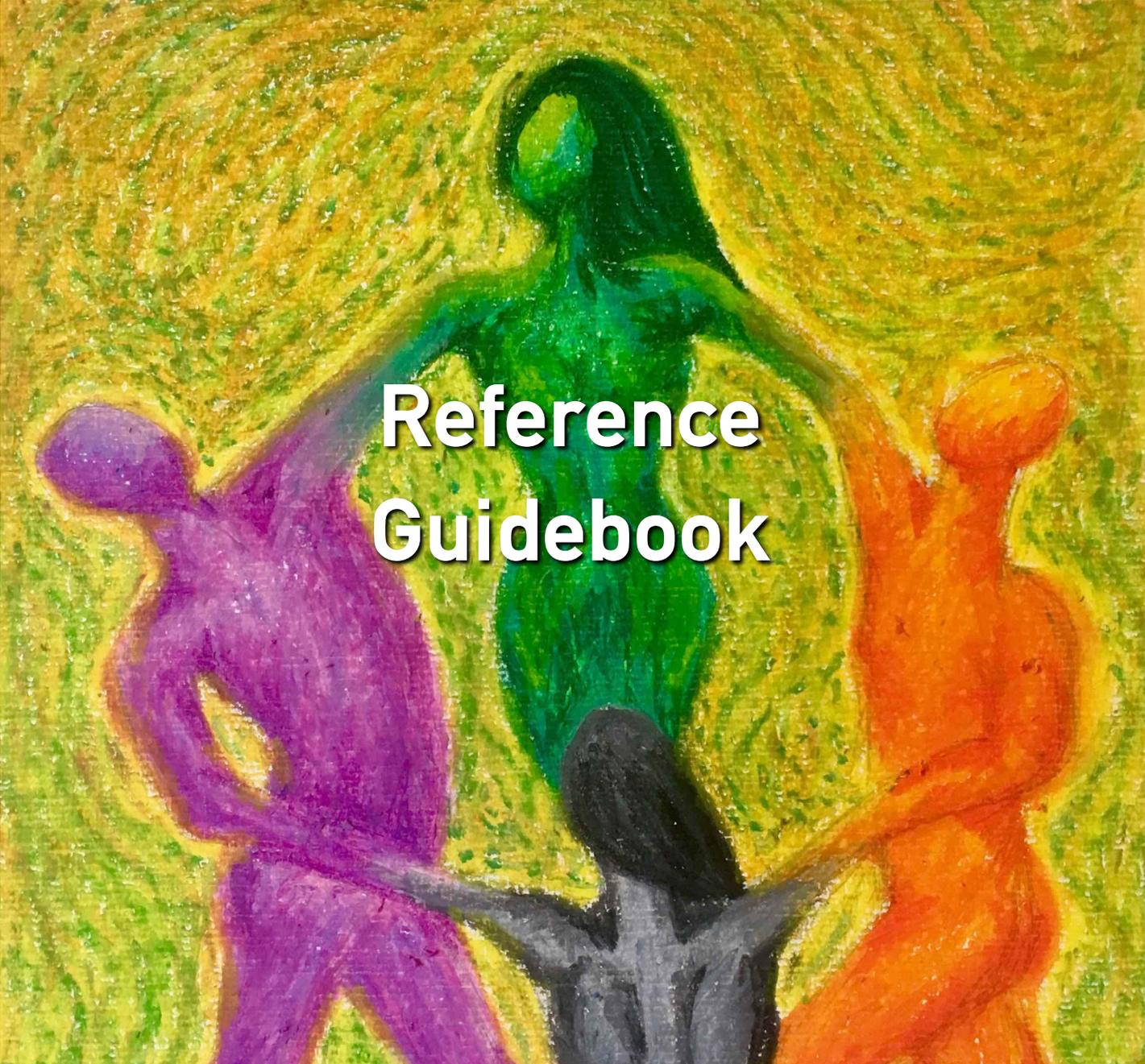


# Understanding Communication Preference Styles

An abstract painting featuring three stylized human figures. The central figure is green, the one on the left is purple, and the one on the right is orange. They are set against a background of textured yellow and green. The figures appear to be in a dynamic, possibly dancing or interacting pose.

## Reference Guidebook



**Ian C. Woodward**

New Edition – (Pre-release version June 2018)



## Communication Intelligence

### **Understanding Communication Preference Styles: Reference Guidebook**

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Grateful acknowledgement is made for the reproduction cover artwork: “Spring” by Veronica Yun, which was commissioned for this Reference Guidebook in 2018. Its imagery and colors suggest engagement between four different communication styles connecting in collaboration.

This is a New Edition (pre-release version) of the Understanding Communication Preference Styles: Reference Guidebook. It is for use with the Communication Preference Styles Survey (CPSS) V4.1 and V5.1 – June 2018.

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# Introduction

Communication is vital in every aspect of our lives. Because we are all unique, we favor different ways of communicating. Becoming deeply aware of our personal Communication Preference Styles is part of developing our “communication intelligence,” which in turn involves understanding our own “communication approach” and that of others. Developing this level of awareness can make us much more effective communicators.

To assist people in developing this awareness, Ian C. Woodward, who is a professor at INSEAD—the Business School for the World in Singapore—developed the **Communication Preference Styles Survey (CPSS)** together with a model of communication intelligence over the past two decades as part of his ongoing research and lecturing work on effective leadership communication. This Reference Guidebook is meant to accompany the CPSS and help readers understand their communication approach, their Communication Preference Styles and their own CPSS results.

## How to Use this Reference Guidebook

Readers should use this Reference Guidebook to understand communication approaches in general and then to interpret their personal CPSS results using that understanding. It provides information about two of the major influencers of communication approaches: **the four major Communication Preference Styles** and the communication features of personality (**extroversion, introversion and ambiversion**).

The Reference Guidebook discusses the topics of communication approach and Communication Preference Styles in three parts:

- **Part 1** explains the concept of communication approaches. This includes the impact of culture, Communication Preference Styles and personality in shaping communication approaches. It also touches upon how pressure, nerves and stress may affect preference styles.
- **Part 2** contains detailed information to help readers interpret their own CPSS results report. It includes detailed information about the four Communication Preference Styles and how personality characteristics interact with these preference styles and communication approaches.
- **Part 3** focuses on what we can do with this new knowledge, including how to use the survey results to become a better and more effective communicator.

## How Our Communication Preference Styles Reveal Themselves to Others

Our personal **Communication Preference Styles** reveal themselves to others through:

- verbal language, including word choices and emphasis;
- subject, topic and content selection and priorities;
- the application of communication processes and structures;
- the use of nonverbal (body language), paraverbal (voice), visual communication signals and communication behaviors; and
- the overall sense of approach in communication which people display or respond positively toward.

As humans are so diverse, there are different levels of intensity and various combinations of Communication Preference Styles. Each style brings different benefits and strengths in ways of

communicating as well as potential challenges and difficulties. People with strong preferences may experience problems and conflict where the communication style of the person with whom they are communicating is the opposite of theirs.

## What We Can Achieve by Understanding Communication Approaches and Preferences

The foundation for effective communication is awareness.

Each person has his or her own way of transmitting (and framing) and receiving (and interpreting) communication messages, whether verbally, nonverbally, visually, behaviorally or through technology. We call this the person's communication approach. Three dimensions significantly influence this approach: cultural background (discussed in Part 1), the four Communication Preference Styles, and personality.

The four **Communication Preference Styles** (discussed in detail in Part 2) are:

**Style 1: Rational (Logical, Factual and Direct)**

**Style 2: Structured (Organized, Detailed and Careful)**

**Style 3: Expressive (Interpersonal, Emotional and Sensitive)**

**Style 4: Visual (Imaginative, Conceptual and Animated)**

The key personality characteristic of Extroversion, Introversion and Ambiversion is also discussed in detail in Part 2.

When we become more aware of our own needs (built on our communication approaches) and those of others, we can connect and engage more successfully. This deep and insightful level of communication awareness leads first to development and change priorities, then to practice and finally to performance improvements—that is, to becoming a more effective communicator in all formats. (For more information about how **CPSS** survey results can be used to improve communication impact, refer to Part 3.)

There is value in using a diagnostic tool such as the **CPSS** not only to identify our own preference styles, but as a concrete starting point to begin reflecting about styles in general, as well as the difference between preference and capability—and why preference matters. Preference matters because it reflects an innate style that people tend to default to whether or not they are aware of it, particularly in conditions of pressure or stress. (For more on how pressure and stress influence Communication Preference Styles, see page 11.)

By understanding our own Communication Preference Styles and personality, we can:

- build the potential strengths associated with that style;
- overcome the potential problems of that style when communicating with people who have different preference styles; and
- increase our understanding and awareness of the preference styles and needs of other people with whom we communicate, which may help prevent misunderstandings.

**Important Note:** There is no ideal communication preference style or combination. The major purpose of the **CPSS** and its results is to promote reflection and deepen awareness. It is a development tool. It is not about “boxing” people into neat categories or “stereotyping” them. Any individual may or may not have many of the characteristics described in the Reference Guidebook. However, the communication characteristics that we can explore based on **CPSS** results should reveal important insights into our development as more effective communicators.

Each style has advantages and disadvantages in different communication situations. Understanding these Communication Preference Styles can help build awareness of self and others. With knowledge about our preference styles, we can build our potential strengths, overcome potential problems, and enhance our capacity to more effectively communicate with those whose preference styles are different from our own. We can also consider adopting techniques from other styles to match the needs of a particular communication situation or purpose.

## Communication Intelligence and Psychometric Principles

The **CPSS** is a diagnostic survey built on psychometric principles<sup>1</sup> designed to elicit a person's responses to, and resonance with, the four Communication Preference Styles. It can be used for developmental and reflection purposes. It covers a range of personal and behavioral communication features that affect and influence Communication Preference Styles. As noted earlier, individual Communication Preference Styles reflect themselves in language, process and nonverbal signals as well as our overall style and approach to communicating with other people. They influence perceptions of communication intelligence and likely use of specific communication techniques.

Various aspects of our selves contribute to our personal **Communication Preference Styles**. These aspects include major psychological characteristics—such as personality and traits, learning styles and thinking orientations—together with gender, social factors, and life, education and professional experiences. Explicit communication skills, learning or training may also influence these preferences, if they are deeply developed and practiced over time through extensive experience.

The online **CPSS** (V5.1) contains 95 questions spread across five sections. The final results report reflects the collective and integrated responses to all the questions.

By answering the **CPSS** questions, we can reveal substantial insights about our own preference styles in communication—as well as the potential strengths and challenges in our communication approach. These insights build our capacity to develop communication intelligence. (See Appendix 1 for a description of the communication intelligence model.) The **CPSS** results also report on the personality characteristic of being an Extrovert, Ambivert or Introvert, which influences how we communicate. (For details, see 2.7, How Extroversion, Introversion and Ambiversion Affect Your Communication Approach, beginning on page 28.)

Sometimes the **CPSS** survey results surprise people. We all have communication skills that exist in styles beyond our preferences because we develop skills and capabilities in response to need (as well as through training) over time. Such skills might not show themselves in our preferences. However, our underlying Communication Preference Styles represent those that are most natural, instinctive and obvious in us.

Under pressure, nerves and stress, we will frequently resort to our underlying preference behaviors and skills ahead of any learned ones. For some people, Communication Preference Styles can change with intense situations, such as pressure, nerves, anxiety or stress. We can call these “stressor preferences.” The **CPSS** research data show that around 40% of people have these so-called stressor preferences and can shift or change their communication preferences compared with their general preference state. For more information about how pressure, nerves and stress may affect Communication Preference Styles results, see page 27.

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<sup>1</sup> Psychometric diagnostic surveys can be used to measure the psychological aspects of a person's behavioral styles and orientations, such as attitudes and personality traits. Diagnostic surveys developed on psychometric principles, such as the CPSS, measure specific characteristics and orientations related to defined parameters (in this case, four defined communication preference styles and an aspect of personality). Surveys such as the CPSS are designed to be used for development purposes rather than assessment.

# Part 1: Understanding the Three Dimensions of Communication Approach: Culture, Communication Preference Styles and Personality

While various factors can influence communication effectiveness in specific situations (such as knowledge level of a topic under discussion, or the relevance of the content), there are three communication dimensions that are with us across **all communication situations**. They are culture, preference styles and personality. Together, these three dimensions combine to form our communication approach.

