

SOCIALSTYLESM

Prepared for

Versatility Report
Sample

TRACOM
SOCIAL STYLE

Versatility Report &
Improvement Guide

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1. Introduction

Effective performance at work depends on a variety of abilities. While technical skills are important, interpersonal skill is also significant for functioning effectively. The Social Style training program that you participated in identified four distinct behavioral styles: Driving, Expressive, Amiable, and Analytical. Each of these styles represents a particular pattern of actions that others can agree upon for describing a person's behavior. At the time of your training, you received a Social Style Profile that indicated your style position, as seen by your group of references.

Research conducted by TRACOM has shown that self-perception matches others' perceptions of behavior only about 50% of the time. Since awareness of the views of your coworkers is key to understanding your impact on them, the interpretations on your Versatility Report are based on the input of your reference group and not your own self-report. As you read these interpretations, consider how you interact with your coworkers and what may have led to your results.

Learning how to identify the styles of your coworkers and interact with them appropriately is one of the cornerstones of increasing your interpersonal effectiveness. Your particular style of behavior matters less than how you actually use your style to earn endorsement when interacting with others. This second aspect of behavior - Versatility - represents your ability to relate to others in a tension-free manner that makes them feel comfortable and helps them to achieve their own work-related goals. The profile you received during training also contained information on your Versatility as perceived by your reference group.

Versatility consists of four dimensions: Image, Presentation, Competence, and Feedback. These aspects of performance are helpful for effective performance at work. As a follow-up to training, this report was produced to provide you with a status check on your Versatility, and more importantly as a tool to provide pragmatic suggestions to continue to increase your interpersonal effectiveness. This report is based on the responses of your reference group to a questionnaire that measures the four dimensions of Versatility.

The report provides you with a profile for each of the four Versatility dimensions. Each dimension is defined, and your results are given along with possible explanations for the

results. If your results are in the high range, this indicates that you have many of the qualities that will help you to perform most effectively. If your results are in the medium range, you have some of the personal qualities that will help you to perform most effectively. Results that are in the low range suggest that you may find it harder to perform effectively in certain areas of work. That is, some aspects of work that are influenced by your Versatility do not come naturally, but can be enhanced through awareness and practice. If you receive specific Versatility results that are in the low range, this does not necessarily mean that you cannot perform effectively in that particular area, since different styles can often achieve results using different methods. Specific suggestions for improving within the Versatility dimensions are provided.

It is important to note that Versatility can change over time and circumstances, and your results may vary depending on the particular group of individuals who rate you. Versatility is a choice, and people who know themselves well can determine when to use specific skills in order to achieve particular tasks or goals.

1.1. How to Use This Report

The Versatility Report is a resource that can help you improve your interpersonal relations. As such, it is designed to be used as a reference document when you need advice in specific situations or with specific people. The report is divided into sections that can be read as necessary.

Section 2 - Your Versatility Results. Most people will want to review their individual results first. The results and interpretations for the Versatility dimensions can be found in Section 2. Each dimension is interpreted in light of your preferred behavioral style, and "actions for improvement" are offered as suggestions for increasing your effectiveness within each area.

Section 3 - Doing Something For Others. This section is designed to assist in your relations with people of the same or different styles. Advice is given for interacting with each of the four social styles, in particular as you relate in the dimensions of Versatility. This section will be helpful as a reference when you need specific advice about working with someone of a particular style.

Sections 4 and 5 are designed as refreshers of the Social Style model and the Versatility model, respectively. This information is helpful to review if you have forgotten some of the foundational material that was presented in your initial workshop.

In addition to the Versatility Report, it might be helpful to review your previous Social Style Profile for your initial Versatility results. You may find some commonalities between the two reports and also some areas where you have shown improvement. The Versatility Report measures the same dimensions as the Social Style Profile, but adds more detailed interpretation and suggestions for personal improvement and interacting with others.

2. Your Versatility Results

Like the results of your original Social Style Profile, Versatility Report scores are based on normative scoring. Your original Versatility results were reported in four categories - W, X, Y, or Z - with 25% of the population falling into each category. The two middle categories, X and Y, are statistically and practically similar enough that they do not warrant separate interpretations; therefore the narrative reports for these two categories are identical.

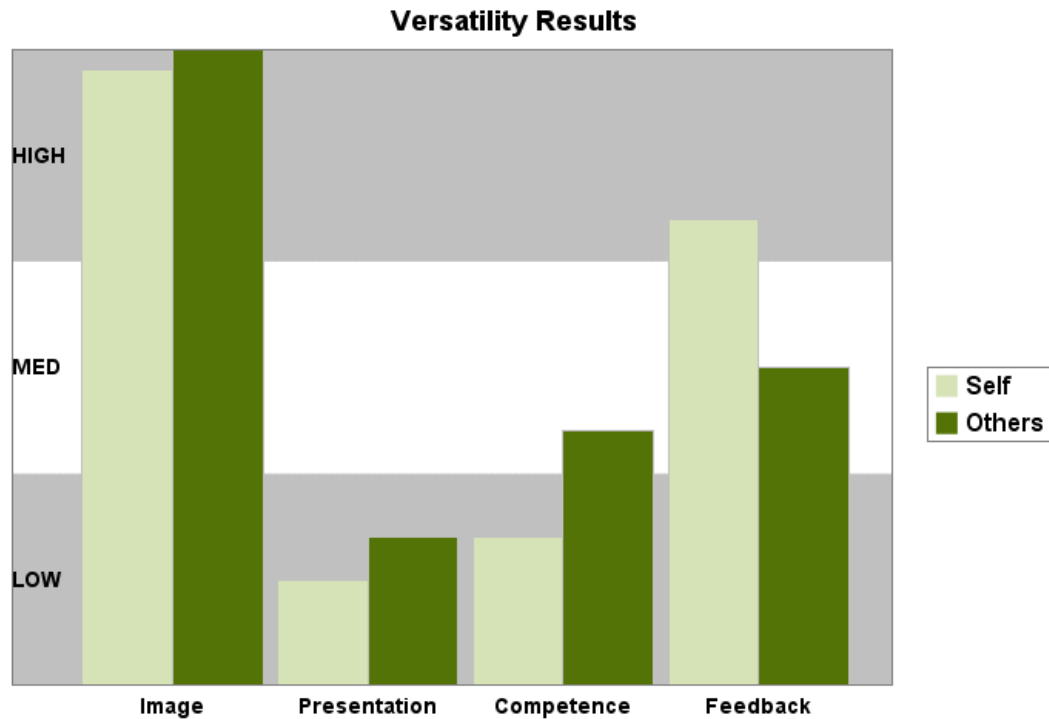
The Versatility Report uses the same type of quartile norms. That is, 25% of the population falls into each of four categories, from low to high. However, instead of using the "W" to "Z" terminology, scores are simply categorized as low, medium, or high. A low score approximately translates into a "W" score on the original profile and a high score is akin to "Z". Scores that fall in the lower medium and higher medium ranges are similar to "X" and "Y" scores, respectively.

Once again, the two middle categories are similar enough that they do not warrant separate interpretations; therefore the single "medium" report is used. Simply keep in mind that if your graphic results are in the higher medium range, you are closer to a high score, while if your results fall in the lower medium range you are closer to a low score.

W	X Y	Z
Low	Medium	High

It will be helpful for you to review the correspondence between your self-evaluation and how your reference group perceives you. Each Versatility dimension is interpreted in the following sections. Keep in mind that these interpretations are based on the scores from your reference group, not on your self-scores.

You identified yourself as an Amiable style person. The graph below displays your results on each of the four dimensions of Versatility.



2.1. Image Results

Image is an evaluation of the appropriateness of your dress and the organization of your work area. This indicates your capacity for dressing in accordance with established norms, and the physical appearance of your work environment.

2.1.1. Results and Interpretation

Your evaluation suggests that others feel that you effectively manage your image. You give special attention to your dress and grooming, and to the organization of your work area. Your image choices enhance your influence with others. You accurately read the impact of your appearance and work area on people, given expectations and established norms. You take into consideration the impact of your image on a broad

range of people, not just a few. And you know when you need to give special attention to your image. You understand how it can affect your ability to accomplish things with others.

