

Identifying Different Communication Styles

Curious about how you *really* communicate with others? How do you come across to your colleagues? Are you a planner, thinker, or doer? Are you a risk-taker or someone who always tries to fit in with everyone else?

Communication styles tests like the one you're about to see can help you assess your current style. Complete this exercise by yourself or with a friend.

Some questions to think about after you assess your style:

- To what extent did the test validate what you already knew about yourself?
- Did the tests reveal any surprising characteristics? Any characteristics that you would not previously have ascribed to yourself?
- What else did you learn about yourself?
- How might these characteristics affect how you interact with your mentees, mentors, or colleagues?
- Did you uncover any characteristics that you'd like to alter? Anything you would like to emphasize more in the future? Or anything you'd like to de-emphasize?

If you completed this exercise with a friend or colleague, share your results with each other. Do the results verify how you viewed each other's communication style? Any surprises?

Directions

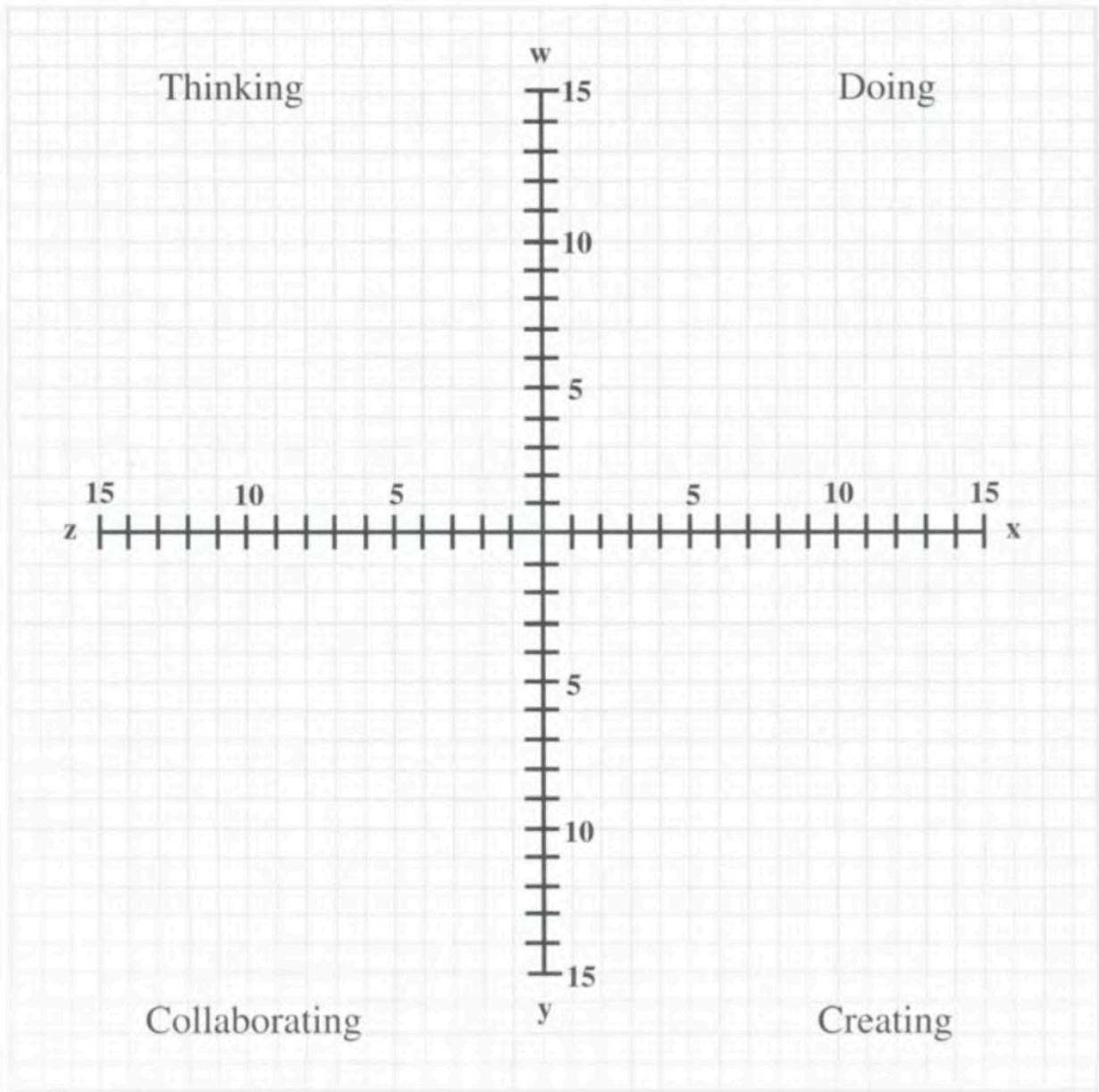
Print and complete this document to determine your communication style.

