

Have you ever said, “I can’t help it—that’s just the way I am”? As a rule, we don’t stop to think about how we became the people we currently are. We accept ourselves as we are and forget that much of who we are is *learned* behavior.

Personality is a complex mix of genetic possibility and learned behavior. Although we can’t always tell for sure whether genetics or experience has a greater influence, we do know that humans are the most adaptable creature on the planet and that even many genetic predispositions to behave in certain ways can be overcome through appropriate training. Even our two strongest inborn fears—the fear of falling and the fear of loud noises—can be relearned through training.

This section is designed to accomplish the following:

- Determine your personal profile.
- Determine your principal metaprograms.
- Explain the ways in which your personal profile and metaprograms interact with those of others.
- Improve your ability to appreciate differences among people and to increase your effectiveness in communicating and working with others who have different behavioral patterns.

◆ Personal Profiles



Exercise

This exercise is designed to help you understand your personal profile—your basic behavioral pattern—and the personal profiles of others, especially those with whom you work.

The Personal Profile is not a test. There are no right answers; you cannot pass or fail. No behavioral pattern is bad—each behavioral pattern has certain advantages and disadvantages. The most effective people are those who understand

- themselves,
- those with whom they work, and
- the needs of the organization.

Personal differences in communication styles and problem-solving strategies can be a source of conflict. The Personal Profile will improve your understanding of a variety of work behaviors and the different needs people have to be effective on the job.

Instructions

The Personal Profile consists of four sets of statements and pairs of descriptive words. The statements require you to determine how true a type of action is of you. You might, for example, have a statement like the following: *I can tell a good joke*. You will then be asked to rank your degree of agreement with that statement, from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*.

Based on your own feelings about the truth of that statement, you would circle the answer that most closely describes your joke-telling ability. The higher the number you selected, the more confident you would be of your ability to tell good jokes on a regular basis.

The word pairs are presented as either explicit or implied opposites. If you had to choose between calling yourself *active* or *passive*, which would you say is more true of you? Because it is possible to be somewhere in between, the word pairs give you a scale so that you can indicate which of the words comes closer to describing you and the degree to which you feel it does.

active	4	3	2	1	0	passive
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If you consider yourself more active than passive, you would circle the 4 or the 3. If you consider yourself more passive, you would circle the 0 or the 1. If you consider yourself to be active sometimes and passive on other occasions, you might circle the 2.

Your Personal Profile

For each of the following questions, indicate whether you *strongly agree* (4), *agree* (3), *neither agree nor disagree* (2), *disagree*, (1), or *strongly disagree* (0) by circling the appropriate number.

	SA				SD
1. I make it a point to start new projects on a regular basis.	4	3	2	1	0
2. I enjoy changing things. I don't like to do things the same way for too long.	4	3	2	1	0
3. I am a creative person.	4	3	2	1	0
4. I make decisions quickly and easily even when I don't have all the facts.	4	3	2	1	0
5. I have plenty of self-confidence.	4	3	2	1	0
6. I would rather figure things out for myself than have someone else tell me.	4	3	2	1	0
7. When I'm in a group, I prefer to be in charge.	4	3	2	1	0
8. Other people look to me to provide leadership and direction.	4	3	2	1	0
9. I find that other people are often indecisive and have trouble deciding what to do.	4	3	2	1	0
10. Getting the job done is more important than working conditions.	4	3	2	1	0
11. I feel that I control my own life, that I am responsible for what I make of myself.	4	3	2	1	0
12. I resent people who seem unable to control their lives.	4	3	2	1	0
13. I wake up full of energy, ready for the day to begin.	4	3	2	1	0
14. I do more work than other members of my group.	4	3	2	1	0
15. When something is important, I prefer to work on it by myself.	4	3	2	1	0

Subtotal 1: _____

Continue to next page.



For each of the following pairs of words, select the point on the scale that best describes your typical behavior or feelings.

competitive	4	3	2	1	0	uncompetitive
bold	4	3	2	1	0	hesitant
take charge	4	3	2	1	0	go along
dominant	4	3	2	1	0	submissive
acting	4	3	2	1	0	thinking
task oriented	4	3	2	1	0	people oriented
threatening	4	3	2	1	0	comforting
lone wolf	4	3	2	1	0	groupie
overwhelming	4	3	2	1	0	unimpressive
inappropriate	4	3	2	1	0	appropriate

Subtotal 2: _____

Insert Subtotal 1 from the previous page:

Subtotal 1: _____

Add Subtotals 1 and 2:

A = _____

Continue to next page.



