A Manager's Guide to Communications

INTRODUCTION

> "What do you mean we don't communicate? Just yesterday I faxed you a
> reply to the recorded message you left on my answering machine."
> **The Wall Street Journal**

Using the Guide …

This guide is designed to assist managers to use the data from the *Interactive Personalities* communications model to enhance effectiveness of organizational communications.

It is suggested that the reader become familiar with the terminology used in this booklet.   This model defines the terms – *Worker*, *Leader*, *Helper* and *Researcher* in very specific ways as related to personality dynamics of individuals. Keep in mind that although a person will measure out as being dominant in any one of these traits, this does not mean that this is all there is to the person. Every dominant *Worker* personality will have some drives, feelings and behaviors typical of *Leaders*, *Helpers* and *Researchers*.   Likewise, the other personality descriptors will have drives, feelings and behaviors of the other three descriptors.

The degree of dominance of any one of the descriptors would indicate the prevalence of certain defined reactions on the part of the person. For example, a person may measure as a *High Worker/Distant Leader*. It would be expected that this person's drives, feelings and behaviors would reflect the characteristics of a *Worker* personality with a high level of consistency.   There will be times when the *Leader* aspect of the person's personality will express itself, but with very little consistency, but more so than *Helper* or *Researcher* traits.

If a person measured as a *Low Worker/Close Leader* it would be expected that the person would show more *Worker* drives, feelings and behaviors than any of the other traits, but would also have some consistency in their *Leader* traits. Also, the *Helper* and *Researcher* traits would probably be apparent in the person's drives, feelings and behaviors.   Usually the modification of any descriptor with the word "Low" means the person will show some balance between all four traits or at least three of these. The reason the person scored low in a descriptor is because the person also identified with other trait characteristics.

Possible Errors in using the Guide …

"They laughed at Joan of Arc, but she went right ahead and build it."
Gracie Allen

Errors in interpreting the results of this type of information could include assuming that people who measure out in some descriptors are more intelligent than people who measure out in others. For example, **Researchers** are more intelligent than people who scored as **Workers**. This could very definitely be wrong. What these descriptors are measuring is more related to "self" or "other" orientation and "what" as opposed to "why" type of thinking. Do not confuse personality types with IQs[1]. These are very different dynamics, and this model does not measure IQ.

Another source of error would be to generalize the descriptor titles. Because a person measured as a **High Worker** would not mean that this person would work harder than a person who measured as a **Low Helper**. **Leaders** are not the only people with leadership ability. **Helpers** may not always be that helpful. And, **Researchers** are not the only people effective in an R&D[2] setting.

This communications model will not account for psychiatric conditions that affect personalities. Such conditions as obsessive-compulsive disorders may be handy to have in some organizational roles, but this will not be addressed in this booklet.

This approach, including the inventory, is not intended as definitive personality assessment. It only describes personality interactions and types in relationship to an organizational setting. It is not meant to do the job of an instrument, such as the Myers Briggs Personality Inventory.

Part One … A Communications Model

"If we do not change our direction, we are likely to end up where we are going."
Ancient Chinese Proverb

A comprehensive *communications training* package would include at least three basic parts: the mechanics of communications, the message of communications, and the ethics of communications. The initial part, the mechanics of communications, would include etiquette, advantages/disadvantages of various communications methods, and how these specific communication tools are best used in the organization. This would necessarily include the following tools: telephone, FAX, e-mail, memo, meetings, bulletin boards (physical & electronic),

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[1] IQ … Abbreviation of Intelligence Quotient.
[2] R&D … Research and Demonstration

and policy/procedures. Most organizations use all of these tools, but may confuse purpose and effectiveness with convenience or limited awareness.

The second part of a comprehensive, communications training package would include the message of communications, or the purpose, effectiveness, efficiency, and intent of the communications. This is dependent upon the speaking, writing, and receptive skills of the various people in the communications chain.

The third part of a comprehensive communications training package would include the ethics of communications. This most often deals with the balancing of organizational and personal agendas, information as power, accessibility of data, priority of information flow, information screening, policies and exceptions, openness of communications, and security.

This **Interactive Personality Model** will touch all three major areas of communications training, but it is primarily part of the second area, the message of communication. This model is designed to assist in increasing the understanding of communications by senders and receivers. More specifically it is designed to enhance:
- awareness of how different people may use the same words but mean very different things
- awareness of personal agendas
- and awareness of receptivity to various kinds of communications.

Part Two … Definition of Descriptors

"People seem not to see that their opinion of the world is also a confession
of character."
Ralph Waldo Emerson

This section will provide descriptions of personality dynamics that exist in most organizations. These descriptions are by primary personality types. Most people within an organization are combinations of two or more of these descriptors.

Workers

These people are the mainstay of the work force. This group comprises the majority of people in the work place. **Workers** like working in a group and may not work well alone, especially for long periods of time. They appreciate a relationship with authority, have a strong need to belong, and need to be shown appreciation. These people do not like changes and will interpret change, as

meaning that what they were doing before was not "good" or it was not appreciated.

These people get a lot of their identity from work and, as a result, they take pride in their work group. They are reliable employees who place a high value in keeping rules and standards[3]. **Workers** do not give blind obedience to authority. **Workers** appreciate good, fair management practices that make them feel secure and needed.

These people do need supervision. If they run out of obvious work to do, they will not do anything. They are not creative, and even if they know there are other things that should be done, they will not do them unless directed to do these things. This is not the result of being lazy, but it is due to their regard for authority. They believe that it is the responsibility of authority to direct them, and if there are not given directions, they will interpret this "downtime" as a well-earned break. Their view of themselves is they are hard workers.

