



Self Awareness

supercharge your career by
understanding yourself



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Introduction

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How self-aware are you? A little, a lot, or you're totally not?

[Some studies](#) have shown that those with high levels of EQ (of which self-awareness is a key part) are more likely to be successful at work.

At Insights our purpose is to help people truly understand themselves and others, and be inspired to make a positive difference in everything they do.

Notice the first part of that statement, helping people to truly understand themselves - that comes before anything else.

If you're trying to make some improvements to the most important relationships in your life, be that with your teammates, your manager or even your partner, the results are likely to be much more successful if you've got the first building block nailed - you.

We've all known people who were professionally brilliant, but whose personal style and people skills dented their ability to make an impact. By increasing your level of self-awareness, you'll be supercharging your own effectiveness, giving you an undeniable edge in the workplace.

We intend to give you a clearer idea not just of who you are, but of how others might perceive you.

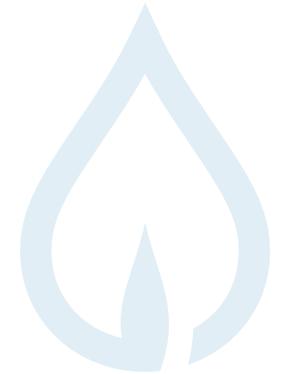
Introduction

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That knowledge will help you

- Appreciate your strengths
- Identify and challenge your weaknesses
- Instigate change successfully
- Build better team relationships
- Find a manager that's right for you

So read on, and begin your journey towards self-awareness and career success.



FACT
CHECK

*Emotional intelligence is
the strongest predictor of
workplace performance*

Chapter one

What's your workstyle? First, know thyself

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What springs to mind first when you're asked to describe yourself?

Maybe you're a Human Resources guru, a parent, a Guitar Hero master, a son or daughter? Maybe you make the best coffee in the team or you're the person in the office who always arranges the social calendar?

But what if you don't quite know who you are? Well, that could be a problem. Coasting through life is all well and good, but truly understanding yourself is at the very heart of every good decision you'll ever make.

From the type of career you're building to what environments you find inspiring, from what kind of colleagues you gel with to what type of

manager will best support you. These are all predicated on knowing what works for you, and what doesn't.

Swiss Psychiatrist, Carl Jung said that the 'most terrifying thing is to accept oneself completely' and we can't really disagree with that. It's easy to accept your gifts and strengths, but it's natural to struggle with the facets of your personality that you may find more difficult.

You're unique and that's awesome - we can see that from here. But in order to make some seriously good decisions in life, taking a long hard look at yourself is non-negotiable. Let us help you get there...



What's your workstyle? First, know thyself

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Take a look at these groups of words – we call these the four Colour Energies. You'll probably identify with one set more than the others.

Which group really stands out for you?



Competitive
Demanding
Strong-willed
Determined
Purposeful



Sociable
Dynamic
Enthusiastic
Persuasive
Demonstrative



Caring
Encouraging
Relaxed
Sharing
Patient



Cautious
Precise
Deliberate
Questioning
Formal

The most terrifying thing is to accept oneself completely. – Carl Jung

What's your workstyle? First, know thyself

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Cool Blue Energy

If you gravitated towards Cool Blue, you're all about what's right in front of you. You make decisions based on evidence and research; you're someone who tends to go with head over heart. You make it your business to ask the right questions, and you need time to process information.

Your team, however, might just get frustrated by that lack of agility. When they need to make quick decisions, your need for time to carefully consider the evidence may mark you out as a blocker.

Fiery Red Energy

If you chose the Fiery Red words, you're most likely someone who is task-focused. You like to get things done, and fast. You're to the point, determined, and it's often your efforts which are key to getting things done at work.

On the other hand, you could be seen as ruthless, impersonal and not that interested in the touchy-feely team-bonding stuff that's expected of you. Of course, whether or not you care about that is another matter. . .

Earth Green Energy

If you opted for Earth Green, we'll pause here while you make sure that everyone in your team is warm enough, comfortable and ready to go ahead.

Oh, you're back? Well, Earth Green energy shows up as calming and stable, caring and all about what's right for the people involved in any decision. On a bad day? You could seem stubborn, reluctant to embrace new ideas or, dare we say it, boring.