As an Amiable style, you probably value your qualities of being dependable, cooperative, and team-oriented. Your style likes to build personable relationships with others. As a result, you may prefer an informal image. You usually dress appropriately for your role or position. When necessary, you dress and act more formally for certain social and work situations. Your work environment, while warm and comfortable, may be seen by others as cluttered and not business-like. But knowing this, you've made changes that reflect efficiency and professionalism.

Dress and Grooming: You understand the impact that your preferred appearance has on others. You realize that there are varying expectations for attire, from casual to formal. You most likely adapt your appearance appropriately for specific events, for meetings at different levels, or for different functions. When meeting someone for the first time, you know the importance of first impressions. Although you may prefer to dress in a casual, comfortable, and unpretentious way, you adjust this for different situations. You know that dressing in ways that make others comfortable, such as in formal business attire, may be more important than dressing for your own comfort. This enhances your initial rapport and credibility with others.

Work Area: Your references indicate that your work area is appropriate for the requirements of your position. Although your style values a workspace that is relaxed, inviting, and comfortable, you still ensure that it also accommodates focused interactions with others. You probably structure and equip your workspace to maximize your helpfulness and responsiveness. But you also create an environment that promotes focus and efficiency. You generally display items that are appropriate to your role and position, and to the nature of your business and industry. For example, you may display personal photos and team momentos that show thoughtfulness and appreciation for others. But you also might display items that show your rank and credentials.

2.1.2. Actions for Improvement

The Image dimension of Versatility is a consistent strength for you. You can continue to increase your effectiveness by taking your style's growth actions. As an Amiable style, your primary need is personal security, your orientation is relationships, and your growth action is to initiate. To exercise your growth action of initiating and gaining feedback about your image from others, try the following:

- Project a secure, energized, and proactive presence, rather than an overly careful, hesitant, or acquiescing one.
- Develop a range of attire, from informal to formal, or from conventional to individualistic, for different situations.
- Determine when you may need to balance dressing in a group or professional uniform, with times that may require a unique personalized statement, or a conservative one.
- Study the social norms in the professional environments in which you find yourself, including unique norms in cross-cultural or global meetings.
- Try to maintain a personable, yet organized, work area for varying styles and work circumstances. Keep a place, such as a round table, that facilitates work and discussions with others. Also create an area that helps you work faster and more efficiently -- without interruptions or distractions -- for tasks that require this.
- Balance your enjoyment of helping and working with others by providing work areas that support quiet time to think, plan, and focus on details.
- Check expectations about your appearance, and the appearance of your work environment. This is especially important when your position changes, or when changes in leadership or organizational culture occur.

2.2. Presentation Results

Presentation is an evaluation of your ability to deliver information in formal or business settings. It includes your comfort level when presenting to groups, and your ability to clearly articulate information in a way that your audience can understand and respond to. It also indicates your level of knowledge about your presentation topics, how organized your delivery is, and how comfortable you make the audience feel about the interaction.

2.2.1. Results and Interpretation

Your results indicate that you are perceived as somewhat less effective than others when presenting to groups. You are perceived as occasionally but not consistently successful in presenting information to a variety of audiences, and you might sometimes have less success in presenting to audience members with whom you might not be familiar. Keep in mind that this assessment might vary depending on the specific group of observers and the situations in which you are observed.

Your colleagues perceive that the effectiveness with which you present information is variable. For example, sometimes your presentation might not be delivered in a clear, logical manner while keeping the needs of your audience in mind. As a result, the level of audience interest and participation might be less than you would like.

Other team members are somewhat confident in your ability to verbally communicate information in a way that others can relate to and understand, but this perception varies. Sometimes you are able to reduce the tension your audience feels and cause them to be open to your message, and at other times your audience might not be entirely comfortable.

Because of your sensitivity to the needs of individuals within your audience, at times you are effective when addressing questions that arise about the content of your presentations. Based on your Amiable style's concern for others, your intent is to present information while providing a context for your audience, but you might not always be able to help your co-workers understand how your key points will affect them and their personal situations.

You are seen as sometimes able to articulate what you need from your audience and what action you would like them to take as a result of your presentation.

Your "ask" assertive approach allows you to share your opinions without using overt power, and so you are at times able to persuade your audience of your conclusions. You sometimes are perceived as having reasonably effective listening skills that enable you to build some measure of understanding and validate participant viewpoints and ideas.

Because you like to get things done through others, at times you might try to solicit participation in your presentations to help the group arrive at an outcome that all can support.

While you occasionally take the time to establish rapport with your audience, your ability to make personal connections within presentations is inconsistent. Thus audience members might not always get to know and relate to you as well as you desire.

Your sensitivity to others sometimes helps you to diagnose concerns that might arise based on the content you are presenting, but you might not be able to react appropriately in all situations to those concerns. At times, you are perceived as creating a generally secure, comfortable environment in which co-workers can share their thoughts or concerns.

2.2.2. Actions for Improvement

While the Presentation dimension of Versatility is not a consistent strength for you, you can increase your effectiveness by taking your style's growth actions, which will lead to greater productivity in this area. As an Amiable style, your growth action is to initiate.

To improve your presentation skills, consider how you can more frequently take risks when presenting controversial or difficult information. By forthrightly stating your positions, you will likely gain some support even when presenting unpopular decisions or positions.

Your Amiable style's tendency might be to avoid conflict, which could cause you sometimes to smooth over audience disagreements without fully exploring them. Consider how you can apply your diplomacy skills to ask appropriate questions and gain agreement when possible.

Ask questions and seek clarification frequently during your presentations. This will help you to avoid making assumptions that your audience has understood what you have to say.

On occasion, your presentations might take longer than planned because of your style's need to enhance the personal or social comfort of your audience. While inviting participation is positive, do not allow the audience to change or extend the agenda, because this might work against your goals for the presentation. Balance personal interactions and rapport building with a steady task focus.

Try to more consistently take your growth action of initiating. More frequently, take a direct approach to show your personal commitment to your presentation's key points, and directly ask for others to make a commitment as well.

Because you might sometimes desire to avoid imposing on others, you might take on more than is required or desirable. To reduce this, more often and more directly ask for audience members to take responsibility for action items that result from your presentation, rather than personally accepting the entire burden.

To generate the interest and motivation of your audience, tune in to their level of knowledge about the topic. More often, try to adjust your word choice and depth of presentation based on your assessment of the audience.

Consider adding more structure to your presentations, especially when audiences are unfamiliar with your topics. This will help reduce their tension and increase both their motivation to listen and their retention of the information you've covered.

2.3. Competence Results

Competence is an evaluation of a number of capacities that can affect your coworkers' abilities to achieve their goals. It includes your dependability, contribution to the group, and ability to change priorities when necessary. It also gauges your level of optimism, ability to help solve problems, and level of perseverance in challenging circumstances.

2.3.1. Results and Interpretation

Your results indicate that you are perceived as demonstrating a moderate degree of competence. This perception generally has a positive effect on your colleagues' ability to achieve their own goals. You are seen as dependable, self-confident, and relatively flexible with regard to changing work priorities. Colleagues see your positive attitude

and flexibility as contributing to group goals, which encourages them to contribute at a higher level.

Your Amiable style helps contribute to the perception that you care about the success of others and the organization. On occasion, others might see you as a bit hesitant to resolve issues or problems by applying new approaches that could negatively affect your own sense of security or individuals on a personal level. Your Amiable style's preferred methods of problem solving - discussion and compromise -- might occasionally be perceived as less than ideal in all situations.

Because your style's focus tends towards cooperation and relationships, both supervisors and peers generally trust you to make recommendations or take actions that have their best interests in mind.

Your supportive nature encourages others to pursue their objectives. Your style's desire is to enhance understanding, and as a result colleagues generally believe your opinions and actions are sincere.

Your Amiable style leads you to establish common ground among your colleagues, and you generally make efforts to uncover and share ideas or topics of mutual interest.

Your Amiable style might sometimes contribute to the perception that you are slightly reluctant to make decisions that have negative impacts on yourself or others. Because of your concern for the feelings, beliefs, and needs of others, you might sometimes delay decision-making to avoid producing a negative effect. This could at times hinder your strength in the Competence dimension.