Communications with this group of people need to be done in terms of "we" and "us" and should be done in, group settings. Signaling out an individual, even if it is to reward the person, could make a **Worker** highly threatened. It could make the person feel like they are being separated from the group, and this is their greatest threat - being removed from their group. It is recommended that if **Worker** individuals are to be recognized for achievement, they are to be recognized with others, and that it be pointed out how their accomplishments benefit the entire group.

Workers often do not adjust well to change, but they will adjust if they feel included in the changes, are given a lot of reassurance, and the reasons for the changes are very logical. At best, however, adjustment to change is a slow process. These people have an extreme need for security, and routine is a primary indicator of security. A manager who recognizes this will start preparing **Workers** for change before the change occurs. **Workers** often do not respond well to surprises.

"What we learn to do we learn by doing."
Aristotle

Communication Guidelines for Workers:

Verbal -
- Tell them WHAT is to be done and how important it is to be done well.
- Compliment them often and do this in a group setting.
- Use the words "we" and "us" frequently.

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[3] The rules and standards may not be the organization's rules and standards.

. If a change is going to occur, tell them how important they are for the change to be effective, how their fine performance has made the change possible, and provide frequent reassurance that the change is good.
. Give logical explanations for any changes and be willing to answer questions about the change.
. Talk often about work "benefits."

Non Verbal -
. Authority figure needs to be present in the work place.
. Smile, shake hands, hug, etc., whatever is culturally acceptable to let them know they are your friends.
. Put up charts and signs in the work place that show the quality of work or the amount of work that has been done. Put a lot of names on these charts or signs. (Do not single out one person.)
. Any changes that are made must be put in writing and posted.
. Authority figure must have some of the trappings (symbols) of office, but not so much that the person is too distant from the group.

Do Not –
. Give vague or "general" information, such as, "Do whatever needs to be done."
. Make frequent changes in routine.
. Be distant or aloof from these workers or they will find another "leader" who they like and this could be just about anyone.
. Let good behavior and production go unnoticed.
. Use verbal, theoretical training.

Leaders

"Life is problems. Living is solving problems."
Raymond E. Feist

Leaders often make the best managers. Their whole value system is geared toward controlling. They are goal oriented and they always have personal objectives. These people typically do not break rules and standards unless they (*Leaders*) are at odds with the organization. They will, however, look for loopholes and stretch the rules. One reason they respect rules is that they aspire to be the ones making the rules.

Leaders do not care to work in a group unless they can be in charge of the group or some function within the group. These people are competitive and goal oriented. These people are not respectful of others, except for how this will get them what they want.   If the goals of the work environment and the goals of the individual correspond, these are good people to have in an organization. If the

goals of the individual and goals of the work environment are different, *Leaders* can be very destructive, or the individual will use the work environment without regard for the needs of the organization.

These people like challenges and problem solving, and become bored quickly if they are not presented with these. Their drive to solve problems will often result in creating problems to solve if they are not channeled into more constructive behaviors. They also thrive on recognition and rewards. Without a tangible goal, *Leaders* will not perform to outside expectations. Also, the goals of these individuals must be short-term goals, such as, monthly, quarterly, or possibly annually.

The benefits of these people in the work force are they are good managers if they have developed the skills to go along with their personality, they are good problem solvers, they are creative, and they get along well with *Workers* (*Leaders* and *Workers* were made for each other). Unfortunately, *Leader* managers tend to surround themselves with *Workers* as their assistant managers which seems to work well, but eventually the *Leader* manager will leave or retire and there is no one adequately prepared to step in as a real manager. Likewise, *Leader* managers tend to distance other *Leaders* within the organization or get rid of them. This rids them of a constant source of competition and headaches.

The possible hazards of these people in the work force is that they always want more than they have, they can become problem makers, and their first priority is not the welfare of others or even the organization.

Communication Guidelines for Leaders:

"Never insult an alligator until you've crossed the river."
Cordell Hull

Verbal:
- Tell them WHY something is to be done. Let them figure out the WHAT - it is important that this individual be challenged.
- Let them know how they will benefit from working in the organization.
- Give public recognition when they do well. Unlike *Workers*, these people like being singled out.
- Be very clear as to what the rules are.
- Be very clear in defining objectives.
- Address problems directly - do not let problems slide.

Nonverbal:
- Eye contact.
- Show no fear.

. Give name recognition to this person (sign on door, mention in memos, etc.).
. Include in meetings and conferences.
. Never ignore this person - this will divert their attention from working with you to working against you.

Do Not –
. Ignore, slight or insult them. They may not be big on friendships, but will identify enemies.
. Give total "free reign" or they will take over. Allow them space to operate, but monitor and have them give reports.
. Promise them something and not come through if they meet their end of the bargain.
. Get into competition with them, set up situations where they complete against others.
. Put them in situations that are routine or place them in circumstances where there is nothing to do, they will get caught up in their own wants, and you may not be able to bring them back to the organizations goals.

Helpers

"The time is always right to do what is right."
Martin Luther King, Jr.

People with this descriptor will range from social zealots to people who are always friendly and helpful to others in need. *Helpers* are other directed. The exception to this is that these people may determine that the downfall of someone or a particular group is their mission. The only person or group they might target would be ones they perceive as unfair and uncaring.

Helpers are first cousins to *Workers*. *Helpers* have a strong identity with the group or organization and a definite need to be included.

Helpers are "people oriented." The work environment derives many benefits from these people because they look at the big picture, they are not tied to only one or two specific groups within the organization, and they have a strong sense of social justice or fairness. These people can "warm up" to anyone because they have a strong sense of compassion and empathy. These people are willing to make sacrifices for the greater social good and expect others to do the same, but they understand if others do not.

These people make good martyrs, not because they have a need to suffer or play "poor me,"[4] but because they have a deep belief that eventually others will see the needs of humanity as they do.

Helpers are often extremely ethical[5]. This descriptor often has an extreme dislike for **Leaders**, and view **Leaders** as petty, back-biting and narrow. (**Leaders** tend to view *Helpers* as impractical dreamers and not in solid contact with reality.)

