

THE ART OF INFLUENCE

➔ Written By Kelly Fairbairn



A Complimentary eBook from Strategic Partners

Influence: an introduction

Influence has been defined as *the ability to affect others—seen only in its effect—without exertion of force or formal authority.*

In order to exert influence, you must be attentive to the interaction styles of others and be willing to flex your own personal interaction style as you work with others.

Interaction styles fall into four general groups:



Analyzer



Director



Relater



Expresser

Chief Strengths

- Informative and practical advice
- Structure
- Step-by-step analysis
- Presents pros and cons

Method of Planning

- In-depth, long-range
- Data-based comprehensive review of alternatives
- Build on known information

Reaction to Stress

- Manages tension by limiting exposure to people
- Avoids or “withdraws”

Guiding Questions

- Where has it been done before?
- What alternatives are available?
- How does it work?
- Can we try it a step at a time?



Analyzer

Chief Strengths

- Offers advice
- Gives prescriptions
- Encourages utilization, action

Method of Planning

- Plans on the go
- Short-range planning
- Dynamic, quick informal
- Action steps

Guiding Questions

- What are the opportunities?
- What is the bottom line?
- Who's in charge?
- How does it advance my position?

Reaction to Stress

- Manages tension by controlling people with facts, logic and reason
- Autocratic or "controls"

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Director



Chief Strengths

- Listens with empathy
- Helps person come up with own answers
- Asks, “What do you want?”

Reaction to Stress

- Manages tension by giving in to people
- Acquiesces or “gives in”



Guiding Questions

- What do others say about it?
- How can we get others to like it?
- Can we change it if we don't like it?
- Will it bring us more together?

Method of Planning

- Pulls pieces into creative outcome
- Involves others in plan
- Concern over general acceptance of plan



Relater



Expresser ↗

Chief Strengths

- ↗ Offers assistance
- ↗ Encourages
- ↗ Is available
- ↗ “I’m here if you need me”

Method of Planning

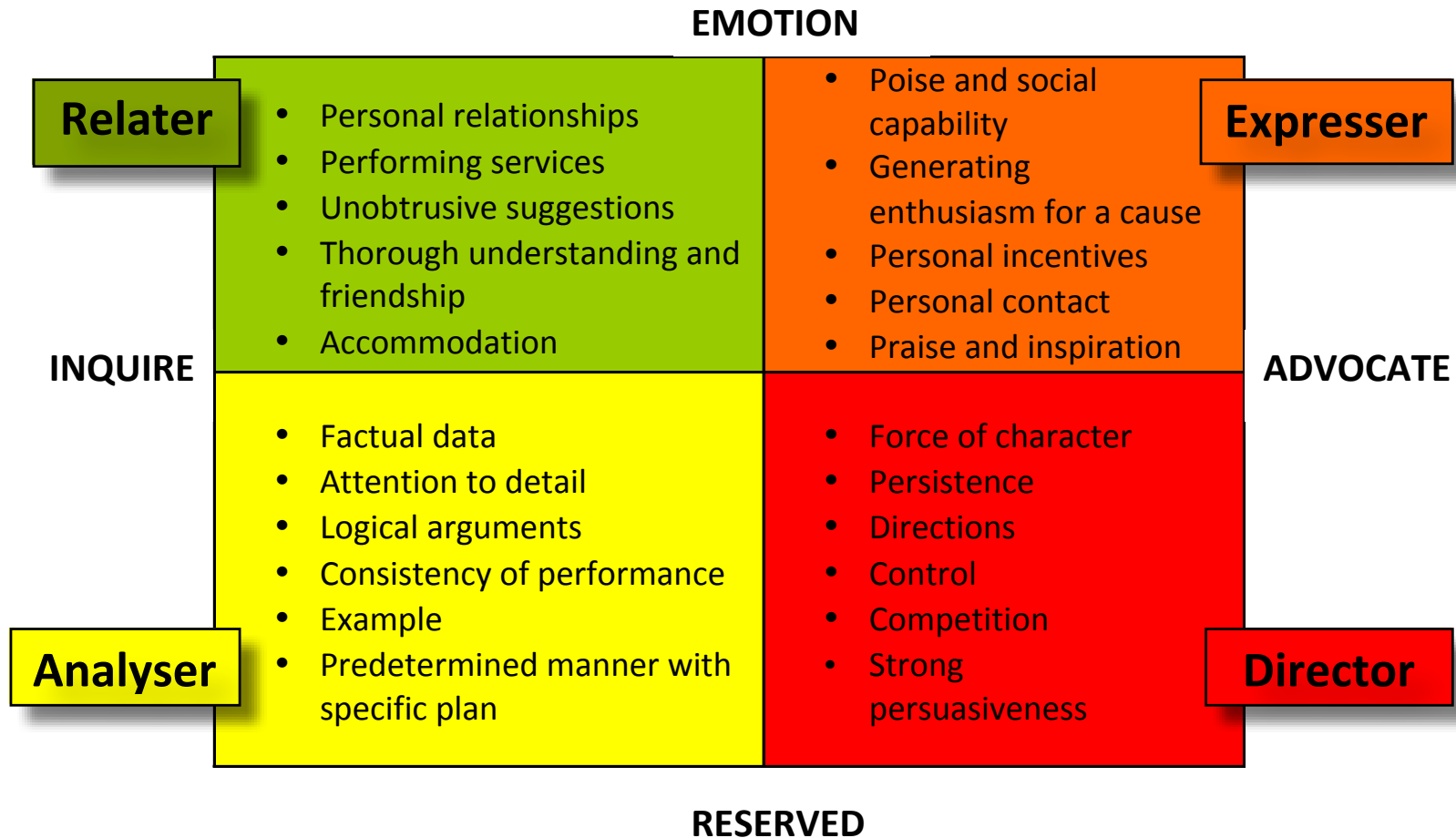
- ↗ Goal-oriented approach
- ↗ Wants best approach
- ↗ Prefers group planning
- ↗ Delegates with high expectations