## 1.2 Communication Approach—An Illustration

Before explaining the three dimensions (culture, Communication Preference Styles and personality), here is an illustration of different communication approaches in action: In March 2011, four global investment partners met by video conference to discuss plans for the final round of a toy design competition they were sponsoring. Their meeting minutes included comments made by each partner in the order they spoke:

- **John:** “I like this. Good risk and reward. Timing means committing some real money now, but with the right business plan, we can target a 20 per cent return in the next year. Given the market analysis, let’s restrict the design options to two clear segments: younger kids and pre-high school. I want to make sure the teams know the competition restrictions and the data we require.”
- **Sarah Jane:** “I saw some fantastic design teams in the first round who want to go all the way in the competition. We should look at how innovative and creative their ideas are. I want to see what their strategies are for the new toys and what their marketing visions are. It would be marvelous if one or more of these designs won one of this year’s big toy awards. Energetic team presentations are essential. We must stress how important it is to show us the promotional visuals for the designs. They can use 3D printing for the prototypes.”
- **Carl:** “We need the team members to display how they work together. The people are important if we are to partner with them by investing for the longer term. How do they collaborate, and is their passion for their new toys? Are they sensitive to what children and their parents really want? How do they feel about working with us? We could ask them to share some personal examples of their previous work. It would be ideal if we could speak with some of the children who have used their toys in the past and some of their employees. I believe we need to have some quieter personal conversations with the team members, not just watch the presentations. I really appreciated being able to talk with the people we met in the first round to get to know them.”
- **Sakura:** “We should provide sufficient time to listen to the team presentations carefully and review their submitted materials to develop thorough questions. From every presentation, we should be able to evaluate how financially viable the product is, and where the investment returns may be coming from. It may be helpful to have the teams submit an implementation plan for their toy designs that covers areas such as operations, logistics and intellectual property protections. We may wish to reflect upon how comfortable we are—based on the preliminary analysis and the competition legal protections—that we are managing our risks in this development funding competition. This is the first time we have

organized a competition of this kind, and there are many important matters for deliberation. There are some detailed comments on the 24 items of the competition agenda rules that I circulated yesterday. On balance, we may wish to consider having the final teams we choose combine both of the toy segments.”

Each example demonstrates a very different communication approach reflecting some aspects of the person’s cultural background, Communication Preference Styles and personality:

- John is American based in New York City. He is a strong Style 1 Rational Communicator and an Extrovert.
- Sakura is Japanese based in Osaka. She is a strong Style 2 Structured Communicator and an Ambivert.
- Carl is Danish based in Copenhagen. He is a strong Style 3 Expressive Communicator and an Introvert.
- Sarah Jane is a New Zealander based in Auckland. She is a strong Style 4 Visual Communicator and an Extrovert.



## 1.2 How Cultural Background Influences Communication Approach

The Communication Preference **Styles and personality characteristics** sit underneath our **cultural communication backgrounds and attitudes**. Like the umbrella in the graphic, a person’s cultural background is the overarching dimension of communication approach. Within a national or ethnic culture, the distinct differences in the four Communication Preference Styles are likely to be very obvious. But in cross-cultural settings, specific and substantial differences in cultural/language approaches may lead people to see another person’s preference styles differently—that is, the cultural differences may be much more significant than the **individual Communication Preference Styles**.

For example, in a culture where there is a higher or larger overall level of body language intensity and louder voice volume compared with another culture (for instance, Italian culture compared with Thai culture), a person who has equal intensity in the Style 3 communication preference (Expressive) is likely to appear more expressive to the Thai, and not as expressive to the Italian.

Similarly, all cultures have Extroverts, Introverts and Ambiverts. Yet if a Dutch Extrovert meets a Korean Extrovert, the Dutch person may perceive the Korean as more introverted because of Korean cultural characteristics, such as level of voice volume (lower), intensity of body language (lower), and highly respectful, less direct speech content.

The **Communication Preference Styles Survey (CPSS)** does not address cultural similarities and differences in communication; nor does this Reference Guidebook in detail. The **CPSS** may be taken by people of any cultural background. It is highly recommended that leaders and executives involved in global or cross-cultural business learn more about cultural similarities and differences in communication.<sup>2</sup> There are many different dimensions of cultural characteristics in communication. Below are just two examples. Note, however, that people are individuals, and may or may not fit into one or more of these generalized examples.

### **High-Context Versus Low-Context Cultures**

High-context cultures tend to have communication that seems more indirect and implied. These cultures use words that are embedded and interpreted in the situation and relationship. There can be higher levels of indirect content and multiple possible meanings for words, making language choice significant to accurate interpretation. Examples of high-context cultures include Japan, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Latin America and West Africa.

Low-context cultures tend to have communication that seems more direct and explicit. These cultures use words and content that can be more task- or outcome-oriented. There can be forthright and confronting content, with definitive words and phrasing having a single meaning. Examples of low-context cultures include the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Australia and the United States. One context type is not “better” than the other, but they are very different.

### **Body Language (Nonverbal) and Voice (Paraverbal) Cultural Intensity**

Different cultures also convey different levels of intensity in body language and voice. Body language differences include the size and frequency of hand gestures, the level of facial expression movement, and eye contact rules (based on age, position or gender). Vocal intensity and expressiveness differs from culture to culture. This includes volume of voice, speed/pace of speech, pitch modulation, and length and use of pauses/silence.

Higher nonverbal- and paraverbal-intensity cultures include those from southern Europe (e.g., Italy), the Iberian Peninsula (e.g., Spain) and Latin America (e.g., Brazil). Lower nonverbal- and paraverbal-intensity cultures include those of north Asia (e.g., Japan), southeast Asia (e.g., Cambodia) and northern Europe (e.g., Finland). One level of intensity is not “better” than the other, but again they are very different.

## **1.3 The Four Communication Preference Styles**

As discussed above, when we analyze our communication approach and those of others, we should first consider cultural background as an overarching dimension, since different cultures and languages significantly influence the way we communicate and provide a rich diversity of communication features across our world.

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<sup>2</sup> There is a wide range of books, articles and web materials available on cross-cultural characteristics, including: Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture* (1976); Erin Meyer, the *Culture Map* (2014); and Geert Hofstede (<https://geerthofstede.com/landing-page/>). The examples provided above include material adapted from these sources.

However, next—at an individual level and sitting below culture—there are two further specific and crucial communication dimensions to consider and the **CPSS** presents results for both of these dimensions:

- **Individual Communication Preference Styles**
- **Personality Characteristic: Extroversion, Introversion and Ambiversion**

Communication Preference Styles influence the way we transmit and deliver—as well as receive and interpret—communication across different situations and different communication formats or media. The four main Communication Preference Styles that represent a collection of communication characteristics found in people, each associated with potential strengths and potential challenges, are:

**Style 1: Rational (Logical, Factual and Direct)**

**Style 2: Structured (Organized, Detailed and Careful)**

**Style 3: Expressive (Interpersonal, Emotional and Sensitive)**

**Style 4: Visual (Imaginative, Conceptual and Animated)**

### **Style 1: Rational (Logical, Factual and Direct)**

**Style 1 (CPSS Report Color Purple)** is the Rational Communicator, whose overall approach appears logical, factual and direct. The Rational Communicator builds on analysis and forthrightness while demonstrating a sense of urgency. The Rational Communicator usually prefers key information that gets straight to the point in communication, and has a communication style that is outcome-/task-oriented and objective.

### **Style 2: Structured (Organized, Detailed and Careful)**

**Style 2 (CPSS Report Color Silver Gray)** is the Structured Communicator, whose overall approach appears organized, detailed and careful. The Structured Communicator builds on organization and thoroughness in communication materials and processes while paying significant attention to accuracy, detail and a comprehensive understanding of facts, information and language. The Structured Communicator usually prefers stability and sequence in communication, and has an organized and meticulous communication style.

### **Style 3: Expressive (Interpersonal, Emotional and Sensitive)**

**Style 3 (CPSS Report Color Green)** is the Expressive Communicator, whose overall approach appears interpersonal, emotional and sensitive. The Expressive Communicator builds on relationship communication and uses description while showing empathy, passion or sensitivity. The Expressive Communicator usually prefers more descriptive language and interactive body language in communication, and has a communication style that is collaborative and emotive.

### **Style 4: Visual (Imaginative, Conceptual and Animated)**

**Style 4 (CPSS Report Color Orange)** is the Visual Communicator, whose overall approach appears imaginative, conceptual and animated. The Visual Communicator builds on ideas and images while displaying creativity and activity. The Visual Communicator usually prefers “big picture” conceptual language and content with graphic visuality in communication, and has a communication style that is creative and imaginative.

<div data-bbox="185 241 746 651" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Style 2</b> <b>Silver Gray</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>The Structured Communicator –</b> <b>Organized, Detailed and</b> <b>Careful</b></p> </div> <p><b>We need to understand ...</b> <b>Walk us through all the details.</b></p>	<div data-bbox="818 241 1390 651" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Style 3</b> <b>Green</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>The Expressive Communicator –</b> <b>Interpersonal, Emotional and</b> <b>Sensitive</b></p> </div> <p><b>We feel and believe ...</b> <b>Consider how this affects us.</b></p>
<div data-bbox="185 913 746 1323" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Style 1</b> <b>Purple</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>The Rational Communicator –</b> <b>Logical, Factual and</b> <b>Direct</b></p> </div> <p><b>I know the facts demonstrate ...</b> <b>Get to the point and the result.</b></p> <hr/>	<div data-bbox="818 913 1390 1323" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Style 4</b> <b>Orange</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>The Visual Communicator –</b> <b>Imaginative, Conceptual and</b> <b>Animated</b></p> </div> <p><b>I imagine this idea ...</b> <b>See the opportunities and benefits.</b></p> <hr/>

### 1.4 Personality Characteristic: Extroverts, Introverts and Ambiverts

Beyond culture and the four Communication Preference Styles, the third crucial dimension influencing our communication approach and behaviors is an underlying aspect of our **personality**: the degree to which we are **Extroverts, Introverts or Ambiverts**. This is an important dimension affecting many of our personal communication behaviors and priorities, especially related to the extent of our active social engagement and energy of interaction with people in spoken communication settings or our methods in combining thinking and speaking.

This aspect of our personality **needs to be taken into consideration in addition to** our **Communication Preference Styles** because there are Extroverts, Introverts and Ambiverts in all

four styles, and their natural tendencies influence their communication energy and structuring, verbal patterns and nonverbal behaviors. (See Part 2 for more details.)

## 1.5 How Pressure, Nerves and Stress Can Affect Communication Preference Styles

Under situations of pressure, nerves, stress and anxiety, some people change their behaviors, including shifting their specific communication preferences. The **CPSS** describes these as stressor preferences. Generally, people will do one of three things:

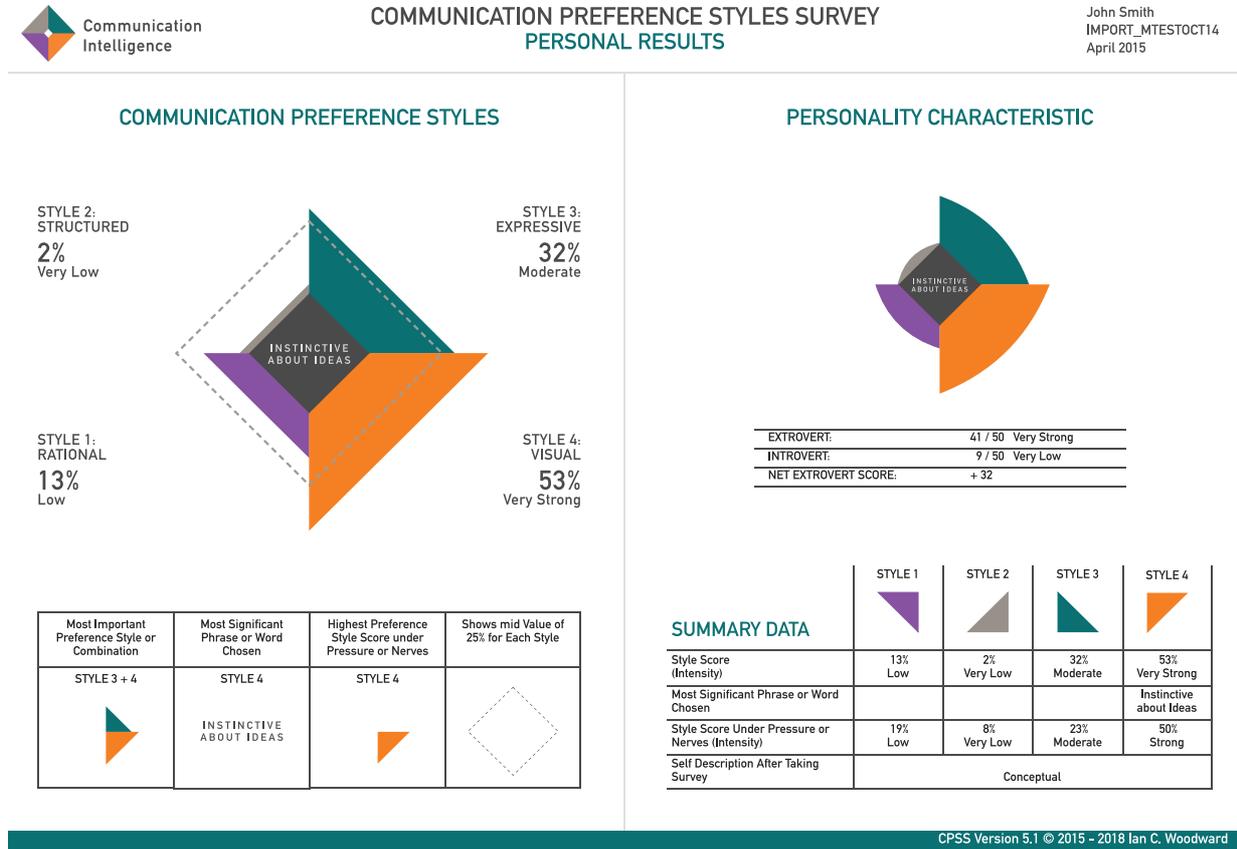
- adhere to their usual or general preference styles;
- extend one or more preferences to a much greater extent compared with their results in general situations; or
- shift their preferences significantly to a different major preference or different preference combination compared with their general preferences (including people who may dramatically reduce their result for a particular preference style).