Helpers ordinarily make poor managers because they become so people oriented that they tend to loose sight of all the objectives of the organization. They manage by personalities or "people principles" rather than by a balanced array of sound management principles. This often leads to overloading positions with incompetent people with potential. These people also tend to shy away from argumentative people in order to avoid conflict (conflict hurts people's feelings and causes *Helpers* great distress). This causes *Helper* managers to surround themselves with people who agree with them and this could lead to the decay of the organization or at least a narrow scope of directions for the organization.

Also *Helper* managers have a tendency to promise employees things that they do not have the skills to deliver. This will eventually lead to mistrust of the *Helper*. Employees may interpret lack of skills for lack of caring. *Helpers* become extremely upset and shocked if they are ever accused of not caring.

There are some instances where a *Helper* manager may be the ideal person. In situations where a department or area needs more support than direction, this type of manager may be ideal.

Helpers are good problem solvers especially if the problems have to do with people. It is possible that a *Helper* would be good at other types of problem solving, but this typically would not be their strong suit.

Communication Guidelines for Helpers:

"What the world really needs is more love and less paperwork."
Pearl Bailey

Verbal:
- Ask how they are doing or how they feel.
- Talk to them about people problems (motivation, benefits, etc.).
- Share a problem with this person.
- Talk to them about people in their lives (family, friends, etc.).
- Let them know that others need them.

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[4] *Helpers* are not above doing this however.
[5] At least ethical in their own minds.

Nonverbal:
- Smile and be sincere.
- Give them all of your attention.
- Provide opportunities for one-on-one communications.
- Put them in charge of projects that are group oriented or a least let them be involved in the planning.
- If an employee is having a problem, refer the employee to this person.

Do Not –
- Put them in situations where they have to discipline others, or be very directive with others.
- Place them in situations where they work by themselves for long periods of time.
- Use cynicism to get a point across, they will interpret this as cruelty.

Researchers

"No problem can stand the assault of sustained thinking."
Voltaire

These people are perpetual students. Their interests are universal, but they often appear to be aloof and "in another world." These people are interested in information and may appear to be interested in people, but this is because other people are a source of information. Ordinarily, these people have a highly developed sense of values, but at the same time are very impersonal. They are not impressed with titles (theirs or others). It would be typical that they would be much more aware of the rights of another person than the other person.

Typically, *Researchers* have a variety of living experiences, including extreme variances in jobs, relationships, life-styles, and other interests. They are often loners and do not identify with any particular group for a great length of time. These people are first cousins to *Leaders* in that they are goal oriented. A big difference is that the goals of *Researchers* are "long-term goals." These people love problems and have absolutely no tolerance for routine work except as a break to allow them time to think through another task. They get bored quickly.

It would be an error to assume that *Researchers* are always highly intelligent - they just have a different way of seeing things. They do not get locked into a set way of thinking about anything. Others tend to think these people are weird and may comment that these people have a strange sense of humor or odd ways of looking at things, and this is true. Although *Researchers* are extremely creative, others are never sure exactly what has been created. The output of these people often gives the impression of being "multi-layered," and it is. When given

a task, the results will always be somewhat unexpected and include elements that were not asked for. Also, these people have a tendency to volunteer or create projects for themselves.

Researchers are effort oriented but not "immediate result" oriented. They are long term result oriented, but the long-term result may be so far away, no one else can see it. One result of this is that others tend to see *Researchers* as being too philosophically oriented, and not in close contact with the reality of the here and now.

They are typically not very interested in recognition and are strong believers in "Live and Let Live." They feel no great need to change anyone and cannot comprehend why someone would want to change them. Other people (other descriptors) usually feel a need to change these people because they appear too different and unreliable. Others cannot figure out where these people are coming from.

Researchers do not work well in a group, although they may not be aware of this. Other people get frustrated working with them because they have a tendency to go off in several directions at once, and *Researchers* tend to get bored with group discussions, especially if something has been said more than once.

Workers are suspicious of *Researchers* because *Researchers* tend to stay to themselves. *Leaders* distrust these people because they can never figure out what these people want or how to control them. *Helpers* have a love-hate relationship with these people. *Helpers* appreciate the strong ethics, but cringe at their lack of personal interaction with "problems".

Researchers do not work well in structure because they do not work well with rules. This is not due to their lack of respect, but to being fixated on what they want to accomplish. They make up their own rules as they go along, but their rules are usually within strict ethical standards.

These people usually do not make good managers. They love to change things (this drives everyone else crazy, especially the *Workers*). They tend to be unaware of petty details (90% of management); they have a tendency to get caught up in "special projects" and forget about the rest of the world for hours or days; and they will over estimate the ability of others to solve their own problems.

Communication Guidelines for Researchers:

"It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare; it is because we do not dare that things are difficult."
Seneca

Verbal:
.   Share information or problems with this person.
.   Ask for opinions.
.   Ask if there is another way of doing things.
.   Don't limit conversation to only the immediate needs.
.   Talk about planning and details.

Nonverbal:
.   Have an open-door policy with this person.
.   Don't panic or show a great deal of concern when they go off on a tangent.
.   Allow freedom of movement and thought.
.   Overlook oddities of behavior.

Do Not –
.   Keep them in routine work situations for long periods of time.
.   Isolate them from the information flow of the organization.

Part Three: Communication Methods and Effectiveness

"The bitterness of study is preferable to the bitterness of ignorance."
Philippine Proverb

This section will review how the different organizational personality types relate to the various communication methods employed by organizations.

Memos and e-mail –

Often the most efficient communications using e-mail and memos to a large group of people would best be addressed to **Workers**.   This typically will not be a problem to the other descriptors, and often there are more Workers than other descriptors in most organizations. Keep the e-mail or memo clear and precise. Specify: who, what, when, where, and why.   Be logical (deductive reasoning) and use the words "we", "ours" and "us". If appropriate the use of graphs and figures will really enhance the communications.

