

Understanding People & Their Work Styles

A Behavioral Inventory Tool Developed by Robert Bolton and Dorothy Grover Bolton

A person's style is the way others see you, not how you perceive yourself. Complete the inventory based on your feelings of how others see you. There are no good or bad styles, or right or wrong answers; just honest, thoughtful assessments to use as a guide.

Behavioral Inventory

Circle the letter next to each pair of comments that most accurately reflects how you perceive that others see you. If it's a close call, go for how you perceive 51 % of the people you know would assess you.

- a. More likely to lean backward when stating opinions
- b. More likely to be erect or lean forward when stating opinions

- c. Less use of hands when talking
- d. More use of hands when talking

- a. Demonstrates less energy
- b. Demonstrates more energy

- c. More controlled body movement
- d. More flowing body movement

- a. Less forceful gestures
- b. More forceful gestures

- c. Less facial expressions
- d. More facial expressions

- a. Softer-spoken
- b. Louder voice

- c. Appears more serious
- d. Appears more fun-loving

- a. More likely to ask questions
- b. More likely to make statements

- c. Less inflection in voice
- d. More inflection in voice

- a. Less apt to exert pressure for action
- b. More apt to exert pressure for action

- c. Less apt to show feelings
- d. More apt to show feelings

- a. More tentative when expressing opinions
- b. Less tentative when expressing opinions

- c. More task-oriented conversations
- d. More people-oriented conversations

- a. Slower to resolve problem situations
- b. Quicker to resolve problem situations

- c. More oriented toward facts and logic
- d. More oriented toward feelings and opinions

- a. Slower-paced
- b. Faster-paced

- c. Less likely to use small-talk or tell anecdotes
- d. More likely to use small-talk and tell anecdotes

Assertiveness (horizontal) Axis

Total 'a' scores = _____
 Total 'b' scores _____

Responsiveness (vertical) Axis

Total 'c' scores = _____
 Total 'd' scores = _____

First, circle the higher score between all 'a' and 'b' items. Higher 'a' scores represent less assertive behavior on the grid (left of the grid line). Higher 'b' scores represent more assertive behaviors on the grid (right of the grid line)

Second, circle the higher score between all 'c' and 'd' items - Higher 'c' scores represent less emotionally responsive, more reserved behavior (above the grid line). Higher 'd' scores represent more emotionally responsive behavior (below the grid line).

If your highest scores are:

Left & above: You believe others see you as an Analytical

Right & above: You believe others see you as a Driver

Left & below: You believe others see you as an Amiable

Right & below You believe others see you as an Expressive

Working Styles Grid



Typical Behavioral Traits & Amiables

- More of a team player than the other styles
- Likes small groups and one-on-one encounters
- Doesn't tend to seek the spotlight or engage in ego clashes with others—good at encouraging others to express their opinions and seeing the value in the contributions of others
- May be adept at integrating conflicting opinions into a position the group can support as a whole
- Eager to help—often the unsung heroes on many projects
- May have a tendency to miss deadlines (from becoming overextended in helping others reach their goals and deadlines)
- Tends to be very strong in relationship-building at work, but is low-key about it
- People tend to confide in them because they are also empathetic (when appropriate)—you see their concern for your issues in their eyes, body language, and hear it in their voices when you speak with them
- Tends to like a structured situation, though they may prefer the organization set the goals and define their roles
- o Industrious and service-oriented
- May prefer to maintain that which has already been created, than to create it
- Tends to be more comfortable doing routine procedures and following processes than other styles
- Takes a cautious approach to decision-making, and also somewhat risk-averse
- Is conscientious about reading reports and required material, but prefers someone to tell them about it
- Prefers face-to-face interaction first, phone second; they may be well-connected to the grapevine
- Patient with people and organizations—may complain about a bad situation, but they'll carry on
- Slow to anger, as well as to forgive and forget, if pushed too far beyond their limits
- More laid-back. Low-key in their body language
- Use less 'air time' in conversation than the more assertive styles
- May be slower in forming an opinion about a recommended course of action, and their input may come to the group late, or not at all
- Conversation tends to be more people-oriented than task-oriented—their focus stays on people and feelings, even when the topic is a work issue. few topics are strictly business for this style
- Though they may reveal personal things about themselves that make people feel that they know them, Amiables can be surprisingly guarded in not communicating the thoughts and feelings that are important to them
- Can easily withhold feelings of anger and critical judgments of others—they can appear calm on the outside and be raging on the inside
- May also use an indirect approach when making requests or stating opinions—they may quote others who share the same opinion versus declaring it as their own
- Tend to be natural peacemakers, and their continued efforts toward conciliation often make collaboration possible
- Dislike conflict—sometimes to the point for some people, where they say what they think the other person wants to hear versus what they really believe, which may impact their credibility with other styles in future conflicts
- Tends to be unwilling to confront someone's performance problems, and avoids giving constructive feedback -

