
CRYSTAL CLEAR COMMUNICATION

MASTER SKILLS SET

LESSON 5

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION STYLES



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LESSON 5

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION STYLES.

TARGETING UNDERSTANDING AND SUCCESS

"Enough about you...let's hear about me."

- Heimel

People are different and unique and it follows that when the Sender of a message uses the style that best suits the Receiver, communication will be more successful. We can't predict precisely how to best communicate with a specific person in any given circumstance – that's why listening and "course correcting" based on feedback are so important. However, there are predictable styles that you can easily identify that "fit" most people. Once you understand the differences, you can easily "target" your own style to match someone else's preferred style. You can also get clear about what your own style is. How do you function best as a message receiver? You will soon understand how your style impacts your interactions with others.



"Creating the right impression can be as simple as treating people the way they want to be treated....In fairness to the Harvard Business School, what they don't teach you is what they can't teach you, which is how to read people and how to use the knowledge to get what you want...I can't imagine being effective in business without having some insight into people. Insight demands opening up your senses, talking less and listening more."

- Mark McCormack, What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School



Everyone is different and wants to be dealt with on their own terms. Some people want you to get to the bottom line and get there ASAP. Some people want to know exactly how you got to the bottom line before they agree with you or even receive anymore of your messages. Some people prefer to discuss the weather and leave the bottom line alone. And, some people would prefer to discuss it all over a friendly cup of coffee while you exchange ideas.

Your job is to figure out which style your friend or new business acquaintance – or even relative – is, and then deal with them accordingly. You need to be flexible, but the process is simple once you understand it.

Personality types have been studied at length over the years with improved communication in mind. There is a general consensus that four predominant styles can be observed. Although these styles are labeled with various descriptive adjectives and titles, the basic styles have remained constant. We'll use the following labels:

- Expressive
- Amiable
- Driver
- Analytical

The easiest way to identify each style is to lay out a system to help you determine each one.

To get to the COMMUNICATION STYLES, we'll first consider four different PERSONALITY style descriptors. Once you have the personality styles figured out, you'll translate them into communication styles. The Personality styles are:

- Dominant or Easy Going and
- Informal or Formal

A DOMINANT person might be:

- Confident
- In-charge
- Extroverted
- Talkative
- Fast-paced
- Make definitive statements
- Assertive
- Outgoing
- Verbal
- Someone who tells things

And, an EASY GOING person might be:

- Subtle
- Compliant
- Introverted
- Quiet
- Deliberate
- Ask questions
- Accepting
- Passive
- Thoughtful
- Good listener

An individual will be EITHER Dominant or Easy Going MOST OF THE TIME. You can see that the characteristics are fairly opposite.

So, think of someone you'd like to "figure out" and ask yourself where they would fit on the continuum below. Are they more Dominant or Easy Going? If they are VERY Dominant, mark an "X" far to the left near the 10, or more to center left – or even in the middle of the line if they are not so Dominant or even toward the 0 if they switch frequently. Or, if they are very Easy Going, mark the line as it fits their personality to the right. These descriptors don't imply that a person displays all of the listed descriptors, but if they seem to fit in general, you can be confident that you're describing their personality.



An Informal person's style could be described as:

- Spontaneous
- Emotional
- Intuitive
- Responsive
- Impulsive
- Demonstrative
- Interactive
- Verbal
- Unstructured

A Formal person's style would be:

- Withholding their feelings
- Reserved
- Self-controlled
- Cautious/disciplined
- Intellectual
- Conservative
- Organized
- Structured
- Distant

Again, one personality is USUALLY either more Informal or Formal – not both. These characteristics are totally different. So, consider the person again, and mark this continuum with an "X" according to where they usually fit. This time, we'll use a vertical line...

