

The Entrepreneurs “Know Yourself” Series: Interaction Style Cheat Sheets



Why Interaction Styles?

Interaction Styles is a way of understanding how people naturally want to go about things and how they seek to influence others. Use these tip sheets to put your knowledge of Interaction Styles to work for you. It can mean the difference between establishing rapport and trust with a client or losing one. Read the clues for how to recognize when you're dealing with someone who's using an Interaction Style different from yours. See the tips on how to flex your own style to be effective with clients who prefer a different style.

How to Recognize the 4 Interaction Styles

Use these tips to help you recognize the style of the person you're communicating with. Recognizing the style can help you flex your own behaviors so that you establish rapport and build trust more quickly. If you insist on using your preferred style with a client who's very different from you, you can lose a client pretty quickly. Even if you manage to keep that client, you can be in for a rocky road as you try to agree on terms and survive the process of working together.

<p>Chart-the-Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet but can feel intense • Less animated, slower pace speaking • Task-focused • List-maker, gets info on own • Makes a plan, follows the plan. • Wants updates on where things stand. 	<p>Behind-the-Scenes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm, quiet energy • Less animated, slower pace of speaking • Softer focus • Gathers info 1-on-1, casts a wider net • Is typically a “good listener”; people often seek them out.
<p>In-Charge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-energy, expressive • Fast-paced • Task-focused • “Be brief, be bright and be gone” • Wants the “executive summary”; will ask for more information if they want it. 	<p>Get-Things-Going</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-energy, expressive • Fast-paced • Less structured • Personable • Typically are bridge-builders between groups and people within groups.

Some content adapted, with permission, from *Understanding Yourself and Others: An Introduction to Interaction Styles, 2.0* by Linda V. Berens, Ph.D.

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Tips for Flexing to be Successful with Each Interaction Style

All of this awareness can be for naught if you don't know what to *do* in the face of these differences. Here are some concrete tips on how to flex your style so that you can have a productive and harmonious relationship with clients whose preferences may be very different from your own.

<p>Chart-the-Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No surprises! Give them information ahead of time • <i>Never say "Those are just details; we'll handle them later."</i> • Answer all their questions and give them time to reflect. • Come in with a solution, not a problem. 	<p>Behind-the-Scenes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soften your energy to not overwhelm them. • Do not rush them. • Give them information ahead of the meeting. • Ask them to help with data gathering and evaluating.
<p>In-Charge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with the executive summary • Do not start with details; give details only when they ask • Show that things are under control. • <i>Lead, follow, or get out of the way.</i> 	<p>Get-Things-Going</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be personable • Involve them • Use their people skills to engage others. • Show respect for others and ask for others' input.

Recommended Resources

I highly recommend Linda V. Berens' ***Understanding Yourself and Others®: An Introduction to Interaction Styles***. You can purchase it from www.radiancehouse.com or from www.amazon.com. (non-affiliate link)

Interaction Styles does not read like "theory." It reads like "real life looking right back at you." Interaction Styles gives you a way of recognizing what you're dealing with and a way of talking about those differences. It empowers you to *choose* your behaviors instead of being limited to responding with your own unconscious preferences.

How to put Interaction Styles to Work for You and Your Company

I'm happy to discuss how you and your clients or teams can work more effectively with different personality types. Contact me to discuss keynotes, lunch-n-learns, and management or team development sessions: 919 599-9301 or carol@effectivewithpeople.com.

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