



## **Reinventing Your Relationships** ***Adapt to Others; Accomplish More***

*“Nothing will change until you do.”*

*-Mike Robbins*

### **A Fresh Start**

Many people sign up for gym memberships in January (the busiest month for initiation in fitness programs) and make resolutions that “This year will be different!” The truth is that it will be just like last year unless you change the way you behave and react to your environment.

You may change residences, jobs, churches and civic organizations, but if you continue to act the way you always have, nothing will change in your life. Wouldn't it be great to really start fresh?

It would be great to develop a plan to interact, sell, serve and work with other people in a way that brings out the strengths in you and those around you. My friend, David Moore, said, “I believe everyone's a 10 at something.” You can be successful at recognizing the “10” in yourself, your co-workers, clients and customers.

Successful people know their strengths and weaknesses. They understand their reactions to other people...but most importantly, they are skilled at adapting to others. They know that to work with teams you need to understand individuals.

To understand individuals you have to be able to “read” their personality and behavioral styles. And to bring about change you have to master adaptability.

There are four basic personality styles. The ancient Greeks called these Choleric, Sanguine, Melancholic and Phlegmatic. But in this context we will call them Powerbroker, Populist, Peacemaker and Perfectionist.

### **Powerbrokers**

The Powerbrokers like to be in control. They walk into a room and take charge immediately. Their battle cry is, “Do what I say and nobody will get hurt!” Carl is a Powerbroker. His family

walks on egg shells for fear of offending him. His coworkers know to only give him brief descriptions of situations to bring him up to speed. He hates details (except his own) and works best alone in his office with the door shut.

Carl dominates every discussion. He expects quick answers and judges others on how fast they respond to him. He leads teams and becomes frustrated to the point of anger when he isn't obeyed...promptly!

Carl is like "Lucy" on the classic Charlie Brown Christmas special. He is in charge and likes to give the orders. The person almost everyone obeys or fears is the Powerbroker.

If you want to work effectively with Powerbrokers, challenge them to look at the situation in different ways. They can't resist a good challenge. It makes them want to respond... and take credit for their work. Put Powerbrokers in positions to manage tasks that require immediate decisiveness. They are very good commanders and will own their decisions.

**Easy Action Step:** Who do you work with that appears to be a Powerbroker? How can you communicate more effectively to be successful in serving, working with or selling to them? What do you need to change in your approach?

## **Populists**

The Populists live to have fun. They like to interact with people. Their enthusiasm is their strongest gift. Judy is the most effervescent person in the office. She exudes excitement and loves to have a great time. She interacts with everyone and seems to either always be "up" or quietly down.

Judy needs to receive affirmation, acceptance and approval from everyone. She works best when she is allowed to involve her creativity and other people in a project. Her office looks like a collection of fun things, places she has visited and people she has known. She invites you to come in and spend time chatting about personal stories and she is more than eager to share her own.

Judy is great with customers and tries to please them. She is a cheerleader for your company and promotes a positive attitude in her communication, dress and image. She is like "Snoopy" in the Charlie Brown Christmas special. She has fun and dances through every situation.

To work effectively with Populists, give them public approval and affirmation. They will reward you with enthusiasm and creativity in every situation. They are great at selling any new initiative, but weak at covering the details... they just aren't very aware of them! They function best in a positive work environment where interaction is encouraged and energetic conversation is rewarded.

**Easy Action Step:** Who do you work with that appears to be a Populist? How can you communicate more effectively to be successful in serving, working with or selling to them?

What do you need to change in your approach?

## **Peacemakers**

Peacemakers quietly go about their business blending in to accomplish each task with regularity. Unlike Populists, they don't want public recognition of their work. They have their job down to a routine pattern and will not swerve from it no matter what is going on around them.

Phil is known for being reliable and trustworthy. He gets along with almost everyone in the organization. He avoids confrontation and conflict. Unfortunately, he can't tell the difference between confrontation and change. He is threatened equally by both.

Phil likes to process every decision and will often change his mind after you believe he has made his final decision. The good news is that he thinks through every choice to be sure of the correct outcome.

Phil is like "Charlie Brown" in the Christmas show. He spends most of the time trying to solve the meaning of what everyone else has already figured out and buys the little tree because he feels sorry for it. He is motivated by feelings and knows that love will make the sad tree flourish.

Peacemakers enjoy a routine task that can be handled easily and quietly. They prefer advance notice on changes and situations where they can work with others in a team situation. They shy away from the limelight and will work best if you reward them privately and personally. Help them avoid conflict situations or immediate deadline tasks. They aren't the best at being "on time," but will accomplish what you want in a well thought out manner.

**Easy Action Step:** Who do you work with that appears to be a Peacemaker? How can you communicate more effectively to be successful in serving, working with or selling to them? What do you need to change in your approach?

## **Perfectionists**

Perfectionists prefer to adhere to the rules and can quote them to you (in case you forget)! They are orderly and work best when everyone values the quality of their work. They judge everyone by how proper and exacting they display their image and work ethics.

Nancy always meets deadlines. She has the cleanest and most organized workspace. She thinks "Casual Friday" is unprofessional with her way of doing tasks. She prefers that everyone play by the rules... and has them color-coded, alphabetized and locked in her filing cabinet. Only she has the key - among about a dozen other keys she possesses.

Nancy tackles every situation in a systematic way. There is almost no problem she doesn't have

a solution designed for... but if one arises, she will devise a policy to deal with it in the future and write a memo to everyone to address it.

In that Charlie Brown show, “Linus” is the conscientious reassurance that everything is under control. At the conclusion, he quotes a lengthy Bible verse to answer Charlie Brown’s question. The typical Perfectionist, he keeps his cool and systematically solves the problem.

Perfectionists are most successful when they can function within expectations and boundaries. They like details and will research any problem or edit any document to correct it before it goes public. They appreciate everyone playing by the rules and doing their job.

***Easy Action Step:*** Who do you work with that appears to be a Perfectionist? How can you communicate more effectively to be successful in serving, working with or selling to them? What do you need to change in your approach?

Good managers or sales people know how to recognize their environment and make it work. They know how to adapt to others and communicate effectively in the language they speak. They adjust readily to any situation and are more successful. Other people feel at ease and are more open to communicating because they feel appreciated and comfortable.

What are you doing to develop your skills at adapting to others? Can you make them feel comfortable without having to adjust to you?

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