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## Your Personal Profile

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The following exercise is from *Healing with Language: Your Key to Effective Mind-Body Communication*, by Joel P. Bowman and Debra Basham (2009).

Have you ever said, “I can’t help it—that’s just the way I am”? As a rule, we don’t stop to think about how we became the people we currently are. We accept ourselves as we are and forget that much of who we are is *learned* behavior.

Personality is a complex mix of genetic possibility and learned behavior. Although we can’t always tell for sure whether genetics or experience has a greater influence, we do know that humans are the most adaptable creature on the planet and that even many genetic predispositions to behave in certain ways can be overcome through appropriate training. Even our two strongest inborn fears—the fear of falling and the fear of loud noises—can be relearned through training.

This section is designed to accomplish the following:

- Determine your personal profile.
- Determine your principal Metaprograms.
- Explain the ways in which your personal profile and Metaprograms interact with those of others.
- Improve your ability to appreciate differences among people and to increase your effectiveness in communicating and working with others who have different behavioral patterns.

### Exercise: Personal Profiles

This exercise is designed to help you understand your personal profile—your basic behavioral patterns—and the personal profiles of others, including friends, family, and colleagues.

The Personal Profile is not a test. There are no right answers; you cannot pass or fail. No behavioral pattern is bad—each behavioral pattern has certain advantages and disadvantages. As you become increasingly conscious of your behavioral tendencies and those of others, you will develop a higher degree of tolerance for differences and greater appreciation for those whose perspectives differ from yours.

The Personal Profile consists of four sets of statements and pairs of descriptive words. The statements require you to determine how true a type of action is of you. You might, for example, have a statement like the following: *I can tell a good joke*. You will then be asked to rank your degree of agreement with that statement, from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*.

Based on your own feelings about the truth of that statement, you would circle the answer that most closely describes your joke-telling ability. The higher the number you selected, the more confident you would be of your ability to tell good jokes on a regular basis.

The word pairs are presented as either explicit or implied opposites. If you had to choose between calling yourself *active* or *passive*, which would you say is more true of you? Because it is possible to be somewhere in between, the word pairs give you a scale so that you can indicate which of the words comes closer to describing you and the degree to which you feel it does.

|        |   |   |   |   |   |         |
|--------|---|---|---|---|---|---------|
| active | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | passive |
|--------|---|---|---|---|---|---------|

If you consider yourself more active than passive, you would circle the 4 or the 3. If you consider yourself more passive, you would circle the 0 or the 1. If you consider yourself to be active sometimes and passive on other occasions, you might circle the 2.

Be sure to answer each question quickly based on your initial feelings rather than attempting to figure out logically which response is *really* true.

## Your Personal Profile

For each of the following questions, indicate whether you *strongly agree* (4), *agree* (3), *neither agree nor disagree* (2), *disagree*, (1), or *strongly disagree* (0) by circling the most appropriate number.

|   | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. I make it a point to start new projects on a regular basis.                          | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 2. I enjoy changing things. I don't like to do things the same way for too long.        | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 3. I am a creative person.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 4. I make decisions quickly and easily even when I don't have all the facts.            | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 5. I have plenty of self-confidence.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 6. I would rather figure things out for myself than have someone else tell me.          | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 7. When I'm in a group, I prefer to be in charge.                                       | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 8. Other people look to me to provide leadership and direction.                         | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 9. I find that other people are often indecisive and have trouble deciding what to do.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 10. Getting the job done is more important than working conditions.                     | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 11. I feel that I control my own life, that I am responsible for what I make of myself. | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 12. I resent people who seem unable to control their lives.                             | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 13. I wake up full of energy, ready for the day to begin.                               | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 14. I do more work than other members of my group.                                      | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 15. When something is important, I prefer to work on it by myself.                      | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |

Add the numbers on this page:

**Subtotal 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

For each of the following pairs of words, select the point on the scale that best describes your typical behavior or feelings:

|               |   |   |   |   |   |                 |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| competitive   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | uncompetitive   |
| bold          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | hesitant        |
| take charge   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | go along        |
| dominant      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | submissive      |
| acting        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | thinking        |
| task oriented | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | people oriented |
| threatening   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | comforting      |
| lone wolf     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | groupie         |
| overwhelming  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | unimpressive    |
| inappropriate | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | appropriate     |

Add the numbers on this page:

**Subtotal 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Insert Subtotal 1 from the previous page:

**Subtotal 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

Add Subtotals 1 and 2:

**A =:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Continue to next page.**

|  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. I enjoy spending time talking with others.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 2. I would rather work in a group than by myself.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 3. I enjoy helping others solve their problems.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 4. I enjoy being the center of attention.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 5. I tend to have a positive outlook, to believe that everything will work out for the best. | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 6. I enjoy giving and receiving compliments and praise.                                      | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 7. I enjoy using the telephone to keep up with family and friends.                           | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 8. Other people enjoy my company.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 9. I enjoy dressing up and going to parties.   | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 10. I tend to believe what other people tell me.   | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 11. I try to be organized but end up accomplishing less than I would like.                   | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 12. I would enjoy being a talk-show host.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 13. I tend to procrastinate and miss deadlines.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 14. I enjoy telling stories or jokes.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 15. If at first I don't succeed, I quit.   | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |

Add the numbers on this page:

**Subtotal 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Continue to next page.**

For each of the following pairs of words, select the point on the scale that best describes your typical behavior or feelings:

|                   |   |   |   |   |   |                 |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| likable           | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | annoying        |
| approachable      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | unapproachable  |
| interested        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | bored           |
| pretending        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | obvious         |
| enthusiastic      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | reserved        |
| attention-seeking | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | self-sufficient |
| easy to know      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | hard to know    |
| playful           | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | stiff           |
| spontaneous       | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | controlled      |
| feeling           | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | thinking        |

Add the numbers on this page:

**Subtotal 4:** \_\_\_\_\_

Insert Subtotal 3 from the previous page:

**Subtotal 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

Add Subtotals 3 and 4:

**C =:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Continue to next page.**

|  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. I have the patience to work until a job is done right.                                  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 2. I am loyal to my friends and to my employer.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 3. Other people tell me that I'm a good listener.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 4. My family and friends are more important to me than my work.                            | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 5. I work well in groups.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 6. I enjoy a job most when I can do it better than anyone else.                            | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 7. I am good at helping others resolve their conflicts.                                    | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 8. I don't like to change unless I can see a good reason for it.                           | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 9. It bothers me to contradict others even when I know that they are wrong.                | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 10. I am most comfortable working for someone who knows exactly what he or she wants done. | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 11. I try to avoid people who like to argue.   | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 12. I do my best to follow directions.   | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 13. I plan for the future and avoid taking chances.  | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 14. I like to plan my day according to a specific schedule.                                | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 15. I am uncomfortable in new situations until I know exactly what is expected of me.      | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |

Add the numbers on this page:

**Subtotal 5:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Continue to next page.**

For each of the following pairs of words, select the point on the scale that best describes your typical behavior or feelings:

|                 |   |   |   |   |   |              |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------|
| matter-of-fact  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | dramatic     |
| satisfying      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | frustrating  |
| friendly        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | unfriendly   |
| responsive      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | unresponsive |
| consistent      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | flexible     |
| sensitive       | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | insensitive  |
| giving          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | demanding    |
| straightforward | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | devious      |
| analytical      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | creative     |
| supportive      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | critical     |

Add the numbers on this page:

**Subtotal 6:** \_\_\_\_\_

Insert Subtotal 5 from the previous page:

**Subtotal 5:** \_\_\_\_\_

Add Subtotals 5 and 6:

**S =:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Continue to next page.**

|  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Doing a good job is more important than doing a job quickly.          | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 2. Other people praise me for my accuracy and attention to detail.       | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 3. I am tactful in presenting my ideas to my boss or supervisor.         | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 4. I am a highly organized person.                                       | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 5. I try to gather all the evidence before making a decision.            | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 6. It's important to me that my friends have high standards.             | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 7. I am amazed at how careless most people are with their work.          | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 8. I avoid doing things that I can't do well.                            | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 9. I do my best work alone rather than in a group.                       | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 10. I hate to be caught having made a mistake.                           | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 11. When I'm right, I refuse to give in.                                 | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 12. I pay close attention to details.                                    | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 13. I find mistakes in the work of others.                               | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 14. I enjoy my privacy and do not like to share my feelings with others. | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |
| 15. Others tell me that I'm too critical.                                | 4  | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0  |

Add the numbers on this page:

**Subtotal 7:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Continue to next page.**

For each of the following pairs of words, select the point on the scale that best describes your typical behavior or feelings:

|              |   |   |   |   |   |                 |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| accurate     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | fast and sloppy |
| critical     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | accepting       |
| hard-working | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | easy going      |
| factual      | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | entertaining    |
| annoying     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | likable         |
| formal       | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | informal        |
| cold         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | hot             |
| rigid        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | flexible        |
| thinking     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | feeling         |
| unfriendly   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | friendly        |

Add the numbers on this page:

**Subtotal 8:** \_\_\_\_\_

Insert Subtotal 5 from the previous page:

**Subtotal 7:** \_\_\_\_\_

Add Subtotals 7 and 8:

**P =:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Continue to next page.**

## Scoring

List your totals here:    **A** = \_\_\_\_        **C** = \_\_\_\_        **S** = \_\_\_\_        **P** = \_\_\_\_

Use the following chart to plot your scores to provide a visual representation of the relative strengths of each component:

| Points | A        | C        | S        | P        | Points |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| 100    |          |          |          |          | 100    |
| 95     |          |          |          |          | 95     |
| 90     |          |          |          |          | 90     |
| 85     |          |          |          |          | 85     |
| 80     |          |          |          |          | 80     |
| 75     |          |          |          |          | 75     |
| 70     |          |          |          |          | 70     |
| 65     |          |          |          |          | 65     |
| 60     |          |          |          |          | 60     |
| 55     |          |          |          |          | 55     |
| 50     |          |          |          |          | 50     |
| 45     |          |          |          |          | 45     |
| 40     |          |          |          |          | 40     |
| 35     |          |          |          |          | 35     |
| 30     |          |          |          |          | 30     |
| 25     |          |          |          |          | 25     |
| 20     |          |          |          |          | 20     |
| 15     |          |          |          |          | 15     |
| 10     |          |          |          |          | 10     |
| 5      |          |          |          |          | 5      |
| 0      |          |          |          |          | 0      |
|        | <b>A</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>S</b> | <b>P</b> |        |

## How to Interpret Your Personal Profile

Your scores indicate the relative *strength* of each category in your personality.

- The **A** questions reveal your tendency to be an *Achiever*.
- The **C** questions reveal your tendency to be a *Communicator*.
- The **S** questions reveal your tendency to be a *Specialist*.
- The **P** questions reveal your tendency to be a *Perfectionist*.

Each of these basic personality types is valuable and makes an important contribution to relationships, whether intimate, family, social, or organizational. These types, however, have different characteristics, different strengths, and different weaknesses. Each of the basic types communicates and solves problems in a different way. For some kinds of problems, the strategies common to one type would prove the most successful. In other circumstances, the same strategies might fail.

Each type also has its good side and its bad side. The same basic behavioral patterns may contribute to one person's becoming a world leader and to another's becoming a bank robber. Behavioral patterns do not necessarily influence goals or choices, but they do tend to influence typical responses to environmental events.

People are not exclusively one type but are rather a mixture of types. Under normal circumstances, the strengths and weaknesses from different types may result in a balanced approach to problem solving. In times of stress, however, people have a tendency to rely on the behaviors common to their most fundamental type (the one in which you earned the highest score): *Achievers* become more "achiever like"; *Communicators* become more "communicator like"; *Specialists* become more "specialist like"; and *Perfectionists* become more "perfectionist like." Becoming *more like* means that *both* the strengths and weaknesses of the type predominate.

