

Chapter 5



Key Negotiating Temperaments

"If I knew you and you
knew me,
If both of us could
clearly see,
And with an inner
sight divine
The meaning of your
heart and mine,
I'm sure that we would
differ less,
And clasp our hands in
friendliness,
Our thoughts would
pleasantly agree
If I knew you and you
knew me."

Nixon Waterman

PERFORMANCE COMPETENCIES FOR THIS CHAPTER

- To learn how your personality affects your negotiating temperament
- To learn the four key negotiating temperaments
- To identify behavioral expectations associated with each negotiating temperament
- To assess your unique negotiating temperament

A person's negotiating success depends upon an accurate understanding and use of his/her own unique personality type and style of interaction as well as an accurate perception and understanding of the other's personality and style. This chapter discusses combinations of particular personality characteristics that combine into four major negotiation temperaments. We discuss how personality and temperament differences present challenges in the negotiation process and how to recognize behavior characteristics of the four major temperaments. Tips on communicating with the various temperaments are included elsewhere in this book.

CATEGORIZING PERSONALITIES

At first it may seem inconsistent to say that we are each unique while at the same time to say that we can identify personality types. To be certain, each of us is a unique package of traits, characteristics, experiences, and perspectives. Further, there are no absolutes in the facets used here. We focus on specific facets of personality that, in combination with each other, can be understood as an individual's negotiation temperament. The temperaments described here are not to be interpreted as descriptive of an individual's entire personality.

Everyone possesses and exhibits each facet from time to time and to some extent. Preferences may also change with environment, effort, and maturity. People may utilize various traits according to need and circumstances. Caution is advised in making sweeping or immutable generalizations of people. Nonetheless, much complexity and diversity can be understood by studying and understanding basic interaction temperaments. Those temperaments reflect a core of characteristics that affect perceptions and behavior. Even though no two people are precisely the same, that core regularly presents itself in human interaction.

Whether we like to admit it or not, we categorize people regularly—both strangers and those we know. Expressions such as “slow,” “bigmouthed,” “uptight,” “laid-back,” “control freak,” to name a few, may sound familiar. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of categorizing people is that our categorization of others is affected by and reflects on who we are. In fact, we are most likely to label those most different from us.

Often, we label people quickly. We also label people based upon accumulated experience with them. We all come to know what to

expect from people with whom we often interact, and we conduct ourselves accordingly in an effort to maximize our satisfaction and happiness. In the negotiating arena, we must do the same thing; however, at least in the formal setting or in negotiating with someone we just met, we are not afforded the time to accumulate experience with that person. Rather, at the negotiating table we must quickly recognize and adapt to the personality with whom we must deal. Knowledge of personality and the dimensions of human behavior inherent in temperament provides the power to interact effectively.

“ . . . Let people be different.”

David Grayson

Personality typing, or labeling, is not negative. There are no good or bad personality types.¹ Typecasting is a method to celebrate and creatively use differences between people. In fact, typecasting removes negative assumptions and attitudes, replacing them with a constructive understanding, thereby enhancing communication. Thus, it enables one to resist the tendency to view certain behavior of others as intentionally personal or offensive. Increased knowledge and understanding help us to control our own behavior so that we may reach our negotiation goal.

FOUR MAIN ALTERNATIVE PREFERENCES

According to psychological theory—most preeminently Carl Jung, we each possess preferences in four key areas of personality.² Those areas describe our personal source of energy—extroversion/introversion, the way we take in information—sensing/intuiting, the way we process information—thinking/feeling, and the way we structure and interact with the outside world—judging/perceiving. The possible combinations of those four preferences create sixteen personality types.³ Fortunately, we can condense the task here to understanding how to recognize two preference areas, or four combinations, in others and how to deal with four key negotiating temperaments.

Our personal source of energy is easily kept secret from those who do not know us well. Our way of thinking, likewise, is difficult

¹ All types of pathologies and personality disorders are excluded from the discussion here.

² Chapter 2 provides explanation of each facet of personality addressed here.