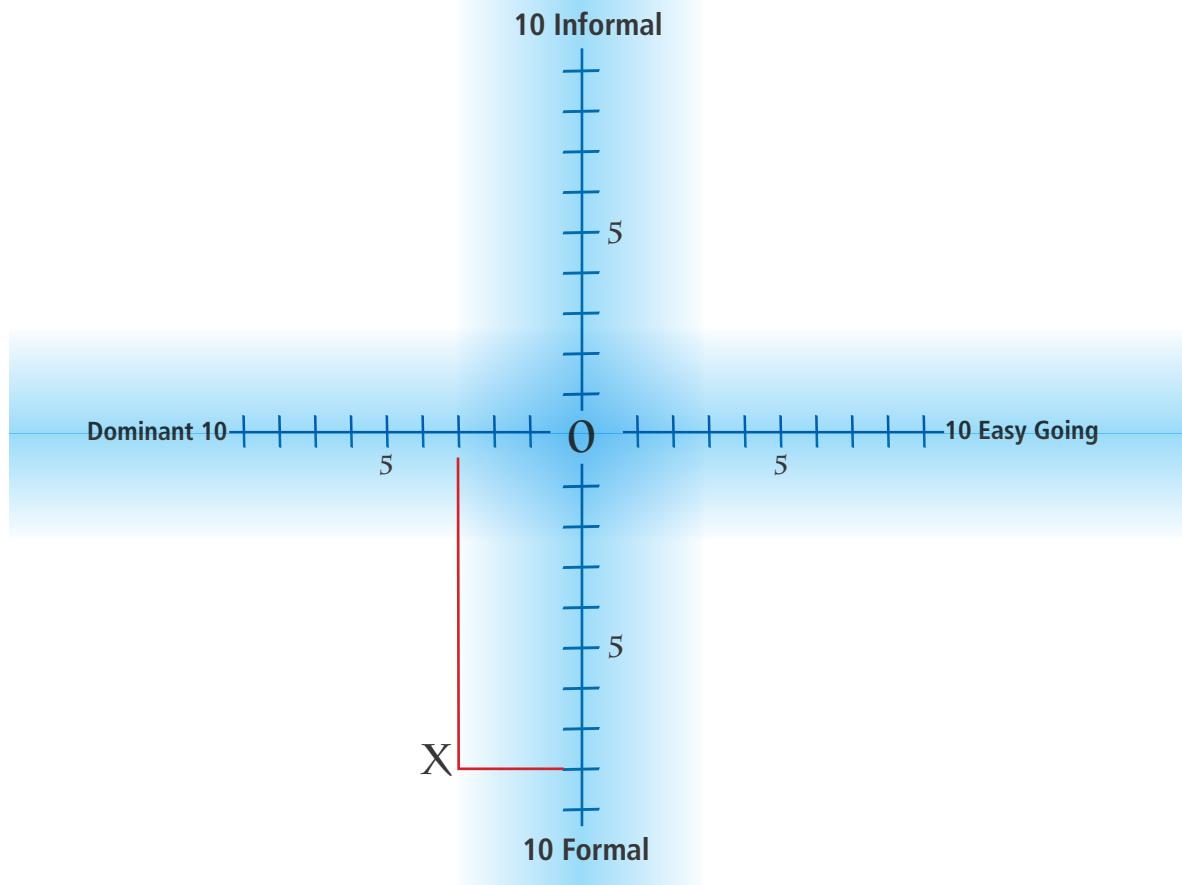
In order to determine a communication style (Expressive, Amiable, Driver or Analytical), we overlay these two continuums to create a North vs. South and West vs. East chart. The personality characteristics you just identified by your two "X's" can now meet to form another point on our new chart, as shown below.

For example, a person whom you evaluate as an 8 on the formal continuum and a 3 on the Dominant continuum will have an "X" placed like the one below.



You can see how we placed the "X" for the person who was an 8 on the formal continuum and a 3 on the Dominant continuum above.

