





INSIGHT  
Inventory®

## Skill-Building Exercises

These skill-building exercises provide a structured, yet easy way to engage participants in the application of the key concepts. They learn from each other in small activity groups. By discussing their various perspectives, participants discover how different styles view communication issues.

The exercises help participants progress through various skill levels. Select the one(s) that fit your training objectives.

Some exercises provide the INSIGHT Inventory personality profiles of the people presented in that exercise and participants predict how the sample individuals might behave in given situations.

Other exercises are more challenging and present only a description of how a particular person behaves. In these exercises the participants work together to identify the personality profiles of individuals described. They then discuss the communication problems that might arise between the people in the exercise and possible solutions.

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# Using the Skill-Building Exercises

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- Select one or two skill-building exercises that relate to the objectives you are emphasizing in your training session.
- Review the training instructions to prepare yourself to lead the exercise.
- Ask participants to move into break-out groups of three to five people.
- Give each participant a copy of a selected skill-building exercise.
- Allow approximately five to seven minutes for participants to discuss the exercise and come to general agreement on the solutions.
- Ask each group to give a verbal report of what they discussed, disagreements that came up, and solutions that they agreed upon. If time is short, you may want to give some groups different skill-building exercises and then ask for public group reports. This enables them to learn from the activity that other groups completed.

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## Skill Building Exercises and Recommended Training Application

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## Two New Team Members

### Steve and Donna

This exercise provides a good beginning for team building and communications skill training.

Introduce this exercise by reading aloud the two descriptive paragraphs. Encourage the participants to take a moment and write responses to each question. Then, ask them discuss their responses in small groups.

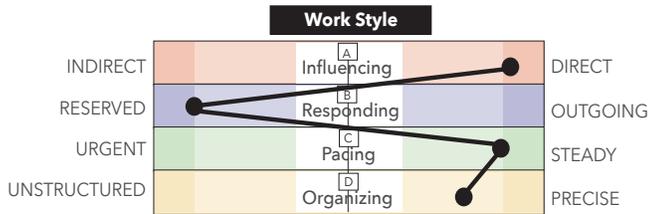
Below are examples of typical responses participants may give. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers. The goal is to get participants to discuss the differences between styles and identify appropriate flexing response.

1. What predictable conflicts may arise between Steve and Donna?
  - *Steve may experience Donna’s Direct style as pushy and abrasive.*
  - *Steve may feel Donna moves too fast and Urgent on decisions without considering all the details.*
  - *Donna may think Steve is too cautious and hesitant to act.*
  - *Donna may get more corporate attention from her highly visible, action-oriented style than Steve gets from his more reserved, persistent style.*
2. What does Donna need to understand and appreciate about Steve’s personality strengths?
  - *Understand he has been successful by using his patient, stick-to-it style, and that this is a good trait for a manager in his position.*
  - *Appreciate that he could help her analyze and think through her ideas to prevent problems in the future.*
3. What does Steve need to understand and appreciate about Donna’s personality strengths?
  - *Understand that Donna’s dynamic, go-getter style will probably help sales and company growth, better securing his own career.*
  - *Appreciate that Donna may be able to help him sell his ideas and dreams to reluctant managers. He could benefit by having her as an advocate.*
4. How could Donna flex her style to work better with Steve?
  - *Soften her directness and ask him for his opinion and thoughts before telling hers.*
  - *Not get impatient when she sees him hesitating - give Steve time and help him decide.*
  - *Get her details and facts together before trying to persuade him. He’ll listen to facts.*
5. How could Steve flex his style to work better with Donna?
  - *Increase his sense of urgency, even rate of speech, to convey a sense of action and decisiveness.*
  - *Be completely candid with her when he disagrees and be willing to keep any conflict out in the open. Directs appreciate this.*
  - *Be willing to look beyond the details until he hears her master plan - then help her get the details worked out.*

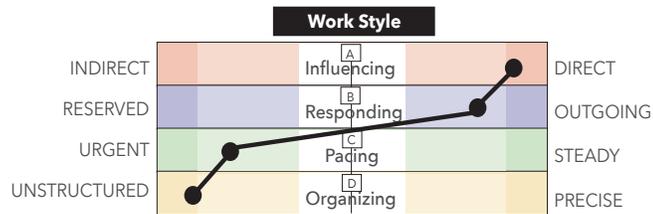
Two New Team Members



STEVE



DONNA



Steve and Donna are both managers in different departments.