Consider these examples of the four Communication Preference Styles under situations of pressure, nerves, stress and anxiety:

Stressor Situation	Potential Strengths	Potential Challenges
Style 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming more direct and to the point</li> <li>• Being more forthright</li> <li>• Using more factual communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being overly dominating and not listening</li> <li>• Seeming overly critical and non-empathetic</li> <li>• Appearing too dismissive, arrogant or aloof</li> </ul>
Style 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming more organized and structured in the communication</li> <li>• Being more prescriptive and comprehensive</li> <li>• Using greater attention to details of language and content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being overly controlled and prescriptive or rigid</li> <li>• Seeming closed off to ideas or overly obsessive</li> <li>• Appearing too detailed and lost in the minutiae</li> </ul>
Style 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming more emotive and expressive</li> <li>• Being more engaged and gregarious</li> <li>• Using more body language for expression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being overly talkative and not listening</li> <li>• Seeming too emotional or sometimes emotionally withdrawn in the communication</li> <li>• Appearing unstructured, with insufficient attention to details and factuality when it is needed</li> </ul>
Style 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming more “big picture” and animated</li> <li>• Being more forceful and creative in expressing ideas</li> <li>• Using more visual images and imagery as well as increasing ideation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being overly dominating and advocating without listening</li> <li>• Seeming dismissive, arrogant or overexcited</li> <li>• Appearing unrealistic without paying sufficient attention to relevant details and questions as well as practical examples</li> </ul>

# Part 2: Interpreting Your CPSS Survey Results

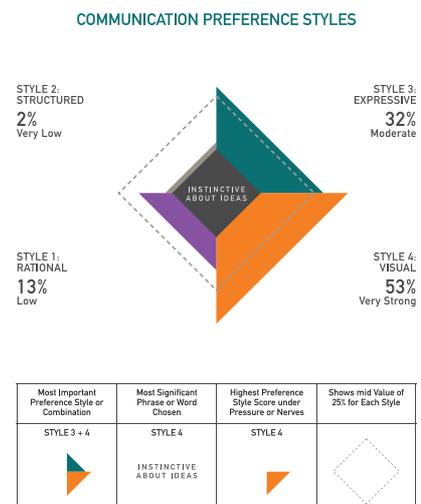
Below is an example of a full personal results report from the **Communication Preferences Styles Survey (CPSS)**.



## 2.1 Your Personal CPSS Results Report

The left hand side of your **CPSS Personal Results Report** deals with your general or usual Communication Preference Styles, and shows your results with:

- your percentage score and intensity level for each of the four major Communication Preference Styles;
- your most significant preference style or combination of styles;
- the most significant phrase or word you chose in the survey (a very important word descriptor in your communication) together with its style category; and
- the style that intensifies to the highest level for you under communication pressure, nerves, stress or anxiety.



This information is presented graphically in your communication “diamond” and in text form. The dotted line represents where 25% would be in each style.

On the bottom right side of your results sheet is a **Summary Data table**. It is provided to compare your overall results information, including your general scores and intensity in each of the four styles and the most significant phrase or word chosen with its style category.

	STYLE 1	STYLE 2	STYLE 3	STYLE 4
<b>SUMMARY DATA</b>				
Style Score (Intensity)	13% Low	2% Very Low	32% Moderate	53% Very Strong
Most Significant Phrase or Word Chosen				Instinctive about Ideas
Style Score Under Pressure or Nerves (Intensity)	19% Low	8% Very Low	23% Moderate	50% Strong
Self Description After Taking Survey	Conceptual			

In addition, your stressor preference style score results **for situations of pressure or nerves** are reported here in detail. In this table, there is also a “Self Description” at the bottom. This records the answer where you were given a free choice to describe yourself after completing the survey. This is a useful description to compare with your actual survey results. (In the example, the personal description is very much a Style 4 word.) This word or phrase did not contribute to actual survey results and is reported for information and reflection.

## 2.2 Understanding the Five Communication Preference Intensities

- Very Strong intensity (51% or higher)
  - A score of 51% or more in one particular style indicates that you likely have most, or have the possibility to develop most, of the potential strengths associated with that style. This style will be very evident to others in your overall approach to communication. You will also likely have a substantial number of the potential challenges and issues associated with that style, and these may be quite obvious to other people.
- Strong intensity (35% to 50%)
  - A score in this range indicates that you are likely to have many, or have the possibility to develop many, of the potential strengths associated with that style. This style will be evident to others in your overall approach to communication. You will also likely have some of the potential challenges and issues associated with that style, and these may be obvious to other people from time to time.
- Moderate intensity (23% to 34%)
  - A score in this range indicates that you are likely to have some of the key potential characteristics of the style—both positive and negative—but with less intensity than someone who has a Very Strong or Strong result.
- Low intensity (11% to 22%)
  - A score in this ranges indicates that you are likely to have few of the obvious characteristics associated with that style. This style will be much less emphasized than your own higher-intensity style results.
- Very Low intensity (0 to 10%)
  - A score in this ranges indicates that you are likely to have very few, if any, of the obvious characteristics associated with that style. The absence of these characteristics would be quite noticeable to someone with a Very Strong/Strong preference in that style. Frequently, the absence of the positive characteristics of this style area in a person relate directly to some of the challenges in their own higher-intensity style results.

The **CPSS** research data shows the majority of people who take the **survey** tend to exhibit at least one Very Strong or Strong style result operating in combination with a Strong or Moderate second preference style. While few in number, it is also completely normal to have a series of Moderate results. However, at least one or two of these is likely to be the more important preference combination for that person—and make a slightly greater contribution to their overall communication approach—while the other results provide an influence as well.

**Remember:** Pressure, stress and nerves can affect your communication preference styles in certain situations.

See Part 1.5 (p. 11) and Part 2.6 (p. 27) for more information.

### People Often Ask ...

*Q: My most significant chosen word or phrase description is not in my highest preference style result. What does this mean?*

A: Around two-thirds of people choose their significant word or phrase in the same style as their highest result. The majority of the rest of people choose their word or phrase in their second highest result. A smaller number choose a word or phrase not in their highest or second highest result. If this is your situation, you will likely display the communication behaviors or approach represented by that word or phrase depiction, but are unlikely to hold most of the other characteristics of that style. Nevertheless, the communication features specifically represented by the phrase/word will be an important and noticeable feature of your overall communication approach.

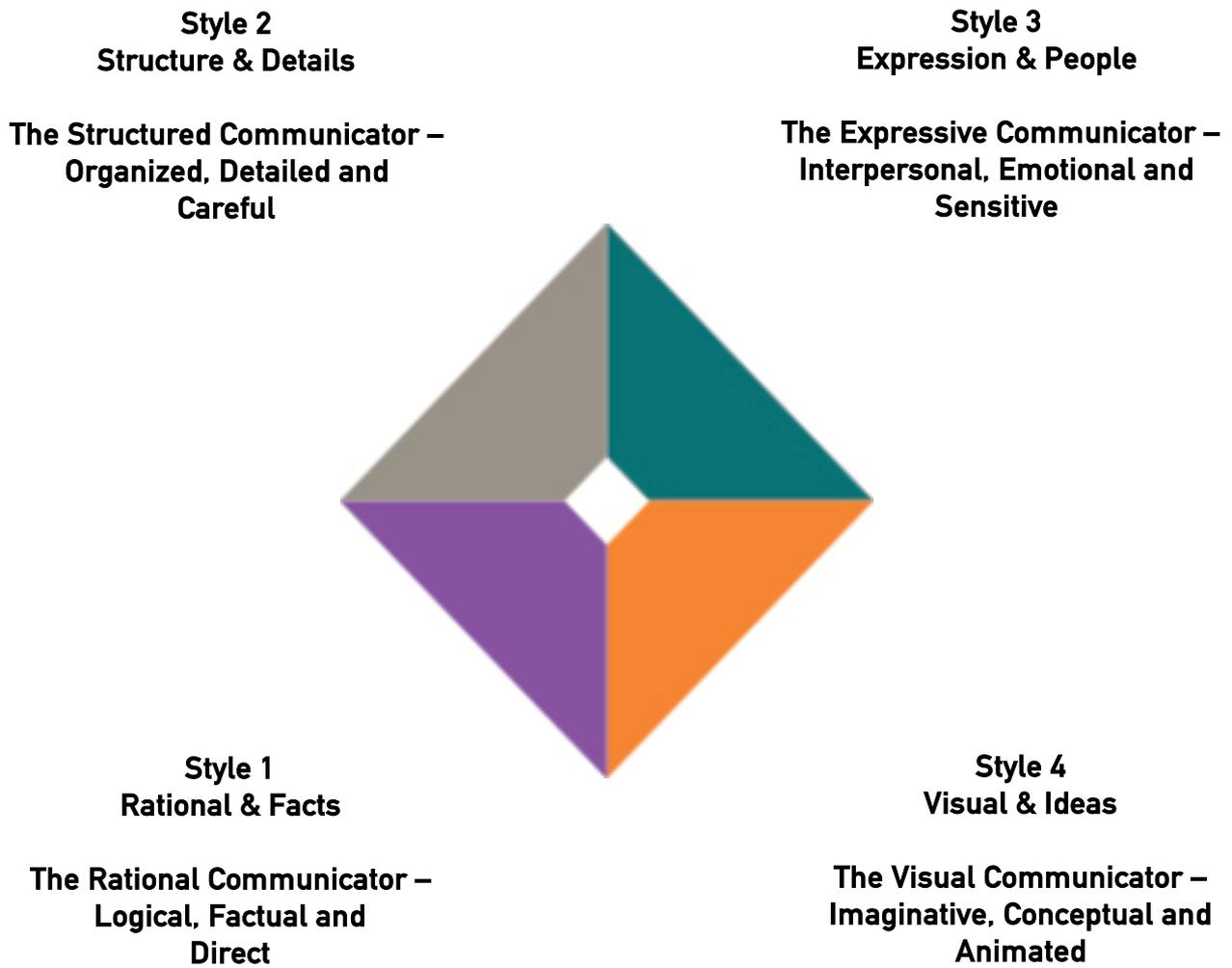
*Q: I have three or four styles that are close in score or intensity to one another, yet my results show only some of these in combination. What does this mean?*

A: Quite a few people hold a series of results that are close in percentage score or intensity. At least one or two of these are likely to be the more important preference set and make a slightly higher level of impact on the person's overall communication approach, although the other results will also contribute. The CPSS calculates the results to take account of this. It also reports where you may have three or four styles in combination.