	SA			SD
1. I enjoy spending time talking with others.	4	3	2	1 0
2. I would rather work in a group than by myself.	4	3	2	1 0
3. I enjoy helping others solve their problems.	4	3	2	1 0
4. I enjoy being the center of attention.	4	3	2	1 0
5. I tend to have a positive outlook, to believe that everything will work out for the best.	4	3	2	1 0
6. I enjoy giving and receiving compliments and praise.	4	3	2	1 0
7. I enjoy using the telephone to keep up with family and friends.	4	3	2	1 0
8. Other people enjoy my company.	4	3	2	1 0
9. I enjoy dressing up and going to parties.	4	3	2	1 0
10. I tend to believe what other people tell me.	4	3	2	1 0
11. I try to be organized but end up accomplishing less than I would like.	4	3	2	1 0
12. I would enjoy being a talk-show host.	4	3	2	1 0
13. I tend to procrastinate and miss deadlines.	4	3	2	1 0
14. I enjoy telling stories or jokes.	4	3	2	1 0
15. If at first I don't succeed, I quit.	4	3	2	1 0

Subtotal 3: _____

Continue to next page.



For each of the following pairs of words, select the point on the scale that best describes your typical behavior or feelings.

likable	4	3	2	1	0	annoying
approachable	4	3	2	1	0	unapproachable
interested	4	3	2	1	0	bored
pretending	4	3	2	1	0	obvious
enthusiastic	4	3	2	1	0	reserved
attention-seeking	4	3	2	1	0	self-sufficient
easy to know	4	3	2	1	0	hard to know
playful	4	3	2	1	0	stiff
spontaneous	4	3	2	1	0	controlled
feeling	4	3	2	1	0	thinking

Subtotal 4: _____

Insert Subtotal 3 from the previous page:

Subtotal 3: _____

Add Subtotals 3 and 4:

C = _____

Continue to next page.



	SA				SD
1. I have the patience to work until a job is done right.	4	3	2	1	0
2. I am loyal to my friends and to my employer.	4	3	2	1	0
3. Other people tell me that I'm a good listener.	4	3	2	1	0
4. My family and friends are more important to me than my work.	4	3	2	1	0
5. I work well in groups.	4	3	2	1	0
6. I enjoy a job most when I can do it better than anyone else.	4	3	2	1	0
7. I am good at helping others resolve their conflicts.	4	3	2	1	0
8. I don't like to change unless I can see a good reason for it.	4	3	2	1	0
9. It bothers me to contradict others even when I know that they are wrong.	4	3	2	1	0
10. I am most comfortable working for someone who knows exactly what he or she wants done.	4	3	2	1	0
11. I try to avoid people who like to argue.	4	3	2	1	0
12. I do my best to follow directions.	4	3	2	1	0
13. I plan for the future and avoid taking chances.	4	3	2	1	0
14. I like to plan my day according to a specific schedule.	4	3	2	1	0
15. I am uncomfortable in new situations until I know exactly what is expected of me.	4	3	2	1	0

Subtotal 5: _____

Continue to next page.



For each of the following pairs of words, select the point on the scale that best describes your typical behavior or feelings.

matter-of-fact	4	3	2	1	0	dramatic
satisfying	4	3	2	1	0	frustrating
friendly	4	3	2	1	0	unfriendly
responsive	4	3	2	1	0	unresponsive
consistent	4	3	2	1	0	flexible
sensitive	4	3	2	1	0	insensitive
giving	4	3	2	1	0	demanding
straightforward	4	3	2	1	0	devious
analytical	4	3	2	1	0	creative
supportive	4	3	2	1	0	critical

Subtotal 6: _____

Insert Subtotal 5 from the previous page:

Subtotal 5: _____

Add Subtotals 5 and 6:

S = _____

Continue to next page.



	SA			SD
1. Doing a good job is more important than doing a job quickly.	4	3	2	1 0
2. Other people praise me for my accuracy and attention to detail.	4	3	2	1 0
3. I am tactful in presenting my ideas to my boss or supervisor.	4	3	2	1 0
4. I am a highly organized person.	4	3	2	1 0
5. I try to gather all the evidence before making a decision.	4	3	2	1 0
6. It's important to me that my friends have high standards.	4	3	2	1 0
7. I am amazed at how careless most people are with their work.	4	3	2	1 0
8. I avoid doing things that I can't do well.	4	3	2	1 0
9. I do my best work alone rather than in a group.	4	3	2	1 0
10. I hate to be caught having made a mistake.	4	3	2	1 0
11. When I'm right, I refuse to give in.	4	3	2	1 0
12. I pay close attention to details.	4	3	2	1 0
13. I find mistakes in the work of others.	4	3	2	1 0
14. I enjoy my privacy and do not like to share my feelings with others.	4	3	2	1 0
15. Others tell me that I'm too critical.	4	3	2	1 0

Subtotal 7: _____

Continue to next page.



