

## CHAPTER 1

# Sort Personalities Like a Profiler

### Tools

- Disposition matrix
- Action matrix

**W**hen you think of profiling, *Silence of the Lambs* might come to mind. In the movie, you see members of the Behavioral Analysis Unit of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) try to piece together the traits of a serial killer. As the movie progresses, the team narrows the options of what kind of person could commit such heinous crimes and why he would commit them. These profilers look at demographic information and trends and then target where that person might be found.

The kind of profiling I do, and what I will teach you to do, uses the reverse of that process. Instead of using past behavior to narrow down options about an individual we're looking for, we will create a profile of someone we're observing. The purpose is not only to understand with whom we're dealing but also to predict that person's response to a given specific stimulus and thereby influence that person's behavior.

You will use profiling skills the way I used them as an interrogator and the way I now use them daily in business since leaving the intelligence field.

## **Value to Business**

You can learn to sort personality types so well that you can often predict how a person will address a crisis, face conflict, or handle a negotiation, for example. When you know the personality profile of your colleague, boss, customer, or competitor, you are in a position to:

- Predict what that person will do in a given situation
- Manipulate that person
- Predict outcomes

In later chapters, I'll add insights on identifying stimuli that cause stress, how a person behaves and talks when relaxed, and much more. Put them together and you have a skill set that puts you in control in many environments and meetings.

The same is true for knowing the personality of a group. Even though the individuals in the group have different profiles, when they come together, they might assume a set of traits that drive behavior. For example, you might have a customer you could aptly describe as self-centered and indifferent; that customer as a whole also focuses on the flaws in a product and the deficits in service. At the same time, your contact at the organization may have a contrasting set of traits. Or you may see that, year after year, your company's customer service department projects a caring and positive attitude; they put the reputation of the company above their individual tendencies when dealing with customers. Again, knowing the personality of the group will help you predict how the group will act, which will give you powerful insights into how to change one of the group's practices or processes.

One of the things you hear today from human resources professionals and a lot of team-building coaches is, "Don't put people in boxes."

Wrong. Put them in well-defined boxes—specifically the ones I introduce you to in this chapter. Just make sure you have a firm grasp of why you put them in particular boxes; then use this understanding of where individuals fit to create better coalitions and create cooperation.

As you read along, think about whether or not the traits your team demonstrates are aligned to your goals as a company. If not, you will need to adjust so that you align your organization and intent. As you read this chapter, start to categorize people. The ability to do that is a foundation skill you will need for manipulation, networking, and team building, all of which are covered in later chapters.

## **Natural Profilers**

Profiling might sound like a skill requiring straightforward analytic skills, but in fact, the people inclined to do it well are those who see patterns, correlations, and trends.

People who make correlations easily have a higher ratio of white matter to gray matter in their brains than the dominantly gray matter folks. In his March 2008 *Scientific American* article “White Matter Matters,” Neuroscientist R. Douglas Fields explained succinctly what the difference is: “White matter, long thought to be passive tissue, actively affects how the brain learns and dysfunctions. Although gray matter (composed of neurons) does the brain’s thinking and calculating, white matter (composed of myelin-coated axons) controls the signals that neurons share, coordinating how well brain regions work together.”

People with more gray matter than white matter, then, tend to be great with isolated facts; on the extreme of that group are autistics. Those of us who are good at tying ideas together see trends and tend to be good at strategic thinking. We also make better liars than the high gray matter folks.

A high gray matter person would understand absolutes and get the details right but would not necessarily understand easily how the details fit together or tied in with everyday information. Put her through an exercise in which she would have to lie about writing a book about biology, for example, and she could go only so far before it was clear she didn’t know enough to write a book about biology. On the other hand, the white matter person would be able to link the few facts he knew to something relevant in daily life and move you off topic.

People who are good at that can get away with a lot. They can demonstrate value easily and forge connections quickly. They are also predisposed to be good profilers.

## **Tools of Profiling**

Sorting people in terms of character traits is an essential step in understanding how to get leverage with them. Identifying the way they take action and process information strengthens your ability to converse with and question them.

The upcoming sections give you a new way of profiling yourself, members of your team, and your team/company as a whole by considering the following:

- Disposition is about an individual's relationship with her world.
- Action styles describe the level of energy a person tends to commit to action and how he handles time.

As part of that discussion, you will see how these traits play out in the four "help categories," which express how a person relates to groups, and the four "type categories," which capture how a person relates to the system, whether that means how the team works or how the whole company works.

At the end of the discussion, you will have a fresh perspective on yourself as well as other people on your team. You will have answers to questions such as, "Why do we seem to disagree all the time?" or "Why don't we have any momentum?"

The tools covered here enable you to make accurate assessments and predictions of behavior in many situations. And they give you valuable insights to know when and how to push someone to get what you want.

When you're through with this section, do not feel a need to remember the words I used to describe the traits. What you want to do is this:

- Remember the concepts.
- Think about pros and cons of each in a business environment.
- Stay alert for examples of how the character traits operate in a continuum.

- Let your mind explore the vulnerabilities associated with each of the traits.

To begin, let's do some reverse engineering. Think about the major traits of the person featured in this story:

Joel heard about a village in Africa with no local source of potable water. He went there immediately armed with plans for a well. Recruiting semiskilled workers from the nearest city, he put them to work building the well and paid them out of his own pocket. When the well became functional, he left Africa and returned home. Assuming he had saved the village, he felt good about his actions and never looked back. Unfortunately, the workers from the city had introduced a disease into the population of the village that proved fatal to the indigenous people. Most eventually died.

What makes a person clearly out for the good of his fellow human miss such a vital piece of information? What about him allows him to set in motion a chain of events that has the opposite effect he intended? This is far more than an issue of lacking common sense.

I have learned how to put people in boxes to understand—and predict—behavior so that outcomes like this are very often not a surprise. This is the system of profiling I am introducing to you here.

My system of sorting people in terms of character traits comes out of extensive empirical research that began even before my years as an interrogator. It is based on information synergized after years of working in intelligence, the Army as a whole, business, TV news analysis, construction management, and labor, as well as from a psychology education, raising animals, and just plain living.

Why does that detail matter here? When I was an interrogator, I learned to use fourteen approved approaches—the same ones being discussed in the media daily in the wake of the interrogation scandals around the civilized world. These were simple levers: If he demonstrates  $xyz$  behavior, then use these psychological ploys. Young interrogators all over the world learn these tools and, as a result of relying on them alone, have some success with prisoners.

“Some success” never seemed quite good enough to me. I couldn’t simply say, “This works pretty well” and leave it at that. My mind often pondered the next question: “Why?” This is the questioning that ultimately led me to a unique way of analyzing how people fit into society.

In sharing this information with you, I hope to get you to assimilate what is useful from it into your own repertoire of analysis skills. The important caveat is that the material here is an introduction to the concepts. Apply it and it will take your interactions with people to a new level, but keep in mind there is a lot more where this came from.

### ***Values and Ego***

In any culture, certain traits will be celebrated openly and therefore trumpeted as virtue. For instance, selfless public service in the United States has been hailed as a virtue. Many renowned figures have demonstrated so-called selfless service up to, and including, martyrdom. Look at Robert and John F. Kennedy; Martin Luther King, Jr.; or any of a long list of people in the public eye who are celebrated for giving their very lives in their efforts to build a better society. On a much closer-to-home level, the fêted American work ethic is exactly that same type of selfless service. Neither the actions of the famous American martyrs nor those of the people who “keep their noses to the grindstone” are born of pure virtue, but both deliver what the culture needs and are therefore celebrated as virtue.