*Q: I have some results Moderate) across one or more styles. What does this mean?*

A: Many people get one or more preference results at a Moderate level of intensity. If that was your result, it simply means you will draw some of the key characteristics—positives and negatives of these preference styles—into your overall communication approach. However, the intensity will be less compared with someone who has a Very Strong or Strong Result. There is a rarer group of people who have all moderate preferences, a potential strength is that they use communication characteristics that connect with many styles. A specific challenge is that they may not develop communication characteristics that stand out compared with someone who has a higher intensity. preference in that style.

## 2.3 Communication Preference Styles: Potential Strengths and Challenges



<b>Style 1 Purple</b>	<b>The Rational Communicator – Logical, Factual and Direct</b>
<b>Potential Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication attention is on rationality, logic, and objectivity.</li> <li>• Is direct, sharp, succinct and to the point in speaking and in writing, often favoring bullet points.</li> <li>• Focuses on communicating, analysis, evidence, facts, and task outcomes.</li> <li>• Extensively uses concrete nouns and precise language of measurement and quantification, such as statistics, metrics or technical data, as well as attention to intellectual relevance in message content with insertion of key facts.</li> <li>• Arranges content through logical progression from one point to the next.</li> <li>• Is decisive, candid and clear.</li> <li>• Explicitly communicates specific goals, objectives or views.</li> <li>• Can choose simple (straightforward) language to reflect complex ideas as an aid to comprehension.</li> <li>• Conveys a sense of urgency and direction through words, voice tone and tight body language.</li> <li>• Appears effective in communication situations that need emphasis on direct, factual objectivity and clarity.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In summary: may lack the communication capacity to engage people.</li> <li>• May fail to add personal “warmth” to interactions; and seem unable to create deep interpersonal/emotional connections.</li> <li>• Often seems “clinical”: may over-emphasize logic, with an absence of emotion/expression or sense of vision (especially if Style 3 or 4 is absent).</li> <li>• May underuse descriptive or emotive language, stories and examples; and overuse technical vocabulary and jargon, which inhibits creation of motivation, inspiration, a sense of vision and purpose.</li> <li>• Can seem overly dominant or assertive in interactions, e.g.: may overuse transmissional “telling” communication; lack sufficient active listening and questioning; not allow sufficient time for understanding and wider engagement in discussion; and be too short or directive in writing.</li> <li>• Generally, has the lowest level of interpersonal eye contact of any style, but is often unaware of it, limiting the ability to engage person to person.</li> <li>• Usually has the tightest body language and direct tone of voice among the styles, adding to appearance of being aloof and non-empathetic.</li> <li>• Can particularly seem to disengage when communication is not factually, intellectually or logically appealing.</li> <li>• Main solution: borrow some of the Style 3 potential strength techniques.</li> </ul>

Style 2 Silver Gray	The Structured Communicator – Organized, Detailed and Careful
Potential Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication attention is on details, accuracy and structuring.</li> <li>• Focuses on precise, detailed language in written and spoken communication.</li> <li>• Translates ideas into implementable steps with a systematic sequence and flow, leading to a comprehensive outcome.</li> <li>• Meticulously builds and organizes messages, content, activities and materials in an orderly and methodical way incorporating comprehensive layers of specific, relevant, practical information.</li> <li>• Uses multiple structures and processes, such as sequencing, categorization, and other language or content structuring devices, agenda-setting, documentation, minute-taking, follow-through and proofreading (hears, sees and reads small communication “errors”).</li> <li>• Can involve others in discussion through structured involvement, planned and prepared materials, and listening/participation processes.</li> <li>• Listens with controlled discipline in turn, giving attention to others before contributing, and making strong use of clarifying questions.</li> <li>• Generally, has the second-highest level of interpersonal eye contact of any style.</li> <li>• Sensitive to reading and using head nodding as agreement and structuring signals.</li> <li>• Maintains organization, consistency and steadiness in communication approach and body language.</li> <li>• Appears effective in communication situations that need emphasis on detailed, comprehensive and organized materials and processes.</li> </ul>
Potential Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In summary: may get lost in the details (self and others).</li> <li>• May find it very challenging to get to the point quickly.</li> <li>• May overwhelm people with too much information or material.</li> <li>• May appear dry with a lack of visuality in pictures and words (i.e., absence of Style 4), and low levels of emotive language and body expression (absence of Style 3).</li> <li>• May appear overly prescriptive; and fail to convey sense of creativity, energy and urgency.</li> <li>• Clarifying questions/comments, which are needed for accuracy and completeness in communication may be misinterpreted as inflexibility and change-resistance.</li> <li>• May be overly literal in interpreting language.</li> <li>• May be too quiet and averse to conflict in waiting turn in active dialog and avoiding free flowing and unstructured group communication, which may create perceptions of passiveness, disinterest, being closed and too rigid, lacking assertiveness, or passive-aggressiveness.</li> <li>• Body language may be too constrained emotionally and expressively, compounding a lack of visual imagery in language.</li> <li>• May give away position unintentionally through head nodding.</li> <li>• May disengage when communication moves away from a defined process, agenda, sequence and completing the details, or when it becomes strongly direct, conceptual or emotional.</li> <li>• Main solution: borrow some of the Style 4 potential strength techniques.</li> </ul>

<b>Style 3 Green</b>	<b>The Expressive Communicator – Interpersonal, Emotional and Sensitive</b>
<b>Potential Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication attention is on expression and interpersonal connection.</li> <li>• Extensively uses descriptive adjectives and storytelling.</li> <li>• Is likely to adapt message to others’ personal needs, emphasizing human and emotive factors; organizes material by descriptive iteration.</li> <li>• Is usually a good listener and question-asker, except when overly emotional or under pressure.</li> <li>• Is passionate and enthusiastic, creating and transmitting personal energy.</li> <li>• Focuses on engagement communication to foster collaboration and teamwork.</li> <li>• Influences and engages through personal connection, making messages personally or emotionally relevant with content designed to touch or evoke “feelings.”</li> <li>• Can use humor or personal anecdotes as well as drama and theater.</li> <li>• Generally, demonstrates the highest interpersonal eye contact of any style; connects facial expression, eyes and fluid/expressive body language.</li> <li>• Displays authenticity, interest and emotion by effectively reading and using nonverbal (body) and paraverbal (voice signals) communication.</li> <li>• Builds communication activities and materials on narrative and relationships with an emphasis on passion, empathy and sensitivity.</li> <li>• Spoken communication tends to be extensive and illustrative; written communication tends to be shorter, with high levels of qualitative language.</li> <li>• Appears effective in communication situations that need emphasis on people-centered interactivity, emotionality and engagement.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In summary: may appear to lack precision, depth and focus.</li> <li>• May seem vague or unstructured in speech and writing, and too indirect when directedness is needed.</li> <li>• May not communicate clear goals, objectives, outcomes, nor a vision or “big picture” (unless with styles 1 and/or 4).</li> <li>• Can be overly talkative and long-winded, too descriptive, qualitative, and emotive, as well as not listening, especially under pressure; can overwhelm with energy.</li> <li>• May not include sufficient facts, logic, evidence and details, even if known; nor pay attention to accuracy (unless with styles 1 and/or 2).</li> <li>• May avoid interpersonal conflict, robust debate and avoid long, detailed, technical discussions or extensive document reading/writing when this is needed.</li> <li>• May use excessive body language, tonal expression and qualitative/descriptive language, thus creating perceptions of being overly emotional, vague, imprecise, distracted, compliant and not sufficiently rational or thorough.</li> <li>• May disengage when communication moves away from feelings and people to become more factual, detailed or conceptual.</li> <li>• Main solution: Borrow some of the Style 1 potential strength techniques.</li> </ul>

<b>Style 4 Orange</b>	<b>The Visual Communicator – Imaginative, Conceptual and Animated</b>
<b>Potential Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication attention is on visuality, idea communication and vigor.</li> <li>• Extensively uses conceptual, abstract, creative, visual, and symbolic, language and metaphors.</li> <li>• Articulates a vision, the “big picture,” with future-oriented and possibilities-oriented messages, often using the future tense.</li> <li>• Displays comfort with communicating ambiguity, risk and new ideas.</li> <li>• Uses visual symbols, designs, pictures, and drawings, connecting these to ideas and content.</li> <li>• May use some relevant information examples, except under pressure.</li> <li>• Uses active, simultaneous, energetic and forceful debate and advocacy.</li> <li>• Is comfortable moving quickly from idea to idea or point to point without detail constraints.</li> <li>• Can appear strategic, entrepreneurial or innovative in their overall communication approach.</li> <li>• Is generally animated, demonstrating strong use of body language, with hands and arms supporting strength of voice.</li> <li>• Spoken communication tends to be medium length and visual; written communication tends to be medium length, with conceptual language and images.</li> <li>• Appears effective in communication situations that need emphasis on imagination, ideas and creativity.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In summary: may lack the communication capacity for sufficient details and concreteness.</li> <li>• May overuse visual messages, metaphors, conceptual and abstract language, which others may find obscure, imprecise, ambiguous, impractical or obtuse.</li> <li>• May miss conveying explicit facts and details (unless with Style 1 and/or 2).</li> <li>• May be overly idea-focused, with insufficient attention to people/emotions (unless with Style 3).</li> <li>• May jump too quickly from one idea or big message to another, seeming unstructured and potentially unrealistic.</li> <li>• May be seen as “performing,” giving the impression of “telling” rather than engaging.</li> <li>• Can be too forceful or domineering in pushing own views, interrupting too frequently, and not using deep listening or question-asking, seeming inattentive, distracted, insensitive, non-empathetic, or arrogant.</li> <li>• May play devil’s advocate for the sake of it; e.g., framing statements as questions from their own point of view.</li> <li>• Generally, has issues with unfocused eye contact (second-lowest level among the four styles).</li> <li>• May disengage when communication moves away from visuality, ideas, creativity or animated interaction and becomes factual, detailed or emotional.</li> <li>• Main solution: Borrow some of the Style 2 potential strength techniques.</li> </ul>

In the current **CPSS** research data, some of the most frequently occurring illustrative words and phrases for each style of communicator include:

<p><b>Style 2 – Structured Communicator</b></p>	<p><b>Style 3 – Expressive Communicator</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured and disciplined</li> <li>• Accurate and detailed</li> <li>• Cautious and careful</li> <li>• Organized planner</li> <li>• Implementation-focused</li> <li>• Reliable and timely</li> <li>• Self-controlled</li> <li>• Systematic</li> <li>• Tenacious and persistent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressive</li> <li>• Approachable</li> <li>• Caring and considerate</li> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Interpersonal</li> <li>• Open and trusting</li> <li>• Passionate</li> <li>• Perceptive about people</li> <li>• Story-Teller</li> </ul>
<p><b>Style 1 – Rational Communicator</b></p>	<p><b>Style 4 – Visual Communicator</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rational and objective</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> <li>• Data focused</li> <li>• Demanding</li> <li>• Fact-based thinker</li> <li>• Forthright and direct</li> <li>• Logical</li> <li>• Knowledgeable and analytical</li> <li>• Results-driven</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual</li> <li>• Adaptable and changeable</li> <li>• “Big picture” and holistic</li> <li>• Conceptual Thinker</li> <li>• Creative Thinker</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial</li> <li>• Instinctive about ideas</li> <li>• Speculative and Curious</li> <li>• Strategic</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Preference Style Combinations

The overwhelming majority of people display characteristics in more than one of the four Communication Preference Styles even though their highest intensity style tends to be significant in influencing their overall communication approach.

The most recent **CPSS** research data shows that around 15% of people taking the survey show an overwhelming orientation to one style only. However, in the majority (around 64%), people's **Communication Preference Styles** are a combination of **two styles operating together**—even though these may not be of the same intensity level.

### 2.4.1 Two Styles in Combination

Importantly, where two styles work in combination, there are some other areas that should be considered as potential strengths and challenges **in addition to the characteristics of the four single styles**. These style combinations are:

**Style 1** + **Style 2** – “The Information Communicator”

**Style 3** + **Style 4** – “The Expressively Visual Communicator”

**Style 2** + **Style 3** – “The Organized Collaborator”

**Style 1** + **Style 4** – “The Debater”

**Style 2** + **Style 4** – “The Big Picture with Details Communicator”

**Style 1** + **Style 3** – “The Rational and Emotional Communicator”

Additional information on these combinations is summarized in tables on the next few pages.