For each of the following pairs of words, select the point on the scale that best describes your typical behavior or feelings.

accurate	4	3	2	1	0	fast and sloppy
critical	4	3	2	1	0	accepting
hard-working	4	3	2	1	0	easy going
factual	4	3	2	1	0	entertaining
annoying	4	3	2	1	0	likable
formal	4	3	2	1	0	informal
cold	4	3	2	1	0	hot
rigid	4	3	2	1	0	flexible
thinking	4	3	2	1	0	feeling
unfriendly	4	3	2	1	0	friendly

Subtotal 8: _____

Insert Subtotal 7 from the previous page:

Subtotal 7: _____

Add Subtotals 7 and 8:

P = _____

Continue to next page.



Scoring

List your totals here: **A** = ____ **C** = ____ **S** = ____ **P** = ____

Use the following chart to plot your scores.

	A	C	S	P
100				100
.....			
95				95
.....			
90				90
.....			
85				85
.....			
80				80
.....			
75				75
.....			
70				70
.....			
65				65
.....			
60				60
.....			
55				55
.....			
50				50
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45				45
.....			
40				40
.....			
35				35
.....			
30				30
.....			
25				25
.....			
20				20
.....			
15				15
.....			
10				10
.....			
5				5
.....			
0				0
	A	C	S	P

How to Interpret Your Personal Profile

- The **A** questions reveal your tendency to be an ***Achiever.***
- The **C** questions reveal your tendency to be a ***Communicator.***
- The **S** questions reveal your tendency to be a ***Specialist.***
- The **P** questions reveal your tendency to be a ***Perfectionist.***

Each of these basic personality types is valuable and makes an important contribution to an organization. These types, however, have different characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses. Each of the basic types communicates and solves problems in a different way. For some kinds of problems, the strategies common to one type would prove the most successful. In other circumstances, the same strategies might fail.

Each type also has its good side and its bad side. The same basic behavioral patterns may contribute to one person's becoming a world leader and to another's becoming a bank robber. Behavioral patterns do not necessarily influence goals or choices, but they do tend to influence typical responses to environmental events.

Most people are not exclusively one type but are rather a mixture of types. Under normal circumstances, the strengths and weaknesses from different types may result in a balanced approach to problem solving. In times of stress, however, people have a tendency to rely on the behaviors common to their most fundamental type: Achievers become more "achiever like"; Communicators become more "communicator like"; Specialists become more "specialist like"; and Perfectionists become more "perfectionist like."

Your scores in the various categories show you the relative strengths of the basic behavioral patterns in your personality. Use the following information about each of the types and your scores for each of the categories to analyze the results of your Personal Profile.

The Achiever

Personality	Likes to set goals, challenge the environment, and win. Sees life as a competition.
Motto	Onward and upward!
Characteristics	Focuses on goal—task oriented Enjoys action and desires results Accepts challenges Takes control and makes decisions quickly Looks for solutions to problems Gives orders Trusts self more than others Worries about losing
Advantages	Self-reliant Good planners Good decision makers Good problem solvers, creative Willing to assume responsibility Willing to take risks
Disadvantages	Obstinate, unwilling to listen to others Argumentative Unwilling to compromise Unempathic (lacks empathy for others) Impatient Unsociable and unconcerned with group norms
Special Wants	Authority (to be in charge) Challenges Opportunity for advancement A variety of activities Individual recognition
Special Needs	To listen to others To recognize the needs of others To gather more evidence before making decisions To cooperate in group situations To be more sensitive to group norms To relax and enjoy other people more
Good Side	Inventors, explorers, writers, musicians, athletes, or company presidents
Bad Side	Gang leaders, bullies, outlaws, hobos, or bums

The Communicator

Personality	Likes to achieve results by working with and through others. Finds more enjoyment in the process than in the results.
Motto	Let's talk about it!
Characteristics	Makes favorable impression Enjoys travel and meeting people Enjoys working in groups Enjoys conversation, parties, social recognition Generates enthusiasm Desires to help others Enjoys speaking in public, entertaining others Is optimistic and friendly Worries about what others might say
Advantages	Good motivators, good at persuading others Good instructors Good at helping and encouraging others Good at working in groups Socially adept Quick witted, never at a loss for words
Disadvantages	Loses track of objective Gossips Would rather talk than listen, would rather talk than work Overlooks important details Has difficulty meeting deadlines Lacks follow through Lacks objectivity
Special Wants	Popularity and social recognition Group activities and teamwork Democratic relationships Opportunities for self-expression Credit for contributions to group Meaningful relationships
Special Needs	To develop time management skills To develop greater objectivity To develop greater perseverance To be more assertive To be more self-reliant
Good Side	Entertainers, writers, corporate leaders, linguists, educators
Bad Side	Complainers, gossips, hypochondriacs, pests, charlatans

