



## THE PLATINUM RULE

### Working with Different Styles Different Communication Focus Different Approach to Work

There are four basic communication styles and ways people approach work:

**T = Tells** – someone who is very direct and brief in their communication

**E = Engages** – someone who likes to talk with people and persuade them

**A = Analyzes** – someone who is very detailed and factual in their conversation

**M = Mediates** – someone who likes to talk with people and get to know them as individuals

There is not a good or bad style. Each style has strengths and weaknesses. The four styles together spell TEAM. The best work team is one where all four styles are represented and where everyone respects and values the differences among the styles.

Understanding these styles can help you work more effectively with people who have styles that are different from yours. The most critical aspect of this is rethinking the “Golden Rule” (Do unto others as you would have them do unto you). The problem with treating other people the way you want to be treated is that not everyone wants to be treated that way! As you read through the following material about the 4 TEAM styles, you’ll see how each style has a significantly different communication style and preference.

To help rework our thinking on this, we have come up with the “**Platinum Rule**”... Do unto others as **THEY** want to be done unto... *or treat people the way they want to be treated*. This is pretty easy if you know how other people want to be treated and you are able to adapt your style to match theirs. While the TEAM model can give you quick clues about the first challenge – figuring out how other people want to be treated... It’s the second one that’s tough – adapting your style turns out to be very difficult, but not at all impossible.

On the following pages are descriptions of each of the 4 styles and the preferences people with these styles have. Complicating matters further, most people are a blend of styles. Fortunately, however, most people have 1 or 2 priority styles that shape the way they approach communication and relationships.

These communication and work styles are based on two factors:

- ♦ whether you are more focused on people or on tasks, and
- ♦ whether you work and talk quickly or slowly.

(See the chart below and on the following pages for more information about each style).

## DIFFERENT STYLES / DIFFERENT FOCUS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>TASK ORIENTED</b>  |  |
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span><b><u>Tells</u></b></span> <span><b><u>T</u></b></span> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Slogan: <i>Get things done</i></p> <p><b>Wants:</b> Results / Autonomy</p> <p><b>Likes:</b> Short, quick, direct conversations</p> <p><b>Dislikes:</b> Indecision, Work not getting done</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b> Accuracy, Listening</p>                                 | <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span><b><u>Analyzes</u></b></span> <span><b><u>A</u></b></span> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Slogan: <i>Get things right</i></p> <p><b>Wants:</b> Accuracy / Details</p> <p><b>Likes:</b> Answers; Time for questions/discussions</p> <p><b>Dislikes:</b> Poor quality / Rushed decisions</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b> Working quickly, Connecting with people</p>       |
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span><b><u>Engages</u></b></span> <span><b><u>E</u></b></span> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Slogan: <i>Do it differently</i></p> <p><b>Wants:</b> Meaning / Creativity</p> <p><b>Likes:</b> Opportunity to talk; to persuade; to change</p> <p><b>Dislikes:</b> Routine, rigidity, Isolation</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b> Listening, especially for details / facts</p> | <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span><b><u>Mediates</u></b></span> <span><b><u>M</u></b></span> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Slogan: <i>Do it together</i></p> <p><b>Wants:</b> Teamwork / Harmony</p> <p><b>Likes:</b> Being friendly, Taking a personal interest in coworkers</p> <p><b>Dislikes:</b> Conflict / Rapid change</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b> Confrontation, Giving critical feedback</p> |
| <b>PEOPLE ORIENTED</b>  |  |

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## Understanding Different Work and Communication Styles – T.E.A.M.

As you talk or work with someone who you find difficult to work talk with, think about those two factors:

1. Do they focus on tasks/facts (impersonal) or do they try to connect with people/build relationships when they talk?
2. Do they move quickly through conversations and tasks or do they work slowly and deliberately, taking time to check details and ask others' opinions?

The answers to these questions will help you begin to focus in on the other person's style. Once you've figured that out, the bigger challenge is to adapt your behavior to better align with their style... the Platinum Rule.

The styles influence how we approach our work and our co-workers. Differences in these styles can provide a healthy range of opinions, and can also be the basis of conflict and irritation with co-workers. Having an understanding of these styles has helped me reframe the way I look at interactions I have with people at work. Once I understood my primary style I began to see why some people were easy to work with (people with my primary style) and others were more "difficult". These others simply approach work and work interactions from a very different foundation.

Where an "A" wants to dive into the details and start tearing things apart, the "E" wants to get the big picture clarified, the "T" just wants to get the task done, and the "M" wants to build a consensus. Any one of these approaches might be just fine for the person with that style, but it is uncomfortable and unhelpful for people with other styles.

So thinking about the Platinum Rule.... why should you make the change and not the other person? Because you now have the insight and understanding.

See the following page for more information about each style.

If you'd like to take a self-assessment to find out your TEAM score, send us an email at [info@kriegersolutions.com](mailto:info@kriegersolutions.com)

## MORE ABOUT EACH STYLE

### **T**ELLS / DIRECTS

- concise and direct in language
- doesn't hesitate to speak his/her mind
- work and task oriented (vs. social)
- action-oriented problem solver
- hates to waste time (be off task)
- business-like in communication
- may seem "bossy" to others
- quick to make decisions
- independent / autonomous
- easily bored, needs challenges

### **E**NGAGES / INFLUENCES

- optimistic—sees lots of possibilities, looks for opportunities
- enthusiastic and friendly
- very verbal—talks in paragraphs
- likes to participate in groups
- creative, thinks "outside the box"
- wants to be committed to what they do for work—needs meaning
- thinks intuitively (not step by step)
- cracks jokes easily - an entertainer
- can be inspirational/motivational

### **A**NALYZES / DETAILED

- systematic, thorough
- concerned with accuracy and details
- asks lots of questions
- task oriented
- sometimes not comfortable with other's open expression of emotion
- very careful and cautious
- needs time to think things through
- looks at things critically
- does not mind working alone
- doesn't socialize much

### **M**EDIATES / EMPATHIZES

- nice, considerate, quiet
- accommodating—willing to help
- listens well to others' troubles
- decorate office like home away from home (pictures, special items, etc.)
- likes working with others
- home life is very important to them
- not very assertive about own needs
- likes routine and predictability –does it well -- cranks out the work