# **Cracking the Communication Code**

### **The Customer Service and Support Professionals**

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### Communicate, communicate, communicate!



# 4 important factors in communication

1 Intent
Purpose—what you want

# Common deviations from our intent:

- Defending ourselves
- Saving face
- Seeking revenge
- Avoiding embarrassment
- Wanting to win...

Give up the need to be right!

2	Criteria, Expectations or Needs	
	Relevant factors to be taken into consideration	on

**Content**Subject—what we end up talking about

4	<b>Process</b>	
	How we look	 _%
	How we <b>sound</b>	 %
	Words we choose	%



### **Communication style self-assessment**

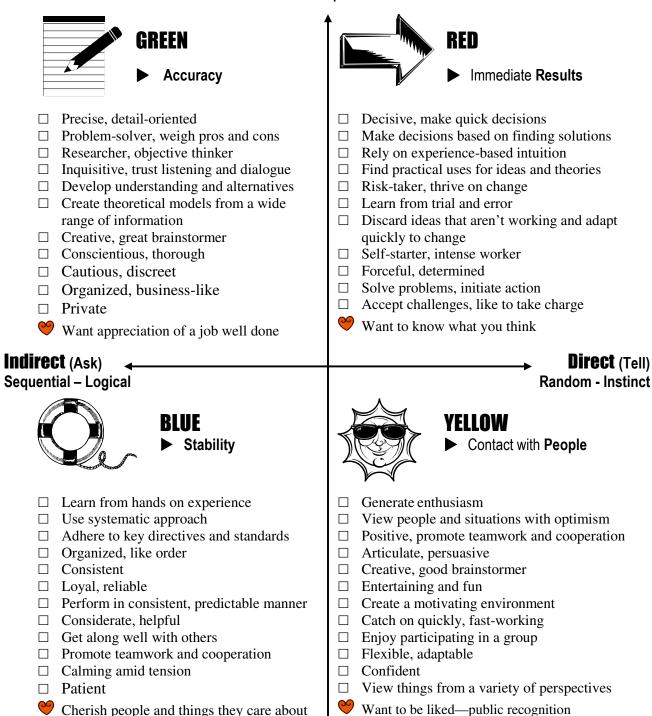
**DIRECTIONS**: Working across each horizontal row of four words, place a 4, 3, 2 or 1 in the space in front of each word. Numbers range from 4 being **most like you** to 1 being **least like you**. For accurate analysis, it's important that you use each number only once in each horizontal row of words. You will be timed, so move quickly and write down your *first reaction*. When you have written a number in the space in front of each word, total the columns vertically and write the total in the space at the bottom.

ou're focusing or	which <b>role</b> ?		
Accurate	Direct	Friendly	Patient
_ Systematic	Adventuresome	Persuasive	Loyal
_ Judgmental	Stubborn	Impulsive	Passive
_ Competent	Self-reliant	Confident	Neighborly
_ Conventional	Forceful	Optimistic	Gentle
_ Restrained	Quick	Colorful	Even-tempered
_ Practical	Outspoken	Emotional	Predictable
_ Perfectionist	Impatient	Talkative	Easy mark
_ Law-abiding	Self-directed	High-spirited	Good listener
_ Cautious	Risk-taker	Playful	Content