Reaction to Stress

- ↗ Manages tension by controlling people with feeling and emotion
- ↗ Attacks or “controls with feelings”

Guiding Questions

- ↗ Is it the best solution for everyone?
- ↗ Does it have a high purpose?
- ↗ Is it fair and just?
- ↗ How much good does it do when...?



How does each interaction style want to be influenced?

This chart shows characteristics of interaction styles. What's important to note is that the styles can be grouped along two continuums: Reserved to Emotion, and Inquire to Advocate.

A Deeper Look...

EMOTION - RESERVED

People who display the Analyser and Director interaction styles tend to be more reserved—their pace is deliberate; their voices are more monotone; their body language is controlled. People who display the Relater and Expresser interaction styles tend to show more emotion—their pace is quicker; their voices are well-modulated and may be louder; their body language is broad and dramatic.

INQUIRE - ADVOCATE

People who are to the left of the Inquire to Advocate continuum, Relaters and Analysers, are more likely to ask for direction or the opinion of others, and they tend to be passive rather than assertive in their interactions with others. Conversely, people who are to the right on the Inquire to Advocate continuum, Expressors and Directors, tend to tell others their opinions and give direction, and they tend to be assertive and sometimes aggressive in their interactions with others.

Now What?

Once you have identified the interaction style of the person you are working with, you must intentionally and consciously flex your own personal style in order to be influential. Here are some strategies for effective interaction:

Analyzer

If you want to be successful when you interact with Analyzers, remember these keys.



➤ Do...

- Prepare your case in advance
- Approach them in a straightforward manner
- Support their principles; build your credibility by listing pros and cons to any suggestion you make
- Make an organized contribution to their efforts; present specifics and do what you say you will do
- Take your time, but be persistent
- Draw up a scheduled approach to implementing action with step-by-step timetable; assure them that there won't be surprises

➤ Don't...

- Be disorganized or messy
- Be giddy, casual, informal or loud
- Rush the decision-making
- Be vague about what's expected of either of you; don't fail to follow through
- Dillydally
- Leave things to chance or luck

Expressers



If you want to be successful when you interact with Expressers, remember these keys:

➤ Do...

- Plan interactions that support their dreams and intentions
- Leave time for relating and socializing
- Talk about people and their goals; opinions they find stimulating
- Ask for their ideas and hunches
- Provide ideas for implementing action
- Use enough time to be stimulating, fun loving, fast moving

➤ Don't...

- Legislate or muffle
- Be curt, cold or tight-lipped
- Drive on to facts or figures, alternatives or abstractions
- Waste time trying to be impersonal and judgmental
- Spend too much time being task-oriented; allow time for discussing ideas
- Dream with them or you'll lose time

Director

If you want to be successful when you interact with Directors, remember these keys:

- Do...
 - Be clear, specific and to the point
 - Stick to business
 - Come prepared with all requirements, objectives, support material in a well-organized package
 - Present facts logically; plan your presentation efficiently
 - Ask specific (preferable “what”) questions
 - Provide alternatives and choices for making own decisions
- Don't...
 - Ramble on or waste their time
 - Spend a lot of time on personal talk
 - Forget or lose things; be disorganized or messy; confuse them or distract them from business
 - Leave loopholes or cloudy issues (if you don't want to be zapped)
 - Ask rhetorical questions or useless ones
 - Come with a ready-made decision, and don't make it for them

Relater

If you want to be successful when you interact with Relaters, remember these keys:

- Do...
 - Start, however briefly, with a personal comment. Break the ice
 - Show interest in them as people; find areas of common involvement; be candid and open
 - Patiently draw out personal goals and work with them to help achieve these goals; listen, be responsive
 - Present your case softly, in a nonthreatening manner
 - Watch carefully for possible areas of early discouragement or dissatisfaction because they probably won't fight back
- Don't...
 - Rush headlong into business or the agenda
 - Stick coldly or harshly to business; on the other hand, lose sight of being too personal
 - Force them to respond quickly to your objectives; say, “Here's how I see it.”
 - Be domineering or demanding; threaten with position power
 - Manipulate or bully them into agreeing
 - Be abrupt and rapid



about the author



Kelly Fairbairn

Kelly Fairbairn began her career as an Instructional Designer with a northeastern utility. While piloting projects, she evaluated programs and conducted training sessions as part of the utility's university for professional employees and supervisors. Kelly evaluated and designed learning on management development topics such as team skills, communication skills, listening skills, conflict management, selection interviewing, and termination management. Later, she became Instructional Design Manager for Fleet Mortgage Group, managing a team of technical and professional development trainers and instructional designers who created total learning solutions for leadership, professional development, and technical employees. Kelly has a Bachelor's degree in public communication from Cornell University and a Master's degree in employee counseling and relations from Binghamton University.

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