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Short Fuses, Live Wires and Dead Batteries: Overcoming Personality and Work Style Differences

“Think of personality as the way we’re hardwired,” says Alise Isbell, owner of Write Wise Communications, LLC. “It’s related to the way we process information. Work style is a combination of personality, the work environment and organizational culture, and preference—our ‘comfort zone.’”

“Personality typically doesn’t change much over time, but work styles can be developed,” Isbell notes. “Skills can be cultivated by putting ourselves in situations outside our comfort zone.”

Isbell provides training and consulting to such clients as ExxonMobil, University of Houston and the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center.

“In every work environment, there are group norms,” says Isbell. “Some work cultures allow a lot of banter and heated discussion, while others have a rigid decorum. In health care and academia there are additional elements present in the workplace dynamic. Every patient, family member or learner creates new

challenges in each interaction.”

“Knowing more about ourselves and others is only one piece of the complex workplace,” Isbell says. “The other aspects include a genuine desire to improve, avoiding manipulation, re-

SpeedReading People® system for quickly identifying personality type characteristics and communicating effectively based on what drives another person.

“You can find clues to personality type by observing a person’s demeanor,

The first step to working with other people who differ in personality and work styles is being self aware.



specting others and helping them succeed.”

It can be helpful to know your own personality type and those of the people in your work environment, yet there has to be a practical application of that knowledge, says Paul D. Tieger, president and CEO of SpeedReading People LLC and author of five books on personality type. He has developed the

energy level, appearance, vocabulary and body language,” he says. “So we teach ‘speed reading’ and then ‘speed reaching’ skills to help people connect by applying those insights in a practical way.”

“For example, you can spot an extravert by their talkative nature and high energy level,” says Tieger. “They will usually answer quickly. An introvert will

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often pause before they speak.”

“To communicate with an extravert, let them think out loud, keep a lively pace and include plenty of variety,” Tieger advises. “With an introvert, ask questions and then listen. Allow time to reflect, and discuss one

topic at a time.”

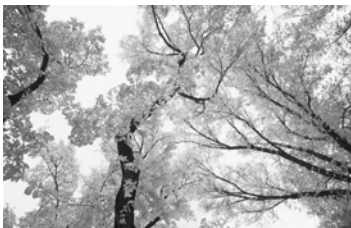
In any work environment, personality type differences are at the root of most interpersonal conflicts. But those differences can be bridged, Tieger says.

“It’s all about getting on the other person’s wave length to speak their language.”

Resources:

- *The Art of SpeedReading People*, Paul D. Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger (Little, Brown & Company, NY, 1998)
- *Type Talk at Work*, Otto Kroeger with Janet M. Thuesen and Hile Rutledge (Dell Publishing, NY, 2002)
- www.speedreadingpeople.com
- www.q4solutions.com
- www.writewisecommunications.com

Observable clues to personality type can be found in a person’s demeanor, energy level, appearance, vocabulary and body language. Learn these clues to read and reach out to others.



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Tips for “Speed Reaching” People

Author and personality type expert Paul D. Tieger offers tips for connecting successfully with people of various types.

Extraverts

- Let them talk
- Keep pace lively
- Include variety

Introverts

- Ask, then listen
- Give time to reflect
- One topic at a time

Sensors

- Get facts straight
- Step-by-step
- Stress practicality

Intuitives

- Talk possibilities
- Engage creativity
- Stress originality

Thinkers

- Logical arguments
- Recognize successes
- Be fair and objective

Feelers

- Ask for their help

- Appreciate efforts
- Be considerate

Judgers

- Be prepared
- Ask their opinion
- Honor commitments

Perceivers

- Expect questions
- Offer options
- Be flexible

Source:

The Pocket SpeedReader®, SpeedReading People LLC, Hartford, CT.
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Dare to Unplug, Productivity Specialist Advises

“Every time you get distracted from your work, it takes 20 to 25 minutes to get back into the flow,” says Denise Landers, owner of Key Organization Systems, Inc. and author of *Destination: Organization*. “Make the foundation of your day a block of 90 minutes of uninterrupted time. Use this time for work that requires the greatest concentration. Control your urge to check

e-mail, don’t answer your phone, and don’t allow drop-in visitors. Use e-mail auto-reply and your voice mail message to let people know when they can expect a response – along with options for reaching you if it’s urgent. You can also use e-mail settings to alert you when you have a message from designated people.”

Even in a work environment with an open-door

policy, it’s reasonable to let colleagues, staff and students know the hours you are available along with times you prefer not to be interrupted, says Landers. “The productivity you gain by organizing your day will allow you to accomplish more with far less stress.”

Resources:

www.keyorganization.com
<http://library.ust.hk/res/highlights/timemanagement.html>