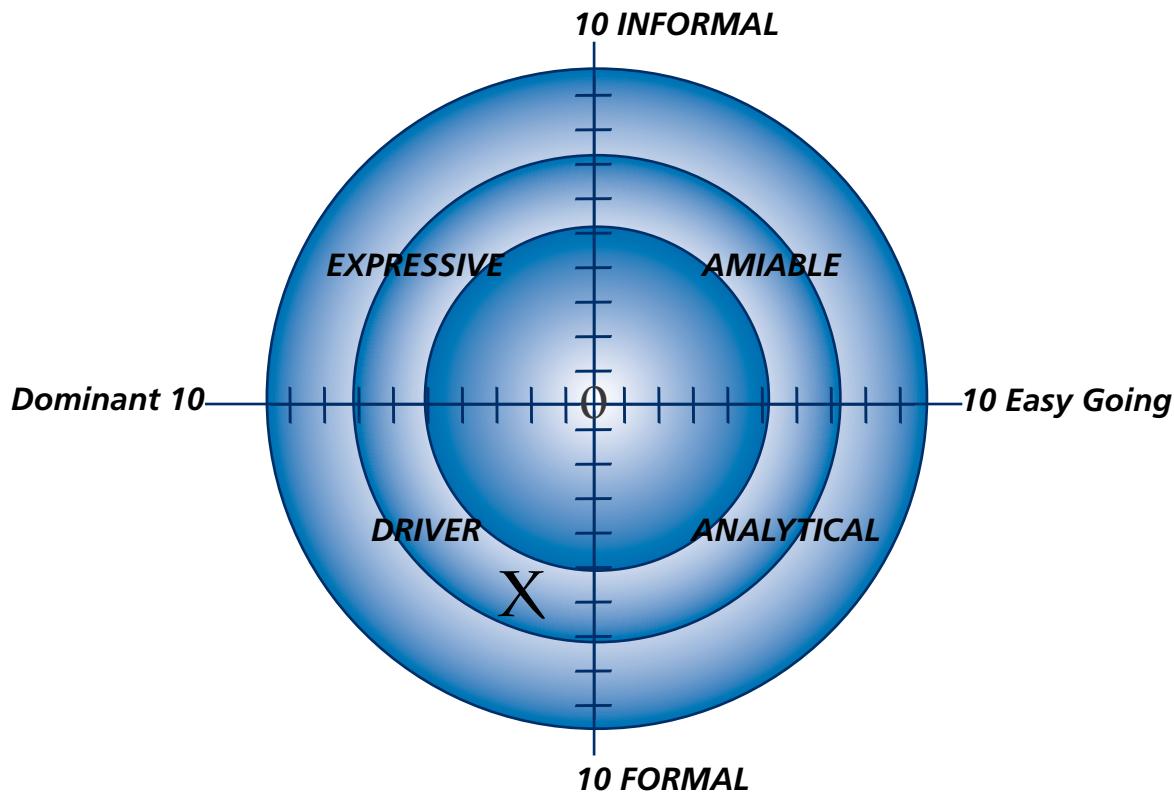
This evaluation will only take you a moment once you're familiar with the characteristics. You will "get" the information you need about a person after only a few moments of interaction.



Now the placement of the "X" takes on even more meaning. On each of the four directions are the characteristics you just considered and the "X" of the person you are evaluating. In each of the four quadrants of the target, we superimpose the four personality styles mentioned above:

- Expressive
- Amiable
- Driver
- Analytical

Now, to determine a communication style (Expressive, Amiable, Driver or Analytical), we begin with the North vs. South and West vs. East chart create a “target” image from it. That chart looks like this:



A person's communication style corresponds to their "X" that you located based on their personality characteristics. The person we identified uses a Driver communication style. To repeat, personality characteristics (the way a person wants to be treated) determine their best communication style. The location of the person's "X" in one of the quadrants tells you their communication style and their placement toward the center or outer edge of the target tells you the depth, or extent of their personality in those characteristics.

Now you know the person's style and how completely they fit into that style, based on the position of their "X." Let's consider the communication style for each quadrant – each communication style.



Expressive

These people are highly dominant. They try to set the agenda and take the initiative. They give off lots of feeling and warmth—always trying to promote a new idea, a new thing, or themselves. They:

- Are direct and expansive
- Are relationship-oriented and verbal
- Value activity and companionship
- Ask who questions
- Are desirous of flexibility
- Are dependent on their fun-loving nature
- Are fast paced and impulsive
- Want personal interaction
- Need incentives and endorsements
- Are proud of personal recognition
- Measure progress by applause and positive feedback

Now that you can identify a style and determine personality traits associated with their style, what do you do with the information? As an excellent communicator, you'll want to think about how each style WANTS TO BE TREATED. Whether you're sharing an idea, describing an opportunity, or simply making a lunch date, consider the "hot buttons" of each style and try to incorporate them into your communication. Here's how that works for an Expressive.