Your style's strength is to foster productive relationships. At times, you might be seen as someone who contributes a moderate degree of experience, drive, and creativity to tasks to which you are assigned. While your "ask" assertive approach yields some cooperation from colleagues, the amount of cooperation from co-workers who are highly task- or goal-focused might at times vary. Others rely fairly consistently on your contributions and typically see you as a dependable colleague with whom they can collaborate.

2.3.2. Actions for Improvement

While the Competence dimension of Versatility is a moderate strength for you, increase your effectiveness by taking your style's growth action (to initiate) which will lead to greater productivity in work relationships.

To address the perception that you at times might make slower decisions to protect your security or the feelings of others, you should display greater confidence in your expertise and occasionally take risks and initiate decisions without first generating full consensus.

You might also consider increasing the balance between making speedy and efficient decisions with your need to foster good will in your interactions. Enhancing this balance will help you avoid extending timelines and project completion, leading to enhanced results.

At times, your commitment to considering and meeting co-workers' needs might contribute to the perception that you are not as "business focused" as others, and thus some colleagues might not give your ideas and opinions as much weight as they deserve. To address this potential concern, continue to articulate your commitment to and confidence in your own ideas, in addition to supporting others' ideas, needs, and opinions within the organization.

As you manage your relationships, you can enhance your supervisors' and co-workers' perception of your competence by more frequently demonstrating creativity and openness to new methods. On a more frequent basis, offer new approaches to problems, rather than maintaining "tried and true" methods of doing things.

2.4. Feedback Results

Feedback evaluates your verbal and non-verbal communication skills that affect your ability to listen and understand others' points of view, respond accordingly, and develop mutually beneficial relationships.

2.4.1. Results and Interpretation

Your evaluation suggests that others feel that you're fairly effective at giving or receiving feedback. As an Amiable style, you may value being supportive, dependable, and diplomatic. Occasionally, this can also cause some people to feel that you're being too conforming or dependent, or that you avoid conflict. You sometimes may be too agreeable, and not forthcoming, when you either give or receive feedback. You usually can read the reaction of others when giving or receiving feedback, both positive and constructive. But sometimes you don't, although you may feel that you do. When you don't, you may withhold constructive or corrective feedback for others. You understand that getting feedback helps you, and others, to consider and then make necessary changes to succeed. This may be hard, but you know it can also enhance your versatility--and your career.

Active Listening: Engaging in feedback requires active listening. Because Amiable style individuals are often good-natured and tolerant, others may come to you for support. They know you'll listen. As an Amiable style, you probably have a casual and flexible pace. Because of this, you sometimes may be slow to act on what others tell, or request of, you. Along with giving personal support, you usually listen to issues about tasks. Generally, you show your commitment to action and deadlines. If you don't, people may feel you're being too easy-going, or too non-committal. When listening, Amiable styles sometimes only pay attention to feelings and opinions, along with any rules and procedures. This can make action-oriented people feel frustrated. Be sure to also listen and react to ideas, details, deadlines, and the need for action. Along with responding to personal needs and concerns, you probably respond to work priorities. When you don't, people may feel that you're too soft-hearted, and that they can't expect much from you with regard to action. So, make sure that you keep working at adding some task emphasis along with your warm concern for relationships.

Empathy: Amiable style individuals are usually friendly and thoughtful. Generally, you like to focus on people and feelings. This is definitely admirable, and people usually like you for it. But sometimes, it can also lead to two kinds of misunderstandings. First, people may feel that you're occasionally trying to be overly helpful, rather than trying to help them work things out for themselves. Second, they sometimes may feel that you don't understand their concerns about detailed planning, quick decisions, or timelines. As an Amiable style, you probably prefer to avoid disagreement and conflict. But your voice, gestures, and facial expressions, may have "transparency" that shows what

you're really thinking. When these "transparent" signals occasionally conflict with your words, others may be confused, or they may feel that you're not really committed to what you're saying. It's important to further develop "balanced transparency"--the capacity to use a range of verbal and nonverbal behaviors to communicate to different styles what you're thinking and feeling. Otherwise, people may sometimes think you're holding back your true feelings, or that you're agreeing with them just to avoid conflict.

Adaptive Communication: As an Amiable style, you usually value service and harmony. You're generally patient and cooperative when working with others. When you feel tension in yourself or others, you sometimes may tend to lower your voice, and not hold eye contact. Generally, you may see this as being cautious and respectful. But sometimes, others may see it as being unsure and indecisive. When giving positive feedback, you usually try to be concise and specific about the things you're praising, rather than overenthusiastic and general. Occasionally, you see what happens when you aren't. You may notice, and probably compliment others, for their support and caring. Also look for and compliment their contributions reflecting thoughtful analysis, innovation, and planning.

On the other hand, when giving constructive and corrective feedback, continue to raise your awareness. For example, are you being specific, rather than general, about the behaviors that you're seeing? Generally, when you need to take action, you address problems. But sometimes, you need to give feedback and move forward without the assurance of others' opinions and support. Instead of your preferred quiet and tentative delivery, you may want to pick up the pace. You usually are goal-oriented. Occasionally, you may need to seek more timely completion of tasks. Prepare to decide and to implement changes more quickly. If you show more often a deliberate pace and confidence to others, they'll be much more likely to listen to your direction and feedback.

When receiving feedback, you typically show that you're being attentive. But to show more interest, try leaning forward, holding eye contact, and responding often enough to show that you're listening. Most of the time, you receive positive feedback graciously. But sometimes, you may tend to minimize what you've done. Continue to work on trying not to feel awkward when you're being acknowledged one-on-one, or in public.

When you get constructive feedback, you sometimes may tend to immediately agree with everything, to avoid conflict. Or occasionally, you might fall back into your backup behavior of acquiescing. Continue to work on not making quick concessions to minimize conflict and smooth things over. If you agree too readily with everything, people generally may feel you're playing it safe, or that you don't really understand what they're saying. Instead, clarify your understanding of what you are hearing. You try to show that you're listening to facts and rationale, or views of you and your work that the other person is presenting. Typically, you first make an effort to indicate where you're in agreement. But then, try more often to share your concerns for yourself and others, while also sharing your thinking and feelings. By clarifying more often--where you both agree and disagree when receiving feedback--you can increase your influence with others.

Interpersonal Relations: Your references suggest that you generally work well with others, though you might occasionally have trouble building effective working relationships. This sometimes keeps you from being able to deliver expected results. This may actually be a result of one of your strengths--you prefer cooperation, agreement, and teamwork. Generally, you value being casual and social. In your attempt to build rapport, this sometimes can lead you to spend too much time sharing stories or anecdotes, or to disclose too much about yourself. In tense situations, Amiable styles often speak too casually or tentatively, and this can make them seem apathetic or hesitant. So, in high-stress situations, you try not to revert to your acquiescing backup behavior and seem to be glossing problems over. When this happens, you try not to ignore issues, and you sometimes can "rock the boat" when needed. If you can't, you know that others may then stop sharing information that you need to do your work and to influence others.

2.4.2. Actions for Improvement

The Feedback Dimension of Versatility is a moderate strength for you, and you can increase your effectiveness when giving and receiving feedback. To improve your feedback versatility, exercise your growth action of initiating, and control your backup behavior of acquiescing. To do this, try the following:

Active Listening

- Pay more attention to verbal and non-verbal signals. Look for signs of interest or restlessness in others. As needed, pick up the pace by leaning forward, keeping eye contact, and speaking more quickly. Ask about plans, details, and action steps. If others withhold these from you, you won't learn what you need to do your work.
- Be more aware of your impact on others. Listen with a task-orientation. Along with feelings, tune into other people's logic and action plans. This helps other people see that you're really listening--on many levels.
- Show your full concern for others. Summarize what you've heard. Tell them what you can and can't support. Clear up things you're not sure about. Use your words, facial expressions, and posture to show that you're open to others and what they say. This doesn't mean you have to agree with everything. But you should show that you understand where they stand.

Empathy

- Try to see things from others' points of view. Recognize their needs, wants, and concerns, along with their feelings. You value relationships and cooperation. Show that you also appreciate others people's analysis and practical planning.
- Even though you might feel defensive about what someone has said, show interest and curiosity in it. Respond effectively to other people's backup behaviors--this can help them feel more understood. Show that you understand their feelings and points of view. Remember, showing that you understand doesn't have to mean that you agree.
- Reflect back what you hear others saying, and how they think and feel about it. You can be objective, even while being empathetic. Along with understanding others' feelings, help them to meet objectives. Make sure your words and non-verbals are consistent with each other. Seek appropriate, balanced openness. Avoid the tendency to disclose everything you're thinking and feeling. Some things are unnecessary, or inappropriate, to reveal.

