

Q: Are there different ways to talk to different people to get better results?

A: The holidays are great. But let's face it. They can be a time of increased stress caused by a lot of poor communication. Why not use the next 30 days to elevate the quality of each conversation?

Try this with Uncle Harry over dinner or your boss in the boardroom: First, determine their personality style and then respond accordingly. Here's how.

Analytical: Look for a slower-pace, business-like person who is time conscious, focused on facts and data, likes to be right and dislikes making decisions.

Respond by: Slow down. Use facts and historical data. Make them right. Give guarantees. He or she may need the weekend to decide.

Driver: These are fast-paced people, focused on results, time conscious, like control and not good at listening. They dislike idle chatter and actions that don't show a result.

Respond by: Be professional with these people. Plan ahead. They want results, now! Give them options so they can be in control. Reduce chitchat.

Expressive: Fast-paced personalities who enjoy variety, big-picture projects and recognition. They dislike a lot of detail work.

Respond by: Give these folks recognition and approval. Use words like "gut," "intuition," "feel" when asking them to consider your ideas.

Amiable: They are slow-

paced people who are excellent at building relationships, listening, sharing their personal life. They dislike taking big risks and stuffy, impersonal conversations.

Respond by: Establish a personal relationship. Give personal guarantees. Occasionally, reconnect with the Amiable to uncover hidden issues.

Personality-style flexibility can be a great asset.

Years ago, I was giving a sales presentation for an accounting firm in Seattle. The people I was meeting with were all Analyticals. I, however, was an enthusiastic, fast-paced, big-picture Expressive. Soon, eyes glazed over and watches were checked. To put it bluntly, my presentation was bombing.

I quickly changed my approach and began slowing my pace and talking quieter. I allowed my arms to fall to my sides. I stated facts, such as "based on our results, our sales-training program helped XYZ Company realize a 20 percent annual growth rate." I drew ROI figures on

a flip chart and offered a money-back guarantee.

Behaving in this manner felt unnatural to me, yet I got the sale. I attribute this to understanding my personality style, identifying the personality style of others and adjusting accordingly.

Cautionary note: Personality styles don't define who we

are, just our preferences.

To use these techniques is about focusing on the needs of others, while being genuine and sincere. It's about knowing your style, identifying the style of others and, when appropriate, adjusting your style to align with theirs. To find out what your style is, go to www.missionfacilitators.com/styles. ■



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