Steve is known for his creative ideas on ways to get new programs introduced. He is an expert in designing detailed customer care systems. His co-workers see him as a tireless worker who puts in many overtime hours to get the job done. Although difficult to get to know, he is well liked, has a dry sense of humor, and has high standards. He often says he's a perfectionist.

Donna is new with the organization. She was hired to start up a innovative unit to reach out to new customers. She has hired an energetic young staff and has selected people very similar to herself. She is a powerhouse of presence and action. She is always on the go and is already viewed as a "mover and shaker" in the organization.

1. What predictable conflicts may arise between Steve and Donna?

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2. What does Donna need to understand and appreciate about Steve's personality strengths?

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3. What does Steve need to understand and appreciate about Donna's personality strengths?

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4. How could Donna flex to work better with Steve?

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5. How could Steve flex to work better with Donna?

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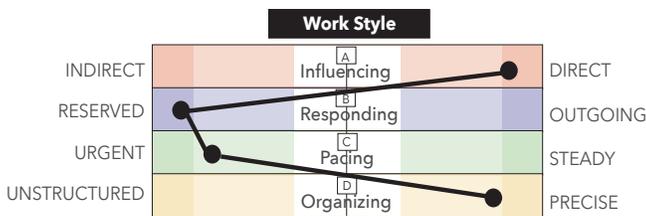
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## Anticipating and Working Through Conflict

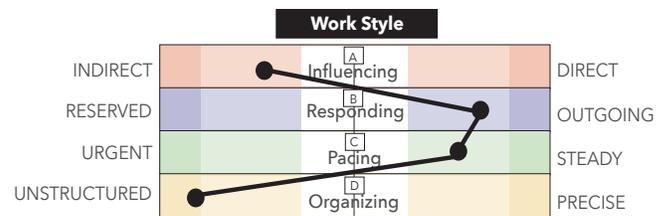
### Charlotte and Ruby

Exercise Two is one degree more difficult than Exercise One. No profiles are provided. Exercise Two requires participants to study the descriptions of both Charlotte's and Ruby's behaviors and then draw their personality profiles before answering the questions. It is important for participants to learn how to identify people's profiles based on observable behaviors. Encourage participants to discuss their different opinions. Recommended profiles are diagrammed below.

Charlotte



Ruby



Typical answers to the questions are:

1. What conflicts or areas of tension could arise between Charlotte and Ruby?
  - Charlotte may see herself as doing all the work while Ruby, with her Outgoing personality, may seem to get all the attention from coworkers and patients.
  - Ruby probably feels Charlotte is aloof and indifferent with little interest in her.
  - Charlotte may believe Ruby is weak and unwilling to confront clients who are behaving inappropriately.
  - Ruby may feel Charlotte is brusque, impatient, and difficult to deal with.
2. Suppose a co-worker returned some work that he felt should be redone. Ruby has to take this to Charlotte. How do you suppose the interaction might go if Charlotte is under stress?
  - Ruby would probably approach Charlotte very cautiously and ask in an indirect way if the problem could be corrected to the co-worker's satisfaction.
  - If Charlotte was under pressure, she might tell Ruby to do it herself or tell her to stand up to the co-workers and quit bringing work back that was already done correctly.
3. What could Charlotte do to work better with Ruby?
  - Open up, be more talkative and friendly
  - Disclose more about herself. Ruby needs to know her as a person
  - Tone down her directness. She may be coming across as more abrupt than she intends.
4. What could Ruby do to work better with Charlotte?
  - Understand that Charlotte's quiet reserved style does not mean she is either aloof or disinterested.
  - Don't interpret lack of talking as rejection.
  - Learn to be more direct with Charlotte. Don't argue, but stand her ground.