The Specialist

Personality	Likes to plan work and relationships and to maintain predictable patterns of behavior. Finds enjoyment in knowing what is expected and in knowing what to expect.
Motto	Better safe than sorry!
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows accepted work patterns Values moderation Dislikes change and dislikes conflict Has tremendous patience Values home life Is very reliable Makes others feel wanted Worries about self-worth
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conscientiousness (pays close attention to detail) Good concentration Good at planning Trustworthiness and loyalty Perseverance Tact and diplomacy Good listening skills Good at resolving conflicts
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow to adjust to change Needs specific guidelines to act Tends to be passive rather than assertive Requires structured environment Hesitates to take risks Needs help starting new projects
Special Wants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured, predictable environment Long-term security and a stable, private home life Well-defined limits of responsibility Identification with a group and cooperative efforts Frequent reinforcement for work accomplished
Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To accept worthwhile changes To be more creative To delegate responsibilities To be more flexible and to accept ambiguities To accept challenges
Good Side	Scientists, psychotherapists, doctors, religious leaders, lawyers
Bad Side	Mindless bureaucrats, hypochondriacs, gang members

The Perfectionist

Personality	Enjoys jobs requiring attention to detail and accuracy, especially when specific guidelines are provided. Enjoys tasks requiring critical, objective thinking. Complies with authority and tries to provide the right answer.
Motto	If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well!
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows orders and directions Checks for accuracy, criticizes the work of others Is capable of systematic, objective thinking Works slowly and gathers all facts before making a decision Relies on the opinions of supervisors Exercises self-discipline Trusts self more than others and prefers to work alone Worries about making a mistake
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competent and reliable—can be trusted to do complex jobs right Capable of solving complex problems Tactful in dealing with superiors Capable of making difficult decisions Willing to assume responsibility Often very intelligent
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be overly critical Doesn't like change and refuses to compromise Overly sensitive to criticism Evaluates others only by the quality of their work Can be slow to make decisions Refuses to acknowledge mistakes
Special Wants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed work with specific rules and guidelines The opportunity to conduct thorough research before deciding A well-defined area of responsibility Personal recognition for accuracy
Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn to delegate responsibility To make faster decisions To be less critical of others To learn to compromise and to be more flexible To be willing to take risks, challenge authority To relax and enjoy others more
Good Side	Surgeons, engineers, scientists, mathematicians, historians, computer programmers
Bad Side	Tax evaders, computer thieves, complainers, bigots

◆ Metaprograms

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| • Action | — | Initiate/Respond |
| • Direction | — | Toward/Away From |
| • Source | — | Internal/External |
| • Conduct | — | Rule Follower/Breaker |
| • Response | — | Match/Mismatch |
| • Scope | — | Global/Specific |
| • Cognitive Style | — | Thinking/Feeling |
| • Confirmation | — | Representational System/Times |
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- *Meta* means *over, beyond, or about*. A metaprogram is a master “program” or behavioral pattern that tends to operate through time and across contexts, influencing behavior in major ways.
- Each of us tends to assume that others use the same metaprograms that we do, and when we discover otherwise, we tend to think of their behavior as wrong.
- Each of the metaprograms has extremes of polar opposites, and most people fall somewhere between those opposites.
- People may employ different metaprograms at work from those they use at home, and they may use yet different metaprograms in social contexts.

The Action Metaprogram

The action metaprogram governs whether an individual is primarily an *initiator* or a *responder*. Initiators have what has often been called “a bias for action” and are motivated by situations in which they can act and have the initiative. Initiators enjoy starting new projects and may have several projects going at once. They do not like to wait for others to act and are frequently accused of failing to “look before they leap.”

Responders, on the other hand, are slow to begin projects and often analyze and plan without taking action. Responders prefer to analyze a situation thoroughly and are most comfortable when they can wait until others initiate the action and then respond to what others have done. Typical language used by such individuals would include the following:

Initiator: I'll decide when I've heard from everyone.
I exercise every day.
Let's go out for dinner tonight.
I want to buy a new car.
This is the right thing to do.

Responder: What do you think we should do?
It's important to think about the value of exercising.
What would you like to do for dinner tonight?
Do you think we should buy a new car yet?
Is this the right thing to do?

In between: Now that we've heard from everyone, I think we have enough information to make a decision.
I exercise because it's important to stay physically fit.
Would you like to go out for dinner tonight?
Our car is getting old, and we probably should think about buying a new one.

The Direction Metaprogram

The direction metaprogram governs whether an individual is primarily motivated to *move toward* desired objectives or to *move away from* unpleasant consequences. Those who are motivated to move *toward* the desirable tend to set and work to achieve specific goals. They think and talk in terms of what will be gained.

