

#cfrresults

Teams Function Better When They Manage Their Preferred Work Styles

Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success. - Henry Ford

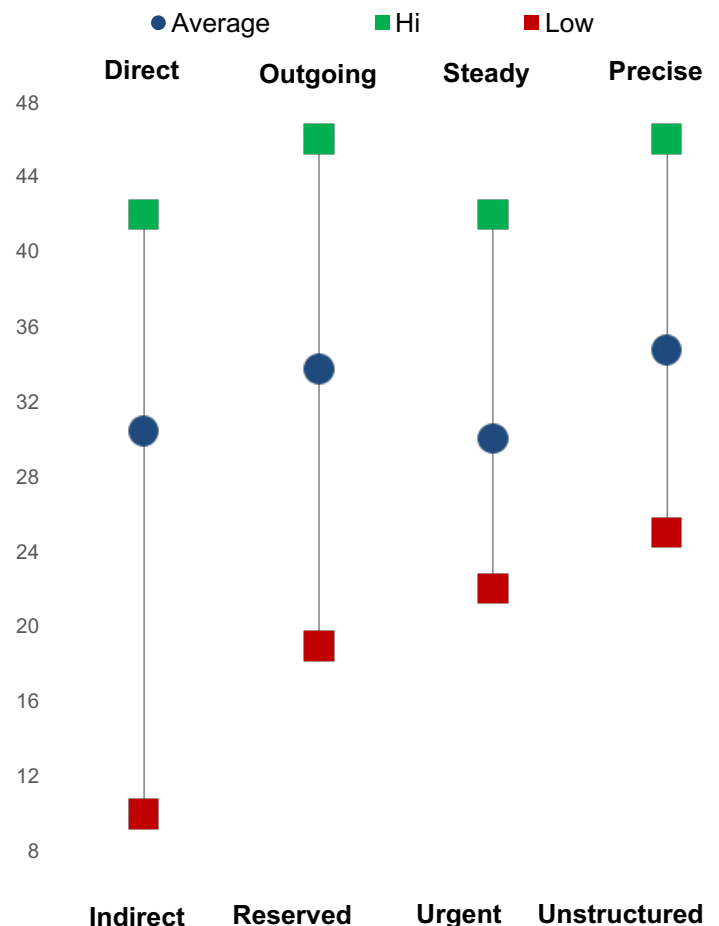
One of the best assessments we have ever utilized with our clients is the INSIGHT Inventory®, created by Patrick Handley, Ph.D. It evaluates the work style preferences for individual employees. The assessment generates insights regarding an employee's style preferences at work and home. When INSIGHT Inventories are completed for an entire workgroup, department, or team of employees, it illustrates the different work styles embedded in the team. Used proactively to improve communications and interactions, INSIGHT Inventories can help coworkers FLEX (adapt or adjust) to function effectively with one another.

Is There A Typical Banker Work Style?

Over the last 24 months we conducted INSIGHT Inventory® assessments with community bank senior level managers. We were hoping to determine if there were certain traits or work styles that occurred frequently across bank leadership teams. What we discovered reflected a very diverse set of work styles. From CEOs to Human Resource Directors to Senior Loan Officers, the diversity of styles was apparent. No one style dominated the profiles. No one style was specific to a job function. The results of our investigation are presented in the High-Low-Average chart below. Interesting to note how closely the average scores mirror the middle of the scoring range for each trait.

You might also notice that the scoring differences are narrower for the Steady-Urgent and Precise-Unstructured traits. Perhaps the nature of banking and finance provides an environment that fits

well with employees that utilize a STEADY approach to taking action and a PRECISE approach to handling details. While the scoring differences are narrower, the overall averages still fell in the middle range of the scale.



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Teams, continued

Each pair of traits in the INSIGHT Inventory[©] represent opposite ends of a spectrum. Most employees can anticipate the general direction of their dominant traits, even without a structured assessment. They know whether they feel comfortable meeting new people or would prefer to talk with people they already know. What we sometimes miss with our generalizations about work preferences is the strength of those dominant traits. If you are a 'to the point' person during conversations, you might be more Direct than Indirect. If you gravitate toward spending time alone, you could be more Reserved than Outgoing. If you are very deliberate in your decision-making process, you are probably more Steady than Urgent.

Here is a quick summary of each combination of traits examined with an INSIGHT Inventory[©] Assessment.

Direct-Indirect

This scale reflects how you tend to influence others, express your opinions, and assert yourself. Note the this set of traits had the widest spread for high to low scoring.

Reserved-Outgoing

This scale reflects how you interact with others and respond to people in groups.