## Anticipating and Working Through Conflict

### Charlotte and Ruby

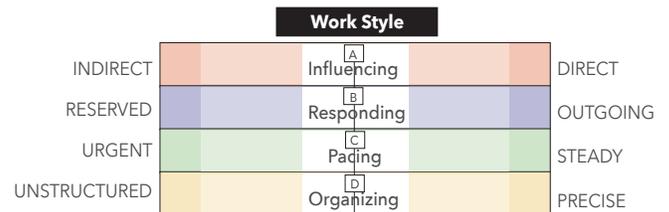
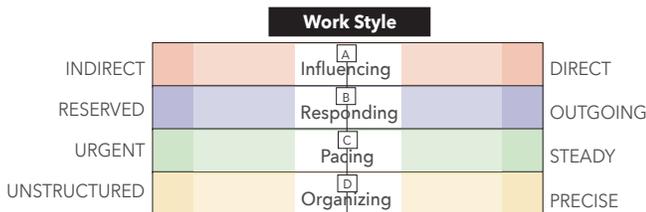


Charlotte is an experienced technician. She is difficult to get to know because she talks very little, especially about her personal life. She is very fast at her work and is constantly looking for new projects to start. She says she get bored with long projects and prefers the variety and challenge of short tasks. Co-workers find it difficult to give her feedback. She challenges their points and argues her side. She is known for doing near perfect work and she prides herself on being the lead technician.

Draw the work profile you feel would describe her.

Ruby loves her work answering internal and customer questions. They universally like her, because she regularly receives cards, small gifts, and flowers. Ruby rarely offends anyone and has mastered the art of tactful diplomacy. Sometimes she wonders if she should stand up to some of the more demanding customers, but she rarely does and instead works patiently with them. Ruby likes research but finds the detail work tedious and often asks Charlotte for help.

Draw the work profile you feel would describe her.



1. What conflicts or areas of tension could arise between Charlotte and Ruby?

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2. Suppose a co-worker returned some lab results that needed to be redone. Ruby has to take this to Charlotte. How do you suppose the interaction might go if Charlotte is under stress?

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3. What could Charlotte do to work better with Ruby?

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4. What could Ruby do to work better with Charlotte?

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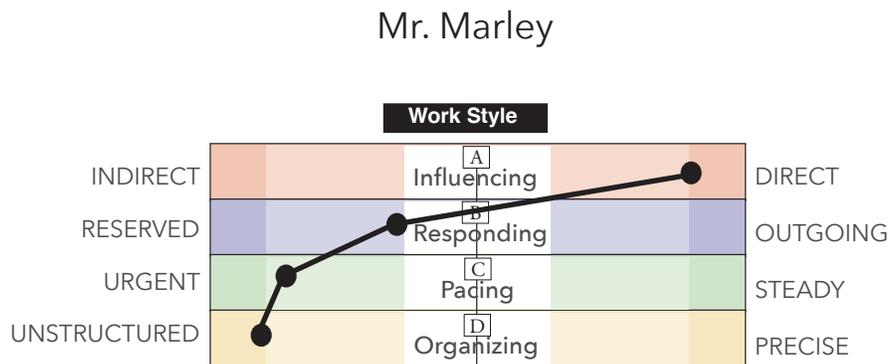
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## Style Identification and Communication Strategy

This exercise is particularly helpful for building skills in sales and negotiation.

Participants must first decide what Mr. Marley's profile most likely is. They can get most of the clues they need from the description of his office and his initial behavior as he walks into the room.

The recommended profile is given below. Don't discount or try to correct the profile shapes participants may draw. They probably have legitimate reasons for drawing them differently. Ask them their reasons and join in discussing how each of us notices different behaviors.