Sunshine Yellow Energy

If you went for Sunshine Yellow, you're probably a natural networker. Enthusiastic, passionate and super-persuasive. You're a bundle of energy, ideas and innovation.

The flip side is that your colleagues may experience your many ideas as a lack of focus; they may dismiss you as lightweight, silly or more interested in the team than the teamwork.



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What does it all mean?

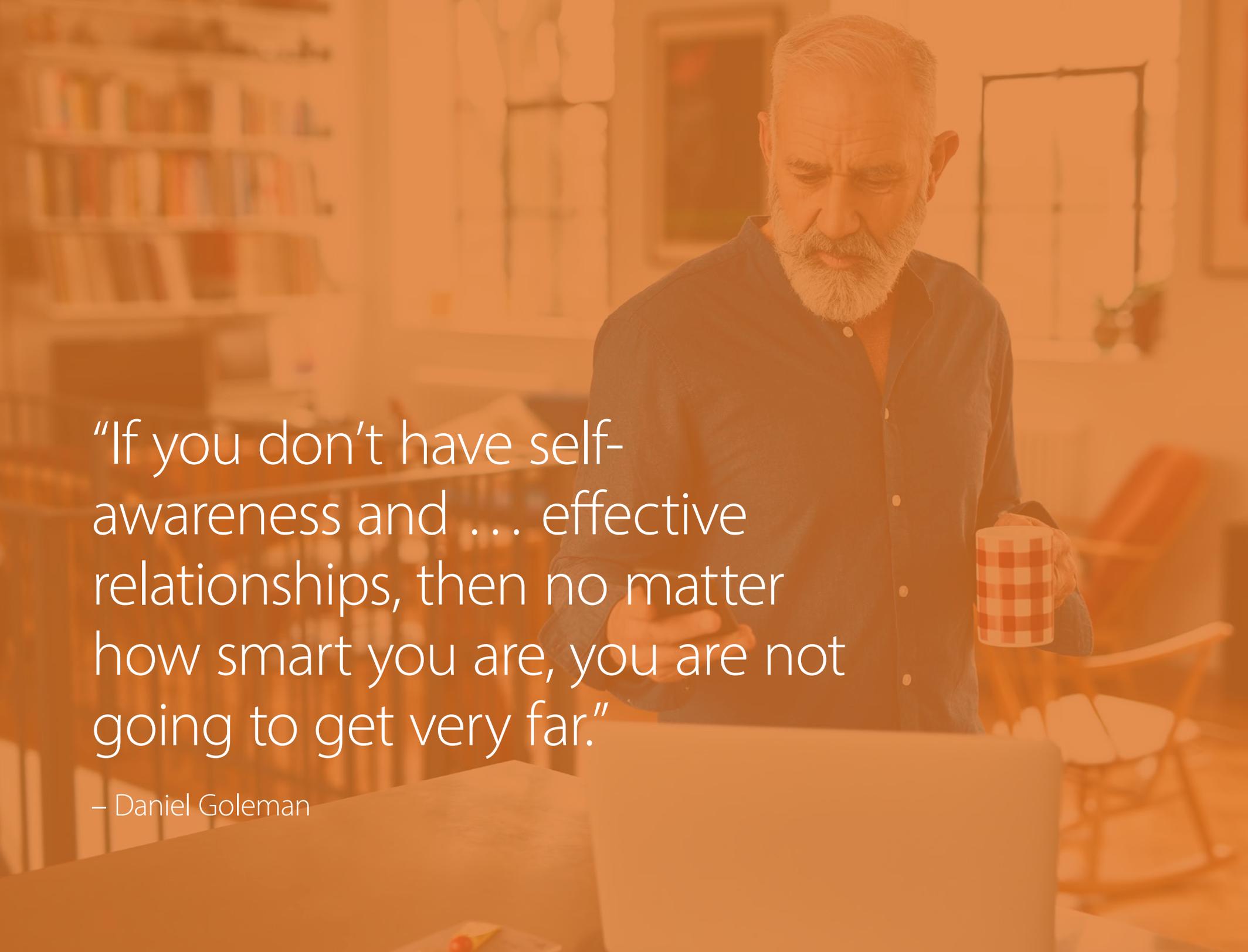
That's just a quick outline of the Colour Energies. It's worth calling out here that we are all our own mix of each of these Colour Energies; that's what makes us all so unique, but we're pretty sure that you recognise yourself in one of these more than the others – strengths, weaknesses and all. So what does it all mean? Well, being able to call out your personal style means you can begin to assess lots of other things.