If there are a number of what items in the memo or e-mail message listed in the *what* section, use numbers, letters or bullets to separate each item. Do not use long sentences. Keep memos or e-mail messages pointed, exact and directive.

If memos or e-mail messages are directed to individuals, it will help to know the personality type of the individual. If you are unsure, address the **Worker**.

Memos or e-mail messages to **Leaders** would emphasis the objectives, expectations or results in the *what* section of the memo and the *why* part of the memo or e-mail message can be expansive. It is recommended that the benefits to the person be indicated.   If applicable the memo would also outline the leadership expectations placed on the person.

It is a mistake to communicate to **Leaders**, **Helpers** or **Researchers** in a manner that tells them all of the exact details of how to do something. Part of their personality is figuring out "how to". Telling **Leaders** "how" can be interpreted as being insulting and a **Leader** will typically assume that an insult is a challenge. But, not the kind of challenge an organization would like to give an employee. The **Leader** might be challenged to "get even".

Memos or e-mail messages to **Helpers** as well as **Researchers** would also emphasize objectives, expectations and results.   The difference between the **Leader** directed memo or e-mail message from the **Helper** directed memo or e-mail message would be that the **Helper** directed memo or e-mail message addresses people issues and organizational interactions, but does not need to emphasize personal benefits.   **Helpers** appreciate personal benefits, but not to the extent that **Leaders** do.

Memos or e-mail messages to **Researchers** would be very similar to memos or e-mail messages to **Leaders**, but be sure to put emphasize *when* to these people.   **Researchers** tend to be busy people, and their time schedules do not always correspond to the expectations of others.   Also, with **Researchers**, expect a follow up query from them for clarification of some information in your memo. This is a good sign. It shows interest, and for these people it is good to have confirmation that they interpreted the memo as you wrote it. **Researchers** have a tendency to go off on tangents or to magnify things. If you do not get any follow up questions about your communication, it might be a good idea to ask if the **Researcher** got the communication.

Policies and Procedures –

> "The factory of the future will have only two employees, a man and a dog.
> The man will be there to feed the dog. The dog will be there to keep the
> man from touching the equipment."
> **Warren Bennis**

Write these strictly for the **Workers**. Be clear and concise and expect no slack if you allow exceptions. Almost all personality types are suspicious of policies and procedures, and do not put much credence in these. Employees tend to watch the behaviors of others and this is the main determinant of what the "rules" are.

It is recommended that OPMs[6] and SOPs[7] be brief and comprehensive of ethic and try not to cover every aspect of the organization. These documents will not replace the responsibility or effectiveness of ineffective managers. Also, if the organization is trying to employee concepts, such as Team Management and empowerment and at the same time has several four-inch binders of rules, this ought to tip someone off that the organization does not have a clue about what these concepts really mean.

Bulletin Boards –

"We don't know who we are until we see what we can do."
Martha Grimes

If these are updated daily, are located in high traffic areas, or on accessible computers, these can be very effective communication devices. This device is a great way to keep employees updated on progress reports (charts and graphs). Direct this type of information to **Workers**.

Rumors and the Organizational grapevine(s) –

"If you are not to drink and drive, why do they have parking lots
at bars?"
George Carlin

The rumor mill or grapevine is a very real means of communication within an organization and at times is more informative than other more formal communications. This is especially true in organizations that hold back information or try to keep information bottled up[8]. The grapevine functions primarily by one-on-one verbal communications. Managers might be more effective with this form of communications if they viewed this process as internal "word-of-mouth" advertising. As with the other forms of communications, the more planning that goes into this the better it will be.

To use this effectively, use one-on-one or small group times to relay information about events that may be coming up, planning activities, how management is dealing with threats to the organization, organizational promotional activities, etc. If the manager has the skill to do this in a personal and/or friendly manner this will enhance the overall communication flow of the organization. Ideal places to use this method: elevator, canteen, smoke breaks, chatting with an employee in their work station, exercise room, golf course, etc.

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[6] OPMs – Operational Procedure Manuels
[7] SOPs – Standard Operational Procedures
[8] Keep in mind a principle that is true of organizations as well as individuals, "You are as sick as your secrets."

The rumor mill apparently is impossible to stop, so why not use it? If solid data is fed into this system there is a better chance of it communicating solid information to people who are interested and hopefully can provide useful feedback. The least this will do is curb the flow of information in the rumor mill to be less about personalities and more about the organization.

Workers tend to rely heavily on the rumor mill. Often this may be their most consistent source of information and only source of safe feedback. *Workers* are group oriented people and do not like to function one-on-one with management through formal communications (memo, e-mail, speaking out in a meeting, etc.); so, if they can communicate through the grapevine, they feel safer.

Leaders will often use the grapevine and try to control or influence groups through this communications device. This will be especially true for *Leaders* who are not in formal leadership roles in the organization.

Training Meetings –

> "Wisdom is knowing what to do next; skill is knowing how to do it, and
> virtue is doing it."
> **David Starr Jordon**

Training is an expensive investment for many organizations, and this is also an area that consistently falls short of expectations for many managers. Part of the reason for this is the assumption that if an employee knows what to do that they will do it. Or the mistaken notion that some details of training will be remembered months later, even though there has been no practice or reinforcement of information between training and application.

Another difficulty with employee's use of training information is that some people do not relate well to some training methodologies. *Workers* may not relate well to theoretical or concept oriented training. This could also include inductive reasoning techniques. Keep material development in a deductive pattern. Hands-on, graphic (visual) or small group discussion training methods may work well with *Workers*. Also with *Workers* it may produce better results training at their work site than training in a formal traditional classroom setting off-site. One-on-one or small group training is also recommended. Modular or programmed instruction that is very specific and brief is also productive.