1. What communication strategies would work best with this person?

- *Be direct and to the point. Be pleasant, but move the conversation quickly to the reason you are there.*
- *Be prepared to be challenged. DIRECT people such as Mr. Marley often want to debate an issue even when they are basically in agreement.*
- *Speak quickly with conviction. Slow or hesitant speech patterns will be perceived as showing a lack of confidence in your product or being untrustworthy.*

2. What should you avoid saying or doing?

- *Don't make too much small talk. Avoid bringing up sports, politics, or news unless he initiates such a discussion. Stick to business.*
- *Don't flood him with facts and details unless he specifically asks for them. Paint him the "big picture" with words.*
- *Avoid being put off by his businesslike manner. He's RESERVED and DIRECT, a combination that sometimes makes for a brusque, hard-charging manner. He'll warm up over time after his business goals are met.*

3. How should you personally flex your style to be more effective with this person?

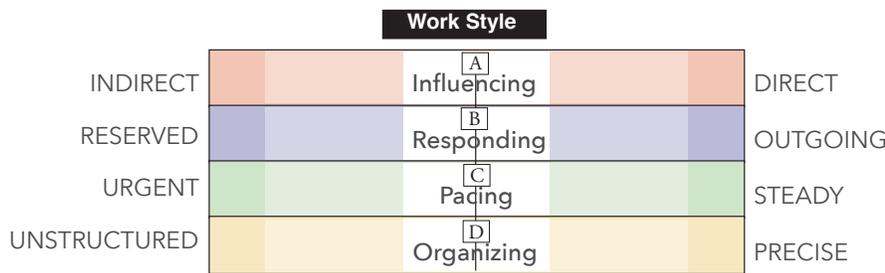
*(Participants should generate personal responses here based on their unique profiles.)*

### Style Identification and Communication Strategy

You have just walked into Mr. Marley’s office. Scanning the room quickly, you notice it is adequately yet sparsely decorated, no extra furnishings, paintings, or softening touches. It looks like an office that is seldom used. The large walnut desk is across from the door with two small chairs immediately in front of it. Papers, electronic items, and various books are scattered here and there, not really in a disorganized fashion, yet they are not stored in a systematic manner either. They give the appearance of just being tossed down to be attended to later.

Mr. Marley walks in a few moments later, shakes your hand in a firm, rather forceful manner, points to a chair and says, “Have a seat.” He is pleasant, but you note that he didn’t formally introduce himself nor does he sit down until a few minutes later. There is definitely the atmosphere that you are a temporary guest at his place of business. His opening line is, “Hello, why are we meeting today?”

Graph Mr. Marley’s style profile based on these behavioral observations.



1. What communication strategies would work best with Mr. Marley?

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2. What should you avoid saying or doing?

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3. How should you personally flex your style to be most effective with Mr. Marley?

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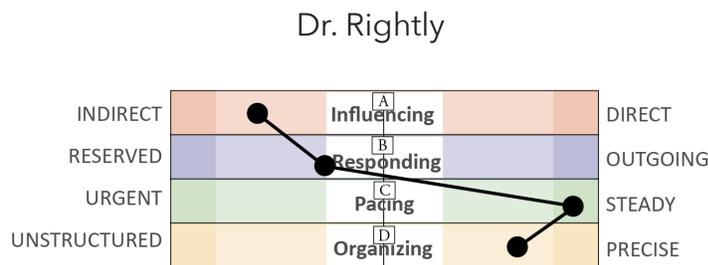


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## Communication

The objective of this exercise is to get participants to identify the best strategies for communicating with and selling a new idea to someone with a different personality style.

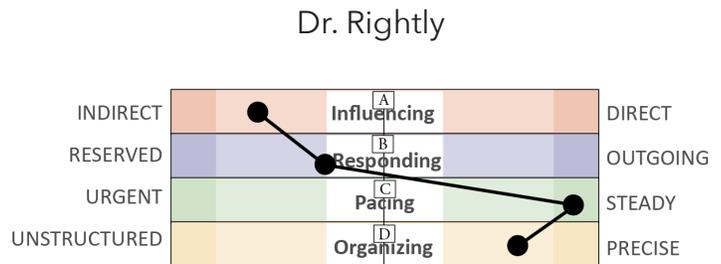
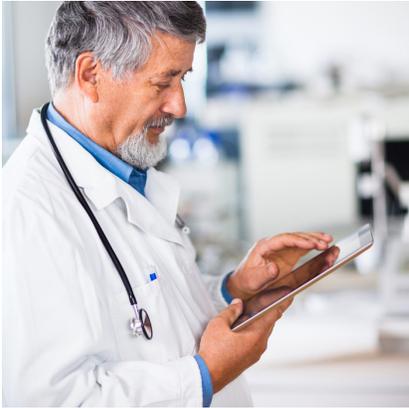
Dr. Rightly provides the example to work from. His Work Style is charted and contains the INDIRECT, RESERVED, STEADY and PRECISE preferences. A brief description of his office and his behavior is also given. Participants are challenged to figure out the best way to present a new idea or sell a new streamlined process to him.