In contrast, we have traits that are not celebrated, but they certainly are rewarded. When a culture rewards such behaviors, people growing up in that culture get mixed messages. For example, consider the trait that ostensibly stands as the “black” to the “white” of selflessness: selfishness. Instead of working long work hours because of the nobility of hard work, you do it with intent to climb quickly, and over the slow people, up the corporate ladder. But if you are holding this book, you already understand the value of this trait and the potential rewards of cultivating it.

And so although selfishness is not celebrated as a virtue, it is certainly a core element of our society. While we might celebrate the selflessness, the United States, France, Germany, Japan, or any

other industrialized nation would not have occurred without both selflessness and its counterpart. We have benefited from having both edges of the sword in play.

I mention this for two reasons. First, any person can take a celebrated value to the point of a self-defining character trait. A person can start off with selfless service as intent only because an event spurs that person to action, just as the kidnapping and murder of Adam Walsh set his parents on a campaign that resulted in three different laws related to child protection. But with time, actions like this can become deeply rooted in self and define the very core of the individual. When this happens, the real driver is no longer the service for its own sake but the need to keep large piles of fuel on the hot-burning ego. This is not to say it is all bad. Once the celebrated value becomes ego-defining, the person pours even more passion into the defining trait and the results are more of what the culture celebrates. So when the trait becomes a definition, it moves to ego and the person now places his heart mind and soul to accomplishing exactly whatever the goal is. *Note well:* In this way he has moved to exactly the same position as the ego-driven climber. In other words, he has *moved from value to ego*.

Does the opposite occur?

Yes, and that is the second thing to remember. Out of the egotistical action of climbing the corporate ladder, the person fuels economy or other organizational growth, creating opportunity for other people. She surrounds herself with other successful people who directly or indirectly contribute to society through their actions. She therefore becomes much more like the selfless service person. Actions made possible by selfishness cause the impetus itself to be celebrated as virtue or rewarded (even if maligned) and to become defining for a culture. Case in point: Bill Gates, one of the most renowned capitalists of all time, plans to spend \$3 billion on education sometime between 2010 and 2017, and one of the other most renowned capitalists of all time, Warren Buffet, is going to help him do it.

In either case, these defining movements of virtue or ego can become so ingrained in behaviors that the full-blown practitioner has defined herself; any move away from the trait is more endangering to the self than death. I refer to this kind of “fate worse than death” as *personal extinction*.

## ***Disposition Matrix***

In the mix of sorting styles and temperament indices available to you from a variety of sources, you will find that many are complex and unwieldy when you try to use them in a business environment. I believe you will find my system immediately helpful in understanding the people with whom you do business. You will use it to tag them and put them into boxes.

First of all, get it out of your head that any of these traits is good or bad. I want you to look at the circular nature of human thought and behavior rather than judge the merits of traits like selflessness and selfishness.

Most of the tools described throughout this book are based on finding similarities between you and other people and bonding with them or finding differences between you and fracturing from them. The tools of profiling will help you think about people in a way that makes that process clear and relatively easy to implement.

There are obvious political examples of each of the types in these charts, and for clarity's sake, I will often use political examples to illustrate my thoughts. Regardless of what person I might be talking about, realize that one is not by design better or worse than another; they just have different outcomes. I do have a very strong opinion about which of those outcomes are desirable and good for business, though. I would say that, as you read the charts, try to think about where you fit and why. Then consider how opposed you are to certain people when you disagree with them. With that in mind, see where you think they fit on the chart. Often the disagreement comes out of someone else being so much like you, and yet manifesting the same trait in a very different way. They are like the other side of your coin. Due to this circular nature of the traits, the more radical you become in your practice of the trait, the closer you come to your opposite.

I introduce the system with a two-axis matrix because we have all had exposure to the model (see Figure 1.1). On the  $x$ -axis, you see Selfish versus Altruistic; on the  $y$ -axis, Individual versus Collectivist.

**Selfish versus Altruistic: Focus on Altruistic** With Mother Teresa at the head of the pack, our modern culture celebrates

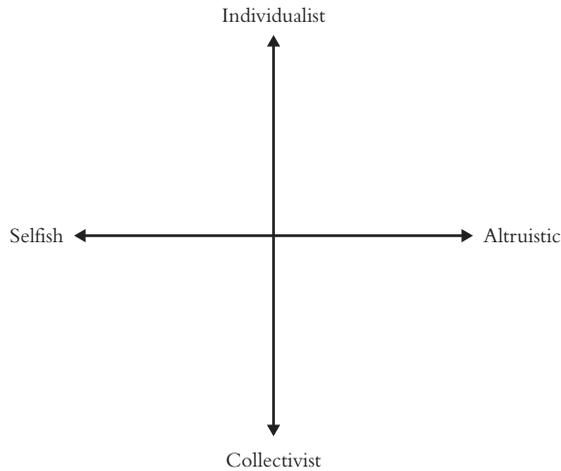


FIGURE 1.1 The axes feature opposite traits. When taken to the extreme, each trait can become its opposite.

altruists. Altruism means putting the good of others, whether collectively or individually, ahead of self. By definition, then, altruism involves noble acts.

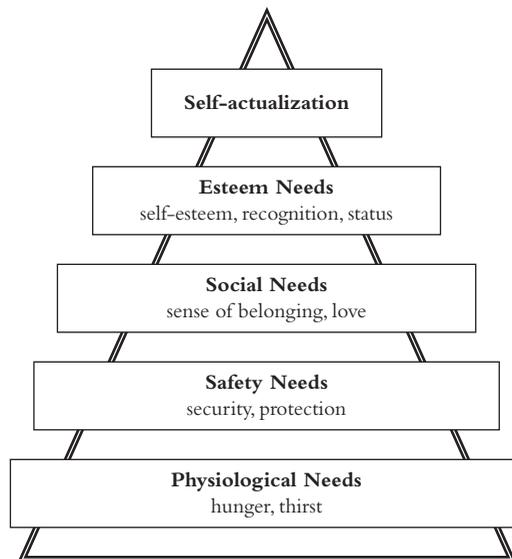
When you read these contrasting words, you automatically want to be associated with the altruist, don't you? Ask yourself why. Is altruism in itself a desirable quality? It may be celebrated in our society to the point of virtue, but do you feel you belong in a tribe of altruists? Or is altruistic behavior simply a way to gain the admiration of those around you? If the latter is true, you are tied to the connotation of the word and not the actual meaning.

If you want the rewards of being an altruist, you'll act like one. If society punished you for behaving that way, you might be a lot less inclined to exhibit altruism or you might be driven to it by the feeling of persecution. Patterns of reward and punishment for behavior create what is the norm for the individual; actions that a person takes nominally for the good of others might be so self-fulfilling that the real reason to keep doing it is that it will hurt to stop doing it. If you're a celebrity getting heaps of accolades in the tabloids for volunteering to help orphans, you don't want to taint your reputation by making the orphans someone else's problem.

Remember that moving too far in the direction of altruist will make you selfish eventually, as I've described the continuum here. If Joe volunteers at the homeless shelter one night a week while his

wife is at Yoga class, is his action inherently “better than” hers? Now imagine our hero Joe likes the feeling he gets from helping those poor, less fortunate souls at the shelter, so he starts to volunteer three days a week and then five, until he no longer has time for his family. Is that altruism the same virtue you would want to celebrate, or is it something more akin to selfishness? Take that *x*-axis and wrap it all the way around in 3-D fashion until it comes back on itself. That’s what you have here. And while the homeless might really appreciate Joe’s altruism, he might be well on the way to be homeless himself. Joe needs to listen to the wisdom of flight attendants when they tell you, if you’re traveling with a child, put the oxygen mask on yourself when it drops down, and then put it on the child. Selfishness to the rescue.

