How communication can make, or break, teams

That’s Not What I Meant!
I grew up in the corporate world and am an Agilist at heart. I spent the first 18 years of my career in project, process and vendor management as well as contract negotiation. I found, and fell in love with, Agile when I was asked to learn Agile and develop an Enterprise metrics model, and discovered I had been using Agile principles without knowing what they were called. I now work with companies that want to bring Enterprise Business Agility into their organizations, accelerate their journey and lead their teams to a culture of continuous improvement.
Everyone communicates the same way, right?

Maybe, maybe not.

In pairs, share a time when your communication has not been on target, either at work or otherwise.
Let’s Look at Why Communication is Important

First of all, should we care about communication?

• Probably

• Google search of this topic yields: About 8,680,000,000 results (0.55 seconds)

• A search on Linkedin.com Groups gives us: Showing 255,234 results

People are talking about communication
WHY?

• How else will we share information and ideas if we don’t communicate?
• Communication comes in countless forms
How does communication break down?

Let me count the ways...

With a different partner, brainstorm the number of ways communication can break down. What’s your personal experience with communication gone wrong?
Do We Need To Think About HOW We Communicate?

According to a recent study by Atlassian

• Employees check their email **36** times an hour and receive **304** business **emails** per week

• Additionally, we spend an average of **31** hours in **62** different **meetings** each month

• Finally, on average we each manage **56** **interruptions** each day, taking **2 hours** to recover from
Holy buckets！！！！

That’s a ton of time…going where?
But what if we could figure out how to make communication more effective?

What if we could unlock the secret of how people think so we could communicate the way people best receive information?
Not Everyone Thinks In The Same Way

• And that’s okay – we need people that think differently to do different kinds of work
  • Can you imagine...Mel Gibson would be content to be a developer?
  • Or Bill Gates as convincing Braveheart?

• But part of our role as communicators – and we are all communicators – is to figure out how to communicate well and with everyone

• IMAGINE HOW EFFECTIVE YOU WOULD BE IF YOU COULD COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR TEAM THE WAY THEY BEST RECEIVE INFORMATION?
How Do We Start?

• There is a way to “de-code” how people think
• You can see PATTERNS in how they work and behave
• Let’s break it down into FOUR Thinking Styles, or Preferences
  • We are going to base this on the work of Drs. Geil Browning and Wendell Williams
  • Everyone has, and can use, all four Thinking Preferences. We are more comfortable generally using two or three of them.
  • And to make it more complex, we are people, so how we act is what people see before they think about how we think
Constellation Game

Analytical
- Logical & rational
- Understands concepts & ideas
- Likes exploring how things work
- Enjoys technical problem solving

Conceptual
- Imaginative
- Embraces the unusual
- Likes to do new things
- Enjoys creative process
- Solves problems intuitively

Structural
- Makes & follows plans carefully
- Enjoys directions
- Likes closure
- Predictable
- Practical

Social
- Likes working in groups
- Intuitive about people
- Enjoys helping others
- Collaborative
- Emotional
- Relational
Observations

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Saturday, September 1st, 2001-11:00am-
2:00 pm
- 9:00 - wake up
- 10:30 - leave house
- 11:00 - arrive at mall
- 11:15 - Gap (jams)
- 11:30 - Abercrombie (shirt)
- 12:00 - Food Court (Chic-Fil-A)
- 12:30 - Victoria's Secret (perume)
- 1:00 - Nine West (shoes)
- 1:30 - American Eagle (suit)
- 2:00 - leave mall
- 2:30 - arrive home
Thinking Preferences Summarized

• **Analytical** – big picture, bottom line thinkers. May not want to hear about the details. They know what to keep and what to toss.

• **Structural** – planners, rule followers, guideline and instruction readers.

• **Social** – care about how this will affect the people, or at least their people. You generally know what they are feeling, and they probably are collectors of something.

• **Conceptual** – Visionary, big picture, connect-the-dots thinkers. Live in the 50,000-foot level. Always know how it should work because they can “see” it.
Now That You Know...