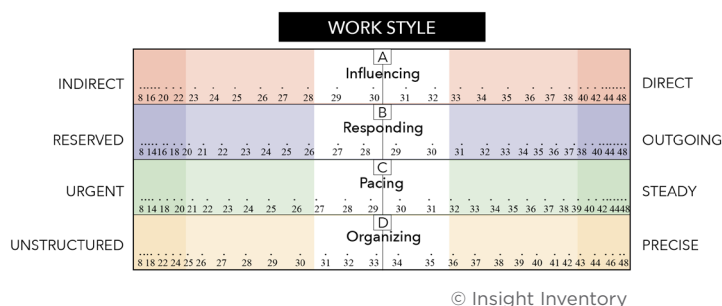
Urgent-Steady

This scale reflects how you tend to make decisions, take action, and pace yourself.

Unstructured-Precise

This scale reflects how you structure time, plan projects, and follow through on details.

INSIGHT Inventory[©] Work Style Matrix



According to Dr. Handley, if we possess an index score that suggests our dominant trait is close to the end of the spectrum, that trait will be a 'go to' response or reaction. When stressed we tend to overuse those dominant traits. For example, if your typical trait is precise, when stressed you will amplify that trait and become even more precise. If you are working with an unstructured employee, you are likely to experience some stress caused by the different styles. When working as part of a team, those amplifications can limit teamwork and reduce the effectiveness of communications. The FLEXING introduced with the INSIGHT Inventory helps coworkers identify how they can temporarily modify their dominant traits to work more effectively with others.

When a team completes their INSIGHT Inventories at the same time, the resulting scores can be mapped. This allows team members to see where their traits are similar or different from other members of the team. The mapped information helps employees identify FLEXING opportunities for improved interactions with coworkers. The end result is a higher performing team.

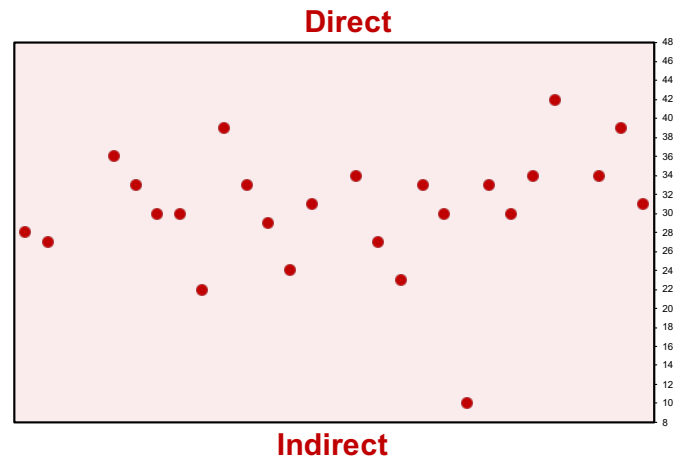
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Teams, continued

Understanding Work Styles

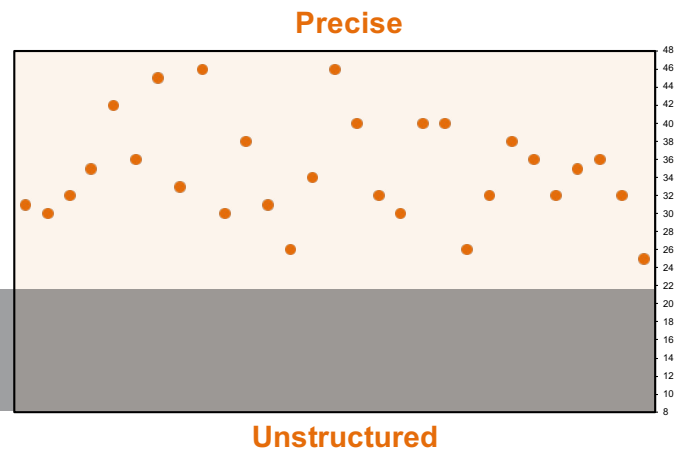
Understanding our own work style is the first step to enhance communications and team performance. Conducting assessments with teams and workgroups is the perfect extension of that process.

The Direct-Indirect map to the right illustrates how a group of employees can openly share their work styles. While the employees in the middle of the grid might find it easy to adapt to styles on either end of the spectrum, the map also draws attention to styles that are more dominant and could cause friction between employees. The highly direct employee from this team could experience tension with the employee that is very indirect. Only by FLEXING will they produce the best team outcomes.



Mapping teams has another important benefit. You might find that every member of your team shares the same dominant trait. When that happens, managers need to ask the team to help identify insights that would normally develop if the team included members with an opposite style.

This team has a style gap that might impact their ability to produce solutions with perspectives from unstructured employees.



What would your team map look like? Would you see a lot of variations or similar dominant traits? Contact us today and we can help you develop the necessary insights.