On the healthy end, the person realizes altruism is defining for him and decides to make his life’s work helping others, he works his way up Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, belonging to the group of do-gooders and then differentiating himself to sainthood, finding along the way a good balance between satisfaction of his needs and the good he does for others (see Figure 1.2).



**FIGURE 1.2** Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Most of us move between the third and fourth levels: belonging and differentiating.

Source: Maslow, Abraham (1954). *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper. p. 236.

On the unhealthy end, the person is the martyr of the group, constantly sacrificing and living the meager life of the unrecognized—right out in the open. The sheer pleasure derived from knowing he has been wronged by being overlooked all the time he has been there to help others is his definition.

Each of these comes with its own challenges in a business environment. When you are dealing with the well-adjusted person, his definition of altruism is intricately woven with the idea. If you do anything to throw off his feeling of self and his self-identification as a defender and protector, you toy with his wrath, as well as that of people who benefit from his good deeds. Rather than challenge him, if you can mobilize him to the good of the organization or team, you get all of his commitment and influence behind your objective. Once he is “on cause,” rest assured it will be done.

Regarding an altruist’s long-suffering “martyr” side, be careful not to upset the status quo unintentionally. Asking the person to participate in something for the good of others will likely get the response you desire, and as you do it, recognize that “he’s been there for the long haul for all of us.”

What happens if your so-called altruist won’t play nicely? Bring out the selfish person in him. Assign him annoying or trivial tasks “for the good of others” that will make him object and force him to show his true selfish identity.

**Selfish versus Altruistic: Focus on Selfish** I use selfish as a category, so I ask you to move yourself away from the negative connotations of the word. Selfishness is by definition the opposite of altruism. It carries pejorative meaning in our society and yet it should not, because a truly altruistic act cannot be carried out unless the person doing it has a firm grasp of, and respect for, self. The teachings of various religions are full of such self-awareness lessons. Jesus didn’t say, “Oh, what the heck, I’ll be a big hero if I die on the cross today, so let’s get on with it.” In the time before his crucifixion, Jesus asked, “Let O father if it be possible this cup pass from me” (Matthew 26). That’s an act of self. But he continued, “Nevertheless not as I will but as you will.” Would this act of sacrifice have the same meaning without the line indicating that he may not view this as an ideal situation?

Humans have a self-preservation instinct and some of us are designed to be more competitive about it than others. This desire to win and promote self is the way I define selfish here. As I said, we fit somewhere on a continuum, so most are more aligned to self or more aligned to altruism—and most not at the extreme.

Unlike the altruist, the selfish person is more focused on outcomes for her (individually) or her own (collectively). She takes actions that are focused on outcomes that mean something to her or her organization. She might take negative steps against others, but more often the negative outcomes for others are outcroppings of positive actions for self.

On the healthy side, the selfish person is concerned with promotions, growth opportunities, and being seen as more competent than others. With a sense of self-respect, she is driven to outpace or outshine her competitors, whether individual or organization. It isn't mean spirited; she just wants to do well.

On the unhealthy side, the selfish person is envious of others moving ahead of her and uses whatever it takes to prevent that. She constantly looks at others as stepping stones and has no genuine interest in teamwork. She becomes toxic because she cannot let others pass her. She uses all of her energy to sabotage others or to take credit for their work.

**Altruistic and Selfish** Few people sit far to the left on the selfish axis, or far to the right as an altruist. Most take a spot on a bench somewhere in the middle.

Stop for a minute and assign yourself or others to the radial diagram in Figure 1.3.

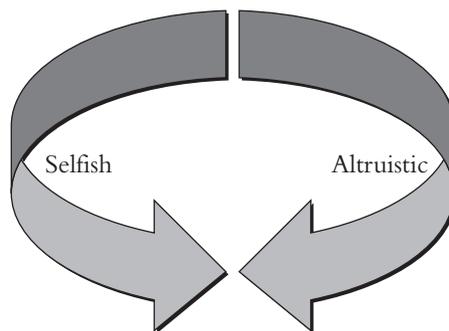


FIGURE 1.3 Where are you on the continuum?

**Individual versus Collectivist** Americans identify with individualism. We often talk of the rugged individualists in American history, and yet, if we look closely we find those protagonists far from individualists. We may admire cowboys in classic Westerns while simultaneously finding them arrogant and insensitive.

When we describe someone as individualistic, the positive bent is “a person who does what he wants to do.” But as a society, we are the first to sign up, join in, and give of ourselves. Most Americans want to belong to a group and then to show their identity by points of difference. This is fundamentally no different from any other group, large or small, in the world.

In the mid-1990s, I was in a country bar in the outskirts of Washington, DC, with a British naval intelligence officer. We were watching people line dance when the young man looked at me and said, “Good God, your people freed the world from socialism and now I see you here dancing like a flock of sheep.” I pointed out to him that, while we as a nation are so radically opposed to a government foisted on folks that tells them what to do, we as a culture are avid joiners. You see evidence of this in so many aspects of our daily life—how we eat, what sports we like, what churches we attend, and what celebrities we think are hot. Most Americans would define their lives as very individualist until forced to isolate the points of difference in their lives.

In a general sense, individualists believe that only when a person is implementing her own desires and plans of action can the group as whole succeed; anything else is a slow death for the group. Pure individualists believe a person has the right to make decisions about not only what she wears but also about everything she does. Of course, the sane person immediately asks, “Where’s the limit?”

And so, in a society like America, limits by peer group or government start to affect what the individualist can get away with. Individualists on the sane side understand that one cannot take opinions to the extreme without becoming a collectivist. That is, I’m a cowboy who stands up for what’s right no matter what . . . and by the way, it’s in your best interests to agree with me. A dictator is the ultimate in individualists; he is not concerned about whether others agree and will resolutely pursue his agenda. Checks and balances are important to prevent individualists from becoming despots.

On the healthy side, an individualist sees everyone's voice as vital. Every person should have the right to do and contribute as he pleases. He might take an altruistic or a selfish approach. If he bends toward altruism, he sees value in allowing people to do as they see fit; he uses his resources to support their right of self-expression for the greater good. If selfish, he sees it his right to use skills and resources for his own good.

Collectivists believe that looking out for the group's good is the most important action they can take and that individuals will find fulfillment in satisfying group needs. The collectivist who sees the other person's point of view realizes that collectivist ideals need to be curbed to allow groups to grow. In contrast, those who cannot see others' points of view will have a tendency to create great reform movements that smother all other ideas out of existence, stagnate the culture, and create its ultimate death.

On a radial scale moving from left to right, a collectivist can go so far left that he creates culture that imposes one person's will on all others. By the same token, if an individualist goes too far in the opposite direction, he creates a culture in which the strongest of the group dominate and collectivism is inevitable. In this way the two extremes mimic each other (see Figure 1.4).

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is far to the right, most of us fit somewhere in the middle, even if we would identify ourselves as an individualist or a collectivist. Mitigating factors like the laws of society and workplace rules also affect our decisions and prevent us from being an absolutist in either direction.

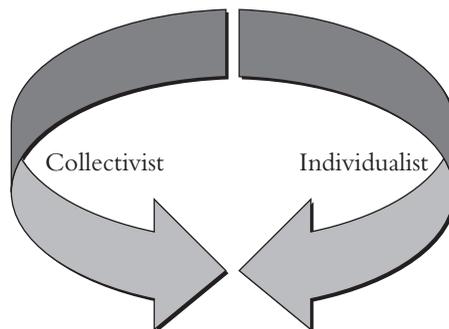


FIGURE 1.4 Where are you on the continuum?