People who move *away from* the undesirable are motivated primarily by avoiding loss. They think and talk in terms of dangers and risks to avoid. They typically do not set goals but rather react to what they perceive as dangers in the environment.

Note that a person can act in a certain way either by moving away from or moving toward something. A person can exercise, for example, because he or she enjoys the feeling of being physically fit, or a person can exercise because he or she does *not* want to be fat. The behavior, exercising, is the same in either case.

Typical language used by such individuals would include the following:

- Toward:* We can earn 38 percent profit!
 We could increase our market share by advertising.
 Let's party first and study later.
 I'm going to study so that I can earn a good grade in this class.
- Away from:* We could easily lose our investment.
 Advertising is expensive, and we can't be sure that it would work.
 We'll lose market share if we don't increase our advertising.
 Studying is such a drag; let's party.
 I can't afford to fail this class, so I'm going to study.
- In between:* This investment shows good potential.
 Advertising is a good way to increase market share.
 Let's study for a while and then take a break.
 I'd like to do well in this class, so I'm going to study.

**The Source
 Metaprogram**

The source metaprogram governs whether an individual relies on his or her own judgment or on the judgments of others when making decisions and for reinforcement. Those with an *internal* source or frame of reference need to decide for themselves and are able to provide their own reinforcement and tend to ignore feedback from others. What others say is treated as information, which the individual then evaluates according to his or her personal standards. Individuals with an extremely strong internal frame of reference will resist following instructions given by others.

Those with an *external* source or frame of reference, on the other hand, prefer to receive direction and reinforcement from others. The information received from others provides the basis for their decisions. They frequently look to external sources, including published information and the opinions of others, to make decisions and to provide standards for conduct. They seek feedback from others and then use that information to determine their future behavior. Typical language used by such individuals would include the following:

- Internal:* I decided. . . .
 I recognized. . . .
 I think. . . .
 I feel. . . .
 I want. . . .
- External:* My boss said. . . .
 The article said that. . . .
 What do you think?
 How would you feel about that?
 What do you want?
- In between:* After a lot of thought and listening to a lot of advice, I've decided. . . . One way to think about it is that. . . .
 A number of people have told me that I made the right decision.
 I'd like to find a solution that gives both of us what we want.

The Conduct Metaprogram

The conduct metaprogram governs whether an individual tends to be a *rule follower* or a *rule breaker* and whether he or she thinks primarily in terms of procedures to be followed or alternative ways of doing things.

Rule followers stick to developed and tested procedures. They have great respect for existing procedures. They believe in doing things the “right” way. They typically want to know *how* something should be done rather than *why* it should be done. Rule followers often think of rule breakers as “cheaters.”

Rule breakers are motivated by developing options and alternatives. They typically need to discover for themselves whether an existing rule or procedure is valid and tend to respect a rule or procedure only if breaking it will clearly produce a negative result. Typical language used by such individuals would include the following:

Rule follower: The owner’s manual says. . . .
We’re supposed to be there at 8:00.
We’ve always done it that way.
We’ll get caught.
I don’t know what I should do next.

Rule breaker: What difference does it make as long as it works?
It won’t matter if we’re late.
Let’s try something new.
No one will know.
No one will care if we substitute the one for the other.

In between: Even though the owner’s manual says every 3000 miles, that can be stretched to 4000 or 5000 without a problem.
We may need to change the way we’ve been doing things.
What’s the worst that could happen if we’re caught?
As long as we are there close to 8:00, no one will care.

The Response Metaprogram

The response metaprogram governs whether an individual tends to *match* (agree with) or *mismatch* (disagree with) elements in the environment and information presented by others.

Matchers look for and desire sameness. They prefer to have their environment, including their relationships, remain the same, and they tend to enjoy working for the same organization for a long time. In conversation, they tend to look for and emphasize points of agreement.

Mismatchers, on the other hand, look for differences and enjoy change. In conversation, they will look for and emphasize differences and exceptions to the rule. Typical language used by such individuals would include the following:

- Matchers:* I agree. . . .
 You're right. . . .
 I see what you mean.
 Yes, they have a lot in common.
- Mismatches:* I disagree. . . .
 You're wrong. . . .
 You failed to consider. . . .
 They are completely different.
- In between:* Yes, but. . . .
 You're right except for the part about. . . .
 Have you considered. . . .
 They are the same but. . . .
 They are similar. . . .
 They are almost the same. . . .

The Scope Metaprogram

The scope metaprogram governs whether an individual tends to focus on the big picture or on specific details. The *global* person is interested in the overall concept and is typically bored with details, whereas the *specific* person prefers details and may have difficulty grasping the overview.

The global person prefers to receive information about and make decisions based on the big picture, leaving the details of execution to others. The global person is more interested in the final result than in the steps required to achieve the result.