Use the following information about each of the types and your scores in each of the categories to analyze the results of your Personal Profile

## **The Achiever**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Personality</b>     | Likes to set goals, challenge the environment, and win.<br>Sees life as a competition.  |
| <b>Motto</b>           | Onward and upward!  |
| <b>Archetypes</b>      | Warrior, Priest, Wizard/Shaman, Visionary, Gambler, Athlete, Healer   |
| <b>Characteristics</b> | Focuses on goal—task oriented<br>Enjoys action and desires results<br>Accepts challenges<br>Takes control and makes decisions quickly<br>Looks for solutions to problems Gives orders<br>Trusts self more than others<br>Worries about losing |
| <b>Advantages</b>      | Self-reliant<br>Good planners<br>Good decision makers<br>Good problem solvers, creative<br>Willing to assume responsibility<br>Willing to take risks  |
| <b>Disadvantages</b>   | Obstinate, unwilling to listen to others<br>Argumentative, unwilling to compromise<br>Unempathic (lacks empathy for others)<br>Impatient<br>Unsociable and unconcerned with group norms   |
| <b>Special Wants</b>   | Authority (to be in charge)<br>Challenges<br>Opportunity for advancement<br>A variety of activities<br>Individual recognition   |
| <b>Special Needs</b>   | To listen to others<br>To recognize the needs of others<br>To gather more evidence before making decisions<br>To cooperate in group situations<br>To be more sensitive to group norms<br>To relax and enjoy other people more                 |
| <b>Good Side</b>       | Soldiers, inventors, explorers, law enforcement personnel, writers, musicians, athletes, or company presidents  |
| <b>Bad Side</b>        | Gang leaders, bullies, outlaws, hobos, or bums  |

## **The Communicator**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Personality</b>     | Likes to achieve results by working with and through others.<br>Finds more enjoyment in the process than in the results.  |
| <b>Motto</b>           | Let's talk about it!  |
| <b>Archetypes</b>      | Advocate, Priest, Teacher, Gambler, Visionary, Counselor, Healer,<br>Gossip, Networker  |
| <b>Characteristics</b> | Makes favorable impression<br>Enjoys travel and meeting people<br>Enjoys working in groups<br>Enjoys conversation, parties, social recognition<br>Generates enthusiasm<br>Desires to help others<br>Enjoys speaking in public, entertaining others<br>Is optimistic and friendly<br>Worries about what others might say |
| <b>Advantages</b>      | Good motivators, good at persuading others<br>Good instructors<br>Good at helping and encouraging others<br>Good at working in groups<br>Socially adept<br>Quick witted, never at a loss for words  |
| <b>Disadvantages</b>   | Loses track of objective<br>Would rather talk than listen, would rather talk than work<br>Overlooks important details<br>Has difficulty meeting deadlines and following through<br>Lacks objectivity<br>Gossips   |
| <b>Special Wants</b>   | Popularity and social recognition<br>Group activities and teamwork<br>Democratic relationships<br>Opportunities for self-expression<br>Credit for contributions to group<br>Meaningful relationships  |
| <b>Special Needs</b>   | To develop time management skills<br>To develop greater objectivity<br>To develop greater perseverance<br>To be more assertive<br>To be more self-reliant   |
| <b>Good Side</b>       | Entertainers, writers, corporate leaders, linguists, educators  |
| <b>Bad Side</b>        | Complainers, gossips, hypochondriacs, pests, charlatans   |