³ Jung’s original theory (1968) described extroversion and introversion so profoundly different from each other as to analyze each of the other preference areas under the umbrellas of extroversion and introversion. Thus, Jung analyzed eighteen personality types.

for others to assess. While extroverts and introverts often experience communication difficulties that are discussed in chapter 6, those two areas of personality are not critical in identifying primary negotiating temperaments of others. However, your level of extroversion or introversion, as well as your preference for thinking or feeling, will help in understanding your *own* behavior. Here we look at the second and fourth preference areas.

The way we take in information and the way we interact with the outside world are evident in key negotiating temperaments. It can become fairly easy to identify another's preference for taking in information. The way we interact with our outside world is the most difficult preference to hide from others. In this chapter we look at the four combinations of sensing/intuiting (S/N) and judging/perceiving (J/P) and how they present themselves in negotiation. You will learn how to identify those preferences and how to improve your negotiating skill with that knowledge.

PERCEIVING OTHERS

Perception is a process of active participation. Individuals select and organize stimuli differently and categorize and interpret differently. We discuss perception and communication more fully in other chapters. Here we briefly touch on differences in selecting stimuli. Sensors prefer precision and detail, while intuitors prefer abstraction and generality. Thus, they see and perceive differently. A sensor would see trees where an intuitor would see a forest.

What is sometimes viewed as an offensive or difficult behavior is merely a reflection of a personality comprised of components opposite to one's own. Sensors and intuitors see different things, and judges and perceivers approach the world and interact in different ways. Judges reveal their position and opinions while perceivers do not. Judges anticipate and expect decisions while perceivers defer decisions. Abstraction and distraction to one are reflection and interrelating to another. While one responds to approaching deadlines (judge), another sees no date or end at all (perceiver). Annoying detail to one (an intuitor) is the tangible substance of importance to another (a sensor). What is justice to one (a thinker) is relative and subjective to another (a feeler).

We tend to expect others to be like us. Our expectations affect our perceptions, and our perceptions affect interpretation and assignment of meaning. Attempts to communicate without recognizing these differences can lead to frustration and even anger. We tend

KEY TERM

Perception

is the selection and organization of stimuli.

to take offense when someone does not act as we expect. Understanding our opposites will change our expectations of others and enhance communication. To be effective in negotiation, you must recognize and relate to people who see the world through lenses different from your own, who gather and process information in a manner different from your own, and whose values and needs are different from your own.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Research has demonstrated that one or two key traits are most determinative of how a person interacts with others. These characteristics of interaction have been referred to as *temperament*.⁴

The single most important trait affecting interpersonal interaction is how a person takes in information. We regularly hear expressions of the communication difficulty presented by conflicting traits. For example, how often have you said, “I don’t know where you’re coming from”? If two people are not “reading off the same page,” how can they have a meaningful discussion or come to agreement? Therefore, it is most helpful to know whether a person is a sensor or an intuitor. The other of the two key traits most relevant to negotiation interaction is how a person relates to the world, or his or her lifestyle orientation—the judger versus perceiver preference.

In negotiation, before agreement we need a meeting of the minds. We must know what each side has communicated. We must ensure that we are working on the same issues, and we must relate our positions and decisions to each other in a way that will be understood. Only then may there be agreement.

The more we know about the other preferences and other aspects of personality, the better will be our ability to be effective. It is noted that the four negotiating temperaments we discuss do not fully describe all human temperaments because the interplay of the other two preference categories and other characteristics have significant effect on an individual’s total personality and temperament. Nevertheless, a closer look at the two key preference categories provides a great deal of information for negotiation effectiveness.

⁴ Other behaviorists and psychologists have analyzed personality traits in terms of temperaments (see, e.g., Keirsey and Bates 1978). The organization and analysis here differ from the general literature on temperaments.

FOUR KEY NEGOTIATING TEMPERAMENTS

The sections that follow present profiles of four negotiating temperaments, how to recognize them, how they are typically perceived, and what behavior to expect from each. If you can develop your knowledge as well as your listening and observation skills adequately to recognize one or two of the key preferences in others, you will be able to interact more effectively in the negotiation process.