1. What communication approach would work best with Dr. Rightly?
  - *Be on time and be organized.*
  - *Get your thoughts prepared and know your facts.*
  - *Be patient and consistent in presenting your points.*
  - *Listen and draw out his ideas or objections, otherwise he may not offer them.*
  
2. What should you avoid saying or doing?
  - *Don't get discouraged if at first your ideas get criticized. Remember he is a perfectionist, and he may nitpick.*
  - *Don't act like a long lost friend or come on overly talkative.*
  - *Don't push him for a decision. STEADY people like to think things over on their time schedule.*
  
3. How should you personally flex your style to be most effective with this person?
  - *These responses will be individualized and unique to each participant.*

Communication

You met Dr. Rightly last week in the office lobby and set up an appointment for today.



Dr. Rightly is known locally for his thorough knowledge on the relatedness of digestive disorders to work stress. Although he is a family practice specialist, he loves research work and sometimes wonders himself if he shouldn't have gone into internal medicine and stayed in an academic setting.

Dr. Rightly's office is meticulously organized; it is evident that there is a place for everything and everything is in its place. His bookshelves are full of texts and journals, all alphabetized and ordered. The papers on his desk are stacked in neat piles with lots of clear space between them. Diplomas hang on the wall in an out of the way place and there is an extra table along a wall with a microscope and other lab instruments which are not typically seen in a physician's office. The office has very few personal items in it and is rather formal in decoration.

Dr. Rightly is ready and waiting for you to arrive for your meeting. He greets you in a quiet soft-spoken fashion and asks you to tell him more about your service. He seems friendly, but doesn't talk much. He is a bit hard to read because he displays little facial animation as he listens and responds to you.

1. What communication strategies would work best with Dr. Rightly?

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2. What should you avoid saying or doing?

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3. How could you flex your particular style to be most effective with Dr. Rightly?

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## Mentor and the New Manager

It is important for individuals who work together to understand and respect each other's personality strengths. This exercise provides the profiles of a department founder who is turning the day-to-day management over to a new and younger executive. They will be working closely together as they make this transition, and they may see what needs to be done quite differently.

The objective of this exercise is to get participants to anticipate some challenges that may arise due to the differing personalities of these two individuals.

1. How did Joan probably use her style characteristics to build a successful department?
  - *She is very INDIRECT and OUTGOING meaning she probably built many warm, friendly relationships with employees and vendors being careful to not offend anyone.*
  - *She is PRECISE and probably was a stickler for detail, making sure everything was done exactly right. She probably ended up doing many of the important details herself rather than delegating.*
2. How do you suppose Janet's strengths help her look like a good replacement and brought her to the attention of Joan?
  - *Her DIRECT style probably helped her come across as self-confident and willing to take charge of problems.*
  - *Janet's URGENCY may have helped her to appear very action-oriented and quick to decide matters.*
  - *Her RESERVED style may have balanced Joan's talkative OUTGOING nature.*
3. What predictable conflicts may arise between Joan and Janet if they don't learn to understand their differences? If they learn to work well together, how could their styles complement each other?