For example, does your preferred style mesh with your company culture, or do you spend a lot of time hiding your true colours in order to fit the corporate mould? Or, what's the impact of your style on those around

you for example, while you feel like you're keeping everyone grounded, is it possible they see you as stubborn or negative?

Understanding yourself leads to understanding others. And that's at the heart of the Insights purpose. To help you gain that understanding, and then help you work out what that means, what steps you can take next and how you can make a positive impact on those around you.

Congratulations! You've taken Step One on your journey towards self-awareness.

A photograph of an older man with a grey beard and hair, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt. He is looking down at a smartphone in his right hand. In his left hand, he holds a red and white checkered mug. He is standing in a room that appears to be a library or a study, with bookshelves filled with books in the background. The lighting is warm and orange-toned. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

“If you don’t have self-awareness and ... effective relationships, then no matter how smart you are, you are not going to get very far.”

– Daniel Goleman

Chapter two

How do you like to communicate? Help your teammates out!

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It's so easy in life to imagine that what you like is what everyone else likes. Admit it; you don't know why your colleagues enjoy getting instant news from Twitter, when you love to wallow in the Sunday papers. And you rarely want to hit the town with your friends when there's a quiet night in to be enjoyed – alone. Whether you're a natural introvert, a party-loving extravert, a social media junkie or an information hoarder, your way is just that – yours, and yours alone.

Just as in life, so it is at work

Similarly, your preferences when it comes to how you want to work are unlikely to be exactly the same as the person sitting next to you, or even

the same as anyone in your team. That's because we're all unique, with a pretty specific set of ideals about how, when and where we want to do things. This isn't news to you, of course. If people were all the same, there would be no such thing as conflict in the workplace, disagreements over who does what, how it's done or where to go for the next team night out.

The most important thing is to recognise that your own preferences for team meetings over quiet one-to-one chats, or open-plan spaces instead of individual offices, are just that: preferences. Just because they're yours doesn't make them fact - sorry.

FACT
CHECK

Where groups of individuals have low self-awareness, the overall teams' chance of success is halved

How do you like to communicate? Help your teammates out!

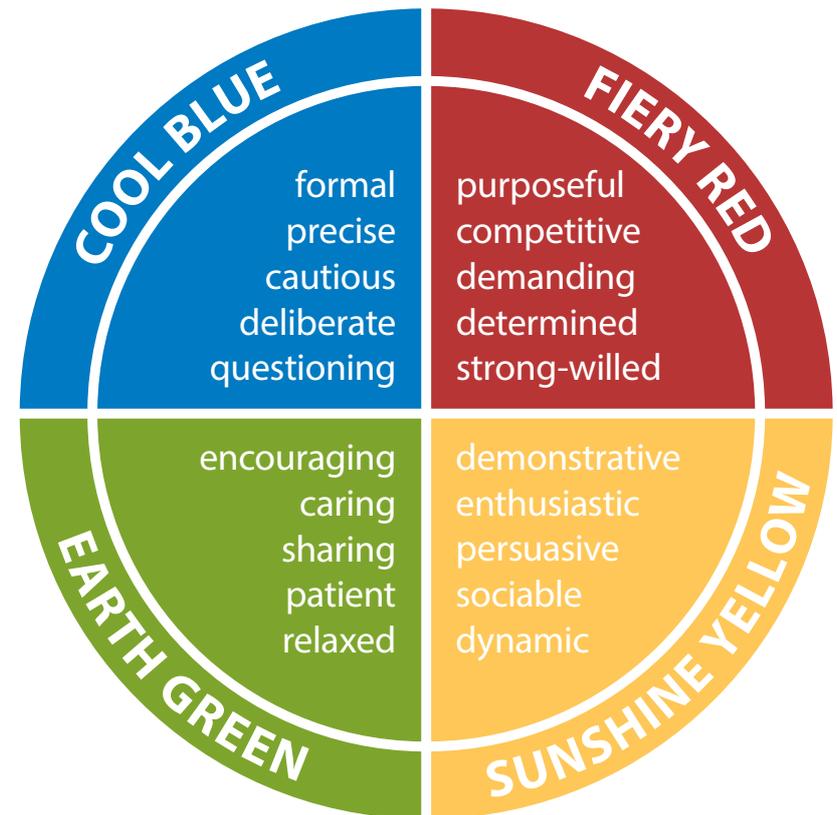
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Your colleagues have their own set of preferences, which they value just as highly as you value yours. This is what makes it so difficult to find a way of working that suits everyone. And with the best will in the world, you can't take responsibility for making sure that everyone is 100% happy, all of the time.