Typical Behavioral Traits of Analyticals

- Tends toward perfectionism- would not likely employ a ‘shoot from the hip’ approach
- Wants to do things right the first time so they won’t have to do it over again
- Sticklers for detail because they understand that every aspect of a project contributes to the final outcome, and desired success of the project
- Tends to be critical-of themselves as well as others
- Less likely to give compliments or positive feedback
- Systematic and well-organized
- The more data and facts the Analytical has, the better
- Tends to be more risk-averse, so that they can increase the probability to make the right choice
- May agonize over decisions—even small ones
- Likes to be alone or with just a few people
- Office grapevine is less appealing than going on the internet
- May prefer a closed door to an open one when working in their offices
- Loyal, and wants people to be treated fairly
- Quietest of all the styles; lower pitched voice, slower pace, and less inflection in the voice
- Always thinking—when talking, they are continuously scanning for the right word choice, which may, lead to hesitations in their delivery
- More task-oriented than people-oriented in their conversation—stick to the facts, which is jarring and sometimes annoying for the more responsive, people-oriented styles (below the line)
- They want others in the workplace to provide them with details and accuracy
- Tend to be indirect when making a request or stating an opinion
- Don’t talk as much about their feelings—may intellectualize their feelings, as well as the feelings of others

Others may find them hard to read because they don’t reveal emotion, and may become emotionally detached when involved in conflict or during heated conversations, which may further antagonize other styles, like the Expressives

- Tends to be punctual for meetings but may miss deadlines (because of perfectionistic traits, and the time it takes to come to decisions or recommendations after exploring all the options available to them)

Typical Behavior Traits of Expressives

- Most flamboyant of all the styles—they tend to the dramatic
 - Like being in the limelight—they have a spirited style and lots of energy
 - o Sometimes are overwhelming to other styles
 - Don't like being confined to a desk—may move about a lot when talking
 - May participate in lots of sidebar conversations during meetings if they are bored—but will let others know they are disengaged
 - Most outgoing of the 4 styles
 - Well-tapped into the grapevine—the consummate networkers
 - Wants work that involves interactions with lots of other people
 - Tend to be dreamers—have bold visions and love 'blue-skying' sessions
 - Sometimes resist getting involved in the nitty-gritty details, even when those details are necessary for success—would rather others devote themselves to the details
 - Tend to be impulsive—act first and think later—which may result in problems in their interactions with other styles
 - Challenged in the arena of time management—often may be late to meetings or miss them altogether; may be behind schedule and miss deadlines habitually or play the famous 'catching up at the last minute' game
 - Sometimes rides an emotional roller coaster—but their enthusiasm in good times is usually contagious
 - Tend to be good at motivating others to recharge and become re-energized
- Play is as important as work—they probably manage to schedule in some recreation to their busy days
- Likely look for ways to make work more enjoyable and fun for themselves and others
 - Expressive body language with lots of gestures when they talk and lots of expressions on their faces
 - Voice pitch and tone matches the intensity of what they are talking about
 - More advocates than inquirers (less 'asking'-oriented than Analyticals and Amiables)
 - Sometimes they tend to dominate the conversation
 - They tend to 'think out loud'—they speak to find out what they're thinking -
 - Storytelling is usually a part of their verbal style—and they are more likely to relate an anecdote than a string of facts in a presentation—unless the facts are very, very dramatic
 - More people-oriented than task-oriented in their conversation, and want to spend time building rapport in every conversation before getting down to brass tacks of the topic at hand, which may annoy the above-the-line styles -
 - can be so to the point in expressing their opinions, that some may find them abrasive, though they mean no offense
 - Willing to raise the hard issues and debate them

Typical Behavior Traits of Drivers

- Very results-oriented, focused on the bottom line with a strong goal-orientation
- Loves to set high goals and then work to achieve them
- Has high energy for action-oriented activities—can accomplish an enormous amount of work and handle responsibility for large or complex projects because the complexity won't overwhelm them
 - While Analyticals are thinking, about a problem, an Amiable is meeting about it, the Expressive is talking. about it, and the Driver is *doing* something about it—the essence of the 'getting things done' way of being
- Drivers' actions may not be the best course of action, because they don't always remember to take the long-term view because they are so keenly focused on the immediate situation, so they may embark on a path that creates a whole new set of problems that they did not foresee
- Very decisive and don't tend to agonize over decisions as much as some of the other styles do— they believe that indecision is, in fact, a decision
- If faced with the outcome of a decision that didn't turn out as they hoped for, they are philosophical about it—'you win some, you lose some'
- More likely to change their minds than those left of the line in issues related to opinion or policy, but they are using their rationality and purposeful nature to be able to make the necessary shifts in position—they are focused on the situation, and if the situation changes, they are prepared to change with it
- Typically excel at time management -
- Body language suggests purposefulness, but has fewer gestures in speaking and they tend to have more serious facial expressions than below the line styles; rapid style of speech, like the Expressives
- Has no problem with direct eye contact, though other styles may find it a bit disconcerting
- **o** Fortright in making requests and stating opinions
- Some people are intimidated by the Drivers' communication style, which is also very task- oriented. May have to force themselves to engage in the small talk other styles desire, but the discomfort for the Driver may be apparent
- Tends to push through agendas at meetings, making the people-oriented styles to reflect that they feel bulldozed through the meeting, which can result in losing time in achieving outcomes because there is a lack of buy-in from the other styles present and involved in the process
- Drivers' feelings are channeled through conversation and rapport-building, but through action
- People tend to think of this as the most assertive style, but Expressives are equally assertive as Drivers' but they differ in their orientation (task versus people)