

What personality type are you?

I sat across the table from a leading HR Pharma director and was spellbound by his insights into the human psyche. “How did he do it?” I asked myself and soon posed the question: “What makes you such an effective negotiator and closer of deals?”

“At school we are taught the Golden Rule, we should treat others the way that we would like to be treated,” he replied. “However, this is short sighted.”

“We need to communicate with people the way that they would be like to be communicated to.”

At first, I sat there puzzled, but he went onto describe the distinctive personality traits, which are common to all people. His vision became very clear.

By gaining an understanding of how people ticked, he was able to understand the *motivators* behind each person’s decision. He highlighted the works of Dawson (Secrets Power of Negotiating) and Littauer (Personality Plus) and said that we could understand others by better understanding ourselves.

There was no cookie-cutter approach to closing deals or dealing with people, the director explained. But there was one undeniable truth - when buying an idea or product or before signing a contract, most people must have their basic needs met. And everybody had different needs, according to their personalities.

The director outlined the four personality types, identified by Dawson and Littauer.

1. Pragmatic/Choleric: What is the bottom line? Let’s get to the point.
2. Extrovert/Sanguine: Let’s have a good time.
3. Amiable/Phlegmatic: Easy does it! No conflict please, the group is key
4. Analytical/Melancholy: Loves details and numbers.

1. **Pragmatic/Choleric:** They want to be involved. They love efficiency, hate wasting time, will make decisions quickly and if the hiring process is drawn out they will see this as a weakness and may cancel the deal. When dealing with the Pragmatic/Choleric don’t bore them with small talk. Fast decisions will be made based on facts. They will want to know the bottom line, so get to the point. Victory is their major goal and they will need to be shown where and when they will be able to lead people. These assertive types like to be in charge and take control. But they also have a short attention span, thus making decisions quickly. They are dominant, strong, decisive, stubborn and even arrogant. They are driven by leadership and being in control.

2. **Extrovert/Sanguine:** They love to be loved; being liked is a big driver for them. They will make quick decisions and are emotional. The HR director said he always took these candidates to dinner to ensure he got their signature on the dotted line. He explained that this candidate was easily swayed and were susceptible to counter offers. They enjoy fun, socializing, chatting, telling stories, and are the dreamers of the world. Their drivers are influence, popularity and recognition.

3. **Amiable/Phlegmatic:** They are slow and steady. This type is definitely the tortoise, not the hare. They should not be rushed, however once they make their mind up, they will not be swayed. The director described one candidate who was harangued by his boss for several hours but stood firm to his decision. It may take extra time to win these people over, but their final decision is rock solid. They want to be a part of a group. They are easy going, laid-back, nonchalant, unexcitable and relaxed. Desiring a peaceful environment above all else, they are driven by a sense of belonging and strive for win/win situations. They avoid conflict.

4. **Melancholy/Analytical:** They need to know all the facts and figures before making a decision. The director spoke of lists of questions presented by these candidates. These were not objections, they simply love details, analysis and charts. This type is always punctual. The director insisted that when negotiating

with these number crunchers, we needed to be accurate and not talk in generalities. Do not say, “that it will be OK, or we’ll work it out.” They need to know when, why, who and where and all the little details in-between. Their typical behavior involves thinking, assessing, making lists, evaluating the positives and negatives, and general analysis of facts. They are driven by facts, details and hard evidence.

I sat a little bemused and asked how I could distinguish the personalities of the candidates I met. With a glint in his eye he stated that I first must understand myself.

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