Adaptive Communication

- Make meaningful contact with a wide range of styles. Notice tension in others. Look for when to increase or decrease emotional tension in yourself and others. Say what you're thinking and feeling. This is important both during meetings, and while you're carrying a project out or working with others on one.

- Give frequent positive feedback, focused on specific behaviors. Show that you respect and appreciate others, and that you notice and reward their contributions. Do this promptly and often, both privately and publicly. If you build a foundation of respect and recognition, others will be more receptive to your constructive feedback when needed.
- When giving constructive--or corrective--feedback, balance speaking and listening. Be concise and respectful, but also deliberate. Don't avoid giving feedback because you're afraid of hurting others' feelings. Like you, they need the feedback to consider making changes, necessary to succeed. When you give feedback, pick up the pace, and vary your eye contact. Speak precisely, and focus on specific behaviors, rather than being general.

Interpersonal Relations

- Take initiative. Show that you're action-oriented, as well as people-oriented. Show that you can give direction, as well as take it. Seek effective working relationships with a wide range of styles, both within and without your organization. Use language that is appropriate for each person and situation.
- Avoid coming across as being too agreeable or conforming. Don't minimize conflict when you, or others, are feeling tension. When you and others express feelings and disagreements, it can help clear the air and avoid misunderstandings. When others challenge rules and processes, avoid taking fixed positions, such as "It's always been done this way." Statements like "Let's discuss this" or "How can I help?" can help you bring open-mindedness, and a willingness to talk and listen into your conversations.
- Help others get through tension-filled moments and reactions. Skillfully respond to other people's backup behaviors--such as demanding, attacking, acquiescing, and withdrawing. Focus on others' tension, rather than your own. By noticing when others are tense, you can choose reactions that will help lead others to desired outcomes.

3. Doing Something for Others

An important component of earning endorsement is "doing something for others" - displaying an awareness of the needs of others' styles and how best to relate to them. This section of the report offers style-specific advice for improving your interactions with each of the four styles. Practical suggestions are offered for each of the Versatility dimensions.

3.1. Amiable

Below are tips for interacting with Amiable style individuals relevant to each of the four Versatility dimensions.

When interacting with those in the Amiable style, remember that their

- primary need is personal security
- orientation is relationships
- growth action is to initiate

Image

To decrease interpersonal tension with Amiable styles regarding image, remember that they:

- Prefer a personable and friendly image. They often prefer attire that is casual and comfortable, while still being appropriate. To build rapport with them, you may sometimes need to dress informally, or create occasions for casual attire.
- Often create an inviting and homey environment. It may include pictures of key people, or significant events with families or work teams.
- Work best in an environment that supports mutual caring and respect. You may need to slow down and show interest in their feelings, opinions, and interests. They appreciate it when you offer support, sincerity, and dependability.

Presentation

At the beginning of a presentation, address Amiable co-workers' need for connection on a personal level by briefly describing some bit of personal information that helps these audience members get to know and relate to you.

Personalize your presentations by involving your Amiable style colleagues. By involving them in the discussion, and in particular in any actions that result from the discussion, you will help them feel comfortable and nurture their sense of being valued. Use collegial language to indicate your value for the individuals and the team as a whole.

Ask Amiable audience members open-ended questions about how they feel about the topic at hand, and demonstrate active listening. Be alert to any non-verbal signals that they are experiencing doubt or insecurity about the information contained in your presentation. Because they might not be willing to overtly disagree with your points, you might have to ask them questions to get the concerns out in the open.

When stating your goals or desired outcomes for the presentation, include a statement about how you anticipate the outcome to affect the audience or other employees. Indicate the benefits or positive aspects of your topic in relation to people's work lives.

Consistently ask for their personal commitment to the outcomes you are trying to achieve from the presentation. Openly state your own actions and future commitments and indicate your intent to follow through. This will enhance Amiable colleagues' sense of security.

If disagreement arises among audience members during the presentation, avoid arguing or personalizing the conflict. Keep the discussion cordial to appeal to Amiable co-workers' need for harmony and accord.

Competence

To "do something" for Amiable style co-workers and supervisors, emphasize personal details and references that foster a feeling of connection to the relationship and to common goals. Instead of emphasizing the tasks and the process you will use to accomplish them, reiterate the positive effects of your approach on people and the organization.

Use empathy to demonstrate your understanding of Amiable style individuals' perspectives on work issues. Use personal language that conveys a desire to collaborate to ensure the success of all members of the team. Provide reassurance that issues will be resolved or work completed with the best interests of the organization and group in mind.

Invite Amiable colleagues to share their personal opinions on projects, tasks, or problems and verbally support those opinions. Follow up on your commitments to give individuals in the Amiable style a greater sense of security.

Feedback

When giving or receiving feedback with Amiable style people, remember these things:

- **Active Listening:** Listen for their feelings, sensitivity, and awareness. They want you to see their helpfulness and cooperation. Avoid behaviors that could be seen as unfeeling, tough-minded, and easily distracted. Allow time to build a relationship. Slow down, talk less, and show concern for them, and for their families and colleagues. Ask about their interests and concerns. Don't interrupt or complete their sentences. Be patient during long pauses or silence. They sometimes need time for reflection.
- **Empathy:** Show empathy by giving sincere and genuine personal attention. Start by touching base with them on a personal level. Don't always start by discussing work issues or action items. Give them time and create a relaxed atmosphere. Acknowledge their feelings, and share your own. Don't rush into talking about completing tasks. Notice when they might be feeling conflict. Encourage them to express it directly--even though they may dislike it. Show that you feel they're important by giving them your undivided attention, without allowing yourself to be distracted or interrupted. Give them a feeling of security by providing details and specifics about what is expected, and by discussing how to accomplish objectives.
- **Adaptive Communication:** When giving them feedback, give time to take others' concerns and feelings into consideration before they respond. Show that you see the human side of things, and not just the bottom line -- especially when making a decision or implementing a change. Avoid coming on too strong and overwhelming them. Lean back, decrease your eye contact and vocal intensity, and present your suggestions provisionally. Show that you're open for input and negotiation. Recognize their helpful efforts and concern for others. When you request changes, show that you're concerned about the impact on morale for them and others. Show support, be available, and reduce uncertainty. Amiable Styles are uncomfortable with conflict. Don't take it personally if they don't give you reciprocal constructive or corrective feedback.
- **Interpersonal Relations:** When they are in their acquiescing backup behavior, support them by making involvement feel safe. Slow down, relax time pressures for

decisions, and show personal interest in them. If appropriate, guarantee confidentiality or anonymity for their input. Ask for their help and insight regarding key relationships and overall morale. Leverage their concern for others by letting them talk with others before you ask for their commitment to a decision or change. When they're hesitant to act, take time to help them break down complex tasks into discrete steps.

3.2. Analytical

Below are tips for interacting with Analytical style individuals relevant to each of the four Versatility dimensions.

When interacting with those in the Analytical style, remember that their

- primary need is to be right
- orientation is thinking
- growth action is to declare

Image

To reduce interpersonal tension with Analytical styles regarding image, remember that they:

- Often project a formal, conventional, and punctual image. They are most comfortable dressing in a neat, proper, or conservative style and color.
- Seek accuracy and thoroughness. They need a work environment that supports solitary and deliberate pursuits for their assignments.
- Appreciate it if you set up appointments ahead of time, are prepared, and send them written material. They would prefer to not have interruptions, or requests made in a hurried or impatient manner.

Presentation

Consider providing a detailed agenda for the meeting, and if possible providing it in advance to those in the Analytical style. This will enable them to better prepare for the presentation and help them know what to expect. By helping them avoid surprises, you will enhance their comfort level and reduce their tension.

To support Analytical style colleagues' thinking orientation, use an organized and detailed delivery approach, including relevant facts and conclusions and data to support

them. Providing charts and graphs on slides or handouts will help them process information and help them fully understand your message and requirements. Provide a clear explanation of your ideas, assumptions, and desired outcomes.

