

Building Rapport with Four Styles of Communicators/Buyers

The Key to Developing Trust and Credibility

Buyers have many different likes, dislikes and motivations. Top performing sales professionals know that the key to developing trust and credibility is to expertly determine the likes, dislikes and buying styles of their prospects/customers and to adapt their communication style to match that of their buyer.

There are four styles you are likely to encounter: Driver, Analytic, Expressive and Amiable. Here are some tips on how to recognize and adapt your communication style to match theirs:

The Driver:

Drivers are action and goal-oriented, need to see results and have a quick reaction time. They are decisive, independent, disciplined, practical and efficient. They typically use facts and data, speak and act quickly, lean forward, point and make direct eye contact. Their body posture is often rigid and they have controlled facial expressions.

They rarely want to waste time on personal talk or preliminaries and can be perceived by other styles as dominating or harsh and severe in pursuit of a goal. They are comfortable in positions of power and control and they have businesslike offices with certificates and commendations on the wall. In times of stress, drivers may become autocratic.

The Analytical:

Analyticals are concerned with being organized, having all the facts and being careful before taking action. Their need is to be accurate, to be right. precise, orderly, methodical and conform to standard operating procedures, organizational rules and historical ways of doing things. They typically have a slow reaction time and work more slowly and carefully than Drivers. They are perceived as serious, industrious, persistent, and exacting.

Usually, they are task-oriented, use facts and data, tend to speak slowly. lean back and use their hands frequently. They do not make direct eye contact and control their facial expressions. Others may see them as stuffy, indecisive, critical, picky and moralistic. They are comfortable in positions in which they can check facts and figures and be sure they are right. They have neat, well organized offices and in times of stress, Analyticals tend to avoid conflict.

The Expressive:

Expressives enjoy involvement, excitement, and interpersonal action. They are sociable, stimulating, enthusiastic and are good at involving and motivating others. They are also ideas-oriented. have little concern for routine, are future oriented and usually they have a quick reaction time. They need to be accepted by others, tend to be spontaneous, outgoing, energetic, friendly and focused on people rather than on tasks. Typically, they use opinions and stories rather than facts and data. They speak and act quickly; vary vocal inflection, lean forward, point and make direct eye contact.

They use their hands when talking; have a relaxed body posture and an animated expression. Their feelings often show in their faces and they are perceived by others as excitable, impulsive, undisciplined, dramatic, manipulative, ambitious, overly reactive and egotistical. They usually have disorganized offices and may have leisure equipment like golf clubs or tennis racquets. Under stressful conditions, Expressives tend to resort to personal attack.

The Amiable:

Amiables need co-operation, personal security and acceptance. They are uncomfortable with and will avoid conflict at all costs. They value personal relationships, helping others and being liked. Some Amiables will sacrifice their own desires to win approval from others. They prefer to work with other people in a team effort, rather than individually and they have an unhurried reaction time and little concern with effecting change. Typically, they are friendly, supportive, respectful, willing, dependable and agreeable. They are also people-oriented.

They use opinions rather than facts and data, speak slowly and softly, use more vocal inflection than Drivers or Analyticals. They lean back while talking and do not make direct eye contact; they also have a casual posture and an animated expression. They are perceived by other styles as conforming, unsure, pliable, dependent and awkward. They have homely offices – family photographs, plants etc. An Amiable's reaction to stress is to comply with others.

Most people's first reaction after reading the four profiles is to believe that they fit into more than one category and this is absolutely right. However, everyone has a dominant style and no-one should believe that they fit into more than two because they don't.

The Social Styles Model:

Analytical	Driver
Amiable	Expressive

Note where each style is placed, because this is important. The people, with whom you probably find it most difficult to relate to naturally, are your diagonal opposites on the matrix. So you do need to study the characteristics of your diagonally opposite Social Style.

The majority of professional salespeople are Expressives; so clearly, they are going to find it most difficult to relate to and communicate with Analyticals. What is even more interesting, is that top 5% achievers are Drivers. They have no difficulty getting onto the same wavelength as Analyticals, because they are side by side and of course they have total synergy with other Drivers, plus, they relate well to Expressives. But, they have little in common with Amiables. Why is that so significant? The Social Style that you are least likely to find in a boardroom is an Amiable.

So, which Social Style do the various residents of the boardroom typically have?

Managing Directors are typically Drivers

Finance Directors are usually Analyticals

Sales Directors are nearly always Expressives

Marketing Directors are also Expressives

Technical Directors are almost always Analyticals

Questions for You to Consider

What is your natural selling style?

Which buying style is the most difficult for you to connect with?

Which style do you tend to avoid?

What do you need to do to become a more skilled communicator?