

# COMPETENCIES

The following is a list of competencies that you will learn and practice in this project.

- Understand different communication styles.
- Identify your preferred communication style.
- Recognize how your communication style may impact your interactions.
- Determine how to improve your relationships by mastering and adapting your application of communication styles based on the situation.
- Tailor your style to match situational expectations.

# COMMUNICATION STYLES

## DISCOVER YOUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

At this time, complete the following questionnaire.



Please choose the word that is **most** descriptive of you.

1. I like to be seen as

- a. Sociable
- b. Decisive
- c. Cautious
- d. Patient

2. When collaborating with others, I am

- a. Competitive
- b. Spontaneous
- c. Cooperative
- d. Precise

3. When it comes to sharing feelings with others, I am

- a. Reserved
- b. Sympathetic
- c. Private
- d. Self-assured

4. Others would describe me as

- a. Gentle
- b. Fun-loving
- c. Results-oriented
- d. Disciplined

**5. I like my appearance to be**

- a. Formal
- b. Casual
- c. Stylish
- d. Business-like

**6. I want support for my**

- a. Goals
- b. Ideas
- c. Feelings
- d. Thoughts

**7. When working on a project, I am**

- a. Enthusiastic
- b. Ambitious
- c. Purposeful
- d. Persistent

**8. Some may perceive me negatively as**

- a. Indecisive
- b. A perfectionist
- c. Impulsive
- d. Strong-willed

**9. As a leader, I would be perceived as**

- a. Focused
- b. A risk-taker
- c. Dependable
- d. A problem-solver

**10. When placed in a new situation, I am**

- a. Conscientious
- b. Fearless
- c. Optimistic
- d. Friendly

**11. My perfect occupation would give me a sense of**

- a. Accomplishment
- b. Enjoyment
- c. Acceptance
- d. Accuracy

**12. My favorite way to work is by**

- a. Networking
- b. Brainstorming
- c. Delegating
- d. Working independently

## IDENTIFYING YOUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

At this time, refer to the Communication Style Scoring Guide on page 17 to identify your communication style. Calculate your scores and keep them available for review as you read through the remainder of this project.

Most people will find they produce a score in multiple categories. Each communication style has value and there is no best overall style. Having a higher score in one communication style indicates you are comfortable using that style in many situations, but is not necessarily what you choose in all communication. The goal of understanding your communication style preferences is to communicate with others in a way that is comfortable and effective.

### Direct

This style is decisive, competitive, independent, and confident. Because the person with a Direct communication style is focused, results-oriented, ambitious, goal-oriented, and driven, others may perceive her as strong-willed or demanding. She can be seen as impatient when bored.

She likes to feel in control and may become frustrated if dependent on others. She measures progress by achievements and successes and is motivated by challenges. At work she displays more concern for results than relationships and does not easily share feelings. Her pace is fast and decisive and she likes a busy, efficient, structured, and formal environment.

### Initiating

This style is sociable, enthusiastic, energetic, spontaneous, and fun-loving. Due to the gregarious nature of the person with an Initiating communication style, he may be perceived as someone who talks more than listens. He is often perceived as self-assured, innovative, and persuasive.

He likes to feel accepted and is motivated by relationships. He responds strongly to praise and approval. His pace is fast and he may appear impulsive at times. He prefers a stimulating, personal, and friendly work environment.

### Supportive

This style is calm, steady, approachable, sincere, and gentle. Because the person with a Supportive communication style dislikes change, she may appear indecisive. More often she is perceived as careful, patient, and amiable. Due to her active listening skills, others see her as cooperative, dependable, and loyal.

She is often modest and prefers praise be given privately. Patient and slow-paced, she likes a personal, relaxed, no-tension environment. She puts high priority on close relationships and does not like conflict, but may mediate if necessary.

## **Analytical**

This style is precise, exact, analytical, and logical. Because the person with an Analytical communication style is systematic and task-oriented, he is sometimes perceived as a perfectionist. He is organized, self-reliant, purposeful, and diplomatic.

He is motivated by certainty and will rarely give an opinion unless asked. He is slow and cautious in his pace and likes a structured, ordered, and functional environment. Because he needs to feel sure of his position and others' expectations, he is often private with personal information and does not easily express emotions.

## **EFFECTIVE USE OF COMMUNICATION STYLES**

It is important to recognize how effective communication can impact your interactions with others. It can lead to higher efficiency and good morale in the workplace, increased innovation and creative potential in groups, and satisfactory personal and familial relationships.

Communication styles are often situational. Be sure to monitor your application of communication styles. Decide if your current style is effective based on feedback and outcomes. If necessary, adjust your behavior and adopt new styles to fit a situation, team, or person.

There is much research and many theories about communication styles and their impacts. To develop a deeper understanding, you may choose to do your own research.

# ADAPTING TO OTHER COMMUNICATION STYLES

## **Direct Communicators**

Direct communicators prefer when you get to the point quickly and in a succinct manner. When dealing with these communicators, be specific and avoid over-explaining or repeating yourself. Focus on solutions and only provide details when asked.

## **Initiating Communicators**

Initiating communicators value interacting with others and sharing stories. Allow time for socializing at the beginning of meetings and create a friendly, non-threatening environment. Provide time for them to express their feelings and opinions.

## **Supportive Communicators**

Supportive communicators appreciate a calm, steady approach. Earn their trust by providing them with plenty of reassurance. When seeking their opinions and ideas, encourage them to express their concerns and allow them time to make decisions.

## **Analytical Communicators**

Analytical communicators like facts and figures. Present information to them in an organized manner and be prepared to answer questions. Be patient while they think through and process new information.

# COMMUNICATION STYLE SCORING GUIDE

Use this scoring sheet to determine your communication style.

- Using your completed questionnaire, circle the corresponding letters in the twelve sections below. For example, if you chose *a* for item 1 on the questionnaire, circle *a* in the item 1 section below.
- Count the number of times you selected each communication style and note the totals in the Results box below.
- The style with the highest value in the Results box indicates your preferred communication style.

There is no right or wrong communication style, and each has value. A higher score in one communication style indicates you are comfortable using that style in many situations. If you score equally in two or more categories, you are likely to feel comfortable adapting your communication style. Read descriptions of each style on the following page.

1.	a. Initiating b. Direct c. Analytical d. Supportive	5.	a. Analytical b. Supportive c. Initiating d. Direct	9.	a. Direct b. Initiating c. Supportive d. Analytical
2.	a. Direct b. Initiating c. Supportive d. Analytical	6.	a. Direct b. Initiating c. Supportive d. Analytical	10.	a. Analytical b. Direct c. Initiating d. Supportive
3.	a. Direct b. Supportive c. Analytical d. Initiating	7.	a. Initiating b. Direct c. Supportive d. Analytical	11.	a. Direct b. Initiating c. Supportive d. Analytical
4.	a. Supportive b. Initiating c. Direct d. Analytical	8.	a. Supportive b. Analytical c. Initiating d. Direct	12.	a. Initiating b. Supportive c. Direct d. Analytical

## Results

\_\_\_\_\_ Direct \_\_\_\_\_ Initiating \_\_\_\_\_ Supportive \_\_\_\_\_ Analytical



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