The specific person prefers to think first about the specific details and to approach results in a sequential, step-by-step fashion. For the specific person, it is important that each detail be correct and in place before moving on to the next detail or step. Typical language used by such individuals would include the following:

- Global:* Envision the result. . . .
 Let me give you an overview. . . .
 Think about the big picture. . . .
 You can't see the forest for the trees. . . .
- Specific:* The first step will be. . . .
 The picture is not clear to me. . . .
 What should I do now (first, next)?
 We need to get closer to see the trees. . . .
- In between:* The plan leads logically to the results we want.
 When you consider the results we want, it seems logical to begin by. . . .
 If we are to complete the project in 30 days, we need to complete a step
 every two days. . . .
 You can't have a forest without trees.

The Cognitive Style Metaprogram The cognitive style metaprogram determines whether an individual is governed primarily by the analytical or the creative impulse. *Thinking* people tend to be analytical and critical. They tend to lack empathy for others and are more concerned with the task and the result than with the effects the task or result will have on others.

Feeling people tend to be creative, accepting, and spontaneous. They are concerned about feelings and relationships and place a priority on knowing how changes will affect others. Typical language used by such individuals would include the following:

Thinking: Let's think about this logically. . . .
The rational thing to do. . . .
Sally has a good head on her shoulders.

Feeling: How do you all feel about this?
John would be really hurt.
Sally's heart is in the right place.

In between: Although you may have mixed feelings about this, it would be more logical to. . . .
John may think that. . . .
Sally usually does the right thing.

The Confirmation Metaprogram The confirmation metaprogram governs the way in which people become convinced about the truth. This metaprogram has two parts: the *sensory mode* and the *pattern*. The sensory mode determines how the individual needs to receive the information before becoming convinced. Some people need to *see* something before they are convinced; some people need to *hear* about it from others; and some need to develop a *feeling* as a result of direct experience.

The sensory mode of the Confirmation Metaprogram may be related to an individual's preferred representational system, but that is not always the case. *Synesthesia* is also possible. A person, for example, may need to *see* something to be able to *tell* him- or herself that something is true or may need to *hear* it before getting the *feeling* of certainty.

The pattern also governs how often the person needs to receive information before becoming convinced. For some, once is enough. For others, each situation is new and requires new evidence. Typical language used by such individuals would include the following:

Visual: I know Becky is good because I've seen her work.

Auditory: I know Becky is good because Raul told me so.

Kinesthetic: I know Becky is good because I've worked with her before.

People will express how often they need to see, hear, or experience something with time references.

- I saw Becky's work when I visited that department last year. She's really good.
- I check Becky's work when I inspect departments each month, and her work has always been good.
- Let's review Becky's work before giving her this assignment. We need to make sure that she's still doing a good job.

Most people have slightly different criteria for accepting the truth of something, depending on their existing beliefs. A person may be willing to accept a religious or spiritual "truth," on the basis of very little evidence, for example, but require a great deal of external evidence before being willing to accept the truth of the efficacy of a new medicine.

Combinations

Combinations

Metaprograms often work in combinations. People with an *internal source* (Source Metaprogram), for example, are often *rule breakers* (Conduct Metaprogram). Those who are initiators (Action Metaprogram), typically moves *toward* desired objectives (Direction Metaprogram) rather than away from things they don't want. The language people use when conversing will typically reveal their metaprograms.

