intensify their verbal behavior. They may exaggerate for effect in their stories. They also might respond to criticism with verbal attacks. They often generalize and gloss over important details because of their enthusiastic support of an idea. Spirited people are rarely concerned with time constraints and may not control the use of their time.

Considerate

Considerate people when stressed may try to assure themselves by sticking with what is comfortable and avoiding change. Because Considerate people dislike conflict they may tell others what others wish to hear. This avoidance of conflict may result in Considerate people not achieving what they want. Unfortunately their unachieved wants and needs may linger under the surface and they may become resentful. Future interaction with those who thwarted the Considerate person will be tense.

Systematic

Systematic people when stressed may continually seek more information to make them feel confident. This information seeking may hide their avoidance of an issue or their withdrawal from others. It may also delay decision making. Because Systematic people are uncomfortable with emotions, they may avoid having to express them at all costs. They tend to put quality and accuracy ahead of feelings, even if it might hurt others. Systematic people can appear impersonal to others.



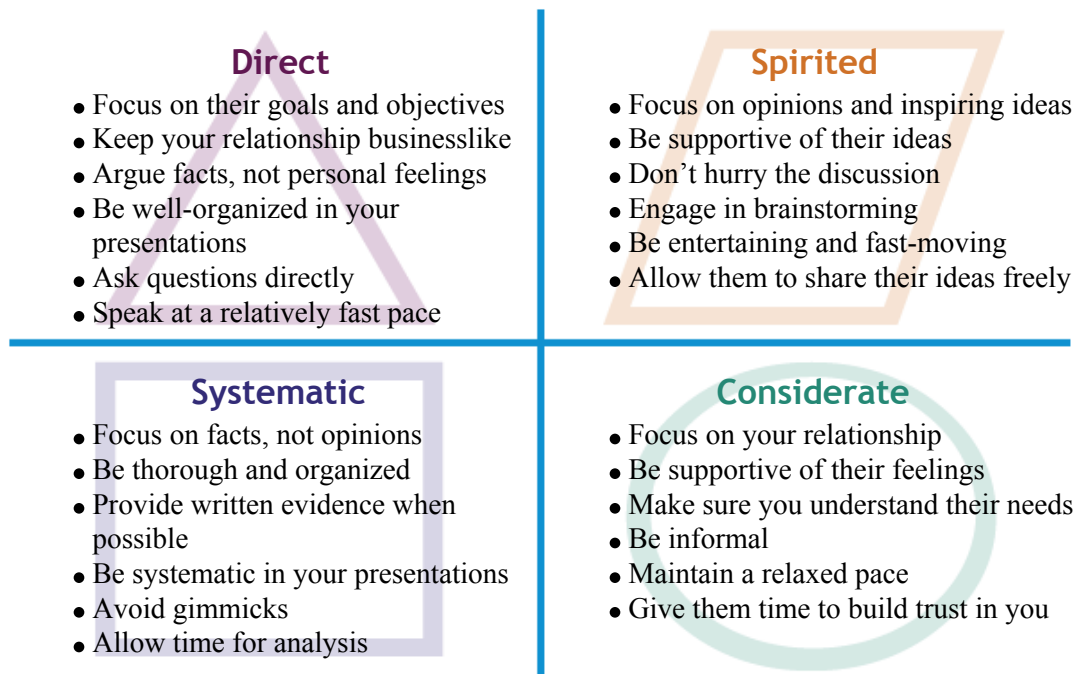
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Interacting with Different Styles

People with different styles often develop misunderstandings that result more from their style differences than from real differences in their beliefs or opinions. A certain amount of flexibility is necessary to communicate with people who have different styles. This means understanding others' styles and being willing and able to adjust one's style to interact more effectively with them.

Recognizing another's style allows us to make adjustments in our own behavior to accommodate that person's style. This in turn makes that person feel more at ease and helps us to achieve our goals more readily. It takes some willingness and effort to expand beyond one's own style to interact with others. It is generally appreciated, however, and may make the difference between success and failure in an interaction.

Behaviors that make interaction with each style more effective are shown in the chart below.



Interacting with Different Styles