## The Categories of Disposition

I sort all people into four easy-to-follow categories. Each category has degrees, of course, but you'll find them broadly applicable both to everyday life and to your business life. I apply a simple criterion for this assessment: HELP. As in, "Let me help you with that," or "You have to suck it up and help yourself." The closer to each of these four corner extremes a person gets, the more emotional and demonstrative she will be when dealing with others. As you look at Figure 1.5, note that this is about mind-set, not activity.

The closer you are to any given line, the more balanced on that axis you are.

**HELP MEs** The HELP MEs see group good as the prime driver in their world; more important, they see their piece of the group good as the driver. They can be high-level people who see benefit from the collectivist action or low-level people who gain from the

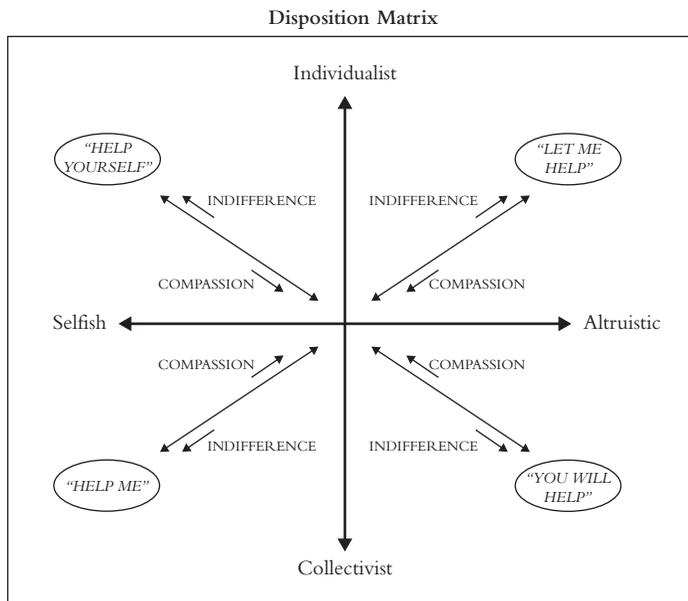


FIGURE 1.5 HELP ME. Group good for my sake.

YOU WILL HELP. Group good at all costs.

LET ME HELP. Group good starts with me.

HELP YOURSELF. Group good comes from "watch out for number one."

same actions. For example, if everyone on the team pulls together and exceeds the sales quota, the boss may get the greatest reward, but everybody wins in some way.

Competence can play a part, but it doesn't have to. It simply means the person wants to gain from all people eating from a common bowl. It can be any level of business. It could be as simple as a conflict-averse peer asking for team presentations to allow him to outshine you and get the boss to see your ugly baby. It can also be the person who cannot pull his own weight getting others involved. They are closely linked to the altruistic collectivist and one can easily become the other.

**YOU WILL HELPS** Altruistic collectivists believe in the good of the group and that there must be a better way for all concerned. Inevitably they organize a plan for improvement, along the way gaining the "support" of all parties. Depending on the action style of this type, she can move heaven or hell to get to the end results. The YOU WILL HELPS use phrases such as "this is a win-win for everyone," "coalition building," and "it's the right thing to do." They often overlook individual human cost in their grand plan for accomplishing what is best for all. In the nonbusiness sense, the extreme version is the wide-eyed do-gooder who goes off to Africa to build a bridge between two villages because one has a school, only to find she has crushed the local ferry company just started by an enterprising young man and aroused hatred and associated crimes because of the large influx to the school of ethnically different people. No corollary to business, is there?

**LET ME HELPS** The LET ME HELPS believe everyone has the right to do what he will and want to help others along the way. On the surface, these are the great philanthropists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

I worked with a company in 2005 that was populated with the type. The company was founded in a small Midwestern town, and the world headquarters remained there for many years. After a larger company bought out the other one, as you might expect, there were shifts in the organization. I was on the operations side of the business and regularly dealing with long-time employees who did things for the company that were unrelated to their job

descriptions. When anyone on the business side from the large company decided to push on the IT/Support/Technical people and force them to do a project, those people would lock down and make it difficult for anyone to move forward. They had a “chip in” kind of mentality, which meant they went above and beyond and gave freely of their time if they wanted to—but not if they were forced to do something. This was especially true if they were told to do something by the folks who didn’t really know what kind of help the company needed.

**HELP YOURSELFS** Selfish individualists are cowboys. They want to do things their way, pass or fail, and you should do the same. They believe in hard work—or not—since the counterpart to the cowboy is the drifter. They see the world as a place that should allow for a person to make it on her own or fall on her face. They often use phrases like “pull yourself up; dust yourself off.” You might immediately excuse this as nonexistent in business, but most organizations have cowboys in them and they bring a lot to the table. They do things their own way, often bringing a different perspective to the discussion; “innovation” is more than a buzzword to them. The reality is that no one is an island in business, so they drag others along in their success, in effect becoming more altruistic than they might realize. In balance they remind us of what’s possible, in contrast to continuing with the way we have always done it. Out of balance, they bring us things like the Enron debacle.

Of course, there are boundary-line types as well and people who cannot make a commitment to anything specific and vacillate with the latest trend. Treat this as an introduction to a way of classifying people into cooperation categories, to what motivates them to cooperate.

**Compassion: The Great Mitigation** Few people live in the extremes, except perhaps rabid left- or right-wing talk show hosts, and they are more product than person. Unless you live in a bubble, you experience the fact that people are affected by all of these styles. The more exposure you have to these different types, the more likely you are to be moved around, most likely toward center. It is easy in business, however, to get caught up in departmental wars and sectional tribalism.

The fact is, without understanding the impact we have on one another, we cannot have compassion; we move more toward a corner of the matrix. So, for instance, I am a selfish individualist at heart primarily because I believe it is the best way to improve the world—the underlying logic being that people work harder on their own ideas. Nevertheless, I have enough compassion to believe there must be a floor for those who stumble, get a late start, or simply give it their all and can't reach the bar. On the other hand, one of my closest friends is also a selfish individualist and he disagrees. He believes if you fall and can't get up on your own, then you should remain on the ground. Whereas my exposure to different types has moved me toward the center, his exposure has hardened his resolve to stay in the corner.

The more compassionate HELP MEs understand that giving takes resources from the person who is offering and that it is a kindness, not an obligation. Whether in business or society, you always catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.

**Dealing with the Opposites** At first glance you might think the extreme opposites of the HELP MEs and LET ME HELPs are complementary, but that is true only when they are not polarized to the extreme. The needy, acidic you-owe-me type rarely gets assistance from the let-me-help-you type. Think back to the people in the story at my old company. The LET ME HELPs are much more likely to participate when asked for a hand rather than when told they owe it to help. When they are at extremes, they are no different from HELP YOURSELFS and YOU WILL HELPs and will end up at loggerheads in discussion.

**Mistaken Identity** Sometimes people will convince others or even themselves that their core personality fits into one of the other buckets. The selfish collectivist can easily masquerade as the altruistic individualist because there is only a thin dime's difference between the two. Only by looking for motivation can you properly categorize and get to the real motivation for his behavior. If I put a face on one versus the other, I'd classify Al Gore as a selfish collectivist and Angelina Jolie as an altruistic individualist. Once you uncover the individual's real driver, you can motivate him in ways even he likely doesn't understand. In Al's case, you

give him a Noble Prize and he feels motivated to continue his crusade to save the planet from cow farts. In Angelina's case, you let her adopt a child from a war-torn country and she gets her reward. (She doesn't even have a publicist.)