- Support their dreams and goals
- Be stimulating and entertaining
- Provide testimony and incentives
- Allow time for socializing and relating

- Show your interest in their ideas
- Ask their opinions
- Move quickly and positively
- Keep the pace moving
- Build rapport and excitement
- Get agreement in writing
- Show enthusiasm for your ideas
- Show how your product enhances their self-esteem
- Remember their decisions are based on emotion
- They want to do things the easy way

To make your communication crystal clear, you can even pick the words the receiver likes best. You've undoubtedly heard that certain words have extraordinary power to influence reactions and emotions. When you consider personality styles, it makes sense that powerful words can be even more targeted and effective. Here is a list of words that will work for Expressive people. It will be particularly helpful when you're writing to people. Get them excited about the potential of your product and what it will do for them with these words. Remember to stimulate and entertain.

- Luxurious
- Exciting
- Dynamic
- Unique
- Different
- Entertaining
- Impressive
- Rewarding



Amiable

These people are easy going, relaxed in interpersonal settings, and highly informal. They exhibit lots of feeling and personality and have an accepting style, both giving acceptance and needing it in return. They:

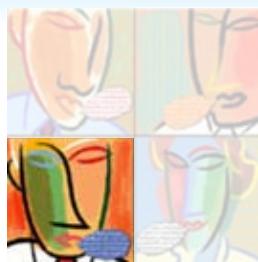
- Are indirect
- Are friendly and relationship-oriented
- Listen well
- Need assurances and guarantees
- Contribute support
- Depend on acceptance and loyalty
- Value respectful, supportive communication
- Cooperate in a slow, easy pace
- Desire trust and companionship
- Ask why questions
- Desire close relationships
- Appreciate the limelight and attention
- Measure progress by strokes and attention

Here's how an Amiable person WANTS TO BE TREATED:

- Support their feelings and relationships
- Be agreeable and understanding
- Provide assurances and guarantees
- Allow time for socializing
- Show your personal interest and support
- Ask "how" questions
- Move casually and informally
- Keep the pace slow
- Build trust and credibility
- Get agreement without pushing
- Show the human element in your ideas
- Reassure them often
- Remember, decisions are based on relationships
- Friendships are very important

Help them to see your product as a way to provide safety, comfort, and/or security for them with these words. Always be supportive and sincere.

- Comfortable
- Expect
- Traditional
- Warm
- Personal
- Secure
- Enjoyable
- Satisfying



Driver

These people are highly dominant and formal.

They try to set the agenda and take charge and control of others. They are self-controlled. They try to organize and discipline situations, objects and people. Control and organization is their priority. They:

- Are direct and forceful
- Lead others using task-orientation
- Value time
- Ask what and when questions
- Desire control and results
- Depend on leadership skills
- Are fast-paced, even urgent in action
- Need options and alternatives
- Contribute authority and leadership
- Take pride in their record and results
- Measure progress by results

Here's how a Driver WANTS TO BE TREATED:

- Support their conclusions and actions
- Be efficient, clear, specific and brief
- Provide options
- Stick to business and stay organized
- Demonstrate your competence
- Ask specific questions – "What?"

- Move confidently and quickly
- Keep the pace purposeful and upbeat
- Build respect and credibility
- Get agreements by providing options
- Show net results of your ideas
- Build respect and credibility
- Show how your product will help reach their goals
- Remember, decisions are based on personal evaluation
- They want to save time

Be clear and concise with your words, proving that your product will meet their needs and make them successful using these words. Be effective and results oriented.

- Proven
- Tested
- Functional
- Dynamic
- Versatile
- Efficient
- Powerful
- Enviable



Analytical

These people are highly formal and self-disciplined. They are

methodical and logical and usually more easy going in a casual setting than business. They delight in analysis of and involvement with data. They:

- Are indirect and reserved
- Are task-oriented and studious
- Value reliable plans
- Desire preparation
- Need details, facts and documentation
- Are deliberate and steady-paced
- Want to understand and process details
- Depend on accuracy
- Take pride in precise, active production
- Measure results by activity

Here's how an Analytical person WANTS TO BE TREATED:

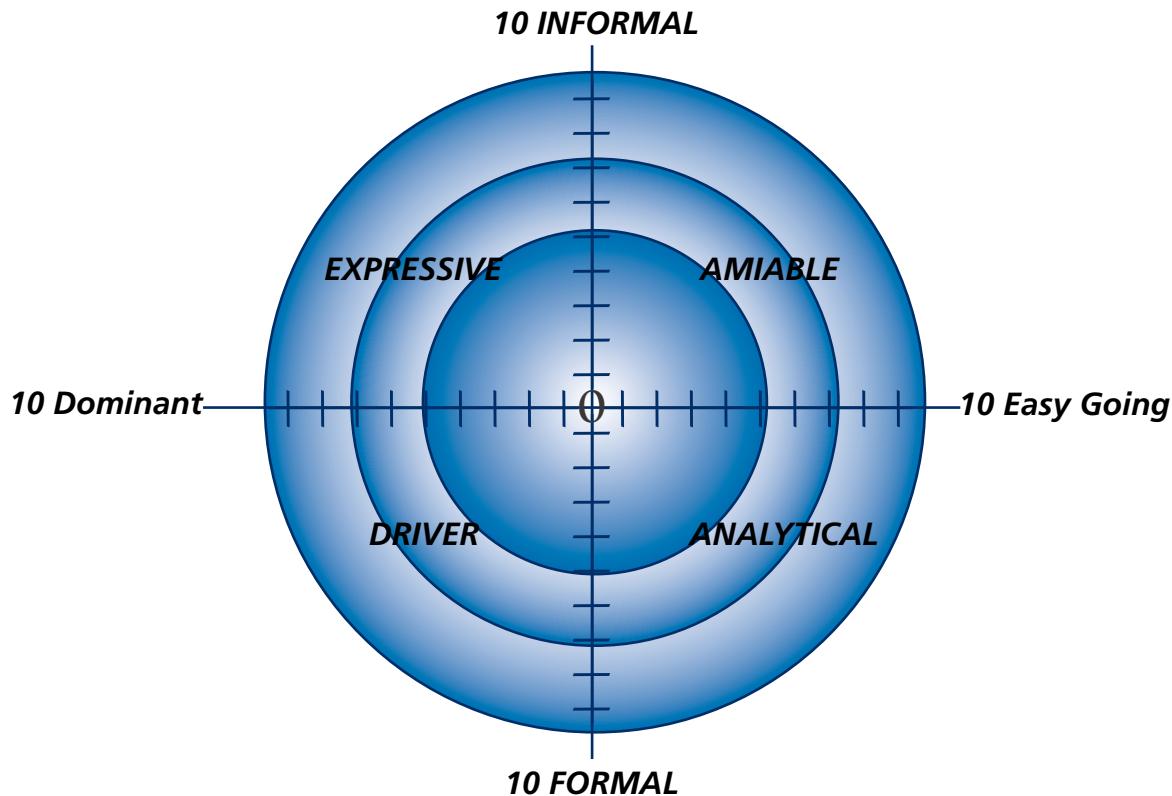
- Support their principles and thinking
- Be accurate and patient
- Provide written data and evidence
- Stick to business
- Give pros and cons
- Move methodically and logically
- Keep the pace steady and organized

- Get agreements patiently and logically
- Show the logic and validity in your ideas
- Show how your product makes sense
- Remember, decisions are based on evaluation of facts
- They hate to be wrong or look bad