Combination		Potential Strengths	Potential Challenges
<b>The Information Communicator</b>			
<b>Style 1 and</b>	<b>Style 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides strong, factually driven and information-based communication with details and specifics. Communication is highly structured by logic, sequence and order.</li> <li>• Uses clear language to translate key factual messages into implementation steps.</li> <li>• There is a strong task or outcome orientation, with precision and accuracy in the communication.</li> <li>• The Style 1 shortens the Style 2; and vice versa, tending to give a balance length of material.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes perceived as an overly dry communicator, with low levels of energy, visuality and apparent motivation or passion.</li> <li>• May not display emotional and visual techniques as well as expression.</li> <li>• May provide so much information that the clear, compelling conceptual or emotional message is lost, and early attention is not secured.</li> <li>• May overuse text-based communication formats when speech, visuals or behaviors are more appropriate for the purpose.</li> </ul>
<b>The Expressively Visual Communicator</b>			
<b>Style 3 and</b>	<b>Style 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides strong, energetic, emotional, expressive and visual communication.</li> <li>• Makes substantial use of body language, nonverbal and paraverbal features.</li> <li>• Uses highly descriptive language and images.</li> <li>• There is a strong focus on people and/or ideas, with a sense of excitement and dynamism in communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes perceived as an overly energetic communicator lacking substance and focus and overly talkative. Non-active listening especially under pressure.</li> <li>• May display an absence of logic, facts, details, structure and concreteness.</li> <li>• May convey so many ideas, emotions and thoughts that the clear, rational message is lost.</li> <li>• May overuse oral and visual communication formats when text or other formats are more appropriate for the purpose.</li> </ul>

Combination	Potential Strengths	Potential Challenges
<b>The Organized Collaborator</b>		
Style 2 and	<b>Style 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combines open conversation and expression with organization, structure and detail.</li> <li>• Is especially effective in small group communication to engage and yet keep on track and agenda.</li> <li>• Very frequently uses appropriately timed clarifying questions and/or head and body signals to indicate agreement or disagreement without interrupting.</li> <li>• There are strong priorities for involvement, process and thoroughness in communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes perceived as not getting to the end point and key message in speech and writing—tends to finish, then add even more (like a never-ending story).</li> <li>• Both written and spoken formats may be too long, too descriptive and too repetitive.</li> <li>• May rely too heavily on words or text, with an absence of visuals.</li> <li>• May remain rigid in views, yet avoid conflict to preserve harmony, resulting in perceptions of disengagement.</li> </ul>
<b>The Debater</b>		
Style 1 and	<b>Style 4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combines ideas and concepts with explicit facts and logic.</li> <li>• Uses visual representations of content and as examples of ideas, whilst adding key data to broad ideas.</li> <li>• Can forcefully debate, argue and advocate ideas with rationality and a conceptual, overall picture.</li> <li>• Displays high priority for interlinking visual and factual attributes in communication quickly and getting to point in message.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes perceived as providing an overly intellectual argument without active listening, open question-asking or interpersonal engagement.</li> <li>• Overall communication may display an absence of emotional language or enough layers of detail.</li> <li>• May be so strong or forceful in communicating their positions that they provoke perceptions of arrogance, dominance and aggressiveness.</li> <li>• May have difficulties with eye contact as well as interpersonal and emotional interaction.</li> </ul>

Combination	Potential Strengths	Potential Challenges
<b>The Big Picture with Details Communicator</b>		
Style 2 and	Style 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique capacity to communicate and connect concepts, the “big picture” or creative ideas with requisite details and specifications.</li> <li>• Can easily relate abstract ideas to specific information and vice versa.</li> <li>• Visuals and text are usually well organized.</li> <li>• There are strong priorities for interlinking visual and related specific, accurate information yet retain flexibility of process in communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High perception of inconsistency in communication approach, as they will tend to jump backward and forward between visual/concepts and details/process almost simultaneously.</li> <li>• Other predominant Style 2s or Style 4s, in particular, find such fast shifts in language and approach to be less comprehensible and not predictable.</li> <li>• May not be direct and to the point when needed, especially in summarizing key factual messages.</li> <li>• May not use enough emotional language in interpersonal dialog.</li> </ul>
<b>The Rational and Emotional Communicator</b>		
Style 1 and	Style 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique capacity to communicate in language and style that can be rational and logical as well as emotional and expressive together— facts with feeling.</li> <li>• Mixes these distinctly different language and Communication Preference Styles to motivate or persuade at objective and emotive level.</li> <li>• Expressive communication remains focused; emotion is connected to logic—where Style 1 eye contact problems and Style 3 focus issues are not prominent.</li> <li>• Strong priorities for interlinking objectivity and directness with descriptive and feeling-based language in communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very strong perception of inconsistency in communication approach, as they will tend to jump backward and forward between rational and emotional language, content, body language and voice tone, almost simultaneously.</li> <li>• Other predominant Style 1s or Style 3s, in particular, find such fast shifts in language and approach, particularly sudden shifts in body language and tone, to be unpredictable and even seem erratic, especially under pressure.</li> <li>• May not use enough visuals or images in public communication.</li> <li>• May not provide sufficient levels of details nor apply consistent process in their communication materials and interactive behaviors.</li> </ul>

## 2.4.2 Three Styles in Combination

**Style 1** + **Style 2** + **Style 3** – “Rational, Structured and Expressive”

**Style 1** + **Style 2** + **Style 4** – “Rational, Structured and Visual”

**Style 1** + **Style 3** + **Style 4** – “Rational, Expressive and Visual”

**Style 2** + **Style 3** + **Style 4** – “Structured, Expressive and Visual”

The most recent **CPSS** research data shows around 19% of people taking the survey have a three-preference style combination. Where there are three styles in combination, the characteristics (positive and negative) of the intensity level of each of these styles will be apparent. To interpret your results, look closely at any single or combined two preferences here with Very Strong or Strong results, and the information already provided on these for potential strengths and challenges in those respective styles or combinations. In the three-way combination, the person will include potential strengths from all three styles, with most emphasis on any Very Strong or Strong results of the three. The most significant additional issues are:

- the additional effects (positive and negative) of the combination of the two highest results of the three (see the double combinations discussion in the earlier section); and
- the **style not** in the combination. (This style result will be Low or Very Low). The absence of the communication characteristics associated with this “missing” style is likely to be obvious to other people, particularly those with a Very Strong or Strong preference for that particular style. Furthermore, the style diagonally opposite the missing style is likely to show more of its challenges or negative characteristics, as there is no counterbalance. For example, a Style 1+2+3 has both 1 and 3, tending to balance between them. However, there is no Style 4 as a counterbalance to their Style 2 result, with a consequently greater chance of Style 2 challenges.

## 2.4.3 The All Moderate Communicator

**Style 1** + **Style 2** + **Style 3** + **Style 4** – “The Moderate Communicator”

The final combination is someone who draws reasonably even intensity across all four Communication Preference Styles. This all Moderate Communicator preference combination is extremely rare. The most recent **CPSS** research data shows around 2% of people taking the survey have this result. This person will draw some of the key characteristics—positive and negative of all of these styles—into their overall communication approach at a Moderate level. However, the intensity of any specific style will be less compared with someone who has a Very Strong or Strong result.

For Moderate Communicators, a major potential strength is that they can use and adapt easily to communication characteristics that connect with any of the styles in some way. On the other hand, a major challenge is that they may not develop characteristics that “stand out” compared with someone who has a higher-intensity preference in a specific style. If the circumstances for effective communication require a larger focus on one of the styles (e.g., rationality, logic and directness from Style 1), this person might not be able to demonstrate it as clearly as needed. That is, they may appear “too balanced” or “even” when more intensity is required.

**Appendix 2 provides more detailed information on the four communication preference styles and their:**

- **Language, Content and Approach;**
- **Communication Processes; and**
- **Presence: Nonverbal and Paraverbal (including body language and voice)**

## 2.5 Communication Preference Annoyance Triggers

When we become irritated or annoyed in a communication situation, our response is often to become even more like our underlying natural preferences (their strengths and weaknesses) or shift to our stressor preferences, unless we consciously adjust and control for this. The table below shows the potential irritation and annoyance triggers for the four single Communication Preference Styles.

There is a description of how other people's possible communication approaches to you, and these might trigger a reaction in yourself. How many of these likely triggers you may have will depend upon whether you have other styles in combination with the examples.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style 1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where critical and key evidence, statistics or information are absent in discussion or materials in speech and writing.</li> <li>• Where content or comments are ambiguous, abstract or personally emotive.</li> <li>• Where communication is unfocused or where communicators appear to be unproductive or unclear in their use of time.</li> <li>• Where communication activities appear to involve too much emotion, touch or are seem too casual.</li> <li>• Where there is too much "talk" before getting on with the "task."</li> <li>• Where content under discussion is not immediately relevant to the outcome or results.</li> <li>• Where other communicators are perceived to be overly detailed, emotional or conceptual.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style 2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where there are disorganized communication activities with too many simultaneous speakers or where content and materials are not fully structured.</li> <li>• Where discussions, tasks or material constraints have insufficient time available or length to cover all the details with accuracy.</li> <li>• Where there is a lack of process, agenda or inadequate details.</li> <li>• Where the communication moves too fast from subject to subject, idea to idea, issue to issue or person to person to be complete.</li> <li>• Where the situation provides a lack of space for each person to contribute in turn to the discussion.</li> <li>• Where sentence, information and materials are seemingly unfinished or inaccurate, or containing obvious and repeatedly small errors.</li> <li>• Where other communicators are seen as overly direct, emotional or conceptual.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Style 3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where discussions have rigid time limits and strict process constraints and where there is too much direction or contributors who are dogmatic, inflexible or overly detailed.</li> <li>• Where there is an absence of active exchange or open conversation or where the overall approach is aggressive, impersonal or dismissive, or there is a perception that others are not deeply listening and engaging.</li> <li>• Where "tactless" or "undiplomatic" remarks and observations are made about people.</li> <li>• Where there is too much written material and too many details or when communication is mostly based on logic or facts.</li> <li>• Where there is an absence of nonverbal and paraverbal signals from others, especially from face, eyes and voice.</li> <li>• Where others use limited expressive, emotive or empathetic language/tone.</li> <li>• Where others are perceived to be overly rational, detailed or conceptual.</li> </ul>

## Style 4

- Where there is too much information in writing, with an absence of visuals, graphics or visual body language.
- Where others are unable to see metaphors or conceptual ideas or where they are less active or seem passive.
- Where communication activities and content are unsurprising, expected and tedious.
- Where another communicator uses too many details, data or information, or is taking too long to move on to another subject.
- Where there are rigid communication processes or structural constraints.
- Where there is limited use of visually descriptive language, symbols, or interesting images and sound.
- Where communicators are seen to be overly prescriptive, detailed or emotional.

## 2.6 Your Results Under Pressure, Nerves and Stress

As noted previously, the **CPSS** results report also demonstrates your likely communication preferences under pressure or nerve situations. The results for these stressor preferences are found in the Summary Data table on the lower right side of the results sheet. You can compare your general results and your results under pressure or nerves and see whether they are similar or different.

A change of 6% points or more in any of the four communication styles (between your general and pressure results) indicates some likely change in communication behaviors under pressure or in stressful situations. The larger the percentage score change, the more significant this is likely to be. Generally, there are three types of stressor results:

1. **Stay in Preference:** This is where a person remains in their preference style(s) under pressure or nerve situations that are similar to their general preference results.
2. **Preference Extension:** This is where a person extends one or more preferences to a much greater extent under pressure or nerves compared with their results in general situations.
3. **Preference Shift:** This is where a person shifts preferences significantly to a different major preference or different preference combination compared with their general preferences. It can also include people who dramatically reduce their result for a high general preference style result as well.

Whether you stay in preference or have a preference extension or shift, reflect upon your results. In thinking about your stressor preference results, the most important insights to consider are these:

- You will bring out some of the potential strengths of the Communication Preference Styles in pressure or nerve situations. Yet it is very likely that more of the significant challenges or issues of that communication preference style will emerge. For many people, this happens in a way that is not fully conscious and can often indicate “blind spots” in a person’s communication behaviors. This matter is especially important for people who shift or substantially extend a preference intensity.
- It is completely usual for stressor preferences to exist. The **CPSS** research data shows that around 40% of people actually shift or extend their preferences under pressure or nerves. However, you should think about the potential weaknesses or issues that might be emerging for you when you communicate under pressure or nerves, as they may lead to

communication practices (positive and negative) that differ significantly from your general state—giving rise to perceptions of inconsistency, unpredictability and adverse impression.

- If your tendency is to “stay in preference,” pay particular attention to a potential increase in the challenges of your general preference style or combination under stressor situations.

