

How To Manage Your Employees



Your employees will tell you how to manage them most effectively, if you know how to listen for clues. This requires interpreting each employee's individual behavioral "style," noting those signals which indicate how he/she would like to be managed by you. You can begin evaluating your employee's behavior by observing how they manage themselves and how they manage information.

Which of these best describes how each of your employees manage their own behavior?

Open: Is the employee ready and willing to show emotions or feelings? Open behaviors depict a person as relaxed, warm, responsive, informal and personable. Employees displaying open behavior tend to be flexible about time, share their personal feelings and like to tell stories and anecdotes.

Self-Contained: Is the employee formal and proper, reluctant to show emotions and feelings? Self-contained behaviors depict a person as being guarded and aloof.

Employees displaying self-contained behavior tend to base their decisions on cold, hard facts. They tend to be disciplined about time and are task oriented.

Which of these best describes how each of your employees manage information?

Indirect: Does the employee avoid control and involvement? Employees who manage information indirectly come across as quiet, shy and reserved. They tend to move slowly—meditating on their decisions. They are quite supportive and listen more than they talk. Often, they reserve their opinions, make tentative statements, and avoid risk.

Direct: Does the employee exercise a great deal of control over the information presented? Employees who manage information directly tend to come on strong.

take the social initiative and create a powerful first impression. They tend to be fast-paced swift decision-makers, risk-takers and impatient with others who cannot keep up with their fast pace. They do a lot of talking, express their opinions readily and appear confident.

THE FOUR EMPLOYEE STYLES

The way in which each of your employees manage themselves and manage information will place each employee in one of four "behavioral" styles. These styles are the Socializer, the Director, the Thinker and the Relater.

Each style represents unique combinations of self-management and information management and is linked to separate and unique ways of behaving with other people. The name given to each style

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reflects a very general characteristic rather than a full or accurate description. Your knowledge can help you communicate effectively and openly in a way which helps them feel more comfortable in their interactions with you as you better understand why employees behave the way they do

Each style has its own unique strengths and weaknesses, and successful people as well as failures populate each style group. There is no "best" style.

Employees possess traits from all four styles in varying degrees. Depending on circumstances, one style may be more dominant than any of the others. However, most employees do have a single dominant style. In order to increase your managerial effectiveness, you need to accurately identify each employee's individual style and manage him/her accordingly.

THE SOCIALIZER STYLE

The Socializer manages information directly and exhibits open behavior. She/He possesses characteristics such as animation, intuitiveness and liveliness. The socializer is an idea person — a dreamer, a fast-paced person with spontaneous actions and decisions and a lack of concern for facts or details. This disregard for details sometimes prompts him to exaggerate and generalize facts and figures.

Socializers have the ability to quickly win people over to their side because of their exciting, playful and persuasive nature. However, they can sometimes come on too strong or appear to be artificial. Sometimes, their playfulness and spontaneity is perceived as a lack of seriousness and unpredictability.

Socializers are more comfortable with "best guesstimates" than with hard, researched facts. They thrive on involvement and tend to work quickly and enthusiastically

with others. They often seek recognition for their accomplishments, are very creative and think quickly on their feet.

THE DIRECTOR STYLE

The Director manages information directly, and displays at the same time self-contained behavior. Directors exhibit firmness in their relationships with others and are oriented toward bottomline results. Closely allied to these positive traits are the negative ones of stubbornness, impatience and toughness. Directors tend to take control of other people and situations and are decisive in both their actions and decisions. They like to move at an extremely fast pace and are very impatient with delays. They seem to want things yesterday.

A great strength of Directors is their ability to get a job done quickly and correctly. They can generalize from details rather fast to see the big picture and the bottom line. Their major weaknesses, however, lie in their apparent bluntness and insensitivity as well as their poor listening behavior.

Directors are high achievers and exhibit very good administrative skills. They certainly get things done and make things happen. Directors like to do many things at the same time. Because of their high achievement-motivation, they show a tendency toward workaholicism.

THE THINKER STYLE

The thinker manages information indirectly and communicates self-contained behavior. Thinkers

are regimented and are persistent, systematic problem-solvers. They can also be seen as aloof, picky and critical. Thinkers are very security-conscious and have a high need to be correct. This leads them to an over-reliance on data collection. In their quest for data, they tend to ask many questions about specific details.

Thinkers will persevere on what otherwise might be considered a boring task by others. They are precise, efficient and well organized. On the other side of the coin, they can be viewed as too cool and impersonal with others and nit-pickers who are too much of a perfectionist to be effective.

Thinkers work slowly and precisely by themselves and prefer an intellectual work environment that is organized and structured. They tend to be skeptical and like to see things in writing. (This comes across as a "show me" attitude.) Although they are great problem-solvers, thinkers are cautious and slow decision-makers.

THE RELATER STYLE

The Relater manages information indirectly and exhibits open behavior. Relaters tend to be unassertive, warm, supportive and reliable.

They are sometimes seen by others as compliant and soft hearted. Relaters seek security and belongingness and are slow at taking action and making decisions because they have to know how other people feel about it.

The strengths of Relaters lie in their warmth and their ability to build meaningful relationships. They are loyal and team players. Their weaknesses include their sometimes over-sensitive nature that requires others to walk on "eggshells" when broaching uncomfortable subjects and their tendency to avoid conflict through compliance and conformity.