Leaders, *Helpers* and *Researchers* tend to respond better to theoretical or concepts oriented training. Deductive reasoning may bore this group. This group tends to like challenges and goals. Training that can incorporate the generation of problem solving and design will get these people involved. Be careful of *Researchers* in training functions. They will almost always question the goals of the training as the training progresses.

Team Meetings, Committees, and Information Meetings –

"To get something done a committee should consist of no more than three
people, two of whom are absent."
Robert Copeland

Workers and **Helpers** tend to like meetings. They view meetings as a good source of information as well as an opportunity for bonding or fellowship. It is recommended that opportunities for fellowship activities be incorporated in Team and Committee meetings. It is also strongly recommended that no one be forced to actively participate[9].

Leaders respond well to these types of meetings if they have an active, responsible role in the meeting; such as, leading the discussion, giving reports on group activities, handling visuals, etc. If these individuals are left out, they may force their way in to the discussion by playing devils advocate for any or all issues brought up for discussion.

Researchers will usually ask a lot of questions and may also play the role of devils advocate, but unlike the **Leaders**, the **Researcher** will not have a "personal agenda".   A problem with **Researchers** is that they tend to go off on tangents and get into issues the group does not see as an issue (yet). They have a tendency to irritate the other people in the group. Although **Researchers** are usually neutral about attending these meetings, they usually prefer that the information be given to them in a well thought out memo.

PART FOUR – *Organizational Dynamics of Communications*

"Those who trust to chance must abide by the results of chance."
Calvin Coolidge

Mechanics of Organizational Communications –

Accounting for personality differences within an organization can enhance the effectiveness of communications and can be advantageous to some areas of problem solving. Like almost anything, this approach can be overdone. Be careful not to use this approach or one like it for an excuse for incompetence or unacceptable behavior.

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[9] not all people are **Workers** or **Helpers**.

An effective communication plan will account for personality differences to enhance communication proficiency, but this is only a part of the process. There are many other areas that can undermine effective communications.

Apparently there is no ideal communication method for large organizations:
- machines break
- people are out sick or on vacation
- people switch jobs and the new person does not know how to use the
  equipment
- upgrade efforts are not consistent and software is not compatible
- FAX machines are out of paper
- answering machines are full
- e-mail is not read in a timely manner
- bulletin boards are not updated
- mail is put in the wrong box
- training announcement tells everything but where the training will be
- memo asking for more information is signed by someone whose signature you
  cannot read
- phone system is down
- present hardware will not support new software
- network system is down
- internet provider's line is busy

Any reader who has experience in a large organization can add to this list.

Prior to the technology explosion of communication aids, which have all come with their own set of problems as well as benefits, organizations had not yet perfected the human communication skills including the basics of who, what, when, where and why in critical communication documents.   Nor have all individuals mastered the skill of refining message packaging.   Sometimes a message can be very accurate, but how it is stated is so offensive that it will not be received, or the message will be so wordy that the meaning is obscure.

Political Correctness and Sensitivity -

"To expect life to be tailored to our specifications is to invite frustration."
One Day At A Time In Al-Anon

One part of the modern difficulty with getting messages through relates to the concept of "political correctness". This is a concept that originally emerged as a guideline for expressing respect, but over time, and through over use, has created a situation that assumes a person is responsible for someone else's feelings.   Although this concept is popular with attorneys and some social zealots, it is a sick concept.   This concept creates a situation that is very understandable in children due to their developmental deficiencies, but in adults it provides a false and dangerous dependence.

Unfortunately, part of this has to do with another concept, sensitivity. Sensitivity is a wonderful thing to enhance a person's awareness, but is an awful thing to use a weapon. Healthy sensitivity can only be applied inward. Outward application is defensiveness not sensitivity.

In recent years both "political correctness' and sensitivity have been distorted into the opposite extreme of the social ills they were trying to enhance. When a person believes his or her feelings are the responsibility of someone else, this creates an unreal situation for an adult. And this is what we have created with the over emphasis on being "politically correct" and the distortion of sensitivity. There is a mid-point where a person should expect to be respected by others, but at the same time own that whether respected or not, a person's value is only set by him or herself. Granted, this requires an adult level of maturity and personal strength.

It is always fair to request respectful communications, and to terminate communications that do not respond to this request. To insist on respectful communications shows a degree of self-righteousness that is as sick as the lack of respect itself.

Two very sensitive conflict areas would include racial discrimination and sexual harassment. Although these are not the only areas of historical conflict that have required lawful intervention, they are unique due to the processing of these conflicts. In both of these areas the accused is often considered guilty until proven innocent. This provides a lot more power to an aggrieved and/or aggressive person if civil action type charges can be used or threatened, but this may not always be the truth.

It may be possible through a thorough investigation to make a determination of the type of conflict. One problem in doing this is that organizations have had a lot more experience in dealing with civil action type cases than personality type cases. This is unfortunate because it prevents getting to the source of some organizational difficulties, and also, it erodes the character of real civil action cases. It is suggested that procedures be designed by the organization to help determine if a problem is actually racial or sexual harassment based, or if there is not a personality issue.

The other situation in which this adult approach to respect and awareness can be useful is with the immature manager, who believes that it is their right to yell, intimidate and belittle employees. Employees might keep in mind a behavioral adage – behaviors that are not reinforced will become extinct. If there is no effective organizational method of requesting respect, and the employee is willing to risk job security, some behaviors that might be effective in the "extinction" process would include various means of resistance. This would include ignoring the person by walking away, asking them to repeat what they just said, saying

"No.", saying, "I will listen only if spoken to as an adult, and if you state that I am not an adult I will take actions against you.", or saying, "The only way you will get any respect or cooperation from me is if you give it."

For all employees in an organization, especially managers, being emotional is no excuse for being disrespectful or irresponsible. For people who cannot do this, suggest they go home and come back when they grow up.