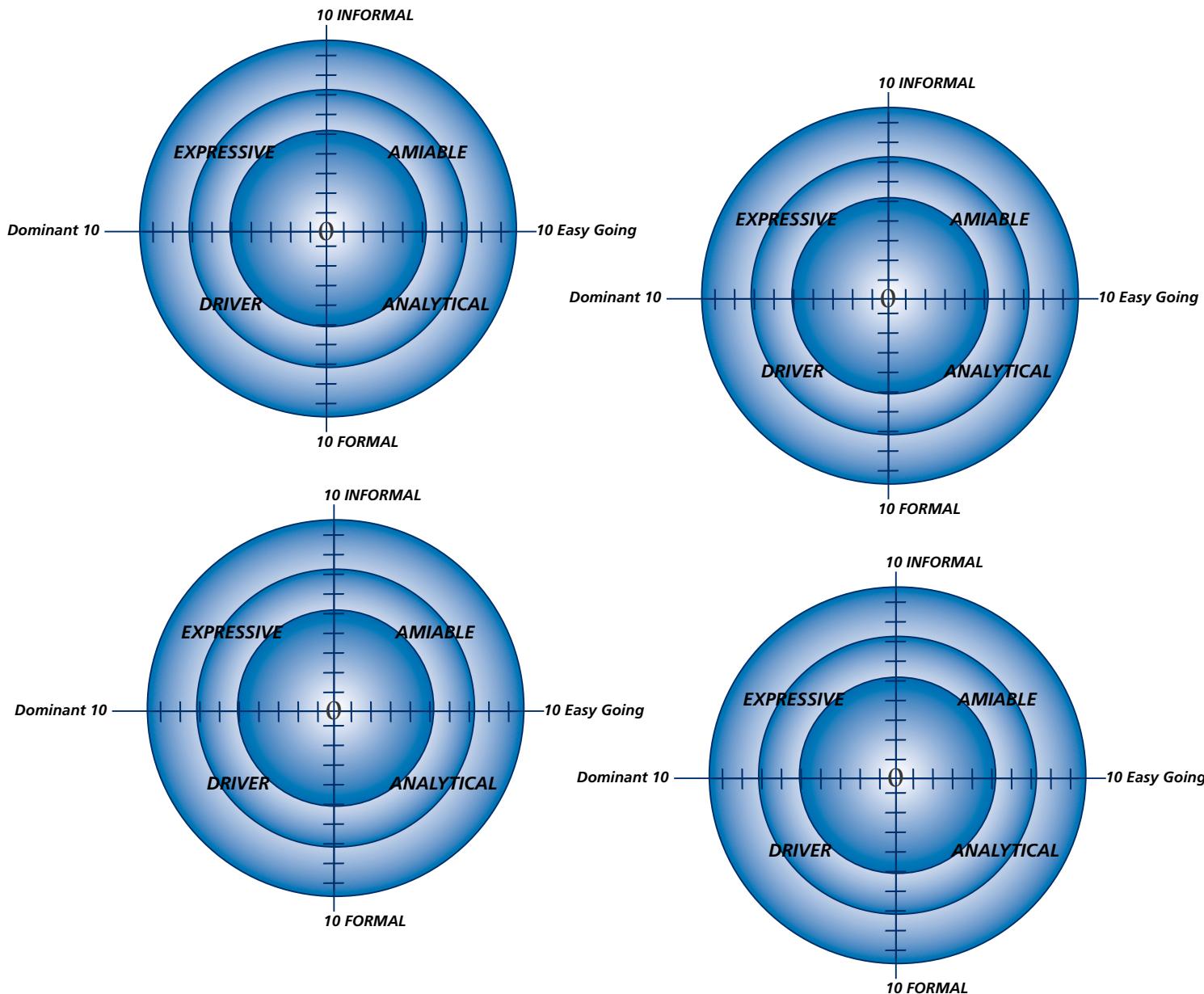
Choose your words carefully with an Analytical person because they will be paying attention. Be organized and prepared. Document your ideas with these words like the following.

- Practical
- Logical
- Validated
- Concise
- Realistic
- Economical
- High quality

What is your style? Consider yourself in terms of the descriptors above and mark the chart in your workbook based on your assessment. Remember to mark on the continuum from 0 to 10 with 0 being not very much that way and 10 being very much that way. Are you more Dominant or Easy Going? More Formal or Informal? Based on your "X" what is your communication style? If you're not objective enough to answer these important questions about yourself, ask people who know you, both in personal and professional relationships, to help place you.



Now, think of at least four friends/relatives/associates, and rate them first on the crosshairs chart, and then determine their communication style on the target. Will you change the way you communicate with them now that you're clear about the way they want to be treated? Does this shed some light on why your previous communications have worked well...or not?



Now that you've done this process several times, it probably feels fairly easy. You'll find that a quick "targeting" exercise that you do in your head will often help tremendously when you're meeting someone who you'd like to communicate well with as soon as possible.

Considering your preferred communication style compared to the people you've evaluated, how far must you come across the chart from your own style and to meet other people's in order to **treat them as they'd like to be treated**. Your best communication will result from your own style not "getting in your way" as you strive to reach another person.

Clearly, the easiest communication will come between two people whose styles are very similar. They won't have to work very hard to get through to each other. However, if you are a Driver or an Expressive (as most entrepreneurs are) working with a an Amiable or Analytical (as many employees to entrepreneurs are), you'll need to be particularly aware of what you say and how you say it.

It has been said that the very best communicators are those who have "chameleon-like" styles. These people's "Xs" are very close to the center of the target, so they move easily among the different styles and characteristics. They are adept, not insincere, because they have a little bit of everybody in themselves – as do we all!

Enjoy the process!

Our final Lesson will consider the more advanced communication skills you need to be successful as a leader and to maintain the best possible relationships in your life.