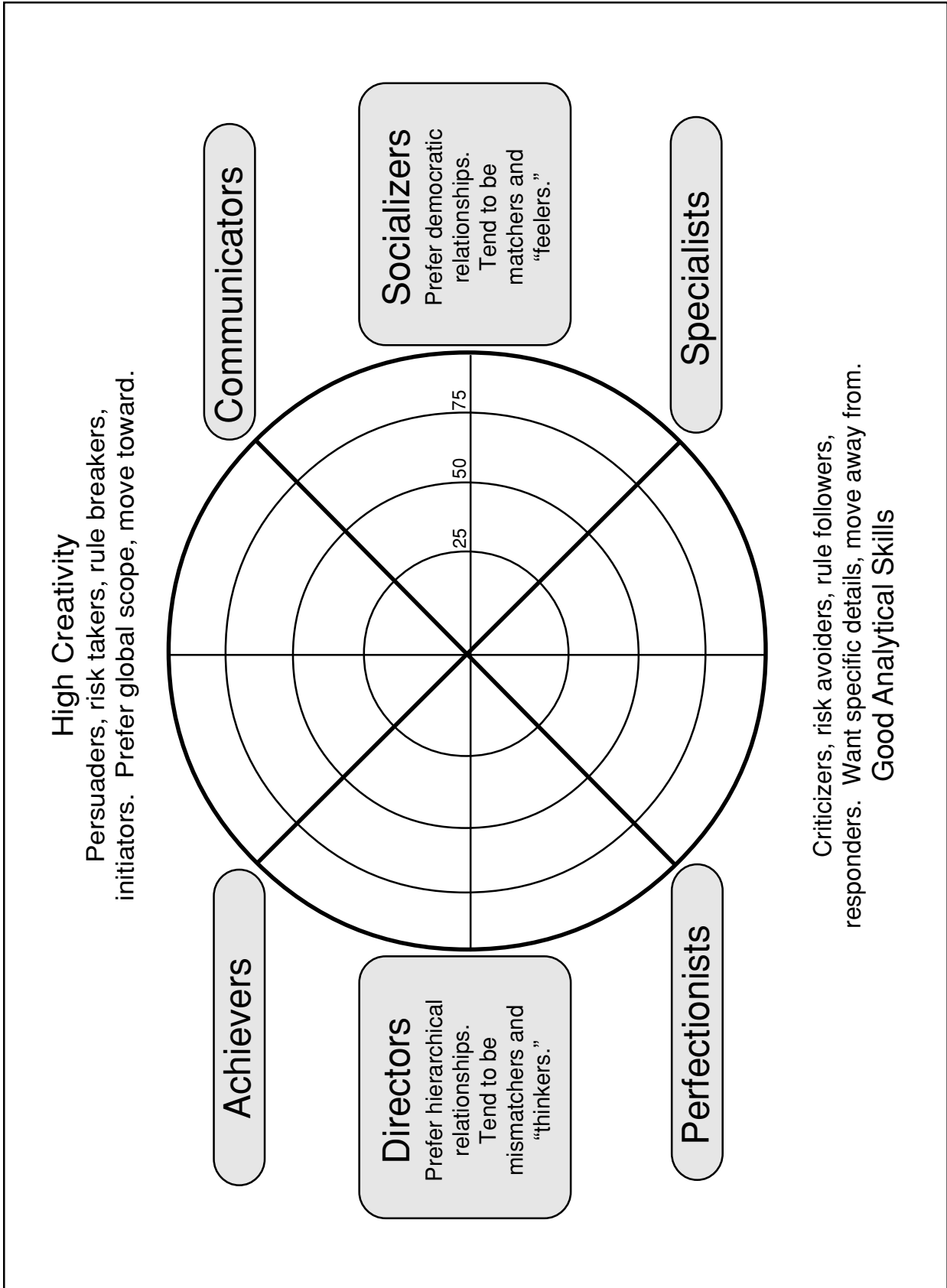
Exercise: Eliciting Metaprograms

Find a partner, and take turns asking each other questions from the following list while listening closely to the answers for language that reveals the other person's metaprograms. If the initial answer does not provide sufficient information for you to determine a metaprogram, ask one of the following follow-up questions: *What do you mean? How do you know? Or What's important to you about that?* Use the space between answers to record the critical aspects of the language used.

- What do you like about your job (or the house you are living in now)?
- What characteristics are important to you when choosing a friend?
- What do you consider an ideal vacation, and why?
- How did you choose your current job (or your current house)?
- How do you know when you have done a good job (or made a good decision)?
- How is your current job (home) like your previous one?
- Tell me about a significant work experience. In what way was it significant?
- In relation to the speed limit, how fast do you have to drive before you consider yourself speeding?
- What problem-solving strategy has worked well for you in the past?
- You've been invited to a party, and you don't want to go. What do you tell the person who asked you, and why?

The following figure illustrates the ways in which the basic personality types and metaprograms relate to each other. In general, people will tend to favor a specific hemisphere, top or bottom, left or right, and have their greatest conflicts with those who favor the opposite hemisphere.

Plot your scores on the various categories along the heavy lines in the following chart using the concentric circles as a rough guide. Connect the dots. Compare your profile with those of others in your group.



◆ Using Metaprograms



Exercise

When you analyze your Personal Profile and metaprograms, can you recognize how you have been influenced to behave in certain ways? Have you recognized examples of these tendencies in others? Have you noticed a difference in your own behavior based on the context (at home, at work, or in social groups)?



For Discussion

How can you use your knowledge of the basic personality types and metaprograms to improve your communication with others? How can you use that knowledge to enhance your own performance and that of others in organizational settings?

Communication Styles

Because these basic personality types interact with the environment in different ways, they have different modes of communicating. When you communicate with individuals, try to take their personal profiles into account.

The Achiever

Be brief and specific. Avoid personal comments that the Achiever will consider a waste of time. Talk about results first and procedures second. Let the Achiever know the purpose of your communication before presenting detailed information. Focus on the problem first. Discuss personal matters *after* the problem is solved and only when you are sure that the Achiever is ready to take a break from working.