Focus less on interpersonal needs and social interaction with Analytical style audience members, and instead involve them by focusing on your rational arguments. Emphasizing reasoning, process, and facts will help you gain endorsement of your presentation from Analytical colleagues.

Make sure to stay on topic, rather than allowing impromptu audience participation or extraneous commentary to unnecessarily direct you off of the agenda.

Be sure to ask Analytical style individuals whether they have questions, and allow them time to clarify your points and expectations. Avoid asking questions of a personal or non-task focused nature. Consider asking rhetorical questions to the Analytical members of your audience, which will get them thinking and contributing.

Provide logical conclusions and step-by-step action plans at the presentation's conclusion to help them understand what will occur next. Doing so will help them be more willing to participate in future efforts.

When Analytical colleagues take their growth action, to declare, by making observations or stating opinions, reward them by validating the logic and reasoning behind their comments.

Competence

To "do something" for co-workers and supervisors of the Analytical style, limit personal details and references that might distract them from the main topic or issue. Instead, focus more on the task and the process you will use to accomplish it.

Provide hard information rather than speculation, and commit to your action items in writing. This will provide reassurance that the job will be done correctly to those with the Analytical style.

Because Analytical colleagues might be uncomfortable with emotional situations or conflicts, it's important to maintain a calm and rational demeanor even when crises arise.

Acknowledge and encourage the need for Analytical style co-workers and managers to ask questions, and invite them to share their opinions on projects, tasks, or problems.

Feedback

When giving or receiving feedback with Analytical style people, remember these things:

- **Active Listening:** Listen to their details, plans, and logical organization. They want you to see their thoroughness and thoughtfulness. Slow down, talk less, and put things in writing for them to review. Give them time to study and to think. Be patient with long pauses. Break silent periods by inviting them to speak, rather than by saying what you think. Show that you're interested in their thoughts. Don't rush or pressure them for a response. When they respond, be prepared to listen to, or read more, than what you want to know.
- **Empathy:** Show empathy by giving them time to be thorough and thoughtful. Understand that they need time to think, to review plans, and to check for accuracy. You'll get the best from them by not imposing tight deadlines or demanding quick decisions. They respond better if you write things down and offer support materials. Build credibility by doing your homework -- provide details and avoid shortcuts.
- **Adaptive Communication:** When giving feedback, allow them to respond thoughtfully. Give them enough time to consider your facts and data. Show your interest in making thoughtful decisions and thorough plans. Avoid coming across as pushy or pressuring. Talk slower and less often than you might prefer. Lower the intensity of your voice. Compliment them on their attention to detail, concern for accuracy, and logical, measured approach. When you request changes, provide data and a sound rationale. Examine and discuss advantages and disadvantages of options. Because they're uncomfortable with conflict, don't take it personally if they withdraw and withhold feedback.
- **Interpersonal Relations:** When you see them in their withdrawing backup behavior, support them by making it safe for them to say what they think and know. Let them know they don't have to be as thoroughly prepared as their standards may lead them to believe. Because they withdraw from conflict, they may try to solve a problem alone. They may disguise their avoidance behavior by asking for more information and time to think things over. If this happens, don't challenge them or make

unnecessary demands. Instead, work with them to set up realistic strategies and deadlines. Help them narrow their options, while still matching their standards for quality.

3.3. Driving

Below are tips for interacting with Driving style individuals relevant to each of the four Versatility dimensions.

When interacting with those in the Driving style, remember that their

- primary need is results
- orientation is action
- growth action is to listen

Image

To reduce interpersonal tension with Driving styles, remember that they:

- Prefer a more neat and formal, yet action-oriented, appearance than other styles.
- Often have a functionally pragmatic work area. They may display only a few personal effects, but may prominently display plaques or credentials. They may look for the same in your work area. They respond well if you create a work environment that values discipline, punctuality, and organization.
- Want you to stay on task and keep the pace up when you enter their work area, without lingering. They appreciate it when you honor their time and priorities, and when you follow through on your commitments for action.

Presentation

When appealing to Driving style audience members, remember to focus on the goal of your presentation. Stating the presentation's desired outcome early in the presentation can help Driving style individuals to show commitment. You might consider presenting a slide that contains the key goal or outcome of the presentation, and referring to it again at the presentation's conclusion.

Consider engaging Driving style co-workers by asking what they would like to see achieved as a result of the presentation. This helps them to perceive that their need for results will be met if they participate.

Make sure to be efficient and brief in your presentation. Extraneous information not related to your goal or key message will be unwelcome and could contribute to a perception that your presentation is ineffective.

Use results oriented and action-oriented language and deliver your message firmly and directly. Directly seek their commitment to the actions or outcomes you desire. To do this, conclude your presentation with a "call to action" or closing remark that solicits their commitment to future action.

Limit your focus with Driving style audience members to tasks and outcomes rather than emphasizing personal rapport building. Driving style individuals will appreciate your businesslike approach.

Build your presentation's content with specific, detailed information and clearly and efficiently describe those specifics to get the Driving style audience members' attention.

Because Driving style colleagues' growth action is to listen, help them attend to your message by asking them pointed questions about their opinions or experiences related to your presentation topic. When they do contribute, support their conclusions.

Thank Driving style colleagues for their contributions by expressing how they will ultimately support the goals discussed in your presentation.

Competence

To "do something" for co-workers and supervisors of the Driving style, explicitly state your opinions without automatically deferring to their opinions or demands. This will instill greater confidence and respect in your competence from associates at all levels.

When offering solutions, more frequently make firm statements rather than posing your views as questions or suggestions.

When faced with shifting needs and priorities, show a greater focus on the outcome to be achieved rather than the interpersonal repercussions of the situation. Those in the Driving style will appreciate your efforts to articulate bottom line results or benefits of your decisions or actions.

When suggesting new approaches to business problems, consider asking Driving style individuals about their opinions and supporting the conclusions they make. Remember to limit discussion of personal topics and give priority to outcomes and results.

Feedback

When giving or receiving feedback with other Driving styles, keep these things in mind:

- **Active Listening:** Listen for deadlines, specific requests, and actions to be taken. They want you to notice their quick responses to requests and initiatives. Avoid seeming to compete. Slow down, and don't interrupt. Lean back. Clarify things as needed, to show that you understand their perspective. To do this, you can ask questions and make observations that show you've been listening.
- **Empathy:** Show empathy by reflecting their needs for results and requests for action back to them. Respond promptly to messages and requests. Send short documents - often in summarized or bulleted form. Show that you understand their frustration when things aren't moving fast enough for them, or in their way. Check out their feelings and opinions. Encourage them to do the same with others.
- **Adaptive Communication:** When giving feedback, be direct and concise, with down-to-earth comments. Use direct eye-contact and a deliberate voice, without being demanding or domineering. Commend them on their discipline on meeting deadlines, and on their drive for getting things done. Reinforce them when you see them listening to others' details, feelings, and opinions, rather than just to actions. When receiving feedback from Driving Styles, try not to take their impatience and impersonal demeanor personally. Remember, these may be signs that they are under stress.
- **Interpersonal Relations:** When a Driving Style is in autocratic backup behavior, support them by listening and clarifying. Slow down, lean back, and concentrate on listening. Don't compete by interrupting or talking more. Give them room to express their independence and individuality. But when decisions require input and buy-in, channel their attention to mutually beneficial results. This helps prevent premature action or unnecessary risks, which might damage relationships for the long-term.

3.4. Expressive

Below are tips for interacting with Expressive style individuals relevant to each of the four Versatility dimensions.

When interacting with those in the Expressive style, remember that their

- primary need is personal approval
- orientation is spontaneity
- growth action is to check

Image

To reduce interpersonal tension with Expressive styles, remember that they:

- Look for freedom of personal expression in their work and appearance. They may dress in highly personalized, colorful, or even flamboyant, ways. They appreciate when you wear casual attire or can create opportunities to do so.
- Often display achievements and inspirational items -- along with humorous ones, too. To get their best on work assignments, they need space for creativity, playfulness, and intensity of expression.
- Want you to be energetic, and if possible, relax time constraints, when you enter their work environment. Avoid demanding or competitive behavior. They appreciate it when you inspire them and use their ideas.

Presentation

Directly seek Expressive individual's input into your ideas and plans. Show excitement about what you're presenting, since this will appeal to the Expressive person's affinity for stimulation. Use emotion, humor, and stories to stimulate the Expressive audience members' attention. Poll the audience on their opinions and it is likely that Expressive co-workers will respond by offering their experiences and input.