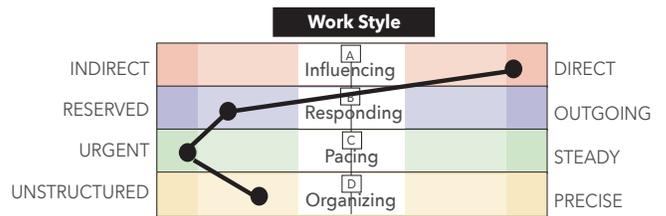
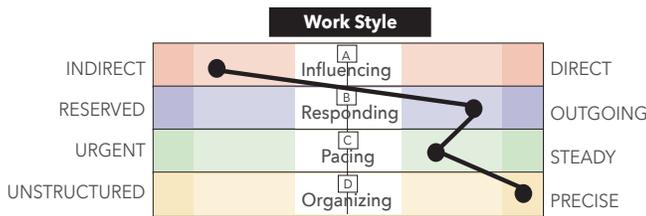
### CONFLICTS

- *If Janet moves in and takes control in the direct, forceful style she is comfortable with, Joan may feel she is losing control and importance and worry about this even though her desire is to let go of responsibilities.*
- *Janet may act quickly on decisions, and Joan may wish that she had at least been asked her opinion.*
- *Janet may feel Joan watches the details too closely.*
- *Janet may feel Joan is always looking over her shoulder checking on small details and nitpicking.*

### COMPLEMENTARY TRAITS

- *Janet is probably good at working alone and getting a lot done quickly. This could free up Joan to do what she has missed doing, dealing with patients.*
- *Joan may have let some problem situations or employees slide because she dislikes confronting people. With Janet in charge, now she can turn these matters over to Janet, who will probably take fast, more impersonal action. Joan can probably smooth things over afterward with her warm, gentle style.*

### Mentor and the New Manager



Joan started the aqua culture department years ago. The new function struggled at first, but has now grown to over 15 employees with a good reputation in the company. Joan is ready to turn the day-to-day management of the department over to Janet. Joan is proud of her accomplishments but now wants time to get involved in some cutting edge research that is dear to her heart. Janet has shown strong leadership and should make a good replacement (at least Joan hopes so).

1. How did Joan probably use her strengths to build a successful department?

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2. How do you suppose Janet's strengths brought her to Joan's attention as a good replacement?

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3. What conflicts may arise between Joan and Janet if they don't appreciate their different strengths? If they learn to work well together, how could their styles complement each other?

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## Style Differences and Decision Making

People who work together often experience their greatest frustrations with each other when making decisions. The process of decision making involves collecting information, negotiating, discussing options, generating alternatives, weighing priorities, and finally, making the decision. The decision making process brings out many personality style differences between people.

Exercise Six helps participants to explore how style differences can help or frustrate two people who are trying to make important business strategy decisions together.

Response Examples:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Mark's preferred approach would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identify what he emotionally feels would be best (Outgoing) and decide quickly (Urgent)</i></li> <li>• <i>Not challenge or argue with Anna and be open to trying something that is close to what he wants.</i></li> </ul> | <p>2. Anna's preferred approach would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Think carefully about what she wants and share only the needed information with others.</i></li> <li>• <i>Debate and challenge others and try to find a solution exactly like what she desires.</i></li> </ul> |
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If they had to make a purchase on some new equipment and got tense and frustrated with each other, what might each one think of the other person's style?

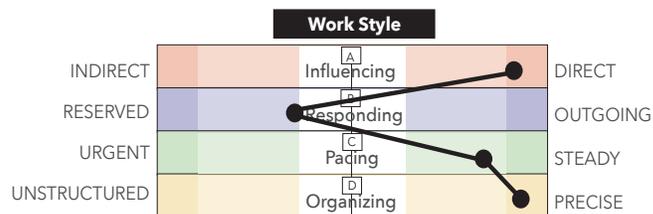
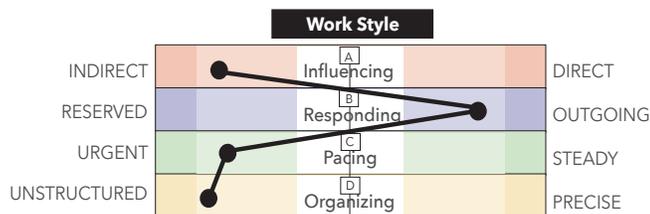
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>3. Mark might think Anna was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Too slow to decide, not quick enough to take advantage of time</i></li> <li>• <i>Too particular on size and fit</i></li> <li>• <i>Too demanding and argumentative when things weren't perfect</i></li> </ul> | <p>4. Anna might think Mark was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Too agreeable and accepting of what the marketing material promises</i></li> <li>• <i>Too impulsive and quick to move ahead</i></li> <li>• <i>Likely to try something that wasn't exactly proven</i></li> </ul> |
|---|--|
5. Most of the time, they enjoy each other's differences and make good decisions together. How do their styles complement each other? How could each flex her style so they be effective when making decisions?
- *Anna could try to worry less, particularly when it was time to make a decision and learn to trust Mark's experience and training and also enjoy Mark's free, more spontaneous style.*
  - *Mark could try to plan more carefully what she wanted before discussing decisions with Anna. He could also learn to allow more time for Anna to think about options, perhaps schedule in extra discussion meetings.*