Training and Organizational Structure Suggestions -

> "I went to the bookstore and asked the saleswoman where the Self Help section was. She said that if she told me, it would defeat the purpose."
> **Unknown**

There apparently is no fool-proof communication system, but there are actions an organization can take to address these problems. It is suggested that an effective communications model would include the following training and organizational structures:

1. Annual demonstration of a perfect memo/e-mail for all employees who produce these.
2. Periodic proficiency training on accessible equipment for each employee on the equipment in the work area of the employee. Handbooks for the equipment and software will be at the employee's work station.
3. Communications Coordination person or department to focus efforts toward personnel and equipment adjustments to provide an accountable plan of action as well as an accurate inventory of hardware, software, and employee training. This function will also account for problems and patterns of usage within the organization.
4. Levels of software training are schedule on an annual basis with progressive levels of skill training available.
5. One-on-one coaching in specific equipment and software be available at the employee's work station within a reasonable time when requested by the employee or supervisor.
6. Back-up systems are clearly identified for communication flow.
7. Security and confidentiality directives are tested per employee on at least an annual basis. (Modular or programmed methodology.)
8. "Respect of differences" training be provided annually to include: culture, gender (sexual harassment), sensitivity issues, and personality patterns. (Related to section *Conflict*, page 20.)
9. Planning data flow information be made available to all employees affected by the plans.
10. Organizational climate surveys be conducted annually. Feedback be given to all participants. Give survey results as this was received. Do not doctor or give interpretation of survey results.

Team Work, Team Management and Team Concepts –

"I wonder which administration it was that came up with the theory that
you can fight bureaucracy by forming a large panel."
Will Teed

It is the area of team concepts that differences in these personality types really stands out. So many managers today have incorporated the term "team work" into their daily working vocabulary. This concept has different meanings, however, depending on who is using it or who is listening.

To **Workers** and **Helpers**, the concept of team, or team work means that everyone works in harmony. The hallmark of the organization is cooperation. The ideal team will feel like one big happy family. Team members are friendly. Conflict is viewed as anti team. Problems are big issues. Problems are often personalized, that is, the focus becomes not necessarily how to solve the problem, but who is responsible for the problem.

To **Leaders** and **Researchers**, the concept of team or team work, means that the group will get the job done efficiently and effectively. The hallmark of the organization is focus. The ideal team will be focused on the same objectives. Team members are accountable. Conflict is viewed as part of the process as long as it doesn't slow down the process. Problems are not an issue. Problem solving is the issue.

Worker and **Helper** oriented teams will provide members support through stress management programs, extensive employee benefits, a multitude of policies, and multiple large group functions. **Leader** and **Researcher** oriented teams will provide members support through conflict management programs, well focused but limited employee benefits, generalized policy statements (ethics approach), and small group functions.

The **Worker**/**Helper** approach to teams is very limiting and in the long run self defeating. These kinds of teams are very limited in their growth, especially qualitative growth. The dynamic that demonstrates this can be found in the team and committee meetings dominated by these personality types. (**Workers** and **Helpers** tend to like to have lots of meetings.) **Workers** do not like change and **Helpers** are very protective of **Worker's** feelings. In meetings **Workers** will be threatened by any suggestion of change, and the more radical the change the higher the level of threat. This will cause the **Workers** to find fault with the suggested or proposed change with the result being to go back and continue to

do what the organization has been doing. *Worker's* solutions are not to do things differently, but to work harder or work more.

If by chance "change" has become one of the current buzz words that is popular in the organization (*Workers* like buzz words), any *Worker* who serves on a committee or speaks in a team meeting will espoused this concept and even contribute to making cosmetic changes in organizational functions. Cosmetic changes would include items, such as, changing labels, titles, increasing benefits to employees, getting a bigger or better facility, adding new updated equipment, formulating policies or procedures to better describe what the organization is already doing or what the organization is supposed to be doing, etc.

The major problem *Workers* and *Helpers* bring to the working of a team is that they are subject to a statistical concept called *regression toward the mean*. What this means in the functioning of a team is that *Workers* and *Helpers* will spend effort helping team members who are not functioning up to the norm of the group. Also, in the functioning of a team they will spend effort holding back members who are functioning above the norm. Their goal is to have everybody functioning at the norm. This is not growth oriented.

Conflict, Ideas and Growth –

> "If two men on the same job agree all the time, then one is useless.
> If they disagree all the time, then both are useless.
> **Darryl F. Zanuck**

If an organization is growth oriented, it will rely of new ideas being generated. As new concepts are proposed or implemented they will cause conflict. For *Workers* any concept that suggests change is a source of conflict. For *Leaders* any concept that does not include them is a source of conflict as well as any proposal that is in competition with the *Leader's* plan. For *Helpers* any plan that upsets other employees could be a source of conflict as well as any plan put forward by a *Leader* that the *Helper* does not trust (which often would be all *Leaders*). *Researchers* are great causes of conflict with practically everybody since they are always generating new plans.

There are a number of approaches to take to deal with conflict. One approach is to discourage the flow of ideas. This will definitely curb the amount of conflict. *Worker* and *Helper* type managers are usually the most unaware of this dynamic. Because they are people oriented they often see themselves as very open to others and therefore open to the ideas of others. What they may be unaware of is they do not like conflict (because they are people oriented and conflict often hurts people's feelings). Ideas or concepts that are given to them are carefully scrutinized to filter out any conflict causing elements, which often means the concept is adjusted to fit the present system of operation and therefore is really nothing "new".