Consider that at times, Expressive style colleagues might have a shorter attention span than other co-workers, so try to move at a good pace through both rapport-building activities as well as the content of your presentation. Speak quickly and use an animated voice and enthusiastic delivery to secure interest. Make direct eye contact with them to fully engage them in your topic.

When Expressive style co-workers voice disagreement over your presentation's key points, avoid taking their comments personally. Keep in mind that they are not likely to be directing negative comments to you but rather attempting to make the topic more interesting or compelling by inserting controversy or differing viewpoints into the

presentation. Defend your positions and take a firm stand to engage their respect and support. Don't appear uncommitted or "wishy-washy" about your presentation goals or these colleagues will likely get frustrated with your approach.

If presenting ideas for new products or services, earn endorsement by appealing to the Expressive person's sense of creativity and brainstorming. Consider including them in idea generating sessions if this supports the purpose of your presentation.

When Expressive colleagues share opinions or otherwise participate during your presentations, reward them publicly by giving sincere complements and thanking them for their contributions. This appeals to their need for personal approval and helps them engage even further in your presentation.

Recall that your Expressive colleagues typically have a need for big-picture thinking and strategic approaches. Make an effort to provide a broad, visual depiction of your goal of the presentation.

Consider providing a road map of your presentation, including your overall goal, agenda items, and a summary at your presentation's conclusion. This will help your Expressive colleagues to stay on track and to gain an overall grasp of both the intent and the desired outcome of your presentation.

Competence

To "do something" for Expressive style co-workers and supervisors, frame your solutions in "big picture" terms, rather than emphasizing details, and use descriptive language with greater frequency.

Because you might sometimes describe ideas, problems, or solutions at length, your Expressive supervisors or co-workers might lose interest or become impatient because they might have a shorter attention span than other styles. Shorten your interactions and quickly make your points to build their perception of your competence.

Portray a greater degree of self-confidence with Expressive supervisors or colleagues to inspire their confidence in you. Emphasize an enthusiastic and positive attitude when interacting with Expressive co-workers, and more frequently collaborate to build mutually acceptable solutions.

Feedback

When giving or receiving feedback with Expressive individuals, keep these things in mind:

- **Active Listening:** Listen for their feelings, enthusiasm, and ideas for what could be. They want you to see their creativity and boundless exploration of possibilities. Avoid looking aloof, too task-focused, or easily distracted. Allow time to build a relationship. Slow down and create a pleasant atmosphere for your conversation. Try not to be impatient when they digress with stories or humor. Instead, lean back and let the discussion flow between playful and focused
- **Empathy:** Show empathy by being attentive. Try to touch base on a personal level. Don't always start by discussing work issues or action items. Acknowledge their feelings, and share some of yours. Disclose more. Talk about things that are happening for you and others. Take time to explore hopes and dreams for the future. Understand their frustration when others discount their creativity, or when they are frustrated by routine and detail. Show that you feel they're important by giving them your undivided attention. For important meetings, don't allow yourself to be interrupted by calls or pagers. Encourage them by focusing on one task or idea, rather than on many.
- **Adaptive Communication:** When giving feedback, allow time for conversation, and for processing their feelings. Don't concentrate just on facts, and don't give too many facts. Show your concern for the human side of issues. Avoid only looking critical. Express warmth and interest. Vary your voice. Keep an open posture, and relax your facial expressions. Publicly spotlight their contributions. Regularly show that you appreciate their efforts. Reinforce them when you see them checking for details and accuracy, rather than relying on heresy or hunches. When you ask for changes, link them enthusiastically to things they want, or to unique opportunities. When receiving feedback from them, don't take it personally when they vent their anger and feelings.
- **Interpersonal Relations:** When they are in their attacking backup behavior, support them by listening. Slow down, pause, and soften your voice. Don't compete by talking more, faster, or louder, or by interrupting. Give them time to vent their feelings. Tolerate any tendency to exaggerate or make sweeping generalizations. Leverage their passion, and let them explore solutions that let them put their stamp on things. When possible, relax deadlines and support them in experimenting with--or improvising--solutions. Then, help them focus on systematic steps, one at a time.

4. Social Style Refresher

4.1. Social Style Model

A person's Social Style is determined by combining two dimensions of behavior - assertiveness and responsiveness.

Assertiveness is the degree to which others perceive a person as tending to "ask" or "tell" in interactions with others. The two descriptive anchors for the assertiveness scale are "ask" assertive on the left side of the continuum and "tell" assertive on the right side of the continuum.

Responsiveness is the extent to which others perceive a person as tending to control or display emotions when interacting. The two descriptive anchors for the responsiveness scale are "control" at the upper end of the continuum and "emote" at the lower end of the continuum.

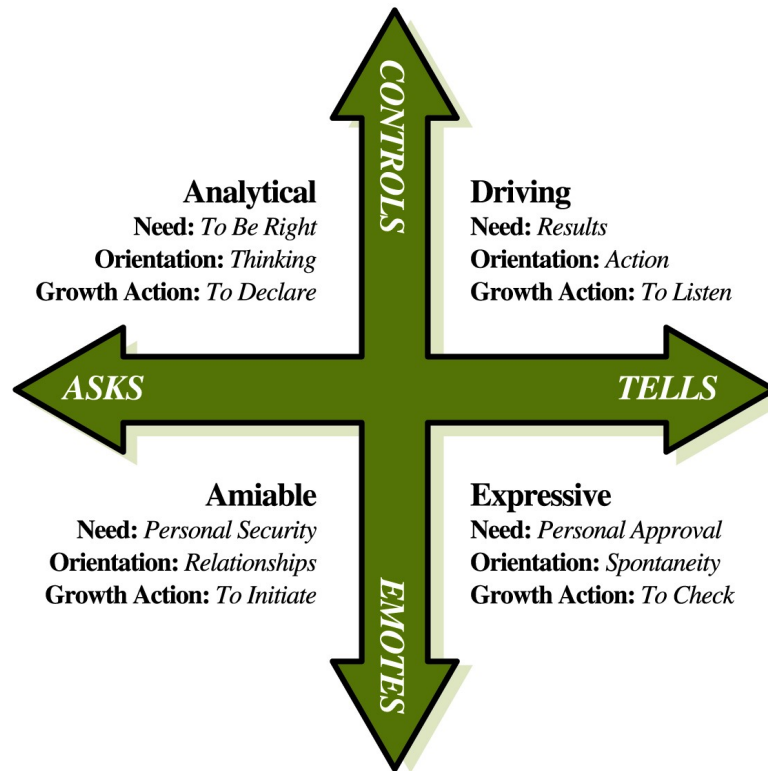
By combining the two dimensions of assertiveness and responsiveness, four patterns of behavior, or styles, can be identified. The four styles are:

- Driving (Tell Assertive + Control Responsive) -- These individuals are seen as strong-willed and more emotionally controlled.
- Expressive (Tell Assertive + Emote Responsive) -- These individuals are described as outgoing and more dramatic.
- Amiable (Ask Assertive + Emote Responsive) -- These individuals are seen as easy-going and supportive.
- Analytical (Ask Assertive + Control Responsive) -- These individuals are described as serious and more exacting.

