



PEARSON NEW INTERNATIONAL EDITION

Conflict Management: A Practical Guide
to Developing Negotiation Strategies
Barbara A. Budjac Corvette
First Edition

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Key Negotiating Temperaments

firm, decisive, and deliberate—possessing stubborn resolve in their positions.

Given their difficulty in seeing the big picture, their focus on details, and their determination to be *right*, pragmatists can usually see little reason for accepting alternatives or giving concessions. Disagreements with the pragmatist can quickly escalate, and the pragmatist can become abrasive and argumentative.

Either due to loss of control or as an intentional maneuver, the pragmatist turned **street fighter** views the negotiation as a win/lose proposition. The street fighter wants to win at all cost.

The best way to get along with the pragmatist is to utilize facts and figures and to demonstrate a concern for the bottom line. The best way to deal with the street fighter is to allow him or her time to cool off. Pragmatists are relatively easy to spot by their focus on details combined with stubborn resolve.

ACTION SEEKER (HIGH ROLLER)

The **action seeker** is the sensing-perceiving (S/P) combination. The action seeker sees details, looks at specifics, and approaches things sequentially. Action seekers also take things literally rather than conceptually.

Action seekers avoid both theory and planning. They are *not* impatient for resolution. Although they are able to defer decisions and adapt to new information, they do have a strong sense of the here and now. They are hands-on people.

Action seekers are spontaneous and action-oriented and seek thrills and gratification. They may allow excitement to take precedence over careful thought. Thus, when action seekers go out of control, they may either win or lose *big*.

In communication, remember that action seekers often share perceptions that may sound like but that are *not* judgments or decisions. The best way to communicate with the action seeker or the **high roller** (the action seeker out of control) is to utilize facts and figures and to occasionally encourage him or her to discuss personal interests in order to tone down the runaway enthusiasm.

Since they do not thrive on order or completion, action seekers can be easily distracted. Action seekers disdain rules, and they are unpredictable. In addition to recognizing their detailed approach, you can spot an action seeker by some hyperactivity.



OTHER INDICATIVE AND RELATED FACETS OF PERSONALITY

Due to the complexity of personality, it is helpful to consider other facets of personality that may be related to negotiating temperament. As stated elsewhere in this book, right-brain/left-brain dominance is related to learning style and to the sensing/intuiting preference. Right-brain dominance is related to the intuiting preference, while left-brain dominance is related to the sensing preference. The accommodator style of learning is associated with sensing (and with extroversion), while the assimilator style of learning is associated with intuiting (and with introversion).

There may be a similarity between a high level of conscientiousness and judging preference (J) behavior. Similarly, Type A personality characteristics may exhibit themselves as similar to judging preference (J) behavior.

Emotional stability, competitiveness, the need for power, the need for affiliation, the need for achievement, and the other two learning styles of converging and diverging may also relate to negotiation temperament when combined with other facets. Those potential effects are noted in the assessment section that follows.

ASSESSING YOUR PRIMARY NEGOTIATING TEMPERAMENT

You should utilize your personality assessments completed elsewhere in this book along with the preceding temperament profiles to fully analyze your primary negotiating temperament. You may find that you relate somewhat to more than one temperament. If you score high in self-monitoring, you may think that you see yourself in all four temperaments. It is important to assess your primary, natural, negotiating temperament. It is easier and more effective to utilize what comes naturally, and it is what comes naturally that takes over when we are under distress or out of control. Knowing how you will behave is necessary to developing effective strategies.

To find your primary temperament, focus first on the manner in which you take in information. Consider your right-brain/left-brain dominance, learning style, and sensing/intuiting to determine your preference. You will notice that, after such determination, you should fit within one of two profiles. Some of the correlations already noted may assist you and provide you with added information about yourself.

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If you are a harmonizer who is also very high on the need for affiliation or the need for social power, and low on conscientiousness, you should take special care to avoid becoming the pacifier in negotiations. If you are an action seeker with low conscientiousness or low emotional stability, take care not to become the high roller. If you have a judging preference and also have a high need for personal power and a high level of competitiveness, you may be prone to becoming the bull or the street fighter. You should exercise particular caution in controlling your negotiation interactions if you also have a low level of emotional stability to add to that mixture.