You've got to start with just you.

Communication begins with self-awareness

To help you work out where your preferences lie, let's take another look at the Colour Energies. You'll have identified with one of these over the others back in Chapter One, so now we're going to take it a step further and look at how you can use each of these to better communicate with others.





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Fiery Red Communication

People with an affinity for Fiery Red energy are task-focused, rather than people focused. They're ambitious, focused and pretty strident when they believe they're in the right.

If this is your communication style, you:

- Prefer brief emails with just the headlines, not long detailed stories and irrelevant details
- Need meetings to have solid actions and outcomes
- Want to talk about the task at hand, not what you did over the weekend
- Talk quickly, because time is of the essence

Sunshine Yellow Communication

High levels of Sunshine Yellow energy translates to lots of energy, ideas and enthusiasm. The human equivalent of an excited puppy; they're big on vision but small on follow-through.

Is this is your communication style, you:

- Speak to think – working alone for long spells might take it out of you
- REALLY want to know what everyone did over the weekend – yours was crazy!
- Love to share your newest thinking before working out the details
- Are energised by team meetings and feel refreshed afterwards

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Earth Green Communication

Those with Earth Green energy are all about the people. They genuinely care about their teammates and feel most comfortable when everyone around them is happy.

If this is your communication style, you:

- Like to start meetings by bonding with some personal chat
- Prefer to have all the information in advance to give you time to consider the implications
- Will think through the implications before trying to sell an idea
- Hate to feel that you're being kept out of the loop

Cool Blue Communication

Those with dominant Cool Blue energy like to have all the information before being asked to talk about an issue. They'll be uncomfortable with quick decisions or those made on gut instinct alone.

If this is your communication style, you:

- Become frustrated by unclear emails; you need succinct, clear next steps
- Are comforted by having time to research issues before meetings take place
- Don't want to bond over personal chats, preferring to stick to the task at hand
- Won't be pushed into making decisions before all the evidence is in



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So, what next?

By integrating the above colour energy preferences into your everyday life, you'll be able to get a quick understanding of how you like to communicate, how you don't want to communicate and why your colleagues can drive you nuts with the way they sometimes behave. When you understand each of the colour energies and the dynamics between them, you can learn to ease communications and take the heat out of conflict. You'll recognise that behaviours and preferences are inherent to others, just as yours are to you; people are rarely trying to be difficult, it's just that we all approach situations with our own set of habits and ideals.

Make it real

To open the channels of communication in your team, here's an exercise to get you started. Using the examples given for each colour energy, you can create your own manifesto on communication which sets out:

- How you'd like people to communicate with you
- How you'd prefer them not to communicate with you

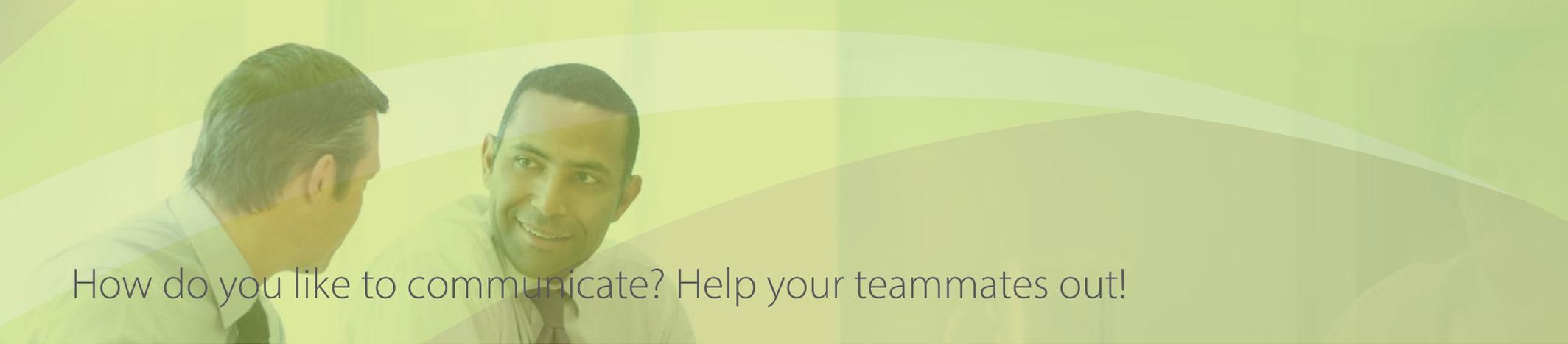
If the very thought makes you shrink in embarrassment, just think of it this way: you're not demanding that people treat you in a certain way, but by outlining some clear boundaries, you're giving them the best shot possible at getting the most out of their interactions with you. And the hope is that once you put your feelings out there, it'll start a whole new chapter of open and honest dialogue in your team, and perhaps even in your organisation.

