

Team Types

Four Personality Traits in Team Building

THE NATIVE AMERICAN MEDICINE WHEEL

Visionary – EAST

- Visionary who sees the big picture
- Very idea-oriented, focus on future thought
- Insight into mission and purpose
- Likes to experiment, explore
- Can lose focus on tasks and not follow through
- May become easily overwhelmed, lose track of time
- Tends to be highly enthusiastic early on, then burn out

Nurturer – WEST

- Innocence and trust in others based on vulnerability and openness
- Allows others to feel important in determining direction of what's happening
- Value driven regarding all aspects of personal/professional life
- Uses relationships to accomplish tasks
- Supportive, nurturing, feeling based
- Has trouble saying no to requests
- Internalizes difficulty and assumes blame
- Prone to disappointment when relationship is seen as secondary to task
- Difficulty confronting

In-charge Activist – NORTH

- Assertive, active, decisive
- Likes to be in control of relationship and steer course of events
- Quick to act, expresses sense of urgency for others to act now
- Enjoys challenge of difficult situations and people
- Can get defensive quickly, argue, try to out-expert you
- Can lose patience, pushed for decision before it's time
- May get autocratic, want things their way, ride roughshod over people

Analyst – SOUTH

- Weighs all sides of issues
- Uses data analysis and logic
- Seen as practical and thorough in task situations
- Introspective, self-analytical
- Can become stubborn and entrenched in position
- May appear cold, withdrawn

EAST – Visionary

Strengths

- Visionary who sees the big picture
- Very idea-oriented, with focus on future thought
- Insight into mission and purpose
- Strong spiritual awareness – attuned to “higher level”
- Likes to experiment and explore
- Appreciates a lot of information
- Value word: “option, possibility”

Overuse: When taken to excess

- Has the potential to lose focus on tasks
- Poor follow-through on projects
- Can develop a reputation for lack of dependability
- Can become easily overwhelmed
- Not time-bound, may lose track of time
- Tends to be highly enthusiastic early on, then burn out over the long haul

Best way to work with an EAST

- Show appreciation and enthusiasm for ideas
- Listen and be patient during idea generation
- Avoid critical judging statements of ideas
- Allow and support divergent thinking
- Provide variety of tasks
- Provide help and supervision check points on details and project follow-through

WEST – Nurturer

Strengths

- An innocence and trust in others based on vulnerability and openness
- Willingness to trust others' statements at face value
- Allows others to feel important in determining the direction of what's happening
- Value-driven regarding aspects of personal/professional life
- Uses relationships to accomplish tasks; interaction is primary
- Supportive, nurturing
- Team-player: receptive to others' ideas, builds on ideas of others, noncompetitive
- Able to focus on present moment
- Feeling based, emotions and intuition regarded as "truth"
- Value words: "right, fair"

Overuse

- Has trouble saying "NO" to requests
- Internalizes difficulty and assumes blame
- Prone to disappointment when relationship is seen as secondary to task; easily taken advantage of
- Immersed in present; loses track of time
- Immersed in NOW; may not see long range view
- Difficulty confronting, difficulty dealing with anger; may be manipulated by anger

How to work with a WEST

- Remember "process" – attention to what is happening in the relationship, feeling between you right now is of primary importance
- Needs to feel decisions are ethically right – justify decisions around values, ethics, the right thing to do
- Appeal to relationship between you and this person, this person and others
- Listen hard and allow the expression of feeling and intuition in logical arguments
- Easily steamrolled, be aware this person may have a hard time saying "NO"
- Provide plenty of positive reassurance and likeability
- Let the person know you like them personally

NORTH – In-charge Activist

Strengths

- Assertive, active, decisive
- Likes to be in control of relationship and steer course of events
- Quick to act, express sense of urgency for others to act now
- Thinks in terms of bottom line
- Enjoys challenges of difficult situations and people
- Likes quick pace and fast track
- Courageous
- Perseveres, not stopped by hearing “NO” probes and presses to get to the hidden resistance
- Likes variety, novelty, new projects
- Likes to be in position of leadership
- Value words, phrases: “Do it now!” “I’ll do it!” “What’s the bottom line?” “What’s stopping us?” “Who’s in charge here?”

Overuse

- Gets defensive quickly, argues, tries to out-expert you, sometimes based on few facts
- Loses patience; pushes for decision before it’s time
- Sees things in terms of black and white, little tolerance for ambiguity
- May go beyond limits, foolhardy actions, gets impulsive and disregards practical issues
- Not heedful of others’ feelings, may be perceived as cold
- Has trouble relinquishing control – finds it hard to delegate, “If you want to do something right, do it yourself!”
- May get overly autocratic, want things their way, rides roughshod over people in decision making process

How to work with a NORTH

- Present your case quickly, clearly and with enthusiastic confidence
- Let them know how they will be involved – their payoff
- Provide a “hero” or leadership role – a showcase
- Talk about the challenge of the task
- Provide plenty of autonomy
- When establishing timelines, stick with them
- Give positive public recognition
- Use them in tasks requiring motivation, persuasion, initiative

SOUTH – Analyst

Strengths

- Weighs all sides of the issue
- Uses data analysis and logic to make decisions
- Seen as practical and thorough individual in task situations
- Careful; thoroughly examines people's needs in situations
- Introspective, self-analytical
- Helpful to others by providing planning and resources – gets the most out of what's been in the past
- Skilled at finding fatal flaws in an idea or project
- “Objective” is a value word

Overuse

- Can become stubborn and entrenched in position
- Can be indecisive, collect unnecessary data, mired in details, analysis paralysis
- Tendency toward watchfulness
- Can remain withdrawn, distanced
- Resists change and emotional pleas
- May appear cold

How to work with a SOUTH

- Allow plenty of time for decision-making
- Provide data – objective facts and figures person can trust
- Don't be put off by critical “NO” statements
- Minimize expression of emotions, use logic when possible
- Appeal to tradition, sense of history, correct procedures

What does it mean to be your direction?

Which direction do you work best with?

Which direction do you work worst with?

What do you value most about being your direction?

What would you change about being your direction?

How does your direction fit with your job description?