### What's your style—what are your strengths?

#### **Task Focus**

**Control - Low Responsiveness** 



#### **People Focus**

**Emote – High Responsiveness** 

### What are your challenges?

#### **Task Focus**

**Control - Low Responsiveness** 

GREEN	RED
► Accuracy	► Immediate Results
<ul> <li>□ Perfectionist</li> <li>□ Demanding / impatient with self &amp; others</li> <li>□ Need lots of data</li> <li>□ Get bogged down in details</li> <li>□ Prefer to receive information in writing</li> <li>□ Difficulty making quick decisions</li> <li>□ Overly sensitive to criticism</li> <li>May appear or become:</li> <li>□ Nitpicking</li> <li>□ Detached</li> <li>□ Aloof</li> <li>□ Impatient</li> <li>□ Unfriendly</li> <li>□ Superior</li> <li>□ Cynical</li> </ul>	☐ Impatient ☐ Blunt ☐ Dissatisfied with routine work ☐ Difficulty in recognizing needs of others ☐ Resist participation in group ☐ Forget to take people with them ☐ Restless  May appear or become: ☐ Overbearing ☐ Uncooperative ☐ Insensitive ☐ Demanding ☐ Abrasive ☐ Caustic
Indirect (Ask) Sequential – Logical	Direct (Tell)  Random - Instinct
BLUE  Slow to adapt to change, resist change  Stick to tried and true  Overly concerned about details & procedures  Frustrated by lack of structure  Avoid conflict  Don't express thoughts and feelings  Take criticism personally  May appear or become:  Indecisive  Hesitant  Resentful  Focused on negatives  Stubborn	YELLOW  Contact with People  □ Emotional, impulsive □ Come on too strong, loud □ Talk too much, superficial □ Inattentive to detail □ Balk at structure—often late □ Overly concerned about pleasing others □ Too trusting, prying  May appear or become: □ Undisciplined □ Excitable □ Flaky □ Sarcastic □ Opinionated □ Argumentative
<b>People</b> Emote – High Res	

### **Adjusting your style** to influence the response you receive

#### **Task Focus**

**Control - Low Responsiveness** 



#### Green

Want Accuracy

Answer \_\_\_\_\_ questions

- Cautious pace
- Thoroughly prepare your facts in advance
- Support ideas with accurate data
- Show you've carefully researched ...list pros and cons, analysis
- Present in written form
- Focus on accuracy rather than personal connection!
- Be brief and concise



#### Red

Want **Results** 

Answer \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_ questions

- Fast pace
- Support ideas with experience
- Focus on bottom line
- Be specific
- Show how it solves a problem
- Demonstrate mutual goal achieved
- Show use of trial and error
- Emphasize *cutting edge* aspects
- Be direct, brief and concise

#### **Indirect** (Ask)

Sequential - Logical

Direct (Tell)

Random - Instinct



#### Blue

Want **Stability** 

Answer \_\_\_\_\_ questions

- Slow pace
- Be sincere and personable
- Be patient in drawing out their goals
- Present ideas for change in a non-threatening manner
- Emphasize how risk is minimized
- Show practical and realistic applications using specific examples let them touch it, feel it
- Focus on benefits and continuity



#### Yellow

Want contact with People

Answer questions

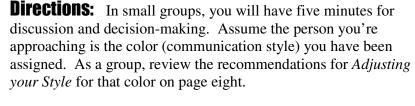
- Quick pace
- Focus on ideas and people
- Offer interpretations rather than specific details
- Focus on instincts rather than logic
- Present broad issues first
   ...invite them to brainstorm
- Offer novel and unusual suggestions
- Focus on connecting with them
- Use entire body to communicate

#### **People Focus**

**Emote – High Responsiveness** 

### Adjusting your style—a specific scenario

# The person you're approaching is a





#### **Use the following scenario:**

A customer calls about a situation a team member was researching for them. The team member (rep/agent) didn't capture the data in their CRM/Call Handling System and they're out for the day. Now you must ask the customer all the questions over again, research their request and get back to them. Needless to say, the customer is NOT happy about this!

Two hours later the customer's request is complete and you are on to other business, yet you are upset at having been put in this situation in the first place. You want to talk with your co-worker (or report, if you are a manager) about what happened and discuss how to avoid this situation in the future.



#### As a group, decide:

How would you approach the person you need to talk to?



What will you SAY?

What supporting materials would you include?



Where might you meet with them?

Anything else you need to take into consideration or do?

**When the entire group reconvenes,** we'll hear suggestions from each group on how to best approach the person with whom they need to talk.



# **Your action plan**

	Something I do well and will continue to do as I communicate with customers and co-workers
Habit is habit, and not to be flung out of the window by any man, but coaxed downstairs a step at a time.	 
—Mark Twain	
You cannot teach a person anything. You can only help them discover it in themselves.	An aspect(s) of my communication style that I may need to adjust to get a more positive response from customers and coworkers
—Galileo	 
Not everything that is faced can be changed; but nothing can be changed	
that is not faced. —Franklin D. Roosevelt	 

### **Communication style self-assessment**

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