How do you like to communicate? Help your teammates out!

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Complete the below example according to your preferences and stick it up somewhere it can't be missed – or even attach it to your email signature! If you're the leader of a team, this is a perfect way to make sure individual needs are met, and get the most out of teams comprised of some very different personalities.

How to communicate with me:	How not to communicate with me:
Keep emails brief, give me the headlines	Give me a huge backstory or wander off-topic
Keep meetings short and to the point	Chat about personal issues instead of work



How do you like to communicate? Help your teammates out!

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We recommend you share this in your team and encourage everyone else to complete one too. By sharing your communication likes and dislikes in an open, conflict-free way, you'll soon have a basis for successful communication that you can embed into your team.

So in your next team meeting, set some time aside to talk about how you communicate as a team and why that might be. Perhaps it's simply a habit or the tone has been set by the leader. Then create some plans around what you can do differently in the days and weeks ahead to suit the preferences of all involved.

While we don't expect all communication to become perfect by the time the next team night out rolls around, it's a pretty good place to start.



A woman with long, dark, wavy hair is smiling and looking upwards. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green gradient. The text is positioned on the left side of the image.

“To effectively communicate,
we must realize that we
are all different in the way
we perceive the world and
use this understanding as a
guide to our communication
with others.”

– Tony Robbins

Chapter three

How do you like to work? What your desk says about you

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As the leader of a team, how easy is it to clearly recognise where your team excels, where there are challenges, and what to do about it? It can be really tough when you're stuck deep in the everyday, to give yourself permission to take time out, sit back, and really map what happens in your team when a piece of work lands on the desk.

But don't be too hard on yourself – perhaps you're the lucky leader of a team which excels at planning, or is the envy of Apple with its lust for innovation, or whose ability to execute is second to none?

That's great, but – stop thinking for a moment about what individual areas your team is great at and consider instead how balanced they are. After all, being great at planning is all well and good, but if you don't ever commit to action, that's a lot of wasted paper. And while coming up with

wild solutions can be fun, if they're too hard to implement, they'll never see the light of day. Likewise, execution is important, but if you're missing out on critical analysis you could be executing all the wrong things.

You see, having a team who excels in one area could mean that it's lacking in other areas. And to be truly high-performing, the trick is not just to lean into the area you're already great at, but to work the other areas to make sure you're high-flying in all the right ways.

Like most other things at Insights, we like to look at team effectiveness through the lens of colour.

There are four pillars of team effectiveness, and we call these Process, Climate, Flow and Focus.

How do you like to work? What your desk says about you

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When you came into work this morning, how did your desk look? Was it a clean, pristine, temple of tidiness? Or was it strewn with the wreckage of yesterday – papers everywhere, unclean coffee cups or even half of your day-old lunch?

If you look around your office (go on, take a peek), you'll see that all desks are different. Some are covered in photos of kids, pets and happy memories. Others are functional to the point of barren, and some are a happy muddled in-between.

So, why do we all choose to work so differently or operate in such individual ways?

Well, we all spend a serious amount of time at work these days – somewhere around 90,000 hours between the ages of 20 and 65. And during those 40 hours each week, it's only natural that we start to treat our workstations like our homes – because we spend just as much time at our desks as we do in our kitchens, sitting at our dining tables or watching *Making a Murderer* from our sofas.