Now when you watch Al and Angelina in action in your office, you won't get them or their motivators confused.

**Conversion** It's possible to go so far that you become what you hate.

The more extreme you become in a given category, the more likely you are to move to the opposite side or at least support it. While an altruistic person can slide into selfish territory easily, the cowboy needs real order to maintain that cowboy persona. He can find himself supporting the YOU WILL HELPs to maintain his help-yourself attitude. And while the YOU WILL HELP is busy forcing others, he can easily slip into the selfish individualistic model.

Once you understand the disposition of a person, you need to understand how he will take action to create an effective management style for dealing with him.

### ***Action Matrix***

Instead of focusing on dispositions, now turn your attention to action styles as a way of categorizing people. The matrices are complementary; one does not replace the other. The disposition matrix is an important tool in creating a team and understanding how ideological conflicts will arise and where the areas are complementary. This one spotlights what actions a given person is likely to take based on personality traits. The result is meant primarily to predict outcomes and mitigate reactions.

Using the action matrix, you can create effective teams that are focused on your intended outcomes.

On the  $x$ -axis sits Impatient versus Enduring; on the  $y$ -axis, it's Positive versus Negative (see Figure 1.6).

**Impatient versus Enduring** Once again, at first glance most people will want to identify with the trait that is considered a virtue. Since there's an old saying, "Patience is a virtue," by

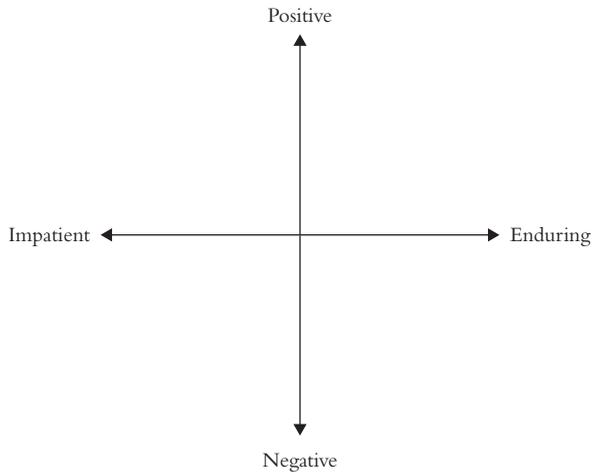


FIGURE 1.6 The vertical axis is about energy level in a direction. The horizontal axis is about degrees in handling time.

extrapolation our entire culture has condemned impatience to the opposite station, that is, a vice.

The two traits reflect a fundamental understanding of priorities: whether you get what you want when you want it or whether good things are worth waiting for. What happens when things don't turn out as hoped for? The long-suffering endurer can become quite volatile when, after waiting patiently all year, Santa brings her the wrong toy. Or after praying really, really hard for a month, you don't get promoted to general manager so you quit in a huff. So do not mistake enduring with tolerating nondelivery. One is simply willing to wait for what she gets and the other wants it on her own schedule.

Impatient people can be born that way and rewarded to maintain the trait or taught to expect their demands by you or others around them. Impatience itself is no vice if the expectations are realistic; they help people stick close to plans and a timetable. This is what I call *professional impatience*—establishing expectations and enforcing them. This is decidedly different from the two-year-old being allowed to dictate the family's behavior and schedule through screaming. This archetypal image illustrates a fundamental trait of impatient people: They see rules as a hindrance.

Regardless of the role a person plays in an organization, lack of respect for agreement can be destructive in both directions. On the healthy side, Eddie-the-Team-Leader sets scope and timeline expectations and then takes punitive measures when those milestones are missed. He drives action and creates operational excellence. On the unhealthy side, he is a tyrant ranting about your incompetence when you don't meet his unspoken expectations for what and when. Left unchecked or rewarded, he can become a cancer in your organization that makes people feel disheartened. The team concludes, "Nothing is good enough, so why bother?"

Enduring personalities likewise can have their roots in both nature and nurture. Essentially, this is a person who understands what is possible and wants you to deliver as promised, even though it may take awhile. Enduring can mean he is waiting for a promotion or an improvement on a widget. At any rate, he believes "good things come to those who wait," "patience is a virtue," and so on. He uses the system to get what he wants and rules are tools.

When well balanced, he can drive performance through setting expectations that are tolerant and reasonable. The patience may end abruptly, however, if you fail to meet the long-range timeline, whether for his personal goals or professional ones. The healthy enduring type can become an ambassador for common sense in midlevel management and inspired common sense in upper management.

Enduring people are good at mentoring and bringing others into an organization, assuming they bring the other traits you are looking for. Once in an intelligence job, an older gentleman said to me, "I think I know a thing or two. I have been here much longer than you have." The consensus of our group was he was worthless, so my answer to him was, "So has the furniture." If I'd had to deal with him long term and he decided to come after me, it is highly likely he would win because his patience for outcome is so protracted.

On the unhealthy side, some enduring people became that way because they are prone to inaction and don't mind the same in others. These are people who can't prioritize and have no sense of urgency. They believe that longevity is the key to success, and in some businesses, that's true. When the unhealthy enduring rise to

the top through longevity, it is likely because the culture of inaction has led the other types to flee.

**Crossing the Line** Whereas selfishness and altruism are so closely tied they can become the other, this is seldom true of impatience and endurance. The shift here is tied to hope. An impatient person can be so driven by something she wants—like revenge—that she is willing to wait to get it.

First, action can be driven by the great human motivator: passion. The person who typically is impatient may turn to patience as she works her plan, putting all of the pieces into a master plan that takes time. Second, long-suffering people can go around the bend. They've had enough and explode in what seems to be an impatient response to a situation, or they move to the other side of the spectrum after they feel they have wasted time reaching for the desired result and lose hope. The breaking point of the enduring marks the point at which she becomes an impatient. Regardless of whether the action is patient or enduring, actions are tied tightly to the type of energy expended by the person. A positive enduring versus a negative enduring will have a very different style of behavior and ways of getting things accomplished (see Figure 1.7).

**Positive versus Negative** In this discussion, positive and negative energy are not a New Age look at the world. They are ways to describe where you apply the energy, not how much. Any given person is going to supply  $x/y$  amount of energy on a topic, where

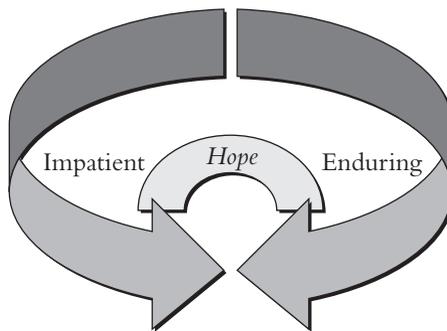


FIGURE 1.7 The critical factor in where you remain on the continuum, or which direction you go next, is hope.

$x$  is total energy output and  $y$  is total available. How he applies this is important. A high-energy person who applies little energy but tells you how passionate she is about the issue telegraphs information she is not aware of. The low-energy guy who gets wound up about his stapler missing, and yet says everything is okay, sends another message. A person's set point determines how much energy he will use and whether the inclination is toward positive or negative. You can have a cheerleader in the positive or negative sense. One is not necessarily bad and the other good.

In my early days in business as a construction project manager, these two extremes existed at one customer's site. One was an older southern lady, conservative in her speech and slower moving, but with a negative outlook. The other lady was slightly younger with high energy and more of a positive set point than the other woman. When something went wrong, the younger energetic woman would exert a fair amount of energy, but she toned it down at the suggestion of helping. The message was negative, but the energy to resolve the issue, clearly positive. Regardless, she did not come across as a happy person who wanted to be engaged in a problematic project. The older lady would declare with all the energy she could summon, "It don't work, it never worked, and it's never gonna work!" All of her energy was involved in criticizing, and while she was reveling in her negative glory, she seemed to be at her happiest. That was the time to co-opt her to get her objections on the table and prepare my plan of attack. Once you overcome the big guns, handling the bottle rockets is easy.

