

“Getting your point across”



Previous articles introduced the concept that we all communicate (whether it be by email, writing or orally) using one of four styles of communication. This article develops this by dealing in some detail with each of them over the next few weeks. The reason is that if you can gain insight into your own communication style and that of the person you are communicating with (particularly in the interview situation) and if you can speak in their language then you will have a much better chance of getting your communication across and building that all important relationship.

Carl Jung, the noted Swiss psychoanalyst, holds that individuals develop different psychological habits or preferences that influence how they process information and make decisions. These qualities affect how people communicate with each other. The differences are referred to as the different types or personal styles of communication. If you come to recognise and acknowledge the influence of your own style on your thoughts and actions, you will begin to appreciate the importance that other people's styles hold for them. This will improve your ability to more meaningfully interact with them, and will positively influence how they perceive you.

It is important to remember no one style is "good" or "bad." Each has its own benefits and virtues and while we may have a primary style, we do not use that style all the time. The first style is:

Intuitors: These are people who are conceptual, synthesising, inductive, reasoning and projecting. They are stimulated by intellectual and creative problem-solving endeavours and are found in strategic roles on boards, task forces, planning committees, or agency leadership groups. In such roles, they are able to assist in problem identification, policy-making, prioritising programme development, coordinating campaigns, and innovatively pulling together the efforts of a variety of groups or functions.

The positive traits of Intuitors are that they are seen at their best as being:

- Leaders, visionaries, and reliable problem solvers
- People who can cut through the smokescreens of tradition and focus on the essentials
- Able to develop profitable new directions or solutions that others have missed
- Recognised for their fresh, novel approaches and ideas
- Catalysts who inspire others to think "out of the box."

However the challenges facing Intuitors are that at their worst they are seen as:

- Being long on vision, short on action
- Tending to avoid some of the tedious "nitty-gritty" that others see as necessary
- Being so convinced of the power and value of their insights and contributions that they might not see the necessity of documenting or proving them to the satisfaction of others. In fact, they may become impatient or irritated with others who demand detailed evidence or who do not see the value or ingenuity of insights and contributions

Under stress however Intuitors run the risk of being seen as:

- Detached or overly intellectual
- Indifferent to the practicalities of a given situation, or even come across as being self-centred
- Rigid, uncompromising, and impractical
- Defensive in justifying their ideas and failing to translate them into more usable forms or incorporate the feedback of others
- Satisfied with the concept itself and less concerned with helping others benefit from it. This often conveys an air of rebelliousness.

Intuitors seem to be more interested in what should be done in the future than in what has been done in the past. They are more committed to change and its implications than in analysing past events or modifying immediate situations. As they derive satisfaction from the world of ideas and imagination, they excel in projecting the probabilities of a situation into the future. Their world of possibilities is the most "real" and satisfying, so they relish the chosen methods to take them there.

Do you know of such a person? There are 3 clues you can use to identify the Intuitor style:

1. **Their communication style** is to assume that others see things as they do, and so they expect their actions to be understood by others. They like things to be stated generally and tend to present insights, concepts, and ideas first, often leaving behind those in need of the facts. They want to know the challenges and future implications and will interject these needs into the communications. They also expect others' suggestions to be novel, unusual, and challenging. Because they focus on possibilities, they leap from topic to topic. However, they can be inspirational in their presentations because they have long-range "vision" and are able to master complex concepts quickly.
2. **Their approach to problem solving** is to brainstorm and they are comfortable developing and relying on hunches when faced with a problem. They are unconventional and eschew established methods. They like to deal with insights, concepts, and ideas first and when given facts and details, want to know how these apply to the larger issues being examined. In problem-solving situations they tend to inspire others to think in creative ways but frequently fail to fully explain the details behind their concepts.
3. **Their writing style** is to extend their impressionistic and philosophical approach to their written communications. They tend to state things generally and may launch right into the main issues without supplying the details or facts that

support them. They may also come to conclusions without explaining how they arrived at them. Letters can be lengthy, because writing, like other forms of communication, stimulates their imagination. When this happens, they may move from one topic to another. They assume that the reader is, or should be, equally as impressed with the issues presented and that he/she follows along.

Are you an Intuitor? If so then you need to appreciate the difficulties others may experience when communicating with you and adjust your style to accommodate them. To do this effectively will mean that you need to be able to identify their style and then speak their language. If you're not an Intuitor then your style has to be one of the other three. Either way you may need to read on if you want to be an effective communicator.