Various techniques for discouraging ideas include:

- the "Open Door Policy" that tells employees, "Anyone is welcome to come and talk to me about anything.", but then is criticized if what is talked about does not coincide with the manager's ideas.
- the manager who assigns problem solving to employees and after employees go through the process, discover what the manager really wanted was for the employees to mirror the manager's thinking. This creates a situation that when challenges are given to employees they realize that their real task is not to come up with the best solution, but to figure out what "the boss" wants. This causes a situation called "Thinking with blinders" and this is very limiting.
- making sure that new ideas have to go through one or more committees. Very few committees can see past the status quo because there are **Workers** on the committee who do not like change, **Helpers** who do not want to see people upset, **Leaders** who are trying to protect their turf, and **Researchers** who may be off on a tangent of their own ideas.
- making sure that new ideas have to go through multiple layers of an organizations structure. This usually has the same dynamics as committees.
- publicly denouncing or criticizing an idea.
- only reinforcing people who have ideas that are adopted by the organization.

Difficulties with promoting an organizational atmosphere of idea exchange will include getting some strange, unaffordable, impractical, and wrong directional ideas. Not only will you get these ideas, but your job as a growth oriented manager is to reinforce the person whose uninformed and distorted mind formulated the idea. This may not be easy.

> "Between two evils, I always pick the one I never tried before."
> **Mae West**

The best way to reinforce an idea is first, to thank the person who shared the idea, but more important to invest in the idea through questions and highlighting. Highlighting means using the Aristotelian[10] concept of finding a useable, positive concept within the idea and recognizing, praising and in some cases implementing that part of the concept. This can be done with the most undesirable of proposals, although it may require some creativity on the part of the manager. A growth, oriented manager would view new ideas and proposals not in terms of good or bad, but in terms of "What is good here?"

This approach will do several things for the organization including:
- encourage the creative people in your organization to be creative.
- discovery of innovative concepts from a typically uncreative sources.
- provide direction to the idea people in your organization.
- create an important information flow between various people. This concept

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[10] from Aristotle … in all things that exist there is an element of truth.

may be necessary for organizations to survive in a growth demanding market. The "Think Tank" concept of the 70s seems to be too theoretical, academic and slow for the new millennium.   Organizations can't afford to have just the "geniuses" thinking any more. Organizations need rivers of ideas flowing through them. Tanks stagnate. (Managers must sample the idea flow often to make sure the river is not getting polluted.)
- it tends to take the wind out of the sails of internal organizational critics.
- it forces managers to be listeners and this is important, because there is a tendency for experienced managers to over estimate their listening skills. The more crisis situations a manager has to deal with, usually the more filters the manager uses and these filters may cause the manager to replace listening skills with criticism skills.

Part Five … Interactions between Personalities

> "If you could kick the person who caused you the most problems over the
> years, you couldn't sit down for a month."
> **Unknown**

Workers -

> "Well done is better than well said."
> **Benjamin Franklin**

Relate well with other *Workers*.
Relate well with *Leaders* who are fair and understand them.
Relate well with *Helpers*, but are suspicious of some of the radical
     changes they propose.
Uncomfortable with *Researchers* because they cannot understand what
     motivates these people.

Leaders -

> "If you have tried to do something but couldn't, you are better off
> than if you had tried to do nothing and succeeded."
> **John T. Ragland, Jr.**

Relate well with *Workers.*
Conflict with other *Leaders* because of the constant competition.
Conflict with *Helpers* because of their "bleeding heart" attitudes.
Conflict with *Researchers* because these people do not openly agree with
     them (*Researchers* see everything differently) and *Leaders*
     often think *Researchers* are other *Leaders*.

Helpers -

> "If employees are upset and don't feel cared for, what will be first in
> their minds is their resume, not the customer."
> **Hal Rosenbluth**

Relate well with *Workers*.
Conflict with *Leaders* because of the *Leader's* "small" scope of
awareness and their uncaring attitude toward others.
Confused by *Researchers* - admire the broad scope of the *Researchers*'
awareness but disappointed in the direction of their efforts   .

Researchers -

> "Lord, grant that I may always desire more than I can accomplish."
> **Michaelangelo**

Relate well with *Workers* (as far as *Researcher is concerned).*
Relate well with *Leaders* unless they start to feel manipulated.
Relate well with *Helpers* but often avoid them because of their one-
sided viewpoint.
Relate well with other *Researchers.*

Part Six – Personality Types as Managers

> "The higher you climb the flagpole, the more people see your rear end."
> **Don Meredith**

In terms of *planning* and *organizing* the **Worker** descriptor might not be the best for these skills. Basically, because this descriptor does not like change. These people may pick up on "change" as a buzz-word and use this in their vocabulary, but any changes that they would incorporate into their management style will only be cosmetic at best. There will be little creativity in orientation. **Workers** are often not big risk takers and risk taking is a necessary part of dynamic management.

The **Worker** could be adequate in the area of controlling (supervisory management). This would be true if the organization's policies and procedures are clear cut and the work these people are in charge of is routine. A benefit to

these people in supervisory management is that they would promote the team concept of "one big happy family". They would be just one of the group. They would not be problem solvers, because they believe that problem solving is what policies and procedures are for.

The *Helper* would bring creativity to the task of management as well as a strong social conscience, an employee and customer orientation, and a strong sense of team spirit. A limitation of this value level in the management field is their view of the scope of problems and objectives. Their view will typically not extend beyond the people they manage or serve. The mechanics, especially the physical part of management is ordinarily their weak areas. This does not mean that they cannot handle physical management issues, but this will not have the priority of personnel management.

Helpers have a difficult time grasping the concept of "Principles over Personalities". In fact, they often believe that people's personalities are the principles. This is indicated by the number of exceptions that are made to policies to accommodate selected employees or customers, reluctance to establish set procedures, the presence of crisis orientation to management, and selection of employees due to their potential rather than their skills.

Another indication of a *Helpers* reaction is if there is a problem within the organization, it would be predictable that the first words out of the mouth of a *Helper* would be, "We need more training." They seem not to grasp that some people know what to do, but just don't do it.   *Helpers* seem to have a difficult time identifying accountability and supervision as a means of problem solving.