## 2.7 How Extroversion, Introversion and Ambiversion Affect Communication Approach

In addition to the communication preference style results, the **CPSS Report** includes information on the important and fundamental personality characteristic of being an Extrovert, Introvert or Ambivert.

Extroverts, Introverts and Ambiverts are found in all four Communication Preference Styles and in all cultures. The **CPSS** measures this personality characteristic with respect to its influence on a person’s communication approach.

For **Extroversion, Introversion, and Ambiversion**, the report provides:

- A gross score out of 50 points for both Extroversion and Introversion, together with a description of its intensity (from Very Strong to Very Low) and a net score:
  - With a Very Strong or Strong intensity, you will likely demonstrate Extrovert or Introvert communication behaviors very frequently.
  - With a Moderate/Strong or Moderate/Low result, you may exhibit some of the characteristics of Extrovert or Introvert communication behaviors frequently.
  - With a Low or Very Low result, you will be unlikely to display many of the relevant characteristics in your communication behaviors.
  - The survey may show your net result as Ambivert. This means your Extrovert/Introvert scores are approximately equal and are Moderate in both.

EXTROVERT	INTROVERT	AMBIVERT
PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTIC	PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTIC	PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTIC
		
EXTROVERT: 41 / 50 Very Strong	EXTROVERT: 9 / 50 Very Low	EXTROVERT: 23 / 50 Moderate
INTROVERT: 9 / 50 Very Low	INTROVERT: 41 / 50 Very Strong	INTROVERT: 27 / 50 Moderate
NET EXTROVERT SCORE: + 32	NET INTROVERT SCORE: + 32	NET AMBIVERT SCORE: + 41

- The “net score” allows you to reflect upon the relative balance of Extroversion and Introversion, or whether you are more Ambivert.
  - If the final net score demonstrates a clear Extrovert or Introvert preference, the relevant communication behaviors should be frequent. If it is very low (i.e.,

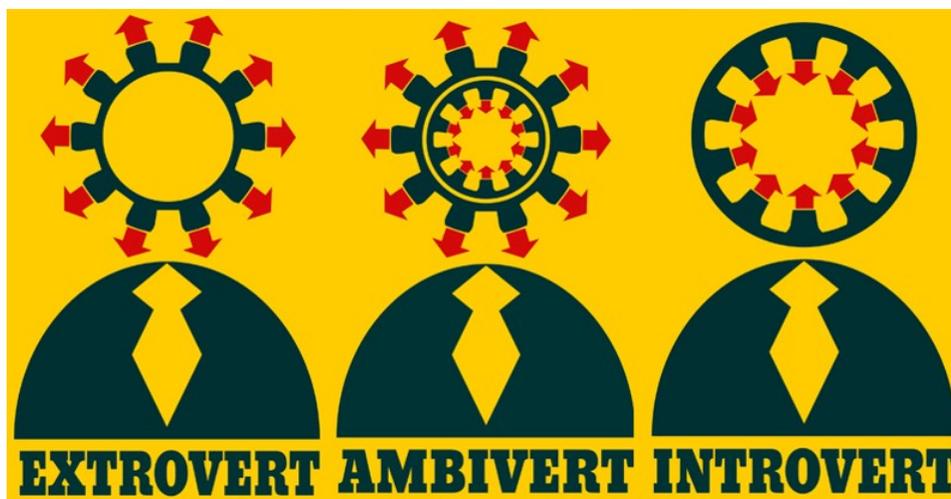
Extrovert or Introvert Result Score (out of 50)	Intensity
40 to 50	Very Strong
35 to 39	Strong
29 to 34	Moderate/Strong
21 to 28	Moderate
16 to 20	Moderate/Low
10 to 15	Low
0 to 9	Very Low

under +9 points), you may move between Extrovert and Introvert behaviors and use a combination of both to some extent and at different times. If you are relatively evenly balanced between both Extrovert and Introvert, your results will describe you as an Ambivert.

- A diamond graphic combining your Communication Preference Styles scores together with an outward, convex curve (Extrovert) or inward, concave curve (Introvert) is also displayed for reference. An Ambivert would not see a curve in their diamond results, but rather see a near straight line.

### 2.7.1 Common Communication Features of Extroverts, Introverts and Ambiverts

**Extroverts** derive much of their psychological “energy” from outside themselves in the external environment through engagement with others, while **Introverts** derive much of their energy from their internal environment inside themselves, or from solitude or quietness. **Ambiverts** can encompass and combine attributes of both Extrovert and Introvert personality characteristics, depending on their needs at the time or situation.



Think of this personality energy as a “battery.” Extroverts recharge their communication batteries through activities like multi-person, interactive communication and gregarious engagement. They need to do this to have sufficient energy to enter into passive and energy-draining communication such as deeper, focused listening situations. Introverts recharge their batteries through activities like quiet communication with self and a few. They need to do this to enter into more performance-oriented and expressive multi-person situations that can drain energy. So, through their communication practices, Extroverts and Introverts need to undertake “battery management” to have the personality energy to undertake their opposite communication behaviors.

The communication behaviors of Extroverts will typically appear to others as more active/talkative/loud, while Introverts will typically appear as more passive/reflective/quiet. Neither is better or worse—just different. Ambiverts, who are roughly equal parts Extrovert and Introvert, combine elements of both. Understanding these personality differences increases our awareness and can lead to more effective communication interaction. Some common features are summarized in the table<sup>3</sup> on the next page.

<sup>3</sup> This table is collated and adapted from multiple sources in the well-known academic literature on personality traits.

Common Extrovert Communication Features	Common Introvert Communication Features	Common Ambivert Communication Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talks actively.</li> <li>• Talks first, then may reflect and adjust.</li> <li>• Likes activity time and variety (“Talk it out” communication).</li> <li>• Communicates a breadth of interests.</li> <li>• Likes external stimuli with energetic people interaction.</li> <li>• Slightly higher inclination for talking vs. writing formats.</li> <li>• Comfortable with distraction.</li> <li>• Extends into their environment by reaching out with active or assertive body language.</li> <li>• Frequently seen as active, energetic, confident and social performers in public communication.</li> <li>• Likely to “charge up” personal energy through active or social communication, yet be “energy drained” from passive or long focused listening.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listens actively.</li> <li>• Reflects and adjusts, then talks.</li> <li>• Likes thinking time and concentration (“Think it through” communication).</li> <li>• Communicates a depth of interests.</li> <li>• Likes internal stimulus including intrapersonal solo time.</li> <li>• Slightly higher inclination for writing/text vs. talking.</li> <li>• Uncomfortable with distraction.</li> <li>• Defends against the environment with controlled body language or by moving back with passive or reserved body language.</li> <li>• Frequently seen as highly focused listeners in interpersonal communication.</li> <li>• Likely to “charge up” personal energy through reflection and listening, yet be “energy drained” from extensive active, performance and multi-person social communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can shift easily between active talking and focused listening activities.</li> <li>• Will utilize their Extrovert or Introvert side in relation to the context or situation.</li> <li>• Seems balanced, at least for periods of time.</li> <li>• Does not suffer immediate “battery drain” when moving from one side of their personality to the other.</li> </ul>
<p>May have communication challenges with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep and engaged listening in interpersonal communication over time.</li> <li>• Perceptions of over-dominating group conversation or being too forceful and interventionist.</li> <li>• Perceptions of over-talking, including frequent interruptions of others.</li> <li>• Perceptions of being inconsistent or too interested in their own views.</li> <li>• Perceptions of “not seeming to listen” and being distracted.</li> <li>• Over-using talk and face-to-face communication formats.</li> </ul>	<p>May have communication challenges with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy and activity in public or performance communication.</li> <li>• Perceptions of being too passive or quiet, not contributing enough.</li> <li>• Perceptions of being difficult to read or hard to know.</li> <li>• Perceptions of not speaking up or out, of being too rigid or seemingly disinterested.</li> <li>• Perceptions of disinterest and disconnection as body language of concentration may be misread.</li> <li>• Over-using written communication formats.</li> </ul>	<p>May have communication challenges with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of inconsistency.</li> <li>• Losing energy or focus after staying for a period of time in either their Extrovert or Introvert side.</li> <li>• May be viewed as unpredictable by Very Strong Extroverts or Introverts.</li> <li>• May feel uncertain as to their personality not understanding the shifts between each side.</li> </ul>

### 2.7.2 A Few Notes on Ambivert Communicators

The major advantage of being an Ambivert is the ease with which these people can move between Extrovert and Introvert communication behaviors. In other words, they can have a breadth of repertoire and can usually enact some Extroversion and Introversion behaviors in the situations where these are needed and often seem “middle of the road.” When making a switch, Ambiverts can usually enter their Extrovert or Introvert behaviors without suffering immediate battery drain.

However, there are two disadvantages: if the Ambivert stays in communication behaviors for too long on one of their Extrovert or Introvert sides, then they tend to lose energy on the other side, lose focus and suddenly seem out of balance. The second issue is perceptions of inconsistency, as to others they sometimes seem Introvert or sometimes seem Extrovert. So, there are two important issues to manage for the Ambivert: energy generation and others’ perceptions.

## The Need for Proactive Battery Management for Ambiverts

If your survey results indicated that you are an Ambivert, take advantage of targeting and extending your Extrovert or Introvert behaviors to the needs of the communication situation: proactively plan for this and manage your timings and program of activities. This is because, as an Ambivert, once you have entered either an Extrovert or Introvert activity, there is potential for suddenly losing focus, concentration or energy after a while, especially after too long on one side of your communication behavior. You may also suddenly feel “out of balance.” This is because your other Extrovert or Introvert “side” needs attention. Manage both sides proactively for balance and focus throughout the day by designing activities that shift in rotation between both sides.

## Managing Perceptions About Consistency

Ambiverts are sometimes misunderstood in that they exhibit Extrovert and Introvert characteristics from time to time in different situations with different people. The Ambivert can easily and quite quickly shift into either their Extrovert or Introvert side, which can be disconcerting to others. As the Ambivert swaps between gregarious talkative activities and much quieter reflective communication behaviors, people’s impressions can change. There is the potential for Very Strong Extroverts or Introverts to misunderstand these changes, resulting in perceptions of inconsistency. In addition, to some people, the Ambivert may sometimes seem more of an Introvert or to others sometimes may seem more of an Extrovert. Another matter can be the Ambivert’s self-impression of uncertainty regarding whether they are an Extrovert or an Introvert, or where they should place their Extrovert or Introvert attention.

### 2.7.3 Avoiding Frustration: Understanding “Talk and Think” Processes

Here are some common examples of miscommunications between Extroverts and Introverts giving rise to unnecessary and counterproductive frustrations:

- An Extrovert may think an Introvert is not contributing and active when in fact they are actively listening and focusing before contributing (or being invited to do so).
- An Introvert may think an Extrovert is over-contributing and dominating when in fact they are trying to engage energy, verbalize their thoughts and needing others to be active (without invitation).
- An Extrovert may think an Introvert is rigid and not open because they may make a major statement and stick to it, when in fact they have thought carefully about what they would say, and their comments are largely settled.
- An Introvert may think an Extrovert is continuously changing their mind because they keep presenting ideas or thoughts, when they are in fact talking out their thinking—their views may not be settled yet.
- It is a misconception that Introverts cannot be actively social or effective public performers. When they wish to be, they can (e.g., Bill Gates, Sir Laurence Olivier, Warren Buffett, Emma Watson, Mahatma Gandhi and Audrey Hepburn). However, they will likely need solo time for energy generation and battery management to prepare beforehand and recover afterward.

**Extroverts talk to think. Talk is their starting point. Introverts think before they talk. For them, speech marks completion.**

**As a result, Extroverts may misunderstand Introverts and view them incorrectly as less engaged, flexible and active. For better communication, they need to open space for Introverts and invite their contributions.**

**Similarly, Introverts may misunderstand Extroverts and see them incorrectly as overly talkative, dominating, unclear and prone to changing their minds too quickly. For better communication, Introverts need to claim space from Extroverts.**

- It is a misconception that Extroverts cannot be passive reflectors, deep listeners or observant participants. When they wish to be, they can (e.g., Bill Clinton, Margaret Thatcher, Winston Churchill, Muhammad Ali, Martin Luther King and Oprah Winfrey). However, they will likely need active time for their energy generation to prepare beforehand and to recover afterward.