HARMONIZER (PACIFIER)

The **harmonizer** is the intuitive-perceiving (N/P) combination. The harmonizer sees the big picture and approaches problems with a broad perspective, organizing information into concepts and theories. Harmonizers have a tendency to discuss multiple issues together or move freely from one to another, because they see the interrelatedness of matters in their search for meaning and a grand scheme.

It is nearly impossible to get the harmonizer to focus on details, unless you can appeal to his or her need for harmony or elevate the details to an adequate level of importance in the grand scheme. It is difficult to disagree with the harmonizer due to his or her usually excellent persuasive ability and ability to generate creative alternatives. It is also tough to pressure harmonizers, because they tend to defer decisions and are not pressured by time deadlines. It is usually possible to distract a harmonizer and move to a different issue when something is moving in the wrong direction.

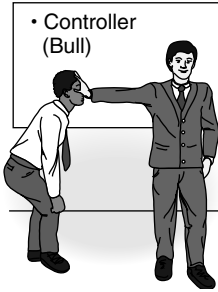
The harmonizer shares perceptions without making or looking for judgment. Miscommunication can occur if these perceptions are considered as decisions. Many harmonizers openly demonstrate their concern for others and may even take criticism personally. Others appear more aloof.

The best way to get along with a harmonizer is to show appreciation for his or her creative concepts and alternatives and to propose an equally broad alternative theory. Harmonizers are probably most easily recognized at the negotiating table by their general, theoretical, and open-ended approach.

The harmonizer may, either when out of control or as an intentional maneuver, become the **pacifier**. Once the pacifier shows up at the negotiating table, there is not likely to be resolution.



CONTROLLER (BULL)



The **controller** is the intuitive-judging (N/J) combination. The controller, due to his or her intuitive preference (like the harmonizer), also sees the big picture and approaches problems with a broad perspective, organizing information into concepts and theories. Although as the controller takes in information he or she sees the interrelatedness of matters in a search for meaning, the controller's need for closure causes him or her to remain focused on the topic or task at hand rather than becoming scattered or leaving loose ends.

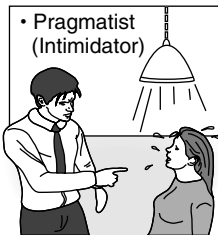
The controller has an organized plan and is impatient for decision and resolution. The controller is firm, decisive, and deliberate. These negotiators thrive on structure and order, possess stubborn resolve in the *rightness* of their positions, and want things their way.

Even though controlling, these individuals do not seek conflict but seek harmony or, at least, calm. Many of them also have a desire to help others. However, since controllers hold strong opinions, they can become (or appear to be) argumentative.

Miscommunication or disagreements can quickly escalate with a controller. They have a tendency to view things as fixed, right-wrong, and black-white. In communicating with a controller, it is best to allow time for him or her to moan in private as alternatives are introduced. The best way to get along with a controller is to evidence a desire to come to agreement. Controllers are probably most easily recognized at the negotiating table by their sense of the big picture combined with their resolve.

The controller, when out of control, may become the **bull**. Once the bull appears, there is likely to be no resolution.

PRAGMATIST (STREET FIGHTER)



The **pragmatist** is the sensing-judging (S/J) combination. The pragmatist sees details, focuses on specifics, and approaches things sequentially. Pragmatists take things literally rather than conceptually. They like facts and figures as well as concrete, tangible results. They are practical, realistic, and bottom-line oriented. One is often able to deduce their conservative financial philosophy.

Pragmatists view themselves as objective. Like the bull, they are organized and impatient for resolution. Pragmatists are also

firm, decisive, and deliberate—possessing stubborn resolve in their positions.

Given their difficulty in seeing the big picture, their focus on details, and their determination to be *right*, pragmatists can usually see little reason for accepting alternatives or giving concessions. Disagreements with the pragmatist can quickly escalate, and the pragmatist can become abrasive and argumentative.