Brainstorm on how you might communicate best with each of the thinking preferences

Brainstorm as a table group – think about the thinking preference assigned by color to your table
Thinking Preferences

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Some Options From the Experts

**ANALYTICAL WANTS**
The budget in #'s
One color of pen
Print or type
Credible speaker
Value for time expended
Written information

**STRUCTURAL WANTS**
Agenda
Details
Neatness & Order
Organized formatting – highlight key info
Implementation steps
Action Plan

**SOCIAL WANTS**
Build rapport
Eye contact
Stories, parables, vignettes
Emotion
Information applied to self

**CONCEPTUAL WANTS**
Budget in pictures
Color
Change every 10-15 minutes
Something left to imagination
Overview and summary
So How Do We Start?

• Observation is one way

• Think about how the people around you act...
  • Who is always asking bottom line, end results questions?
  • Who is breaking down the work you are planning and asking the tough questions?
  • Who is coming up with new ideas – all the time?
  • Who is checking in with the team to make sure everyone is doing well?
What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say.

Ralph Waldo Emerson
So How Do We Start?

• The way people act, their natural behavior patterns, can make this more complicated
  • Some people are internal processors...they most likely think everything through before speaking
    • The person on the team that you always listen to when the talk because they always add value
    • they may appear shy or standoff-ish
  • Some people are external processors...they appear to never think before speaking
    • Could be the person that easily dominates meetings because they just...keep...talking
    • They may appear to have a ton of friends, because they will talk to anyone

EXPRESSIVENESS
So How Do We Start?

• The way people act, their natural behavior patterns, can make this more complicated
  • Some people appear relaxed when it comes to getting work done
    • The person that surprises you with what they get done because they just quietly get %&$^ done
    • The “ducks” – calm on the surface and paddling like mad underneath
  • Some people carry you along in the wave of energy they bring to their work
    • The air around them seems to crackle because they are so energized by what they are doing
    • No matter what, they can get work pushed through and “get ’r done”

ASSERTIVENESS
So How Do We Start?

• The way people act, their natural behavior patterns, can make this more complicated
  • Some people don’t want to change their mind once a decision is made, even if the decision proves to be a bad one
    • They continue down the agreed upon path, even if you can see a better option on the horizon
    • They will only change their mind when given an overwhelming amount of evidence that change is a good idea
  • Some people think of decisions as options to test, then inspect and adapt
    • Decisions are ideas to audition until something better comes along

FLEXIBILITY
How Does a Psychometric Tool Build High Performing Teams?

If you can identify how people think and behave, and bring together a team of people that cover the four thinking attributes, then together you can see issues and solve problems collectively and collaboratively.
The Formal Model Looks More Like This...

**ANALYTICAL = 29%**
- Clear thinker
- Logical problem solver
- Data driven
- Rational
- Learns by mental analysis

**CONCEPTUAL = 31%**
- Imaginative
- Intuitive about ideas
- Visionary
- Enjoys the unusual
- Learns by experimenting

**STRUCTURAL = 17%**
- Practical thinker
- Likes guidelines
- Cautious of new ideas
- Predictable
- Learns by doing

**SOCIAL = 22%**
- Relational
- Intuitive about people
- Socially aware
- Empathic
- Learns from others
How Does This Fit With Agility?
So Now What?

Now that you have a little more information, what do you think?

Chose a group of 2-3 and think about your teams and how you might apply this knowledge to help improve your team.
Emergenetics Is Just One Facet of Who You Are

- Social Styles
- Values Inventory
- Power Profile
- MBT
- 360° Feedback
One Final Thought...

Intent Impact Model

INTENT  GAP  IMPACT
One Final Thought...

Intent Impact Model
One Final Thought...

Intent Impact Model

\[ \text{INTENT} = \text{IMPACT} \]
So, what’s your preference?

How will you use this information to change your communication style?
So, Who Am I?