Major Theme of Each Style Once you identify your own or someone else's style position, you can describe that individual using some of the descriptors below. Each style position has its own characteristics or theme related to its preferred behaviors. The four style positions appear to others as:

Analytical Style

- Reserved, unaggressive and avoids appearing dominant
- Tentative and may not communicate with others unless there is a specific need to do so



- Decides thoughtfully and acts slowly with decisions based on reasoning and logic
- Tends not to impose on others
- Cautious, careful and thorough
- Formal, stiff and proper and seen as avoiding personal involvement
- Precise, specific and/or critical with a no-nonsense attitude; cool, distant and detached

Expressive Style

- Direct and seeks to know what is going on, active, spontaneous, forceful and makes his or her presence known
- Reactive and impulsive about showing both positive and negative feelings, displays his or her feelings and emotions readily
- Initiates social contact and communicates with others even when it may not be appropriate to do so
- Quick to decide and makes decisions based on an intuitive approach
- Uses the power of an assertive approach to influence others
- Casual, general, imprecise and impulsive communicator with a flair for the dramatic

Driving Style

- Active, forceful and sometimes aggressive
- Direct; initiates social contact, and focuses efforts on goals and objectives that need to get done now
- Willing to challenge ideas and views of others
- Risk taker, quick decision maker; impatient with others if things don't move as quickly as desired
- Cool, distant, guarded and aloof at times so as to control feelings and emotions with others
- Formal, self-sufficient, serious and tends to deal with the reasoning and logic behind actions and decisions
- Competitive interacting with others

Amiable Style

- Approachable, concerned, supportive and seems to prefer to deal from a level of personal trust in relationships with others
- Avoids using personal power and doesn't often impose views on others
- Tends to be "ask" assertive and displays feelings openly
- Informal, casual, easy-going and sensitive to keeping relationships on friendly, personal basis
- Slow to decide and makes decisions based on relationships
- Unconcerned about efficiency of actions

4.2. Tension Productivity Model

In relationships, without some level of tension, it is difficult to accomplish anything. It is important to demonstrate an appropriate amount of tension - neither too much nor too little. You can learn about tension management by examining the relationship between tension and productivity.

A. Low Tension-Low Productivity

Tension is seen as a motivation for activity. That is, without some level of tension, you would not be able to get anything accomplished. As tension increases, productivity increases. Tension in and of itself is neither positive nor negative. You measure

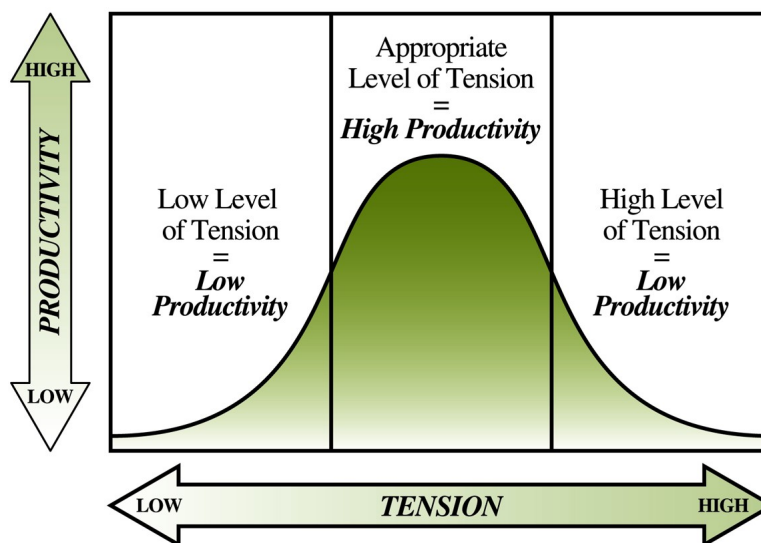
whether there is too little or too much tension by the resulting level of productivity. For example, when there is too little tension, there is low productivity.

B. Appropriate Tension-High Productivity

Productivity increases as tension increases. There needs to be an appropriate level of tension in a situation to have a productive outcome. The important point is to learn how to stay within this range and to help others to do so too.

C. High Tension-Low Productivity

Increased tension is acceptable as long as you are productive. The danger is that tension can increase to such a level that the tension is not motivational but stressful and non-productive.



4.3. Backup Behavior

Patterns of behavior are formed throughout the lifespan by reinforcement. When you experience a need, you feel it in some form of tension. This tension produces a behavioral response, and if that response leads to a reduction in tension, you are likely to use the same or similar behavioral response when you experience that tension again. Each time you repeat the behavioral response, it is reinforced as long as it continues to reduce the tension.

What happens when preferred style behaviors do not reduce the tension? For example, what happens when the usual action-oriented behaviors of an individual with a Driving style do not meet the need for results?

When people are frustrated in their usual ways of utilizing tension productively, they often move into some sort of extreme behavior to help them deal with the tension buildup. This extreme form of interaction is labeled as "Backup behavior." Each style has its own distinctive Backup behavior that you should be prepared to recognize and deal with effectively. Backup Behavior is most often seen as an exaggerated form of style used by an individual to reduce his or her high level of tension within the relationship that caused the tension.

Backup behavior occurs because the individual's more typical style behaviors are not meeting his or her style need, such as to be right, to get results, to gain personal approval, or to gain personal security. This leads to an unproductive level of tension.

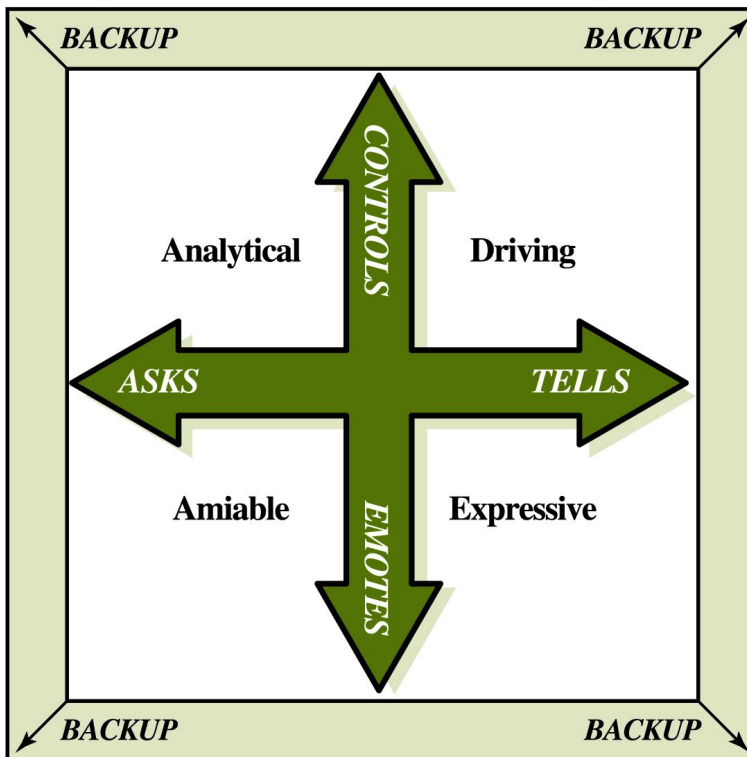
Backup behavior can be a significant factor in causing unproductive relationships because the individual in backup mode is not concerned with the effects such behavior is having on others. Nevertheless, it can raise the tension of others. Backup occurs within the relationship that caused the high level of tension.

It is important to understand Backup Behavior so that:

1. You can recognize your own Backup behavior and how you can cause tension in others, and how this can result in nonproductive relationships.
2. You are in a better position to manage your tension and maintain a productive relationship.
3. You can recognize that Backup behavior is an effort to reduce the high level of tension the other person is experiencing.

AVOIDS: Withdraws to reduce personal tension

AUTOCRATIC: Takes charge to reduce personal tension



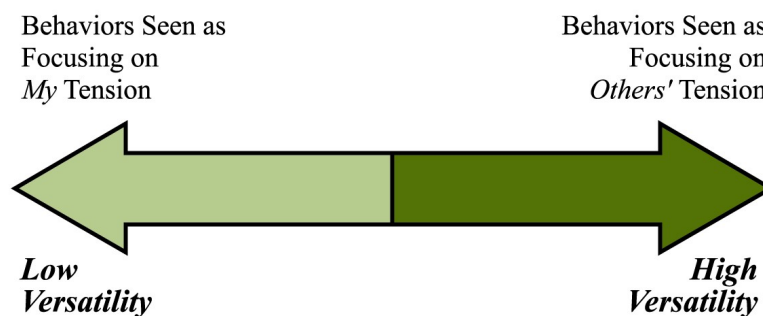
ACQUIESCES: Goes along to reduce personal tension

ATTACKS: Confronts to reduce personal tension

5. Versatility Refresher

5.1. Versatility

Versatility is a measure of the level of social endorsement accorded to an individual by others. Earning social endorsement hinges on both your ability to impress others, and the extent to which others see you working to make a relationship mutually productive. Earning social endorsement is a key to developing and maintaining successful professional and personal relationships.



Versatility is NOT:

- Simply the ability to get along with others. A versatile relationship increases the effectiveness and productivity of both parties.
- A "liking" scale. A low rating doesn't mean that people don't like you or that you are a bad person.