Either due to loss of control or as an intentional maneuver, the pragmatist turned **street fighter** views the negotiation as a win/lose proposition. The street fighter wants to win at all cost.

The best way to get along with the pragmatist is to utilize facts and figures and to demonstrate a concern for the bottom line. The best way to deal with the street fighter is to allow him or her time to cool off. Pragmatists are relatively easy to spot by their focus on details combined with stubborn resolve.

ACTION SEEKER (HIGH ROLLER)

The **action seeker** is the sensing-perceiving (S/P) combination. The action seeker sees details, looks at specifics, and approaches things sequentially. Action seekers also take things literally rather than conceptually.

Action seekers avoid both theory and planning. They are *not* impatient for resolution. Although they are able to defer decisions and adapt to new information, they do have a strong sense of the here and now. They are hands-on people.

Action seekers are spontaneous and action-oriented and seek thrills and gratification. They may allow excitement to take precedence over careful thought. Thus, when action seekers go out of control, they may either win or lose *big*.

In communication, remember that action seekers often share perceptions that may sound like but that are *not* judgments or decisions. The best way to communicate with the action seeker or the **high roller** (the action seeker out of control) is to utilize facts and figures and to occasionally encourage him or her to discuss personal interests in order to tone down the runaway enthusiasm.

Since they do not thrive on order or completion, action seekers can be easily distracted. Action seekers disdain rules, and they are unpredictable. In addition to recognizing their detailed approach, you can spot an action seeker by some hyperactivity.



OTHER INDICATIVE AND RELATED FACETS OF PERSONALITY

Due to the complexity of personality, it is helpful to consider other facets of personality that may be related to negotiating temperament. As stated elsewhere in this book, right-brain/left-brain dominance is related to learning style and to the sensing/intuiting preference. Right-brain dominance is related to the intuiting preference, while left-brain dominance is related to the sensing preference. The accommodator style of learning is associated with sensing (and with extroversion), while the assimilator style of learning is associated with intuiting (and with introversion).

There may be a similarity between a high level of conscientiousness and judging preference (J) behavior. Similarly, Type A personality characteristics may exhibit themselves as similar to judging preference (J) behavior.

Emotional stability, competitiveness, the need for power, the need for affiliation, the need for achievement, and the other two learning styles of converging and diverging may also relate to negotiation temperament when combined with other facets. Those potential effects are noted in the assessment section that follows.

ASSESSING YOUR PRIMARY NEGOTIATING TEMPERAMENT

You should utilize your personality assessments completed elsewhere in this book along with the preceding temperament profiles to fully analyze your primary negotiating temperament. You may find that you relate somewhat to more than one temperament. If you score high in self-monitoring, you may think that you see yourself in all four temperaments. It is important to assess your primary, natural, negotiating temperament. It is easier and more effective to utilize what comes naturally, and it is what comes naturally that takes over when we are under distress or out of control. Knowing how you will behave is necessary to developing effective strategies.

To find your primary temperament, focus first on the manner in which you take in information. Consider your right-brain/left-brain dominance, learning style, and sensing/intuiting to determine your preference. You will notice that, after such determination, you should fit within one of two profiles. Some of the correlations already noted may assist you and provide you with added information about yourself.

If you are a harmonizer who is also very high on the need for affiliation or the need for social power, and low on conscientiousness, you should take special care to avoid becoming the pacifier in negotiations. If you are an action seeker with low conscientiousness or low emotional stability, take care not to become the high roller. If you have a judging preference and also have a high need for personal power and a high level of competitiveness, you may be prone to becoming the bull or the street fighter. You should exercise particular caution in controlling your negotiation interactions if you also have a low level of emotional stability to add to that mixture.

If your learning style is either converging or diverging and you are unsure of your negotiation temperament, consider three additional facets. If you are a converger and are also high in need for achievement, competitiveness, or conscientiousness, you may fit the controller profile. If you are a diverging style of learner and are also relatively low on conscientiousness and need for achievement, you may fit the action seeker profile. A form is provided in Exhibit 5-1 to record your temperament assessment.

