



How to Manage Different Personality Styles at Work

Have you ever been frustrated by a co-worker that is dragging their feet to make a decision? Or Have you ever been run over by a boss that is charging full speed ahead to accomplish a goal? In these moments it is easy to become frustrated by the individual instead of the issue at hand. The issue being is that it is likely more about personality differences and less about it being an individual issue. Understanding different personalities is essential for leaders. When you understand the differences you can be more strategic in your communications to influence others and less reactive when individuals do not do exactly what you would do. Below are the four main personality styles in the workplace to help you be a more influential leader.

The Analytical

This individual is fact-oriented. They are thoughtful and have high standards of performance. They prefer structure and tend to be very organized.

Strengths: They are self-disciplined, many are perfectionists (which can be a strength and a weakness) which allows them to be high producers.

Weaknesses: They can be indecisive and overly-analytical, which can increase the amount of time it takes for them to make a decision. If you need them to respond quickly to a challenge, anticipate resistance as they do not thrive under pressure.

How to manage the Analytical: Avoid pressuring them to make quick decisions. Be sure to provide facts and data when presenting challenges. If you are an Analytical, avoid making standards so high that it jeopardizes your relationships because others feel you are unrealistic or abrasive. Embrace failure and identify the opportunities to learn from your mistakes and extend the same permission to those you manage.

The Driver

This individual gets things done. They see a challenge as an opportunity and are eager to tackle it. They are resilient and not easily discouraged. Drivers are natural-born leaders.

Strengths: They are visionaries and can paint a picture of the future to inspire others. They are independent and very productive.

Weaknesses: They can be so focused on achieving the goal that they neglect the human component. They can lack empathy and be seen as harsh and insensitive which can cause people to avoid working with them.

How to manage the Driver: Do not waste time with niceties; get to the point of the issue at hand. Unlike The Analytical, The Driver does not need all of the facts to make a decision. Give them autonomy and allow them freedom and flexibility to perform their job. If you are a Driver practice active-listening and be cognizant of how demanding you can be, this will improve your ability to influence others. Also, take the time to understand the process. Often times Drivers can be so caught up in the vision, they do not see the resources and time available which can result in creating unrealistic expectations.

The Amiable

This individual can provide stability as they are well-balanced and patient. They are very diplomatic in their approach and can bring a team together.

Strengths: This individual works well with all other personality styles. They are ambitious and have a strong desire to learn. They work well under pressure and are easy-going.

Weaknesses: They can lack attention to detail and may benefit from structure and guidance to remind them of the big and small actions that need to be done to accomplish a goal. They avoid conflict, which can lead to smaller issues becoming bigger as they fail to address them in their desire to keep the peace.

How to manage the Amiable: Avoid being abrasive or brash as they respond best to a calm and soft approach. Try kindness and curiosity, encourage them to take risks and step into discomfort. If you are an amiable, practice being more open and assertive. Take a stand on an issue and give yourself permission to have an opinion. Look at change as an opportunity to grow.

The Expressive

This individual likes to have fun and has a great sense of humor. They have a high desire to feel included and be a part of a team.

Strengths: They are ambitious and charismatic and can be very persuasive in influencing others.

Weaknesses: They can be disorganized and lack discipline. Their constant talking and playing around can be distracting to others and derail meeting agendas.

How to manage the Expressive: Focus on building a genuine relationship with them and show appreciation for their enthusiasm and charisma. Try to provide structure as this can help them stay focused on accomplishing a task. If you are an Expressive and want to get along better with others, try to withhold opinions by being more patient. This is not to say do not voice opinions, but try a calm approach. Also, be sure to follow through on tasks and commitments you make to others.

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