**Positive versus Negative: Focus on Positive** Positive-energy people are the eternal optimists, starting conversations with phrases like "what if?" and "there has to be a way." They see all actions as building toward their objectives instead of blowing up something to force a rebirth. They have faith in the existing system.

If they are high energy, they can become the cheerleaders of your organization, constantly attempting to get people on board for solutions and making everyone feel as if the unimaginable is possible. Positive people typically think the old way simply needs improvement. The positive high-energy person gives it her all and applies every bit of that energy to the cause she believes in for the purpose of building rather than destroying. When you don't see

that level of energy, it's a sign she doesn't have passion for the topic. She sees value in continuous building and improving.

The low-energy positive can be the great unsung hero constantly rescuing others, but in a quiet fashion. When competent, she is seen as the backbone of the company with substance over flash.

Even the positive-energy types can be disenchanting like the younger of the two women at the construction site I mentioned; the result is they simply disengage. When this happens, you are likely to get negative responses from her as she slides over on the continuum. A positive converted to negative has lost faith and is not a pretty sight.

**Positive versus Negative: Focus on Negative** Negative energy doesn't mean the person intends negative outcomes. He simply sees applying negative energy as a way to accomplish a positive outcome. He has no faith in the existing system. His approach: Destroy the old or point out how bad it is and people will join you in building something better.

Negative-energy people bask in the fact you don't know what you are doing and take every opportunity to point it out. If they are competent in the area, they show you where you made your mistake; if not, they simply point out what you did wrong and that you should be better at it.

When they are high-energy and healthy, they are engines of improvement. They can create an environment of dissatisfaction with status quo and drive an organization to look for better things at every turn. But they still need the positives to help build it.

When high-energy and unhealthy impulses combine, that negative energy and cheerleading can lead to disagreement. For an organization, that can be toxic. All negativity with no solutions makes for a dismal work environment.

**Icon versus Artifact** The subtitle for this section should be, "Do any of these things fit together?"

Much of a human's perception is tied to ratios of gray matter to white matter, which is a topic I introduced earlier in this chapter in the discussion of what makes a good profiler. Although you cannot see the white matter-to-gray matter ratio of a person without written authorization and some pretty expensive tools, there are

behavioral symptoms that can allow you a good guess. More important, accurately pegging someone as predominately one or the other has great value in predicting the actions that person will take. By this I do not mean exactly what the person will do, but rather the likelihood of action being taken and the intensity of the action.

**Icon versus Artifact: Focus on Artifact** Dr. Temple Grandin, a very high-functioning autistic and professor of animal science, has noted in her writings that the very high gray matter autistics see everything in “pictures” or as a single concept when they are learning and experiencing the world. I have spent a fair amount of time watching horses on the farms and even conducted experiments to see what they understand. What I find is that horses understand every artifact associated with food as food. There is no chain of events or cause and effect. A horse will revisit a bucket he has stood beside for hours repeatedly with nothing changing. He also recognizes the feed room door opening means food, and my going to the barn means food. Any other interpretation is simply the human mind looking for cognition like ours in livestock.

I started to pay attention to people and see how much of that thinking was apparent. In the beginning, I was surprised to find people who were not far removed. On the extreme end are people with conditions like autism and Asperger syndrome who cannot link the absolutes of facts or faces to the underlying meaning. I call this kind of thinking artifact thinking.

Artifact thinkers see concise, packaged information in every concept or conversation. To say they take information at face value would be a misnomer because many artifact thinkers analyze data; they simply do not see the connections between one thing and another. Revisit the example earlier in the chapter of the man who built the well in the village: It never occurred to him that constructing the well could be a bad thing.

Extreme artifact thinkers are great repositories of “how things got to this point” and “who played what part.” They can separate facts from reasons, but application of the facts presents a challenge for them.

More centered artifact thinkers, with enough understanding of connections to keep the schedule together, make great executors for projects or installation of new systems. They can see the task at hand,

cut it into component parts, and drive it to completion without stress about what might break downstream. Where they have difficulty is in the design arena. They cannot manage design alone, but clearly can contribute the factual details about what needs to be done.

**Icon versus Artifact: Focus on Icon** On the other extreme, there are the people who can take any set of artifacts or objects and create a story line for how they tie together. I use the term “icon thinkers” to describe these people. To people of various religions, icons integral to their worship represent morality and stories of struggle and triumph. Any given icon could represent an entire religious story, complete with the character development, struggle/plot, and finale. More important, these icons carry spiritual significance and a lesson. In days gone by, icons may have been the only tie certain people had to the “word of God.” Interestingly, in Islam, images of people and creations of Allah are forbidden, a fact that has led to a great dependence on recitation and memorization by those who could not read. As a corollary, the Arabic language is one of the most iconic in the world.

By now, you are no doubt accustomed to my premise that traits taken to the extreme move into the territory of the polar opposite. This is true of artifact versus icon as well.

Go too far in the icon direction, and you start to see concepts as holistic ideas with no real tie-in to daily life. If you see connections between just about everything around you, you are, in effect, living in a world of your own creation. It describes not only conspiracy theorists who have gone well past reason but also some people in our society whom we hail as eccentric geniuses. It’s the theoretical physicist who spends every waking minute trying to prove a theory once started down that road, giving no thought to trying to disprove it.

Icon thinkers find relationships and build the story behind every action or function they encounter. They seek to understand the connections between things. Icon thinkers *will* find the reason something occurred.

On the healthy side, they are great researchers who discover fantastic correlations, create cutting-edge theories, and solve problems for business.

On the unhealthy side they are people who find conspiracies behind the weather. They find correlations where none exist. In

areas where data are not available to make a decision, conjecture can substitute. The danger in a group is that the bright, high-minded icon thinker posits a theory and the less-than-stellar thinkers in the group revere her for her genius. The next thing you know, her theory (fully intended to be theory by the icon thinker) becomes fact.

**Icon versus Artifact: Focus on Decisions and Action** Often, really iconic thinkers see the complexities of a situation as cause for analysis before taking action, to the point of so-called analysis paralysis. Alternatively, they may simply opt not to move ahead because the issue is so complex that any action might make the situation worse.

On the other extreme are the rash artifact thinkers. With wholly compartmentalized ideas, the artifact thinker will boldly take action. A lot of young people end up in jail because of this mentality blended with high levels of passion.

Passion of any type, whether revenge or something much more complex, will drive even the most iconic thinker to action. Passion will often override judgment, taking the individual out of the thinking or rational brain and into the reactionary or mammalian brain.

The iconic thinker with little passion to goad him can appear at the very center of the matrix. Even though he has very strong opinions, with so much thought invested in relationships between things but not much emotional energy, he is resigned to be an observer.

Imagine the signers of the Declaration of Independence—wealthy and educated, balancing decisions. Imagine the discussions about the unforeseeable consequences of establishing “inalienable rights.” Take a few minutes to think about where each of these men would fit on the actions matrix, and then add the passion and fervor that overrode their original impulses. That will give you a reasonable model for looking at your organization.

### ***The Categories of Action Styles***

This matrix of actions styles uses some terms that might at first look political until you take into account the meaning of each. They are people who

- Try to work through the system
- Tend to work against the system
- Want to blow up the system
- Aim to force overhaul of the system

Each of these types brings something to the table, and each of them in balance can ensure positive outcomes. But if you overload your organization with one style or the other, you should be aware of it and *make a conscious move to change the face of your organization.*

Remember, this does not replace the disposition matrix. It is compounding and simply the way a given person will take action.