Performance Checklist

- ✓ Certain aspects of personality relate particularly to interaction style. Preferences for taking in information and structuring the outside world exhibit themselves in negotiating temperaments. Right-brain/left-brain dominance; learning style; conscientiousness; Type A characteristics; emotional stability; and needs for power, achievement, and affiliation may also relate to temperament.
- ✓ The four key negotiation temperaments are the harmonizer (pacifier), the controller (bull), the pragmatist (street fighter), and the action seeker (high roller). The parenthetical names describe the temperament out of control.
- ✓ Temperament affects perceptions, interpretations, and certain behaviors. It is possible to recognize each temperament by paying attention to approach. Harmonizers are general and open-ended; controllers are general and resolved; pragmatists are specific and resolved; and action seekers are specific and open-ended.
- ✓ You should record your negotiation temperament assessment in the form provided in Exhibit 5-1 using the knowledge gained thus far.

EXHIBIT 5-1**Negotiating Temperament Assessment Form**

My primary negotiating temperament is

Harmonizer _____ Controller _____ Pragmatist _____ Action seeker _____

I am a harmonizer who also has

High need for affiliation _____

High need for social power _____

Low conscientiousness _____

If one or more of the preceding are true, I will focus on not being a pacifier _____

I am a controller who also has

High competitiveness _____

High need for personal power _____

Moderate to low emotional stability _____

If two or more of the preceding are true, I will focus on not being a bull _____

I am a pragmatist who also has

High competitiveness _____

High need for personal power _____

Moderate to low emotional stability _____

If two or more of the preceding are true, I will focus on not being a street fighter _____

I am an action seeker who also has

Moderate to low conscientiousness _____

Moderate to low emotional stability _____

If one or both of the preceding are true, I will focus on not being a high roller _____

Key Terms, Phrases, and Concepts

Perception

Harmonizer (pacifier)

Controller (bull)

Pragmatist (street fighter)

Action Seeker (high-roller)

Review Questions

Mark each of questions 1 and 2 as True (T) or False (F) and answer questions 3 through 10.

- T F 1. The four key negotiating temperaments reflect four possible combinations of two personality preferences.
- T F 2. Understanding two personality preferences is all that is necessary to master negotiating behavior.
3. A negotiator who moves freely from one issue to another or discusses multiple issues together is exemplifying the temperament of a/an _____.
4. A negotiator who focuses on specifics and details might be one of which two temperaments? _____ or _____.
5. A negotiator who likes detail and is also focused on resolution exemplifies the temperament of a/an _____.
6. The negotiating temperament that is likely most unpredictable is the _____.
7. Why are harmonizers and controllers prone to organize information into concepts and theories? What aspects of personality relate to such behavior?
8. What personality characteristics or traits must a harmonizer be sure to keep in check or under control? Why?
9. What personality characteristics or traits must an action seeker be sure to keep under control? Why?
10. Think of a recent interaction you were party to. Imagine yourself in the eyes of the other party. Which negotiating temperament did you exhibit?

Case 5.1

Ventura Capital is a financier who specializes in capitalizing start-up companies. Andy Preneur is a would-be entrepreneur. He needs capital to start his new business. Andy and Ventura have been negotiating a potential agreement over the last few months. It seems there is only one item unresolved. Ventura wants her investment to remain in the company and earn a preferred dividend of 5 percent, even if Andy no longer needs the money. Andy wants the right to buy out Ventura's interest at any time as long as the 5 percent return

is paid. Role-play this case with another person. When you finish, address the following questions.

Case Discussion Questions

1. Which of the four key temperaments was most clearly displayed by the other person? Identify specific comments and behaviors to support your assessment.
2. Which of the four key temperaments do you think your comments and behaviors most clearly displayed?
3. Do you agree with each other's self and other assessments? If not, why do you think you see the behaviors differently?