## **The Specialist**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Personality</b>     | Likes to plan work and relationships and to maintain predictable patterns of behavior. Finds enjoyment in knowing what is expected and in knowing what to expect.   |
| <b>Motto</b>           | Better safe than sorry!   |
| <b>Archetypes</b>      | Priest, Counselor, Teacher, Companion, Martyr, Mediator, Servant  |
| <b>Characteristics</b> | Follows accepted work patterns<br>Values moderation and home life<br>Dislikes change and dislikes conflict<br>Has tremendous patience<br>Is very reliable<br>Makes others feel wanted<br>Worries about self-worth                         |
| <b>Advantages</b>      | Conscientiousness (pays close attention to detail)<br>Good concentration<br>Good at planning<br>Trustworthiness and loyalty<br>Perseverance<br>Tact and diplomacy<br>Good listening skills<br>Good at resolving conflicts                 |
| <b>Disadvantages</b>   | Slow to adjust to change<br>Needs specific guidelines to act<br>Tends to be passive rather than assertive<br>Requires structured environment<br>Hesitates to take risks<br>Needs help starting new projects                               |
| <b>Special Wants</b>   | Structured, predictable environment<br>Long-term security and a stable, private home life<br>Well-defined limits of responsibility<br>Identification with a group and cooperative efforts<br>Frequent reinforcement for work accomplished |
| <b>Special Needs</b>   | To accept worthwhile changes<br>To be more creative<br>To delegate responsibilities<br>To be more flexible and to accept ambiguities<br>To accept challenges  |
| <b>Good Side</b>       | Scientists, psychotherapists, doctors, religious leaders, lawyers   |
| <b>Bad Side</b>        | Mindless bureaucrats, hypochondriacs, gang members  |

## The Perfectionist

**Personality** Enjoys jobs requiring attention to detail and accuracy, especially when specific guidelines are provided. Enjoys tasks requiring critical, objective thinking. Complies with authority and tries to provide the *right* answer.

**Motto** If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well!

**Archetypes** Monk, Alchemist, Scientist, Mediator, Detective, Miser, Judge

**Characteristics** Follows orders and directions  
Checks for accuracy, criticizes the work of others  
Is capable of systematic, objective thinking  
Works slowly and gathers all facts before making a decision  
Relies on the opinions of supervisors  
Exercises self-discipline  
Trusts self more than others and prefers to work alone  
Worries about making a mistake

**Advantages** Competent and reliable—can be trusted to do complex jobs right  
Capable of solving complex problems  
Tactful in dealing with superiors  
Capable of making difficult decisions  
Willing to assume responsibility  
Often very intelligent

**Disadvantages** Can be overly critical  
Doesn't like change and refuses to compromise  
Overly sensitive to criticism  
Evaluates others only by the quality of their work  
Can be slow to make decisions  
Refuses to acknowledge mistakes

**Special Wants** Detailed work with specific rules and guidelines  
The opportunity to conduct thorough research before deciding  
A well-defined area of responsibility  
Personal recognition for accuracy

**Special Needs** To learn to delegate responsibility  
To make faster decisions  
To be less critical of others  
To learn to compromise and to be more flexible  
To be willing to take risks, challenge authority  
To relax and enjoy others more

**Good Side** Surgeons, engineers, scientists, mathematicians, historians, computer programmers

**Bad Side** Tax evaders, computer thieves, complainers, bigots

### Personalities and Metaprograms



The correlation between personalities and Metaprograms is not absolute. It does, however, provide sufficient clues to patterns of behavior to be worth noting. After reviewing the material on Metaprograms in *Healing with Language* (pp. 65-74), plot your scores on the chart on the next page on the diagonal lines. Connect the dots using an oval shape. Most people will have a bulge in one direction: toward the top, toward the left, toward the right, or toward the bottom. If your oval is virtually circular, that's fine.

