

Difficult Or Different? Effective Communication Strategies

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Notes

References

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Questions

1. Can someone's style change over their lifetime if they actively try to adopt the traits of other behaviour types?

It is certainly possible to adopt different traits, and to take on the attributes of other preferences. The question is how easy or difficult this is. Given the underlying physiological preferences that each of us have, there are traits that we inherently prefer. Taking on other traits is possible, but because it is not our natural preference, it is also a source of stress. The result is that while we may develop the ability to *appear* to adopt different traits, it may come at an overall psychological cost.

2. Do you see a tendency of line managers/traders being extroverts and risk managers/auditors being introverts?

There are numerous stereotypes regarding specific jobs and underlying traits, the above being just a few examples. What you will typically see is that there is a tendency for there to be a statistically significant difference between the preferences in a particular role and those of the general population. As an example, many executives are extroverted-thinking, many healthcare professionals are introverted-feeling and many accountant are introverted-thinking. That is not to say that this is a rule, and that people with that preference would be good at the job, or that people in that job are therefore going to have that preference. While more people of a preference will statistically self-select into a particular role, you will still see a full and comprehensive distribution of preferences in any given role.

3. Can an extrovert become introverted depending on the situation? Or with experience?

We all have the ability to take on all aspects of personality. The question is how easy, comfortable and natural it is for us to do this. Because each of the traits live on a continuum, and our preferences are expressed as a range within this continuum, we inherently recognize that we can shift in different situations. It simply depends upon the degree of comfort and ease with which we can make this shift. Some are easier; some will be much harder. A separate question, however, is whether we need to or should. The further we get from our home preferences, the more stressful we will find adopting other traits. This is particularly true because our traits are the result of our underlying physiological preferences.

4. It seems that Introverts aspire or look up to Extroverts because that is something they could probably never do (ie. speak in groups, etc.) Do extroverts ever aspire to be more like an introvert?

It can be argued (and certainly people have made the argument) that we live in an extroverted world. The reasons for this are numerous, including the fact that statistically there are more of them and that they are more naturally comfortable dominating conversations and quickly reaching conclusions. The gift of the introvert is that they take time to think through things, they process meaning and they have an inherent caution to moving forward. Certainly, there are (enlightened) extroverts that value this, because the introvert brings the caution and awareness to potential challenges that the extrovert simply lacks. Ideally, we'd be able to equally adopt all traits. In that this isn't possible, we work with what we have. And often we envy the preferences that others bring.

5. Can one expect to form a consensus to a progressive action plan in a homogeneous mix of personality? If so, how?

Certainly, a consensus is possible. The key here is that it is not going to likely be possible in one meeting, especially if it's a) short, b) the first time anyone has heard of the plan (or the problem) and c) the first time that a solution has been proposed. Introverts bring a natural caution to the conversation. Feeling preferences bring a natural desire for consultation and to 'check in'. So unless the room is full of extroverted thinkers (and that's a danger in itself) you're going to want to be staging how you get to agreement and finalization of the plan. Stage it right, and give people the time and space to discuss and work through their questions and concerns, however, and consensus is certainly possible.

6. The colour framework seems very similar to the True Colour model by Don Lowry - are there other colour frameworks and are they all based on Jung theory?

There are a number of tools for evaluating preferences, and a number of them (notably Insights Discovery, True Colours, Hermann Brain Dominance Instrument) use colour as a shorthand for personality preferences, and many also use a wheel as their preferred model for communicating preferences. Sadly, they don't all use the same wheel or the same colours for the same attributes. Overall, however, they all are rooted in Jung's theory of psychological types. Any model that introduces the structures of extroverted/introverted, thinking/feeling and

sensing/intuition (and these also include DISC and MBTI) have at their core the theory of Psychological Types as proposed by Jung. Each model interprets this differently, and purports to lead to different conclusions, but they all share the same sources.