1. Reflect on your personal characteristics as you read across each of the 15 lines below. On each line, circle two descriptive words that best describe you. This is a forced choice, so sometimes all four words will describe you, but you *must* select only two. Sometimes none of the four words "best" describes you, however, you *must* select two words on each line.
2. After completing line 15, verify the number of words circled on each line, (as you read across from left to right) there must only be two words circled on each line.
3. For each column (x, z, w, and y), count the number of words circled and indicate the total circled in the box provided at the bottom.
4. Your "total" scores for each column represent four "points" (w, x, y, z), take these four points and graph them on the scoring grid which follows. When plotting your points, remember zero is in the middle of the graph no matter which direction you are plotting (left, right, up, or down).

5. Draw a four-sided figure to connect the four points (in other words when you connect your four points they *must* make a square or rectangle: that is, a four-sided figure. **DO NOT DRAW A KITE.** The largest area (length times width) of the four-sided figure drawn represents your dominant communication style as indicated by the words you selected. If you disagree about your style, go back and review the words you selected.
6. Read the summary page for information about your style.

X	Z	W	Y	
1. disputes the issue	unruffled	focused	sociable	
2. will take a chance	flexible	rational	sympathetic	
3. spur-of-the-moment	prudent	composed	extraverted	
4. directs others	asks	pensive	lively	
5. decisive	ponders	diligent	gregarious	
6. takes control	collaborates	independent	amicable	
7. self-assured	noncommittal	orderly	demonstrative	
8. convincing	open-minded	thorough	free-thinking	
9. will fight for	will defend	effective	good-hearted	
10. wants to win	hopeful	pragmatic	young-at-heart	
11. eager	diplomatic	systematic	innovative	
12. confident	accepting	pains taking	high-strung	
13. dominant	mild	plans	talkative	
14. insistent	sensible	exact	helpful	
15. urgent	constant	conventional	good-natured	
				=30

Effective Communication Styles Scoring Grid



Effective Communication Styles Inventory Summary

Thinking/Planning

Ask For:

- data
- information
- facts

Focused On:

- process
- task
- goal
- doing things the right way

Under Stress:

- avoid

Need/Like:

- logical thinking
- documentation
- rational approach
- careful planning

Doing/Directing

Tell About:

- progress to goals
- actions required
- solutions to problems

Focused On:

- task
- goal
- winning/being successful
- making things happen

Under Stress:

- become autocratic and tell

Need/Like:

- options
- directness
- flexibility
- conciseness

Supporting/Collaborating

Ask For:

- information re: others' skills/interests
- input
- feedback

Focused On:

- people
- relationships
- collaborations
- how situations "feel"

Under Stress:

- acquiesce or yield

Need/Like:

- friendliness
- participation
- inclusion
- involvement

Visioning/Creating

Tell:

- visions
- ideas
- stories, analogies

Focused On:

- big picture
- models/theories/concepts
- bringing visions into reality

Under Stress:

- blame others

Need/Like:

- to understand how the details fit their picture
- innovation and creativity
- others to handle the details

Adapted from the *Effective Communication Styles Inventory Scoring Form*, copyright Wanda Hackett Enterprises (1998). Retrieved on November 27, 2017 from <http://whcare.com/images/form.pdf>