Relaters dislike interpersonal conflicts so much that they some-

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times say what they think other people want to hear rather than what is really on their minds. Relaters have tremendous counseling skills and are extremely supportive of other people. They are also incredibly active listeners. You usually feel good by just being with a relater.

RELATIONSHIP STRATEGIES WITH THE SOCIALIZER

The socializer likes to interact with other people, so try not to hurry the discussion. Attempt to develop mutually stimulating ideas together. Focus your conversation on opinions, ideas and dreams and then try to support them. Make sure you try to move at a pace that is both entertaining and fast. Instead of arguing, try to explore alternative solutions you both can share with enthusiasm.

When you finally reach agreement, iron out the specifics concerning what, when, who, and how. Summarize in writing what you both agreed upon, even though it may not appear necessary.

WHEN MANAGING SOCIALIZERS

To motivate, offer them incentives and testimonials. They love to get "special deals."

To compliment, pay direct compliments to them as individuals.

To counsel, allow them plenty of opportunity to talk about things that are bothering them. Listen for the facts and for the feelings. Probe and direct with questions. Many times Socializers merely need to "get something off their chest" and talking in and of itself can solve the problem.

To correct, specify exactly what the problem happens to be and what appropriate behavior is required to eliminate the problem. Be sure you confirm in writing the agreed-upon behavior changes.

To delegate, make sure you get clear agreement and establish check points so that there is not a long period of time between progress reports.

RELATIONSHIP STRATEGIES WITH THE DIRECTOR

Directors are easy to deal with so long as you are precise, efficient, time-disciplined and well-organized. Make sure you keep your relationship businesslike. Do not attempt to establish a personal relationship unless that is one of the Director's objectives. Focus your conversation around the Director's goals. If during the conversation you must take issue with the Director, argue the facts, not personal feelings. Make sure you can back-up your facts with solid, tangible proof. Provide the director with options because they like to make their own decisions.

WHEN MANAGING DIRECTORS

To motivate, provide them with options and clearly describe the probabilities of success in achieving their goals. They like to be winners.

To compliment, compliment what they have accomplished rather than complimenting them as a person.

To counsel, stick to the facts. Draw them out by talking about the desired results and discuss their concerns. Remember, they are much more task oriented than relationship oriented so they'll focus on things more than feelings.

To correct, describe what results were desired and show them the gap between the actual and desired outcomes. Suggest clearly the

improvement that is needed and establish a time when they will get back to you. Don't hover over them while they are working on a task.

To delegate, give them the bottom line and then get out of their way, but so that they can be more efficient, give them parameters and guidelines.

RELATIONSHIP STRATEGIES WITH THE THINKER

Try to be systematic, exact, organized, and prepared with thinkers. Support their organized, thoughtful approach. They may require that you send them solid, tangible, factual evidence that what you say is true and accurate. List the advantages and disadvantages of any plan you propose and have viable alternatives for dealing effectively with the disadvantages. If you do not bring up the obvious disadvantages in your plan, the Thinker will certainly discover them and then question your future credibility. Try not to rush the decision making process with Thinkers because they need time to verify your words and actions.

WHEN MANAGING THINKERS

To motivate, appeal to their need to be accurate and to their logical approach to things.

To compliment, compliment their efficiency and their thinking processes, i.e., "I like the way you think."

To counsel, describe the process that you will follow and outline how that process will produce the results you both seek. Ask questions to help them give you the right information.

To correct, specify the exact behavior that is indicated and outline how you would like to see it changed. Establish checkpoints and times.

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To delegate, take time to answer all their questions about structure and guidance. The more they understand the process and details, the more likely they will be to complete the task properly. Be sure to establish targets and deadlines.

RELATIONSHIP STRATEGIES WITH THE RELATER

Support the Relater's feelings by projecting that you are interested in him as a person. Move along in an informal, casual manner and constantly show the Relater that you are actively listening. Discuss personal opinions and feelings. The Relater likes guarantees that any new actions will involve a minimum of risk. Therefore, offer personal assurances and suggestions. Try not to rush the relater, but do provide guidance. Project genuine sincerity in your relationship.

WHEN MANAGING RELATERS

To motivate, show them how it will benefit their relationships and strengthen their position with others.

To compliment, compliment the way they are regarded by other people, their relationship skills and their ability to "get along" with others.

To counsel, allow plenty of time to explore their feelings and to understand the emotional side of the situation as well as the factual side. They tend to keep many of their feelings to themselves. They are trying to express their feelings, but in an indirect and tentative way. Therefore, you'll need to draw them out through specific questioning and reflective listening techniques, i.e., "This is what I heard you say... Is that on target?" Be sure to create a non-threatening environment for them. Don't push or make them feel that they are getting pressured or undergoing the third degree.

To correct, reassure them that what you are seeking to correct is their behavior only. Don't blame or judge them personally, but rather keep things focused on the behavior and its appropriateness. Relaters tend to take everything "to heart", so you'll need to be extra sensitive in the way you make your comments.

To delegate, appeal to them personally and appeal to their sense of loyalty and team spirit. Give them the task, state the deadlines that need to be met and explain why it's important to do it in that specific time.

Employees need to be managed as individuals, according to their own personalities. This concept of "Relationship Strategies" allows you to have a general management strategy for each of the four major "styles" of employees. With this general strategy in mind, you can then be more sensitive to the unique individual differences of each person by simply listening to the "clues" they send you.



People Skills that Put You in Control Relationship Strategies

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(800) 222-4883

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