### Style Differences and Decision Making

Mark



Anna



Mark and Anna have quite different styles and this has an impact on how they discuss strategy and make decisions. Predict how each one would approach the task of deciding on and moving ahead with a new idea.

1. Mark's preferred approach would probably be:

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2. Anna's preferred approach would probably be:

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If they get off topic, tense and frustrated with each other, what might each one think of the other person's style?

3. Mark might think Anna was:

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4. Anna might think Mark was:

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5. How do their personality styles complement each other and how could each flex her style to minimize conflict?

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Skill-building exercises provide a powerful way to help people learn from each other. If you are using the INSIGHT Inventory to teach a skill unique to your organization it may be helpful to create your own customized exercises; better yet, encourage the participants to create these. It is easy and fun to create these using the blank charts and graphics provided below and the step by step guide.

1

Identify a specific issue or communication problem that the participants have experienced and are motivated to solve. The more specific it is, the easier it will be to design the activity to discuss possible solutions.

2

Look through the clip art provided and select images that would depict the problem.

For example, this image could be used for exploring how personality differences impact teamwork, dealing with anger, supervisory skills, etc.



3

Make copies of some blank Work Style charts (these are provided on a following page) for use in constructing the exercise.

Work Style				
INDIRECT		A Influencing		DIRECT
RESERVED		B Responding		OUTGOING
URGENT		C Pacing		STEADY
UNSTRUCTURED		D Organizing		PRECISE

# Creating Your Own Skill Building Exercises

4 Write a short story that describes the communication issue the people in the exercise are facing (or again, ask participants to write these). If they have difficulty coming up with an idea they can reconstruct or modify the example below.

5 Develop, or ask participants to identify, some specific questions for small group discussions. This will keep the group discussions focused. After they have had sufficient time, ask for group reports. You'll be amazed at the amount of "insight" that will be shared.

Example:

1) *Specific problem*

2) *Clip art*

3) *Personality profiles*

4) *Story about problem*

5) *Questions*

### Assigning Temporary Staff at ABC Health Care

Melanie and Teresa



Melanie



Teresa

		Work Style		
INDIRECT	Influencing	A	DIRECT	INDIRECT
RESERVED	Responding	B	OUTGOING	RESERVED
URGENT	Pacing	C	STEADY	URGENT
UNSTRUCTURED	Organizing	D	PRECISE	UNSTRUCTURED

		Work Style		
INDIRECT	Influencing	A	DIRECT	INDIRECT
RESERVED	Responding	B	OUTGOING	RESERVED
URGENT	Pacing	C	STEADY	URGENT
UNSTRUCTURED	Organizing	D	PRECISE	UNSTRUCTURED

Melanie is a new scheduling coordinator and has been having trouble getting the cooperation of some of the health care staff. She initially got along very well with Teresa. They have very similar personality characteristics. Both take charge and act quickly on problems. Once Teresa even said that she was glad there was finally someone in the coordinator's role who could make her mind up. But, lately Teresa and Melanie have been butting heads and arguing. Neither seems aware of why their relationship has deteriorated.

1) What personality characteristics could be causing some of their problems?

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2) What could Melanie and Teresa each do to work better with each other?

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Clip Art for Activity 7