Other factors related to the management practices typical of a *Helper* would include:
-      wanting the term "Team" to mean that everybody works well and in harmony at all times;
-      rating the importance of organizational problems on their emotional impact on selected individuals rather than on the effect of the problem to the organization's mission
-      a tendency to believe that anyone under their management who disagrees with them is disloyal and suspected of not caring as much as they do.

There is definitely a place for *Helpers* in management. In departments where the primary concern is staying focused on providing service and where people need consistent motivational input, the *Helper* could be an ideal manager. Also in areas that are almost totally "people" oriented, this value level has a place in management.

Researchers could excel in management areas that require planning and organizing, but in the control area of management these may not be the best people. These people could provide the maximum level of creativity due to the

various sources of input they can provide.   A problem is they may become so "creative" no one else has a clue about what the **Researcher** is talking about.

The main drawback to the **Researcher** manager is their lack of consistent involvement with the people they manage.   The **Researcher** often does not consistently work well in a group, but may be unaware of this.   The lack of personal involvement between this person, and the people they supervise, may be perceived by the people as a lack of caring.   Also, one thing that is guaranteed from a **Researcher** manager is that they will often change things. They are always looking for a better way of doing things.   This tends to drive the other Descriptor types crazy.

One factor that tends to hamper the communication ability of **Researchers** is that they are constantly dealing with information and organizing information, and this information becomes "second nature" to them.   They assume that because they know something, that everybody else knows it also.   The result of this is that there is usually a lot of data that other people may need, but the **Researchers** do not consider telling anyone.

The **Leader** as stated earlier in this program is usually the best manager.   They are psychologically oriented to plan, organize and control.   They are creative problem solvers, attuned to others, and goal oriented.   They are self-oriented, and the objectives of the organization will not take precedence over their own objectives (at least not indefinitely), but if they identify with the organization, they can provide positive and real leadership.

Leaders thrive on reaching objectives, recognition, and controlling.   People that work for **Leaders** are judged in terms of performance.   A skilled **Leader** will do whatever it takes to get the job done, and in some professions these people may relate to others in a similar manner to **Helpers** in that they appear to be very people oriented. This is just an effective way to get others to do what the **Leaders** believes needs to be done.

One problem with **Leader** managers is that they often do not work well with other **Leaders**.   When **Leaders** have to work together, things get very competitive, with the primary of objective of each is to get rid of the other or beat the other. After a **Leader** stays in managerial/supervisory role for a length of time there tends to be very few if any other **Leaders** in the area the person manages. A major problem for the organization is that sometimes after a **Leader** leaves a position there is no one really qualified to fill in because all the other **Leaders** have been eliminated.

Part Seven - Perceptions of Ethics and Values

"Better to be occasionally cheated than to be perpetually suspicious."
B. C. Forbes

Because of the unique views or perceptions of each of these descriptors, how each person values the organization or situations that affect the organization will vary. The *Worker* will perceive "right and wrong" most often based upon feelings of security, but be strongly influenced by the messages from their real[11] leadership. For people strong in the *Worker* descriptor, feelings of insecurity will provoke questions about the character, morality or ethics of the organization or more likely, the organizational managers, especially managers in the upper levels of the organization, the managers that have little or no interactions with these *Workers*.

In terms of the *Workers* ethical practices this is very strongly influenced by group consensus. For this reason, leadership can play an important part in shaping perceptions or values. Over time, a set of behaviors that at one point was considered "wrong" may eventually be the standard of acceptable behavior, or acceptable behaviors will become unacceptable.

In effective organizations this is anticipated and there is an ongoing plan of influence through leadership to promote managers, staff and customer values that are congruent to the organization's mission and methods of operation. Having sound organizational mechanics (traditional management logic) is not enough.

For *Leaders*, concepts of "right and wrong" are perceived in terms of fair competition, productivity, and individual opportunities. A strong *Leader* will judge the correctness of an organization through perceptions of paths for advancement and recognition. If this person is "left out" it will be the mission of this person to compete with or undermine the organization or prove the ineffectiveness or inefficiency of those in management who are the "problems". The rules of this person are adjustable to the circumstances. This person has a basic belief in rules (actually these are very important in competition), but if the organization's rules for advancement are too nebulous or restrictive, a *Leader* will continue to adjust their personal set of rules to accomplish their goals. This person will often do whatever it takes.

When *Leaders* are in management roles they will reevaluate the rules to curb the ambitions of other *Leaders*. It is typical that a *Leader* will do what it takes to get rid of other *Leaders* and will be very careful to fill in with *Workers* or any other descriptor but *Leaders*.

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[11] real leadership is not always the organization's management. It may be a union, other forces within the organization, community influences, etc.

Helpers will view "right and wrong" in terms of how circumstances help people, both employees and customers. Helpers tend to get caught up in Situational Ethics. This descriptor is willing to make allowances for differences and allow exceptions, more that the other descriptors. ***Helpers*** are also more "right and wrong" oriented than the other descriptors except possibly the ***Researchers***. Almost all ***Helper*** behaviors are weighed against some set of moral principles. It is interesting to observe ***Helpers*** who often have liberal attitudes, but conservative behaviors.

Researchers sense of value is probably the most basic and less "situational ethic" oriented than the other descriptors. What confuses others about this personality type is that often these people are not big on rules, policies, or procedures. ***Researchers*** may function like their personal set of ethics and focus at the time is more important than some "unproductive" policy or poorly though out procedure. Often what saves a ***Researcher*** from getting into trouble in an organizational setting is that they often work alone; what they work on is not of interest to a lot of people; or others do not want to get involved in a long explanation of what the ***Researcher*** is working on at the time. Also, what helps the ***Researcher*** is that what they are working on is typically very beneficial to the organization.