## 2.8 When Strong Personality Meets Strong Communication Preference Styles

Some potential positive and negative implications of being a Very Strong/Strong Extrovert or Introvert combined with Very Strong/Strong Communication Preference Style are:

Very Strong to Strong	Extrovert	Introvert
Style 1	<p>Emphasizes knowledge authority in language, directness in tone, and energy focus to complete the task.</p> <p>High perceptions of assertiveness and forcefulness; low levels of interpersonal listening.</p>	<p>Emphasizes knowledge clarity in language with insertion of crucially important questions/observations to get to the point or highlight a key overlooked fact.</p> <p>High perceptions of passiveness and aloofness with low levels of active participation.</p>
Style 2	<p>Emphasizes structure and detail through language and content, and actively leads planned discussions.</p> <p>High perceptions of assertiveness, rigidity with the appearance of inflexibility in listening.</p>	<p>Emphasizes detail in language and content reflection; raises questions of clarification and process.</p> <p>High perceptions of passivity, rigidity with the appearance of low levels of active participation.</p>
Style 3	<p>Emphasizes open description and emotion in language and content, and uses body language, gestures as well as facial and eye contact expressively for communication interaction.</p> <p>High perceptions of talkativeness and overtly dramatic performance, with perceived low levels of active and focused attention in listening as well as distraction behaviors.</p>	<p>Emphasizes listening to description and emotion in language and content, and responds to body language, gestures as well as facial and eye contact expressively when directly interacting in interpersonal communication.</p> <p>High perceptions of passivity or holding emotion in, with moments of dramatic intervention, giving rise to questions of consistency in participation and energy levels.</p>
Style 4	<p>Emphasizes strongly conceptual language supported by highly animated body language and voice tone and interactive brainstorming/visualization.</p> <p>High perceptions of assertiveness, over-animation with low levels of listening.</p>	<p>Emphasizes thinking through ideas before inserting them into discussion, and mapping out or visualizing ideas for self-first, then contributing.</p> <p>High perceptions of being distracted or seemingly raising unrelated matters in the flow of discussion with questions of consistency in participation and energy levels.</p>

# Part 3: Using Your Survey Results to Improve How You Communicate

Awareness is the grounding point for effective communication and communication intelligence.

Having taken the **Communication Preferences Styles Survey (CPSS)** and thought about your results (your Communication Preference Styles, style combinations and Extrovert/Introvert/Ambivert characteristics), you are likely now more aware of your own needs, preferences and approaches to communication—and more aware of other people's, too.

You now have the opportunity to turn this knowledge into a deep and insightful level of communication awareness. You can make decisions for communication development and change priorities, then practice these to achieve performance improvements and effectiveness as a communicator in whatever formats you use. Focus on making a few very important changes in your communication approach at first. Do not try to change everything. It will not work, nor will it seem authentic.

## 3.1 Nine Steps for Making Positive Changes

There are eight recommended steps for helping you decide on the most important communication changes for yourself:

1. **Critical self-reflection:** carefully consider your results and the commentary information about your Communication Preference Styles. What are the most important implications for you? What communication situations from the past clearly indicate your strengths and challenges? Where there was miscommunication or frustration, how might you have adjusted your approach or coped differently to be more effective?
2. Examine the potential strengths of your most important style or combination in detail. Which of these do you have already, and which might you develop further? Are there some you don't have and want to develop? (These should be relatively easy to do if you wish).
3. Examine the potential challenges of your most important style or combination in detail. Which of these is most important to address and why?
4. Examine your lowest style result. Do the strengths of that style relate to your most important challenges? If so, this is a further indication of priority for change or development. There are a few simple ways to add the missing style in practice (outlined below).
5. Examine your stressor preferences. What are the potential implications of any changes (positive or negative) in your Communication Preference Styles under pressure or nerves?

**Remember: Personal Communication Preference Styles reveal themselves to others through:**

- **word choices and emphasis when speaking;**
- **subject, topic and content selection and priorities;**
- **application of communication processes and structures;**
- **the use of nonverbal (body language), paraverbal (voice) and visual communication signals; and**
- **the overall sense of approach in communication that people display or to which they respond positively.**

6. Consider your personality (Extrovert, Introvert or Ambivert). What are the implications for your “battery management”, “talk/think process” and communication approach?
7. Consider further insights about your cultural background and its potential influence on your communication approach in interacting with others.
8. Get feedback from people who know you to assist your reflection and decision-making on communication change and development priorities. Decide what key and significant actions you will take to build strengths further or overcome your challenges. Put these into practice and get further feedback from others. Record these commitments for change in a communication skills development agenda or plan.
9. Develop the habit of continuous observation—looking for the communication approach (cultural background, Communication Preference Styles and personality) in other people and in different communication situations.

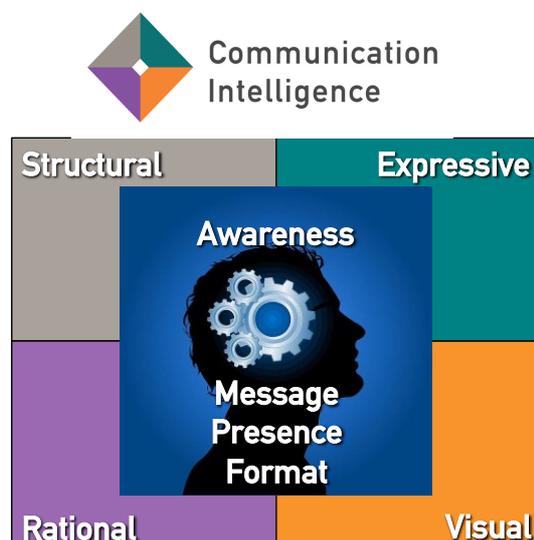
### 3.2 Quick Tips for Building Communication Styles and Overcoming Challenges

There are some very simple practices, habits and actions you can use to build a more specific communication preference style and overcome some of its challenges if needed.

	Build or Add More of This Style	Overcome Challenges of This Style
<b>Style 1: Rational (Logical, Factual and Direct)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add key facts that get directly to the point.</li> <li>• Organize arguments logically.</li> <li>• Create a short summary of the key facts or bullet points.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase interpersonal eye contact.</li> <li>• Add descriptive and emotive adjectives and language.</li> <li>• Use more open, expressive body language.</li> </ul>
<b>Style 2: Structured (Organized, Detailed and Careful)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add layers of detail to key messages.</li> <li>• Plan outlines for communication materials and proofread.</li> <li>• Structure agendas and discussion processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an overarching or overview summary message.</li> <li>• Add visuals and pictures.</li> <li>• Summarize long content in a series of short bullet points.</li> </ul>
<b>Style 3: Expressive (Interpersonal, Emotional and Sensitive)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add eye contact, body language and voice modulation to active listening.</li> <li>• Use descriptive adjectives, including words of emotion or feeling.</li> <li>• Include people-based story examples.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add structure and prepare an outline for communication materials or speeches.</li> <li>• Use a few key, quantifiable facts that get straight to the main point.</li> <li>• Add visuals and pictures.</li> </ul>
<b>Style 4: Visual (Imaginative, Conceptual and Animated)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add visuals and pictures.</li> <li>• Use future-oriented messages and the language of imagination.</li> <li>• Use messages that answer “why” something is relevant and important, not just what it is.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Break ideas into steps and organize materials by building a logical argument.</li> <li>• Use more direct eye contact and conversational voice tone and ask more open questions.</li> <li>• Use some key, quantifiable facts that are explicit to the point of the idea or concept; or specific, concrete and practical examples of the “big picture.”</li> </ul>

# Appendix 1: Communication Intelligence Model—An Overview

Communication Intelligence is one model for effective communication that fully integrates eight elements: four mindsets (the things we need to think about for effective communication); and four clusters of communication techniques and qualities (the ways we need to undertake communication activity to be effective). These four clusters are very closely related to the four major Communication Preference Styles seen in people and discussed extensively throughout the Reference Guidebook. Sometimes, communication intelligence is referred to as your **CI**. Communication intelligence applies across the different kinds of communication situations, ranging from public to group and interpersonal and intrapersonal (with self). People with high levels of communication intelligence use all the mindsets and techniques from all four clusters: not only those that are natural from their preference styles, but those they have learned from the other clusters.



## The Four Mindsets in Communication Intelligence:

Mindsets are the things we need to think about for effective communication, being:

- **Awareness:** of self, others, context and purpose. This is the ability to be deeply aware of the communication requirements and preference styles of all those involved, as well as the situation and intent of the communication activity (e.g., informing, inquiring, influencing, persuading, entertaining, motivating, inspiring, listening, collaborating). The awareness mindset also encompasses understanding your own communication skills development needs and reading the styles of others, as well as considering the cross-cultural, gender and generational issues.
- **Message:** the core meaning and content of the communication, supported by structure and appropriate details, as well as messages that are relevant, clear, compelling and comprehensible.
- **Presence:** beyond the words—the nonverbal (e.g., body language and gestures), paraverbal (e.g., sound/tone of voice) and visual, symbolic or expressive features of the communication.
- **Format:** the choice and effective use of different communication formats, media and repertoire that are “fit for the purpose and situation” (e.g., behaviors, spoken, written,

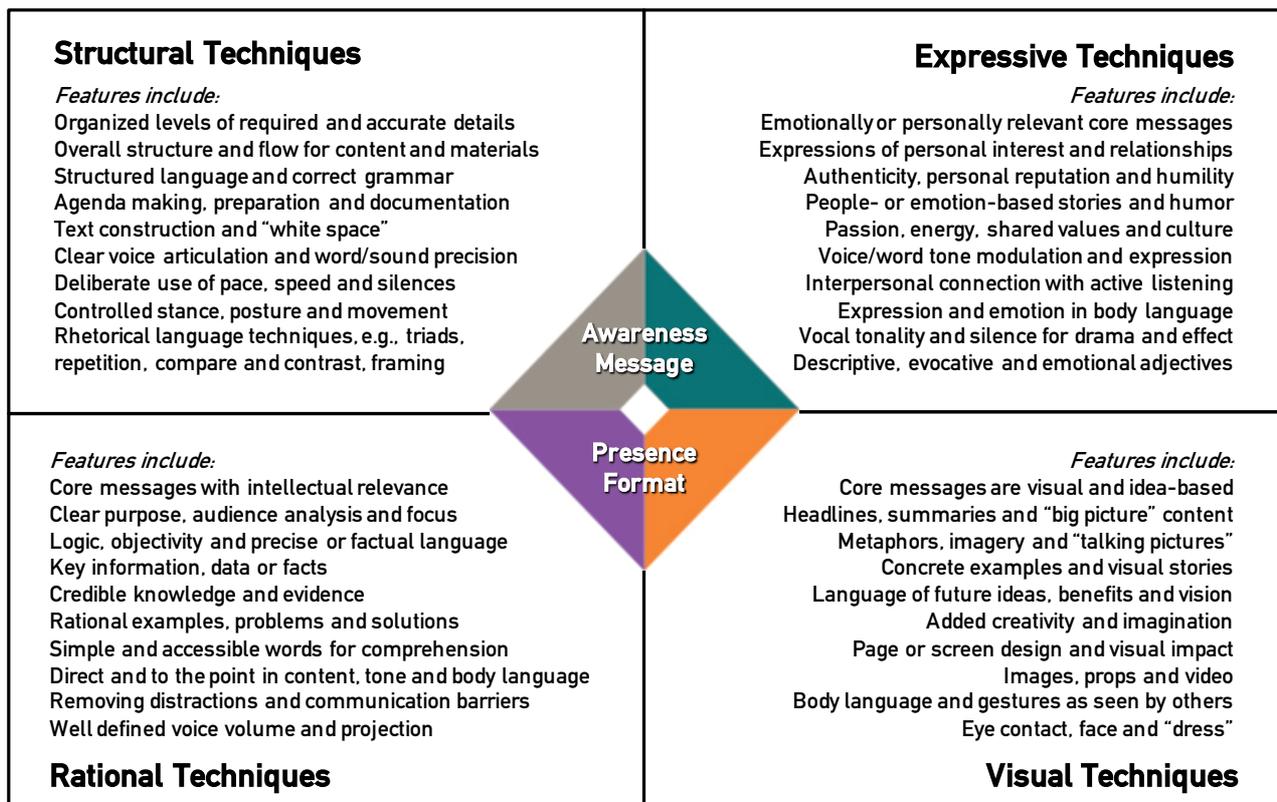
listening, thinking/reflection, novels, text, email, instant messaging, video, technology and the like). It also includes understanding when some formats will not be effective, as well as how to use different formats successfully.