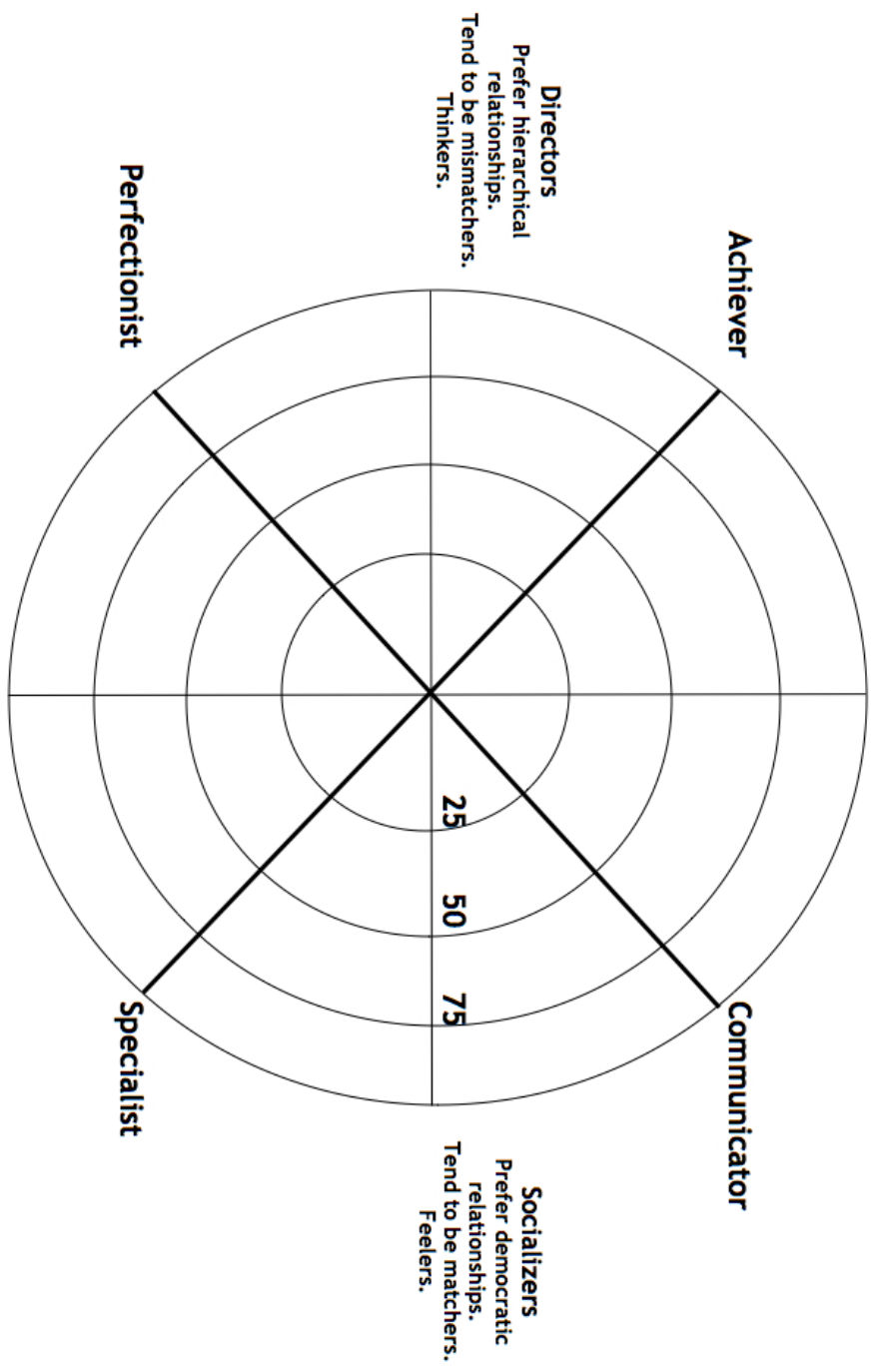
When completed, the chart will show you not only your most common behavioral tendencies, but also your least likely behavioral tendencies. It also shows you the kinds of profiles and behavioral patterns most likely to be in conflict with you. While people can and do have conflict with others who share their behavioral patterns, for most people the greatest and most common conflicts occur with those whose profiles are opposite their own.

