

## Styles of Communication

There's a lot more to communicating than just knowing how to string words together and provide straight-forward answers to questions. It's important to recognize that there are many different ways to communicate and that each way is dependent upon the individual.

Whether you're a manager working with a team or a team member working with your coworkers to reach a goal, here are the different communication styles you might encounter:

### The Director

- Looks for direct lines of communication and stays focused on tasks.
- Makes decisions quickly, confidently, and practically.
- Can be dominant in discussions, which may lead to being impatient and insensitive.
- Doesn't like being questioned, especially if he or she is the one providing directions.
- Doesn't waste time and sets goals to get things done quickly.

### The Team-Player

- Supports others.
- Has an enthusiasm that makes the individual approachable.
- Speaks with animated gestures.
- Is willing to make changes and be creative to reach goals.
- Thinks out loud and involves others in decisions.
- Desires to support others and is sensitive to their needs, making the person vulnerable to criticism.
- Decisions are based on personal wishes, needs, and desires and often lack details and follow-through.

### The Contributor

- Tends to support the decisions of others rather than provide his or her own direction.
- Is dependable, relaxed, and supportive.
- Listens carefully to what others have to say and provides genuine responses.
- Can be seen as being too passive or indecisive, because of his or her support of others.
- Doesn't always share true feelings to keep from creating confrontation with others.

### The Thinker

- Is always prepared, ready to analyze, and searching for the details.
- Likes to make lists so that he or she can keep all of the facts out in the open.
- Strives for accuracy when trying to get his or her point across.
- May be too cautious or inflexible when it comes to making decisions.
- Adheres to high standards that others might find critical or insensitive to the needs of the group.
- Likes to ask questions and look for solutions to problems that others have overlooked.

Did you recognize what style of communicator you are? Did you determine the styles of your coworkers or managers? Once you recognize the differences between how you and others pass along and interpret information, you can begin to see where there are positive and negative relationships between those styles and how to build solutions to any problems that stem from differences in communication styles.

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