### Four Clusters of Communication Techniques and Qualities

The four clusters of communication techniques and qualities in communication intelligence to undertake effective communication in practice, map closely to the four Communication Preference Styles:

- **Rational:** techniques and qualities that affect the logic, factuality, knowledge level, intellectual substance and language comprehension in communication.
- **Structural:** techniques and qualities that affect the clarity, order/flow, construction, precision and levels of detail and accuracy in communication.
- **Expressive:** techniques and qualities that affect the expression, emotion, interactivity, personalization and authenticity of communication.
- **Visual:** techniques and qualities that affect the appearance, visibility, conceptuality, creativity and symbolism of communication.

There are literally thousands of communication tools and techniques spread across these four clusters and used in the various formats of communication that exist. Some features of specific communication techniques in each cluster are in the diagram below.



# Appendix 2: Further Information on the Communication Preference Styles

## Language and Content; Communication Processes; Presence: Nonverbal/Paraverbal

This appendix contains detailed information relating to the four Communication Preference Styles, with a focus on: (A) Language and Content; (B) Communication Processes; and (C) Presence: Nonverbal and Paraverbal (including body language and voice).

Usually, some of these characteristics are obvious in people with a Very Strong or Strong preference style intensity, though people will not usually have every characteristic described. In situations of communication pressure, stress and nerves, many of the presence, body language and voice characteristics described will change substantially in response to the effects of adrenaline on the brain and body (“fight, freeze, flight”).

One important note: the characteristics described are relative to cultural norms—that is, within a specific culture, the characteristics show themselves relative to others from the same cultural background. Major differences in cultural background between two people might overshadow these characteristics. In that case, someone with the same preference style might see a person from another culture differently. For example, the level of intensity in body language, facial expression and voice volume differs dramatically across the many cultures of the world. Cultural differences can obscure the similarity of styles.

<b>(A) Language and Content</b>			
<b>Style 1</b>	<b>Style 2</b>	<b>Style 3</b>	<b>Style 4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short, factually focused communication in both speech and writing, with rationality and logic underpinning content and words.</li> <li>• Use of objective words and information, such as concrete nouns, language of quantification and specific facts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long statements with layers of detail in both speech and writing, with accurate language.</li> <li>• Statements and information organized in sequence—for example, chronologically.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long statements in speech and very short statements in writing, with expressive language and feeling.</li> <li>• Use of descriptive and emotive words, such as adjectives and qualitative language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short statements in writing and moderate to long statements in speech.</li> <li>• Use of visuals together with conceptual ideas and metaphorical language.</li> </ul>

Style 1	Style 2	Style 3	Style 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favors advocacy statements over open inquiry questions.</li> <li>• Questions facts and logic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favors inquiry questions over advocacy statements to draw out details or seek clarification until position is decided.</li> <li>• Questions specific details and process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses inquiry questions and advocacy statements simultaneously, as in an interactive conversation or dialog.</li> <li>• Questions motives and feelings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favors advocacy statements over open inquiry questions.</li> <li>• Questions ideas and concepts.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclination for written or spoken communication depends upon efficiency for the task or purpose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclination for accurate and complete written or spoken materials that are well organized and error-free.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclination for spoken conversation with interpersonal engagement, storytelling and sensitivity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclination for spoken word but as an active discussion and simultaneous debate or brainstorming, with visuals and metaphors.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong use of concrete nouns and direct tone in language with explicit interpretation, including active voice and present tense.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong use of qualified nouns and indirectness in language with literal interpretation, including passive voice and past tense.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong use of adjectives, emotive, descriptive and qualitative language and both the present and past tenses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong use of conceptual language or abstract nouns as well as visual language and the future tense.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low levels of descriptive, emotive or qualitative language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low to moderate levels of expressive and visual language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low levels of quantitative and technical language and low levels of detailed, factual information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low levels of quantitative and emotional language as well as low levels of prescriptive information and detail.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of quantitative language clearly describing measurement, numbers or technical characteristics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of qualifiers and layers to expand statements and amplify details.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of language clearly expressing description, emotions, feelings, values and personal beliefs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of complex, conceptual, imaginative and visual language to describe ideas.</li> </ul>

<b>(B) Communication Processes</b>			
<b>Style 1</b>	<b>Style 2</b>	<b>Style 3</b>	<b>Style 4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast, efficient, factual communication focused on task or issue and getting to an outcome.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly organized, structured and sequenced communication, focused on detail and comprehension.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dramatic or interpersonal communication focused on people, emotions and description.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animated and active communication focused on ideas or concepts.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct, clear and logical processes driven by desire to achieve outcome together with written documents that include executive/end summaries and key information summaries, tables and charts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent use of defined processes and categorization (such as agenda-setting and subject classification).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergent, iterative and unstructured processes driven by instinctive collaboration together with written documents that are story-like or descriptive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally non-prescriptive, yet active and impromptu processes driven by debate or advocacy – potential use of visualization processes, such as whiteboarding, idea mapping or brainstorming. May set up a process at the outset, but not follow it completely or rigidly.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication process is highly dependent upon objective evidence, data and information.</li> <li>• Relevant facts and information obtained and analyzed ahead of formally expressing or committing to ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication process is central. Organized and methodical, with written documents that include table of contents, defined sections and detailed references or appendices.</li> <li>• Collects as much information as possible, then exhaustively evaluates it before expressing or committing to ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication process is highly dependent upon direct interpersonal engagement and conversation.</li> <li>• Views, opinions and evidence accepted on face value; ideas committed are often intuitive, but strongly believed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication process is highly dependent upon being an active participant in discussion.</li> <li>• Views, opinions and evidence are presented strongly from a conceptual or idea generation, tending to start with the big-picture view.</li> </ul>

Style 1	Style 2	Style 3	Style 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions are logical, objective and non-tangential.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions are extensive in time and content.</li> <li>Multi-person structured to allow for sequential contribution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions are open, non-controlled, with all contributions taken into account, sometimes simultaneously.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions are simultaneous, with significant advocacy of own positions and comfort with disagreement.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opinions in writing and speech are provided with an emphasis on direct factuality, objectivity and logical relevance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opinions in writing and speech are provided in detail with an emphasis on accuracy, completeness and practicality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opinions in writing and speech are provided with an emphasis on description, feelings and people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opinions in writing and speech are provided with an emphasis on innovation, creativity and concepts.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logic is likely to be more inductive.</li> <li>Communication based on intuition absent facts is uncharacteristic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logic is likely to be more deductive.</li> <li>Communication based on intuition absent facts is uncharacteristic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logic, if utilized, is likely to be more deductive.</li> <li>Communication based on intuition is likely to be more emotional in approach and appearance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Logic, if utilized, is likely to be more inductive.</li> <li>Communication based on intuition is likely to be more intellectual, conceptual or visual.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One person speaking at a time is preferred for oral communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One person speaking at a time is preferred for oral communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than one person speaking at a time is comfortable in oral communication, provided another person is not dominating.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than one person speaking at a time is comfortable in oral communication provided the person can be active themselves when they want to be.</li> </ul>

<b>(C) Presence: Nonverbal and Paraverbal (Including Body Language and Voice)</b>			
<b>Style 1</b>	<b>Style 2</b>	<b>Style 3</b>	<b>Style 4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body stance and posture: tight, rigid and task-focused.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body stance and posture: leaning in toward others; quiet but intense.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body stance and posture: relaxed and with fluid movement, but may become very animated (or alternatively, frozen) under stress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body stance and posture: tight body with strong movement in feet or hands/arms.</li> <li>• Portrays a sense of activity, animation or visuality.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal space: distant and rigid.</li> <li>• Discomfort with touch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal space: moderately close—often spaced in circular formation.</li> <li>• Moderate discomfort with touch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal space: close and interpersonal.</li> <li>• Comfortable with touch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal space: ranges from moderately close to distant depending upon level of advocacy.</li> <li>• Moderately comfortable with touch.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face: displays intensity of interest in intellectual content and seriousness of discussion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face: displays open interest in detailed content of discussion.</li> <li>• Frequent use of head nodding for agreement/disagreement without vocal interruption.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face: displays intensity of emotions and interest, including frequent smiling or obvious emotional expression.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face: face displays intensity of conviction of idea under discussion.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eyes: Task-focused much more than person-focused. May look down or up often to think.</li> <li>• Usually lowest level of person-to-person eye contact of all four styles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eyes: Focused on individual speaking within group, one at a time.</li> <li>• Usually second-highest level of personal eye contact of the four styles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eyes: directly people-focused and personally engaged.</li> <li>• Usually highest level of eye contact of the four styles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eyes: not an interpersonal focus; appears to see people or groups as a “whole;” with unfocussed eyes; may look around or upward rather than at people.</li> <li>• Generally, second-lowest level of personal eye contact of the 4 styles.</li> </ul>

Style 1	Style 2	Style 3	Style 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hands: very limited visual hand or directive gestures; often closed arm and inward body language. Strong use of monitoring or evaluating gestures by placing hands on face.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hands: limited visual hand gestures; often very small gesturing. Moderate use of monitoring or evaluating gestures by placing hands on face.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hands: often large and dramatic hand gestures; mainly open body language except under stress, when closure or freezing is apparent. Limited use of monitoring or evaluating gestures by placing hands on face.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hands: often large or forceful hand gestures; mainly open body language except under stress, when voice increases together with forcefulness of gestures. Moderate to strong use of monitoring or evaluating gestures by placing hands on face.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice: flat and objective tone, yet moderate to strong volume.</li> <li>• Low use of pitch modulation; may seem monotone.</li> <li>• Deliberate and measured voice speed, punctuated by short (almost “bullet point”) sound.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice: moderately flat and even tone, with moderate to quiet volume.</li> <li>• Low use of pitch modulation; may seem monotone.</li> <li>• Measured and consistent speed of speech.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice: expressive tone with moderate volume; volume increases with intensity of feeling. More laughter sounds than other styles.</li> <li>• Moderate to strong use of voice pitch modulation, with emotional expression.</li> <li>• Speed (combined with vocal intensity) may range widely from conversational to dramatic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice: moderately expressive tone with moderate to strong volume; volume increases with intensity of advocacy.</li> <li>• Relatively wide pitch modulation.</li> <li>• Speed may vary widely, with frequent changes in intensity and forcefulness.</li> </ul>

## About the Author

### Professor Ian C. Woodward

Dr. Ian C. Woodward specializes in leadership and communication. He is a Professor of Management Practice at INSEAD. He lectures in a range of INSEAD programs and is Director of its flagship Advanced Management Programme as well as the Leadership Communication with Impact course. He was Co-Program Director for the INSEAD Master of Finance degree. He also lectures and consults in leadership and management practice for high performance, as well as leadership and strategic development in organizations as diverse as financial and professional services, utilities, energy and the public sector. He has been guest faculty at leading international business schools, including Associate Faculty Director for Columbia Business School's Senior Executive Program.



Ian brings a unique combination of global business, government, communication and arts experience to executive education. His business career includes Board Directorships, Chief Executive, Senior Executive and Executive Consulting roles in financial and energy sector organizations, including: the Australian Gas Light Company; Natural Gas Corporation of New Zealand; the Australian Gas Association; Macquarie Bank; and Asian Development Bank. In government, he was the first Australian to serve on the staff of a US Cabinet Secretary (Minister) as well as being Chief of Staff to an Australian State Premier and Minister. From 2005 to 2010, he was a Commissioner of the Australian Energy Market Commission and inaugural Chairman of the Asia-Pacific Partnership Energy Regulatory and Market Development Forum. He is currently a Board member of The Gas Company of Hawaii; and is also the Associate Conductor, Singapore's Metropolitan Festival Orchestra.

Developing exceptional communication proficiency in leaders is a particular passion. Ian developed the concept and model of communication intelligence in leadership communication. He designed the Communication Preference Styles Survey (CPSS) as a development tool to assist leaders to become more aware and effective communicators. In parallel with his business career before academia, he designed and delivered courses in effective leadership and communication around the world, as well delivering major keynote conference speeches and media appearances.

He was Chairman and broadcaster on Sydney's classical music radio station and co-produced a special series of Deutsche Grammophon recordings dedicated to the legacy of conductor Arthur Fiedler. He also combines leadership development with the arts through innovative learning experiences using orchestras and musicians. His recent published research includes articles in the *Journal of International Management*, *Australian Communication Journal*, and *Communication Research and Practice*. He also has many articles online at INSEAD Knowledge and a TEDx talk on the "Altitudes of Leadership."

Ian is an alumnus of the University of New South Wales, the Australian Graduate School of Management, University of New England, Macquarie Graduate School of Management, and Columbia Business School.

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