If my strongest behavioral type is *Achiever*, for example, and yours is *Specialist*, we will have different ideas about appropriate interpersonal and social behavior in a wide variety of circumstances, and we will have different ideas about how to solve problems. What seems natural and obvious to me, will seem unnatural and foreign to you, and vice versa. This would be especially true when we are in stressful situations. Stress typically causes us to "revert to type" for our behavioral options and to close ourselves off to other possibilities.

The principal solution to this particular kind of problem is to increase your awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of each of the basic personality profiles and to enhance your ability to communicate with those types using language that appeals to the other. It is important to note, for example, that the categories indicate *tendencies* rather than absolutes. A person who prefers *thinking* to *feeling* also feels. A person who prefers *global scope* to *specific detail* still needs to have specific detail. Even extreme *extroverts* have times when they feel *introverted*.

Those with a circular pattern resulting from very similar scores in each category can consider themselves "well-rounded." That pattern may also result, however, in those who are overly analytical and avoided the extremes (*Strongly Agree* or *Strongly Disagree*) when answering questions.

**High Creativity**  
Persuaders, risk takers, rule breakers, initiators.  
Prefer global scope, move toward.  
Extroverts, Intuitives, and Judgers



## Profiles and Communication Styles

Because these basic personality styles interact with the environment in different ways, they have different modes of communicating. When you communicate with individuals, take their personal profiles into account.

### The Achiever

Be brief and specific. Avoid personal comments that the Achiever will consider a waste of time. Talk about results first and procedures second. Let the Achiever know the purpose of your communication before presenting detailed information. Focus on the problem first. Discuss personal matters *after* the problem is solved and only when you are sure that the Achiever is ready to take a break from working.

In discussions, present the most important facts first, and arrange things in a logical order. Ask *what* questions:

- *What would you like to see happen?*
- *What obstacles might stand in the way?*
- *What do we need to do next?*

Present alternatives so that the Achiever can make his or her own decision. Avoid telling the Achiever what to do. If you disagree, focus on the *facts*. If you agree, focus on the *results*. Avoid “empathy” remarks (“I hear you,” “Let me share something with you,” “I’m really with you on this one”). Leave when finished.

### The Communicator

Plan to spend some time socializing. Speak in terms of what the subject of discussion means to people. Ask for opinions and feelings. Allow the Communicator to respond and contribute his or her own ideas. Avoid interrupting. Listen for clues about how the subject coincides with the Communicator’s own plans. Show that you understand the Communicator by paraphrasing (or “parrot-phrasing”) his or her ideas.

Be responsive to the personal aspects of the relationship. Make special arrangements for serious discussions. When possible, conduct business in a social context—take the Communicator out to lunch or dinner when you wish to be persuasive. Ask *who* questions:

- *Whom could we count on to help with this?*
- *Who would be influenced by this?*
- *Who has done something like this before?*

Avoid presenting too many details. The Communicator is more interested in hearing what others (especially important others) have said than in the specific, objective facts. Be clear about who should do what next—repeat agreements about responsibilities for follow-up actions.

## The Specialist

Begin with small talk. Personal comments help break the ice. Find areas of common interest. Show the Specialist that you trust him or her. Be the first to volunteer personal information. Draw personal information from the Specialist slowly and show that you are interested in his or her goals. Avoid saying anything threatening; and, if you disagree with the Specialist, look for signs of hurt feelings. Let the Specialist know that you appreciate his or her contributions.

Present new ideas slowly. Avoid being a bully (Achiever) or trying to overwhelm with superficial razzle-dazzle (Communicator). Show that any change will help minimize risks. Avoid attempting to force a quick decision. Ask *how* questions:

- *How do you think that would influence you and others in your department?*
- *How could we avoid that difficulty?*
- *How can we go about finding a solution that would satisfy everyone?*

Show that you have weighed the risks against the benefits and that you are trying to minimize the risks and maximize the benefits. Provide personal assurances—then keep your promises. Personal trust is extremely important to a Specialist.