**Legislators** Figure 1.8 suggests that legislators, in the way I use the term here, fall in the positive-energy arena. For purposes of putting the concept to work in your business, “legislator” refers to a person who uses positive energy to work through a known system and endures to a desired outcome.

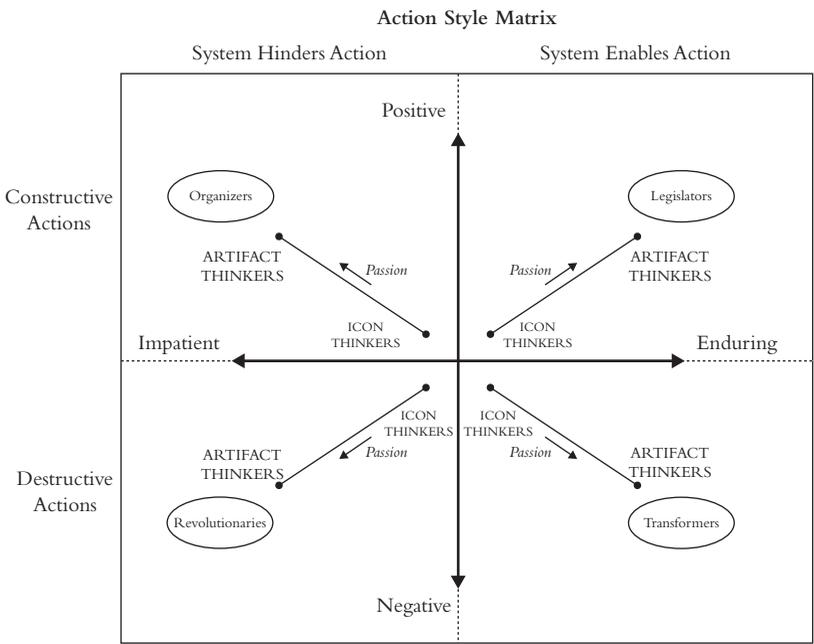


FIGURE 1.8 Legislator, revolutionary, organizer, or transformer: What is your relationship to the system and how much/how fast do you want to change it . . . if at all?

This is not to imply that some of the legislators in our modern world are not negative in energy and given to fits of passion with no understanding of cause and effect. This has nothing to do with disposition; you can find anyone deciding to work through the system to get what they want. This also has nothing to do with their intent; simply following the rules doesn't imply love of fellow humans or concern for coworkers.

Legislators bring stability to organization and create process for business.

When they are in balance, they allow the organization to get the basic blocking and tackling down to an art form, so it's easier to discover new opportunities.

When they go to an extreme, they create a byzantine labyrinth impossible for all but their own kind to navigate. They are the first to use the rules against you when you try to overcome their cause, and when it comes to revenge, the trap will be baited well and in plain sight.

**Revolutionaries** Revolutionaries have no patience when it comes to change; they want it now and see the entire status quo as the issue. We may have gotten here working through the system, but what makes us think we can improve matters using that same old system?

Revolutionary behavior can be targeted at the micro or macro level. Depending on their disposition, revolutionaries might be looking out for self or for others closest to them. They simply find fault in the system, and the opportunity exists to make it right—right now. They often know something needs to be done, but lack the endurance or patience to work through the system: "Let's just blow the whole thing up and make it work the right way!" If they succeed, they will want to blow that new thing up, too, at some point.

When in balance, they keep an organization nimble and looking to the future. They prevent the growth of convoluted organizational structures and allow for new ideas to crop up and rise to the top.

When they go to an extreme, they create a culture of upheaval and nothing gets done.

*Revolutionaries are best when balanced with the legislators to keep things moving.* When pushed into a role as a legislator,

revolutionaries can be restless and agitating. If forced to implement, they will become true believers in their own process and often act more like legislators than revolutionaries.

**Organizers** Organizers see value in the system and believe in positive action to accomplish a goal within that framework, but they cannot understand why it takes so long. They see power to do more in numbers, and to that end, they create a group strategy to get things done. This does not necessarily mean their acts are selfless; they will simply build coalitions to get the project moving faster.

In society, people like this create actions such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and other social movements that prod legislators into action. Basically, they see things as moving too slowly, so let's add momentum.

This kind of mind-set can create odd dynamics in an organization as normally opposing dispositions join forces to move things along faster. Disparate types may agree that they cannot make things work through usual channels, so they combine to force action for positive change. They may speed up the process, but with disregard for the clashing motivations for the change.

In balance, organizers keep people focused so that they remember why they started the endeavor in the first place. They goad the legislators to quicker action.

Out of balance, they set the company's priorities as their own by constantly foisting their own ideas on everyone.

**Transformers** Transformers are like revolutionaries in that they see the current system as needing overhaul, but they take a much more patient approach to getting what they want. Instead of throwing out the baby with the bath water, they prefer to heat the water until the baby jumps out. They apply negative energy to remove slowly the pieces of the current situation they dislike, leaving behind only the things they do like. All along the way, they are likely substituting their own ideals so that in the end, the organization or system becomes exactly what they desire and only the outward appearance is the same.

If the U.S. Congress had term limits in place, we would see a lot fewer transformers on Capitol Hill.

In balance, transformers can keep the organization thinking and challenging its performance. They deliver fantastic results in transforming teams and business units when their ideas are aligned with the good of the business.

When they are not in balance, transformers become underminers. They are effective long-term planners who overcome objection by using the system.

**Commonalities and Catalysts** *Legislators and organizers* believe the system has value and simply needs to be improved. The big difference is their level of patience.

Legislators can become disenchanted with the process and become organizers if they wait too long or if the prize they have waited for turns out to be a failure but they still maintain their positive energy. In terms American philosopher and social observer Eric Hoffer used, this is when the actual falls short of expectation and hope is lost.

*Revolutionaries and transformers* believe that the system is flawed and needs to be replaced. Again, the big difference is their level of patience.

Likewise, transformers can turn revolutionary if they wait too long or if the prize they have waited for turns out to be a failure.

*Transformers and legislators* believe a system is the answer and, by working through rules, they can accomplish their goals. The big difference is whether the system as it exists is good or bad.

They differ on whether the current system is worthwhile, even though both gravitate toward using the rules to accomplish their goals. Legislators see the system as valuable but needing improvement, which they are more than willing to do. Transformers see it as broken and useless but work through the system to replace it. When positive action does not work, legislators can easily become transformers as they lose trust in the system.

*Revolutionaries and organizers* both see rules as a hindrance or restriction in accomplishing their goals. They differ on whether the system is worthless and should be destroyed or whether it should be gamed to accomplish what they want. Organizers see the system as valuable but slow, so they create a pressing call for faster action to improve what they believe needs to be done.

Revolutionaries see the system as flawed and work outside the system to accomplish their goals.

If organizers are spurred to action by passion and see no reward from the system, they can easily lose trust and become revolutionaries.

*Revolutionaries and legislators* may be the same person, but at different times. Revolutionaries who set out to rebuild can become legislators and work through the system they create.

**Predicting Actions** Combine drives—the HELP categories—with the types of people I've talked about so far and you can make some accurate predictions about how they will behave in an organization.

**First, a look at the HELP MEs:**

- HELP ME legislators

Example: Al Gore, prior to his loss in the presidential election of 2000

The action will be driven by creating a system that better serves his individual needs. The real drivers are the good he is doing for self and, as a corollary, how he can effectively use the system to get it. He has a sense of entitlement to what he wants and is willing to work tirelessly through the system to secure that entitlement. After he lost the presidential election and no longer had the opportunity to work this way, he turned into an organizer.

