



Maximizing Communication Effectiveness Leveraging the Social Styles Model

The key to leveraging the Merrill - Reid Social Styles model is integrating a third dimension: **Versatility**. Specifically, how the four styles manifest in the real world, and our ability to adapt to other people’s styles to ultimately get the best out of any social or business situation and interaction. These skills are closely related to Emotional Intelligence.

<u>The Analytical</u>	<u>The Driver</u>
<p>Analyticals value accuracy, and don't like being wrong and criticized. They may exhibit the following traits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to know how things work. • Wants accuracy, both from themselves and others. • Values numbers, statistics, and ideas. • Loves details. • Fears being embarrassed or losing the respect of others. • Often introverted and hides feelings. <p><u>When communicating with an Analytical/Process oriented person:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be systematic, thorough, deliberate, and breakdown your recommendation. • Focus on the task and organize the discussion in a logical order. • Be prepared to answer many “How” questions. • Be precise, provide analysis and facts, and include options and alternatives with pros and cons. • Avoid being too personal. • Expect to repeat yourself. • Don't rush, allow time for evaluation. • Use evidence to support your position. • Compliment the precision and accuracy of the completed work. 	<p>Drivers gain pleasure from power, control, and respect. They find pain is loss of respect, lack of results, and the feeling that they are being taken advantage of. They may exhibit the following traits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to know “What will this do for me?” • Wants to save time. • Values results • Loves being in control, being in charge, and doing it their way. • Fears giving up control. • Often extroverted but does not show emotions. <p><u>When communicating with a Driver/Action oriented person:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on results first and state the conclusion at the outset. • Use visual aids and emphasize the practicality of your ideas. • State your best recommendation and do not offer many alternatives. • Be business like and factual. Provide concise, precise, and organized information. • Discuss and answer “What” questions. • Argue facts, not feelings. • Avoid wasting time and arguing details. Be as brief as possible.

<u>The Amiable</u>	<u>The Expressive</u>
<p>Amiables pleasure is stability and cooperation, and their pain is change and chaos. They may exhibit the following traits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to know, “Why am I doing this?”. • Wants to build relationships. • Loves supporting others. • Values suggestions from others. • Fears losing trust or having disagreements. • Tends to display emotions. • Often thought of as introverts. <p><u>When communicating with an Amiable/People oriented person:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be relaxed and agreeable. • Allow for small talk, and do not start the discussion right away. • Indicate support from well-respected people. • Be logical and systematic. • Create a plan with written guidelines using an informal writing style. • Be prepared to answer “Why” questions. • Show how the ideas worked well in the past. Agree clearly and often. • Use the word 'We'. Stress the relationship between your proposal and people. • Avoid pushing and rushing. Be a good listener. • Compliment the person as a team player. 	<p>Expressives get pleasure from recognition and approval and are uncomfortable with isolation and lack of attention. They may exhibit the following traits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to know who else is involved. • Values appreciation, applause, and a pat on the back • Loves social situations and parties. • Likes to inspire others. • Fears being rejected. <p><u>When communicating with an Expressive/Idea oriented person:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with an overall statement, and work toward the details. • Where possible, relate the discussed topic to a broader concept or idea. • Focus on developing a relationship. Be warm and approachable. • Show how your ideas will improve their image. • Be enthusiastic, open, and responsive. • Relate to their need to share information, stories, and experiences. • Be forthcoming and allow enough time for discussion. • Do not become impatient if they go on tangents. • Ask and answer “Who” questions. • Emphasize future value or relate the impact of the idea to the future. • Work to minimize their direct involvement.

As with many situations in business, preparation is key. It begins with understanding your social style. Is enhanced as you learn to identify the style of others. And is complete when you can effectively develop a communication plan that aligns with the needs of others. Once you have mastered these skills you are well on your way to building better and deeper relationships, increasing your success, and decreasing your stress.

Always keep in mind that with this, and all similar models, to ensure you use it as a guide. It is not intended to "pigeonhole" or stereo type you are anyone else. Understanding the model will increase your effectiveness but always remember that no model is perfect.