## The Perfectionist

Be well prepared—know the facts and figures before you begin. Avoid wasting time beating around the bush. Use notes to keep yourself organized. Stick to the facts—leave personalities out of it. Avoid surprising the Perfectionist with changes or unexpected remarks. Discuss one subject at a time. Examine differences of opinion objectively. Show the Perfectionist that you have analyzed the situation thoroughly and that you expect him or her to do the same.

Use accepted rules and procedures as authority. Use reliable sources only—the testimony of most others will likely be dismissed as “hearsay.” The opinions of those considered superiors (in age, rank, or intelligence) will be important. Be direct, but avoid being pushy.

Ask questions about the facts first. Solicit opinion when the facts are known:

- *Have I overlooked any important details?*
- *Has this approach been tried before?*
- *Who has the appropriate skills to ensure success?*
- *What do you think about our chances of success?*

Allow the Perfectionist time to evaluate your information and to confirm your accuracy before making a decision. Show that you appreciate the Perfectionist’s ability to weigh the evidence and to make an objective decision. If you reach an agreement, be sure to follow through—and *when* you said you would follow through. If the discussion was important, provide the Perfectionist with a summary, including a step-by-step schedule for implementing any required action.

## Communication Preferences

In addition to their basic personal profiles and metaprograms, individuals differ in the ways in which they prefer to receive and consider information from the environment. Some people are primarily *readers*, some are primarily *talkers/listeners*, and some are primarily *doers*.

While the relationship between these preferences and the personal profiles is not exact, Perfectionists and some Specialists tend to be readers; Communicators and some Specialists tend to be talkers/listeners; and Achievers tend to be either readers (especially of brief, action-oriented memos) and doers.

When you have determined the communication preferences of those with whom you live, work, and socialize, you are in a better position to provide them with the kind of information they want, when they want it, and in the form they desire. When you can match their desires and expectations, they will take your messages more seriously.

**Readers** prefer to obtain their information in written form. If you tell them something, they will consider it relatively unimportant and they may well forget. Readers take seriously only the information they see in writing. They typically consider oral messages preliminary—nothing is final or important until it is put in writing. Readers prefer email and text-messages to telephone conversations, and readers rarely buy something until they have read about it.

A reader was the first to say, “An oral contract isn’t worth the paper it’s printed on.” They consider the nonverbal message in a face-to-face discussion a distraction. If you disagree with a reader in a face-to-face discussion, he or she will say that you are *arguing*. If you were to present the same information in written form, he or she might praise you for the logic of your presentation. Readers are likely to withdraw from conversations with significant emotional content.

**Talkers/listeners** prefer to discuss issues rather than exchange memos. If you send a letter or memo to a talker, he or she won’t know what you really think. Talkers/listeners take seriously only the information they receive in conversations and meetings. For them, the written memo serves merely as a reminder of the all-important discussion. They need to have the nonverbal component to fully understand the implications of the message.

Talkers/listeners tend to prefer telephone conversations to email or text-messaging. They appreciate the nuances of vocal inflection provided by the telephone.

**Doers** need to experience something to understand it fully. Information they receive in writing or orally is less important to them than what they learn as a result of hands-on experience. Doers would rather be doing—experimenting—than reading or discussing. Their philosophy is, “Let’s try it.” They never fully believe something until they have experienced it for themselves.

Their Confirmation Metaprogram (“convincer strategy”) requires direct experience, and they will not trust you until they have had what they consider sufficient direct experience of your trustworthiness. The logic of what you say in your written communication and the emotional sincerity with which you say it face-to-face are not enough. For them, behavior is not only high quality communication, it is the only communication that really counts.

Doers will use both the telephone and email, primarily because they enjoy having and using gadgets.

### **Exercise: Understanding Common Behavioral Patterns**



You have four friends who all have birthdays on the same day. You have decided to give them all cameras. One of your friends happens to be an Achiever, one a Communicator, one a Specialist, and one a Perfectionist. Based on your knowledge of these basic personality types and their likely Metaprograms, what will each of them do with the camera?

**The Achiever**

**The Communicator**

**The Specialist**

**The Perfectionist**