We've worked out that there are four main styles of workstation. Keep reading to learn what your own desk says about you and your personal working style. Both you and your teammate's desks have a whole lot to say about who you are, how you each operate, and what that means for how well you work together.



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So read on: it's time to turn Desk Detective.

Chaos Theory

You'll definitely recognise this one – this desk is the one that everyone walks past and shakes their heads, saying 'I don't know how they can work like that!' Well, the reason this person can work like that, is because 'that' is precisely what makes them tick.

The owner of this desk is a walking ideas machine, so their desk will be littered with a festival of Post-its, all filled with the great ideas they had this morning, last week and last year. They're also one of life's extraverts, so likely to have a cubicle wallpapered with photos of their last great

night out, the flyer from their drama group's latest play and a certificate from the time they abseiled down Big Ben.

This person is impulsive (see the last-minute concert tickets?), sociable (that's why there are two mobile phones – one for work, one for play) and ready to throw themselves into anything if they believe in it enough (that's why there are three large coffee cups lying around – they were here last night working on an amazing new concept).

It's a cluttered desk, possibly straight from the office of your nightmares, covered in anything and everything, useful or not. But we're willing to bet that amidst the noise, the mess and the social plans being made, a million great ideas will be brought to life from this desk. Seeing them through?

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Well, that's another chapter...

Organisation Station

Whereas the Chaos Theory desk is all about being surrounded by the stuff of life, which then spark some creative ideas at work, the Organisation Station is about being surrounded by stuff which turns those ideas into reality – or not.

You know the person we're talking about, right? When everyone else is getting carried away by a great idea, they're putting the brakes on by suggesting you need to gather evidence and do your research before making any decisions.

This person is all about information. They won't make a decision, whether it's for a business case or what the best sandwich from the local cafe is, without conducting a serious amount of research. And this analytical style is evidenced by the layout of their desk.

Their workspace is neat, but not sparse. It's lined with reference books of all kinds – from technical manuals to a daily diary to a thesaurus. This desk is designed to have all information at hand. When a decision needs to be made or proposals put forward, this person wants to have evidence at their fingertips, without having to fight past family photos, desk plants or a hilariously-shaped stress toy.



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Put it this way – their reference books, that goldmine of information, are to them what that ratty old security blanket is to Linus. They need to be close to it in order to be comfortable.

Laser-like Focus

This person is efficiency in human form. Their absolute clarity of focus is reflected in how their workstation operates. Everything on their desk absolutely has to be in place and in order for them to get the job done. Nothing is just for fun, to brighten up the office or to remind them of home when they're at work (we can hear them scoffing at this very notion! Who's got the time?).

They are likely to be of the 'How to Get More Done In A Day Than Most People Do In A Week' variety if they have books on their desk. If they drink coffee, it's black – none of that pumpkin spiced-chai latte-half fat-extra foam stuff. In short, this person isn't here to mess around.

They're here to get stuff done, and done fast. Projects completed, tasks closed off, processes created and targets smashed. And that's just before lunch, which they'll eat while they file their expenses after their lunchtime parkrun.

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Anything old, irrelevant or no longer required will be thrown out, in a way that may seem ruthless to others, but is actually necessary to their ability to stay on-purpose and focus like a laser beam on the next project.

Just don't get caught in the junk pile!

The Homebird

And at the completely opposite end of the scale, we have the person to whom the office is simply an extension of their own home. You'll recognise it when you see it, however, you may not be able to see the actual desk at first; it will be hidden under a variety of stuffed toys, mugs emblazoned with 'World's Best Mum/Dad/Friend', packets of sweets for

that 3pm sugar dip, sweaters for when the office gets chilly, and even a little tub of home-baked biscuits to share with their team.

This person is the heart of any team. With an empathetic smile, a listening ear and a willingness to grab you a coffee when you're stressing about a deadline, they're what makes your office feel like a home away from home.

The Homebird probably has a pair of slippers under their desk and a whole wall of photographs on their desk, displaying their treasured family memories and times they've shared with their friends. They're committed to their job and team, and making sure that everyone is A-OK. They may



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not be the most dynamic of colleagues, but you simply can't fault their reliability, their genuine nature and their ability to make sure that people aren't forgotten when processes are created.

What does it all mean?

So, what's the point of all this information? How are you going to make use of it?