Versatility is:

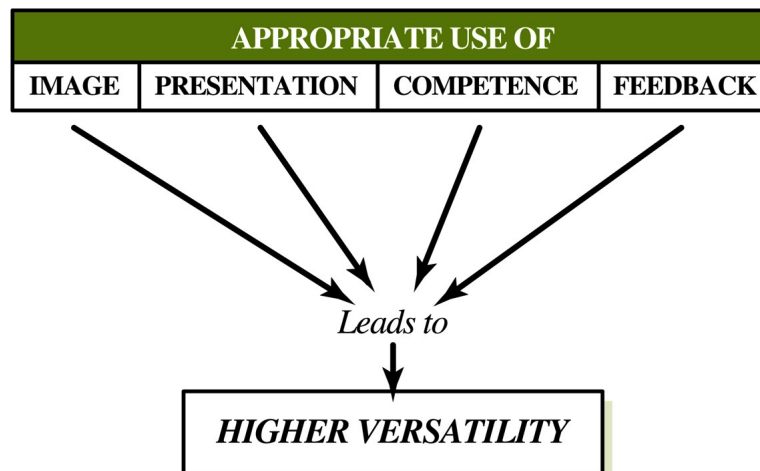
- When the interaction retains enough tension so that those involved reach their goal.
- The most modifiable dimension of the Social Style Model.
- Variable and changeable. It can vary over time depending upon the situation and people in the interaction. Depending on the effort put into a relationship, one can receive smaller or greater amounts of endorsement from others.
- A choice. A person might not want to make the effort to be versatile because the outcome of the relationship is not valuable or a priority. As an example, you are working in an organization where you are dissatisfied and looking for another job.

You may not put much effort forward to build relationships with your team because you know you will only be there short-term.

5.2. Sources of Social Endorsement

The major sources of social endorsement come from the appropriate use of:

1. Image: Physical appearance, good impression, well-groomed, physically appealing, appropriate to the viewer.
2. Presentation: Capacity to clearly communicate to groups, use of language that is appropriate to audience.
3. Competence: Appropriate competence that others can put to use in accomplishing their goals, leading to their respect and confidence. This includes taking responsibility for work and following through with commitments, adjusting to changing priorities and persevering during challenging circumstances, personal creativity, and optimism.
4. Feedback: Sending and receiving verbal and non-verbal signals to maximize understanding and minimize tension, and making appropriate adjustments as necessary in the situation. This includes the ability to actively listen and understand other people's needs, respond accordingly, and develop mutually beneficial interpersonal relationships.



Efforts at being appropriate require sensitivity to, and good judgment about, situations and behaviors that have the potential for causing unproductive interpersonal tension.

Since earning social endorsement involves your ability or skill to impress others, you can improve that skill and increase your level of Versatility. Just trying could increase your Versatility rating since others will see you working to make the relationship productive and this is also a factor in earning social endorsement.

5.3. Gaining Endorsement

TRACOM's research suggests that a person's style matters less than the way he or she uses that style when interacting with others. If a person creates a positive impact upon others with his or her style, others will tend to report favorably about that person's actions.

For example, you might describe a person preferring the Amiable style with high Versatility in positive terms such as supportive, respectful, willing, dependable and agreeable, as opposed to negative terms, such as conforming, unsure, pliable, dependent and awkward. As Versatility increases for any style, others agree that the style produces a positive impact upon them.

Any style can perform with any level of Versatility. A person can develop or modify Versatility more quickly than the Assertiveness and Responsiveness dimensions that make up style. Versatility is largely a personal choice.

In order to gain endorsement, it is useful to consider a number of questions relevant to each of the four sources of Versatility.

Image

1. What adjustments do you make to your attire/appearance in different business interactions?
2. What image factors seem to earn endorsement in your organization?
3. What image factors do not seem to earn endorsement in your organization?

Presentation

1. When presenting ideas to others, to what extent do you adjust your delivery and content to the specific audience? To what degree do you feel comfortable presenting to a variety of audiences?
2. Which factors regarding presentation seem to earn endorsement in your organization?
3. Which factors regarding presentation do not earn endorsement in your organization?

Competence

1. What abilities do you possess that others have found helpful in meeting their objectives? (For instance, dependability, perseverance, optimism, flexibility, creativity).
2. What earns endorsement in your organization in regard to competency and breadth of understanding?
3. What does not earn endorsement in your organization in regard to competency and breadth of understanding?

Feedback

1. What information have you received from others about your ability to share your perspective about important issues openly and candidly? How do you respond to others when they offer their open and candid perspective about an issue that is important to you?
2. What earns endorsement regarding feedback in your organization?
3. What does not earn endorsement regarding feedback in your organization?

5.4. Steps for Observing Others

"Knowing others" is key to improving interpersonal effectiveness. You can learn to identify others' preferred styles by following the six rules for observing style, listed below. Your greatest challenge is to be non-judgmental about other people's behavior. However, you will also find that allowing people the freedom to behave in ways that are comfortable for them will bring you a higher level of social endorsement. It will also help turn relationships that are potential liabilities into definite assets.

It is important to understand that observing others' behavior to determine their style is not an automatic or mechanical process. Just like any other skill, it takes practice. The following can aid you in this process.

1. Avoid trying to define a style too quickly. Since people tend to jump to conclusions, you should try to observe a person in as many situations as possible. If you force style identification too quickly, you might create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Use a suspended reaction to confirm the validity of observations. Avoid taking sides in an interaction; hang back, get out of the picture as much as possible. Don't grasp onto one bit of observed behavior and ignore others that don't fit. Rather, let the behaviors add up, and be willing to add more later, if necessary.
2. Get out of the way. Your personal feelings toward the people you are observing can only hinder the accuracy of your objective observations. You should attempt to forget how you are feeling and reacting and concentrate instead on how the other person is acting. Give people a second chance to display more behavior.
3. Learn to observe more accurately and describe what a person does without making early "good," "bad" or "why" judgments. Your natural response to others is an early "like" or "dislike" judgment. More often than not, this is a style reaction and gets in the way of objective observation. The test of the skill of accurate observation is to describe a person's actions in a way that others can readily agree. For example, the observation that "Charlie sat quietly during the meeting and had an expressionless face" can be quickly verified or denied by others who attended the meeting. However, the statement "Charlie wasn't interested" is an interpretation, not an objective description, and it can lead to serious errors in predicting Charlie's future behavior. Concentrate on observing behavior until you can predict someone else's typical action pattern. Don't worry about motivations.
4. Separate style clues from assigned authority or role. People often jump to conclusions based upon assigned roles. For example, you might say, "He's a football player, a competitor, so he must be assertive." This statement is not necessarily true. Assertiveness is how someone says or does things within a relationship, not how well someone competes in a contact sport. Many football players are socially unassertive when off the field.
5. Moderate stress clarifies style. As already mentioned, people often fall back on those patterns of action that have worked well for them in the past in social situations that cause them moderate tension. It is fairly easy to use different, less comfortable behavior patterns when the situation doesn't put us under stress. However, watch a person snap back to old habits when the situation is not so comfortable.
6. Set the stage for the person being observed. If someone is busy reacting to you and your style, you will find it very difficult to observe that person's style. Thus, you must

give the other person a chance to show his or her style by effectively setting the stage. To do this, approach the individual in an open, non-threatening way. Demonstrate an interest in the person. After the normal greetings, begin the conversation with non-dramatic questions, rather than with a statement. Take an information-gathering posture, but don't ask questions that are too personal or specific. Instead, you might say, "I understand you are involved in 'X.' Can you tell me something about it?" or, "Can you tell me a little bit about your current situation?" or, ask some other general questions appropriate to the meeting

In this way, you will show interest in the person and give the individual a chance to display his or her habitual style. This technique works best if you standardize your actions at the beginning of the process. The key to this technique is to provide as few clues as possible about how you expect, or want, the person to respond. This creates an ambiguous situation and mild stress, which causes people to rely on their own styles. The less other people know, or think they know, about what you expect, the more they will rely on their most comfortable behavioral habits, that is, their styles. The more they use those habits, the clearer their styles will become to you. However, even at this point, do not leap to any quick conclusions. Take time to be as open as possible to all of their verbal and non-verbal actions. Then, confident of your observations, you can form a tentative style judgment.