If your learning style is either converging or diverging and you are unsure of your negotiation temperament, consider three additional facets. If you are a converger and are also high in need for achievement, competitiveness, or conscientiousness, you may fit the controller profile. If you are a diverging style of learner and are also relatively low on conscientiousness and need for achievement, you may fit the action seeker profile. A form is provided in Exhibit 1 to record your temperament assessment.

Performance Checklist

- ✓ Certain aspects of personality relate particularly to interaction style. Preferences for taking in information and structuring the outside world exhibit themselves in negotiating temperaments. Right-brain/left-brain dominance; learning style; conscientiousness; Type A characteristics; emotional stability; and needs for power, achievement, and affiliation may also relate to temperament.
- ✓ The four key negotiation temperaments are the harmonizer (pacifier), the controller (bull), the pragmatist (street fighter), and the action seeker (high roller). The parenthetical names describe the temperament out of control.
- ✓ Temperament affects perceptions, interpretations, and certain behaviors. It is possible to recognize each temperament by paying attention to approach. Harmonizers are general and open-ended; controllers are general and resolved; pragmatists are specific and resolved; and action seekers are specific and open-ended.
- ✓ You should record your negotiation temperament assessment in the form provided in Exhibit 1 using the knowledge gained thus far.

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EXHIBIT 1

Negotiating Temperament Assessment Form

My primary negotiating temperament is

Harmonizer _____ Controller _____ Pragmatist _____ Action seeker _____

I am a harmonizer who also has

High need for affiliation _____

High need for social power _____

Low conscientiousness _____

If one or more of the preceding are true, I will focus on not being a pacifier _____

I am a controller who also has

High competitiveness _____

High need for personal power _____

Moderate to low emotional stability _____

If two or more of the preceding are true, I will focus on not being a bull _____

I am a pragmatist who also has

High competitiveness _____

High need for personal power _____

Moderate to low emotional stability _____

If two or more of the preceding are true, I will focus on not being a street fighter _____

I am an action seeker who also has

Moderate to low conscientiousness _____

Moderate to low emotional stability _____

If one or both of the preceding are true, I will focus on not being a high roller _____

Key Terms, Phrases, and Concepts

Perception

Harmonizer (pacifier)

Controller (bull)

Pragmatist (street fighter)

Action Seeker (high-roller)

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Review Questions

Mark each of questions 1 and 2 as True (T) or False (F) and answer questions 3 through 10.

- T F 1. The four key negotiating temperaments reflect four possible combinations of two personality preferences.
- T F 2. Understanding two personality preferences is all that is necessary to master negotiating behavior.
3. A negotiator who moves freely from one issue to another or discusses multiple issues together is exemplifying the temperament of a/an _____.
4. A negotiator who focuses on specifics and details might be one of which two temperaments? _____ or _____.
5. A negotiator who likes detail and is also focused on resolution exemplifies the temperament of a/an _____.
6. The negotiating temperament that is likely most unpredictable is the _____.
7. Why are harmonizers and controllers prone to organize information into concepts and theories? What aspects of personality relate to such behavior?
8. What personality characteristics or traits must a harmonizer be sure to keep in check or under control? Why?
9. What personality characteristics or traits must an action seeker be sure to keep under control? Why?
10. Think of a recent interaction you were party to. Imagine yourself in the eyes of the other party. Which negotiating temperament did you exhibit?

Case 1

Ventura Capital is a financier who specializes in capitalizing start-up companies. Andy Preneur is a would-be entrepreneur. He needs capital to start his new business. Andy and Ventura have been negotiating a potential agreement over the last few months. It seems there is only one item unresolved. Ventura wants her investment to remain in the company and earn a preferred dividend of 5 percent, even if Andy no longer needs the money. Andy wants the right to buy out Ventura's interest at any time as long as the 5 percent return

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is paid. Role-play this case with another person. When you finish, address the following questions.

Case Discussion Questions

1. Which of the four key temperaments was most clearly displayed by the other person? Identify specific comments and behaviors to support your assessment.
2. Which of the four key temperaments do you think your comments and behaviors most clearly displayed?
3. Do you agree with each other's self and other assessments? If not, why do you think you see the behaviors differently?