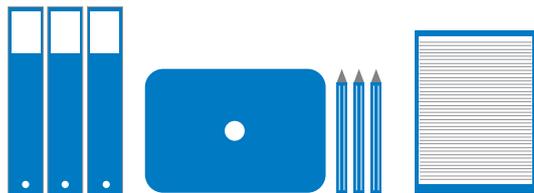
First, you're going to take a long hard look at your own desk. What clues is it giving away? If you're very honest, which category do you fall into? Are you a Chaos Theory, an Organisation Station, a Laser-like Focus or a Homebird?

Then take a look at the desks of those around you, whom you work most closely with. What clues are they giving away, and what might that mean for your working relationships?



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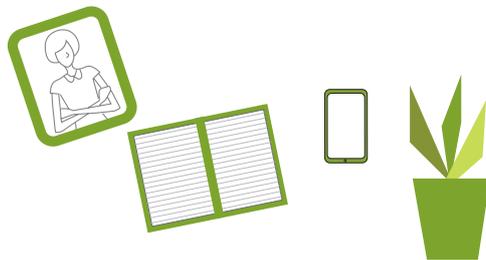
Organisation Station

You like to be organised and neat. All reference books are to hand. You only have what you need on your very clean desk. No “hot-desk” here please!



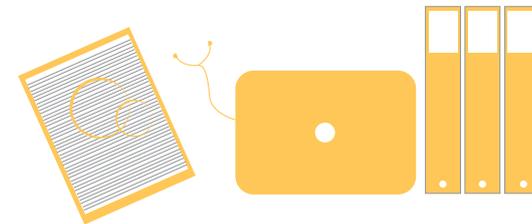
Laser-like Focus

You prefer an efficient workspace, with easy access to everything. You like to have regular clear outs and your posh pen is never too far away.



Homebird

You like your desk to be a little home from home. Family photograph, picture of pets and a plant someone waters when you're on holiday.



Chaos Theory

You love a busy and unstructured space, which is code for a little messy! (But you know where everything is right?) Oh and you have to have the latest gadgets, laptop, tablet or smart phone ...

How do you like to work? What your desk says about you

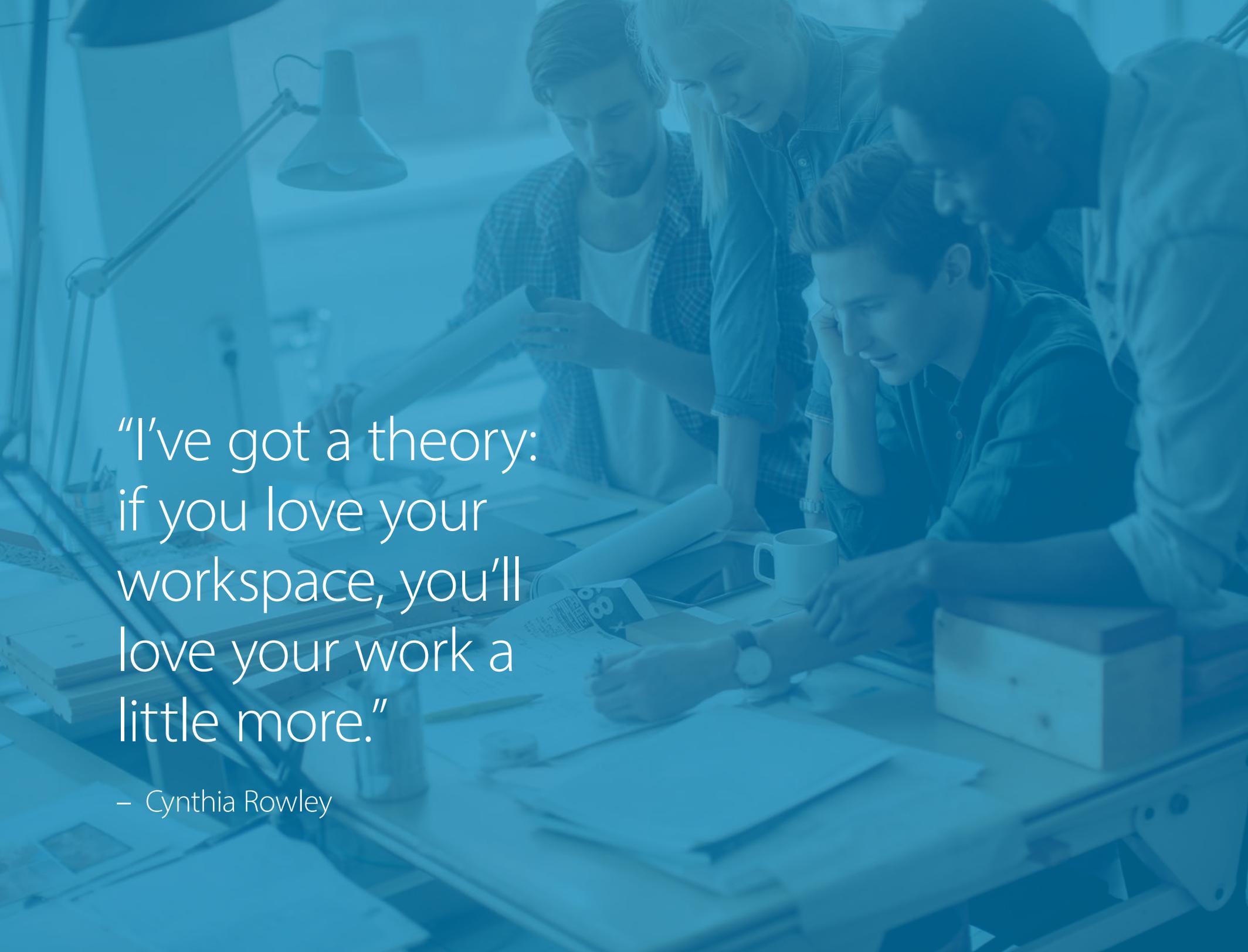
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For example, let's imagine you're a typical Homebird; your desk is a cosy haven in the midst of some functional Organisation Stations. What does that mean for your working relationships? It could be that your people focus is in direct conflict with the task focus shared by your colleagues.