- HELP ME organizers

Example: Candice Lightner (founder of MADD); Al Gore after he lost the election of 2000

The HELP MEs organizers wield real power as they gather mass support for the cause.

They understand that others must be feeling the same way, and they take advantage of it. Along the way, others get the same benefit—but that is not the driver. They want what they want right now and see the group as the means to get it. They align the arrows of motivation.

On a small scale, this is the waitress who is underperforming but gets her friends to join into the tip pooling scheme. Or the seller of a product line who is failing but gets others in the group

to create bundled selling opportunities. She can easily organize others of her own kind (the HELP MEs) and YOU WILL HELPs to drive her cause. When she chooses the right cause, she can engage the LET ME HELPs and the HELP YOURSELFS by drawing them closer to the human side of the issue.

Think about average Americans responding to collective efforts to rebuild New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina or to assist Haitians after their devastating earthquake. All but the staunchest opponents of collectivism were swayed by calls of compassion.

The same can be true in the business world when a person feels wronged or cheated and creates a coalition to change the rules. This is about gaining entitlement through mass movement and gaming the system through the use of the rules.

- **HELP ME revolutionaries**

Example: Fidel Castro (before he got a job as dictator)

The HELP ME revolutionary looks for opportunities to overcome what he sees as a stagnant system blocking his progress.

People given to get-rich-quick schemes fit this category. I've seen many people with this profile jump into multilevel-marketing.

In an office setting, a HELP ME revolutionary will want to destroy the status quo to rebuild it around "how the world works now," which is code for "what we have isn't working for me." He is not above helping others in the process as long as he gains benefit.

- **HELP ME transformers**

Example: Madalyn Murray O'Hair, who removed prayer from public schools

HELP ME transformers whittle away at the system's rules that offend them to create a system designed around their desired outcomes. They use the rules against the system.

**Next, a look at the HELP YOURSELFS:**

- **HELP YOURSELF legislators**

Example: Karl Rove

A HELP YOURSELF legislator will look out for his own interests, all the while working within the system.

They take on roles in corporate America to ensure that there is minimal intrusion to local offices or champion changes to

policies they see as restrictive. In the political world, they work to make regulations less restrictive and protect individuals' rights and incomes. They are against social programs and against programs that make anyone aid someone else. The neocons (that is, the current generation of right-wing politicians) fit this bill; they believe that larger government is designed to protect individual rights.

- HELP YOURSELF organizers

Example: "Tea Partiers"

This type does not believe the system is broken enough to throw out, but is unhappy with how slowly the changes occur. The modus operandi is to game the system by overwhelming it. The organizer in this case is looking to take back control of the system. In the office, she builds coalitions of like-minded folks to present grievances and get what she wants; once she gets it, she'll probably slink quietly back into her old status.

- HELP YOURSELF revolutionaries

Example: Thomas Jefferson (pre-presidency)

This person sees the system as so onerous and limiting that it must be worked around or destroyed.

On the low end, the revolutionary works simply through passive resistance to the rules. On the high end, he goes to war with the offending rules and completely disposes of them.

- HELP YOURSELF transformers

Example: Ayn Rand, novelist and philosopher known for the system called objectivism

This person is a cowboy focusing all of his energy on dismantling the controls of the system.

In an office, this person goads the sales team into thinking "every man for himself," because he sees the advantages of a hotly competitive structure superior to teaming.

### **The third set to examine is the combinations involving LET ME HELPS:**

- LET ME HELP legislators

Example: Andrew Carnegie

The LET ME HELP legislators, above all else, want to choose whom to help and when. They work through the system to become major contributors to the good of others, but they will

use that understanding of the system at any opportunity to stop mandates for help. Working through an established system to help, Andrew Carnegie offered \$20 million to the Philippines to buy their independence from the United States; \$20 million is the price the United States paid Spain for the Philippines.

- LET ME HELP organizers

Example: Bill Gates

LET ME HELP organizers lead with their own energy and resources to create a movement so that others can contribute.

They are keenly aware of what they have to offer and provide that as a catalyst for getting things done. The overall intent is to get others to support a cause they believe in. In an office, this is the cheerleader for fixing problems, and perhaps getting everyone to kick in to help someone facing a problem. On a grander scale, it is a philanthropist leading the way with her money, intent on having others support the initiative.

- LET ME HELP revolutionaries

Example: Ross Perot

LET ME HELP revolutionaries will invest all of their mental, emotional, and financial resources to promote their cause.

Rules don't matter because their commitment and belief in cause supersede everything. In the office, they give time to the project they see as valuable, even at the expense of other supposed priorities. But when forced to work on a project against their will, they refuse and create a disturbance about how "busy they are" with more important matters.

- LET ME HELP transformers

Example: Ronald Reagan

These types of transformers want to spend their resources to help others; they look for ways to reduce obstacles so that you can help them effect a renovation.

They take negative actions to dismantle the system, which they don't think works all that well. Along the way, they introduce more rules, but they are the "right" rules. In the office, they are the ones who don't want to do away with rules; rather, they want to adjust them to become more reasonable, more reflective of common sense. An example of this type of action is when Ronald Reagan dismantled social programs believing that nonprofits would fill the gaps.

**And finally, there is the set of YOU WILL HELP characters:**

- YOU WILL HELP legislators

Example: Nancy Pelosi, first female Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives

YOU WILL HELP legislators understand collective thinking and the application of rules to reach their objectives. They drive with fervor to create more rules as they build the system that will be best for all concerned. In business, these architects often miss the mark by not asking the users what they want.

- YOU WILL HELP organizers

Examples: Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

YOU WILL HELP organizers use the overwhelming support of the group to get to a greater good.

Typically, they see the system as well intentioned, but flawed and in need of improvement. Driving for change, they follow their belief that many voices are better than one. In the office, they create coalitions to get rules changed. YOU WILL HELP organizers are the classic union organizers.

- YOU WILL HELP revolutionaries

Example: Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, leader of the Bolsheviks

YOU WILL HELP revolutionaries drive fervor in pointing out that the system is broken and that all stand to gain from its replacement.

Whether it is your compensation strategy or the assigned parking policy you just implemented, YOU WILL HELP revolutionaries look out for the good of the group and are not afraid to blow things up to get it.

- YOU WILL HELP transformers

Example: Harvey Milk, first openly gay man to be elected to office in California

Looking out for the good of the group, YOU WILL HELP transformers dismantle the pieces of the system they oppose and replace it with rules they see as better.

These transformers are driven by outcomes for everyone, and it can often become a point of ego. They will move ahead with a new and better system by using the rules against the system. In the office, they are the ones who find the loopholes.

As you think about the people in your organization, give yourself permission to create tags for each of these categories or use the examples. And remember: Someone who is Ayn Rand today can become Thomas Jefferson when her patience runs out.

## **Profile Your People**

With these summaries in mind, plot your team, office, or company on the chart.

Is your organization a legislator frozen in inaction by the complexities of the system, or a revolutionary organization with the passion to get things done? Or something else?

Get the profile right, for your people and your organization, and you can not only predict actions but also change what individuals and teams will do.

Here is the most important profiling question for you as a business professional: Now that you have a new understanding of personal dispositions and action strategies, do you think your organization is properly aligned? That is, do you have the balance of types in your company and on your team to succeed? Or did you stack too many of one type and miss the mark?

You can change the action styles of people, but it will be stressful. If the action styles do not match your needs, you must decide: Is it worth all of that stress, or do you replace the people?