In discussions, present the most important facts first, and arrange things in a logical order. Ask *what* questions:

- *What would you like to see happen?*
- *What obstacles might stand in the way?*

Present alternatives so that the Achiever can make his or her own decision. Avoid telling the Achiever what to do. If you disagree, focus on the facts. If you agree, focus on the results. Avoid “empathy” remarks (“I hear you,” “Let me share something with you,” “I’m really with you on this one”). Leave when finished.

The Communicator

Plan to spend some time socializing. Speak in terms of what the subject of discussion means to people. Ask for opinions and feelings. Allow the Communicator to respond and contribute his or her own ideas. Don’t interrupt. Listen for clues about how the subject coincides with the Communicator’s own plans. Show that you understand the Communicator by paraphrasing his or her ideas.

Be responsive to the personal aspects of the relationship. Make special arrangements for serious discussions. When possible, conduct business in a social context—take the Communicator out to lunch or dinner if you wish to be persuasive. Ask *who* questions:

- *Whom could we count on to help with this?*
- *Who would be influenced by this?*

Avoid presenting too many details. The Communicator is more interested in hearing what others (especially important others) have said than in the specific, objective facts. Be clear about who should do what next—repeat agreements about responsibilities for follow-up actions.

The Specialist

Begin with small talk. Personal comments help break the ice. Find areas of common interest. Show the Specialist that you trust him or her. Be the first to volunteer personal information. Draw personal information from the Specialist slowly and show that you are interested in his or her goals. Avoid saying anything threatening; and, if you disagree with the Specialist, look for signs of hurt feelings. Let the Specialist know that you appreciate his or her contributions.

Present new ideas slowly. Don't be a bully (Achiever) or try to overwhelm with superficial razzle-dazzle (Communicator). Show that any change will help minimize risks. Don't attempt to force a quick decision. Ask *how* questions:

- *How do you think that would influence you and others in your department?*
- *How could we avoid that difficulty?*

Show that you have weighed the risks against the benefits and that you are trying to minimize the risks and maximize the benefits. Provide personal assurances—then keep your promises. Personal trust is extremely important to a Specialist.

The Perfectionist

Be well prepared—know the facts and figures before you begin. Don't waste time beating around the bush. Use notes to keep yourself organized. Stick to the facts—leave personalities out of it. Avoid surprising the Perfectionist with changes or unexpected remarks. Discuss one subject at a time. Examine differences of opinion objectively. Show the Perfectionist that you have analyzed the situation thoroughly and that you expect him or her to do the same.

Use accepted rules and procedures as authority. Use reliable sources only—the testimony of others will likely be dismissed as “hearsay.” Be direct, but don't be pushy. Ask questions about the facts:

- *Have I overlooked any important details?*
- *Has this approach been tried before?*

Allow the Perfectionist time to evaluate your information and to confirm your accuracy before making a decision. Show that you appreciate the Perfectionist's ability to weigh the evidence and to make an objective decision. If you agree, be sure to follow through. If the discussion was important, provide the Perfectionist with a summary, including a step-by-step schedule for implementing any required action.

Communication Preferences

In addition to their basic personal profiles and metaprograms, individuals differ in the ways in which they prefer to receive and consider information from the environment. Some people are primarily *readers*, some are primarily *talkers*, and some are primarily *doers*.

While the relationship between these preferences and the personal profiles is not exact, Perfectionists and some Specialists tend to be readers; Communicators and some Specialists tend to be talkers; and Achievers tend to be either readers (especially of brief, action-oriented memos) and doers.

When you have determined the communication preferences of those with whom you work, you are in a better position to provide them with the kind of information they want, when they want it, and in the form they desire. When you can match their desires and expectations, they will take your messages more seriously.

Readers

Readers prefer to obtain their information in written form. If you tell them something, they will probably forget. Readers take seriously only the information they see in writing. They consider oral messages preliminary—nothing is final or important until it is put in writing.

Talkers

Talkers prefer to discuss issues rather than exchange memos. If you send a letter or memo to a talker, he or she won't know what you really think. Talkers take seriously only that information they receive in conversations and meetings. For them, the written memo serves merely as a reminder of the all-important discussion.

Doers

Doers need to experience something to understand it. Information they receive in writing or orally is less important to them than what they learn as a result of hands-on experience. Doers would rather be doing—experimenting—than reading or discussing.

◆ Understanding Common Behavioral Patterns



Exercise

You have four friends who all have birthdays on the same day. You have decided to give them all cameras. One of your friends happens to be an Achiever, one a Communicator, one a Specialist, and one a Perfectionist. Based on your knowledge of these basic personality types and their likely metaprograms, what will each of them do with the camera?

The Achiever

The Communicator

The Specialist

The Perfectionist