Or imagine you've got true Laser-like Focus; how do you think that would be perceived by a flock of Chaos Theory-type teammates? Might they experience your passion for action as overbearing, bossy or unbearably dominant?

The point is not what your desk looks like. What's important here is that you take clues from the desks around you (and your own) and use that to build a picture of your relationships with your own team. That little bit of insider knowledge could just help you build better, stronger and quicker relationships when you're new to a team or an organisation.

But – and we say this with love – tidy up!



“I’ve got a theory:
if you love your
workspace, you’ll
love your work a
little more.”

– Cynthia Rowley

Chapter four

How do you like to be managed? Know which manager suits your style

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Like the old song says, there may be 50 ways to leave your lover, but there are also at least that many reasons to leave your leader.

For reasons such as micromanagement, failing to delegate, not giving enough responsibility, feedback or motivation, or conversely being too hands-off - it's a much-repeated axiom that people don't leave their job, they leave their manager. In fact, [one in two adults have left a job](#) to get away from their manager and improve their life overall at some point during their career.

On the other hand, it could be true to say that people don't just accept a new job either; they also have to be attracted to working with the person

that's going to be leading them in their new role. That scary statistic above shows why checking out your new manager as thoroughly as they're researching you as a candidate, is critical to your career and your happy future.

Find a leader that's perfect for you

Think about the last time you were in the market for a new job. Maybe you found a number of roles advertised that sounded just perfect on paper, but had second thoughts after meeting with your potential new manager. Perhaps you felt that your working styles just wouldn't sit well

FACT
CHECK

1 in 2 adults have left their job to get away from their manager at some point in their career



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together? Maybe you felt unconvinced by their experience or worried that you might find yourselves in conflict due to being motivated by different factors.

Globally only 13% of employees are engaged with from their organisation and their daily work. To beat this statistic, you need to find something in your next role that's going to fire you up, get you excited and make you leap out of bed each and every Monday morning. And that something could be your next manager.

You owe it to yourself to make sure that your next move is the one that's going to catapult you into something great – and we don't necessarily mean world domination. We just mean a job that feels right for you, whatever that might be.

It's ok (and arguably necessary) to know from the beginning that you are looking for a certain type of manager. In fact, it's key to any job search. The influence of a truly great leader (or at least a leader that's great for you) can be the difference between simply enjoying your daily work and being totally motivated by the purpose and vision that you're working towards - together.

So how do you begin to create an image of your perfect leader? Well, you can't do that without first working out what's important to you.

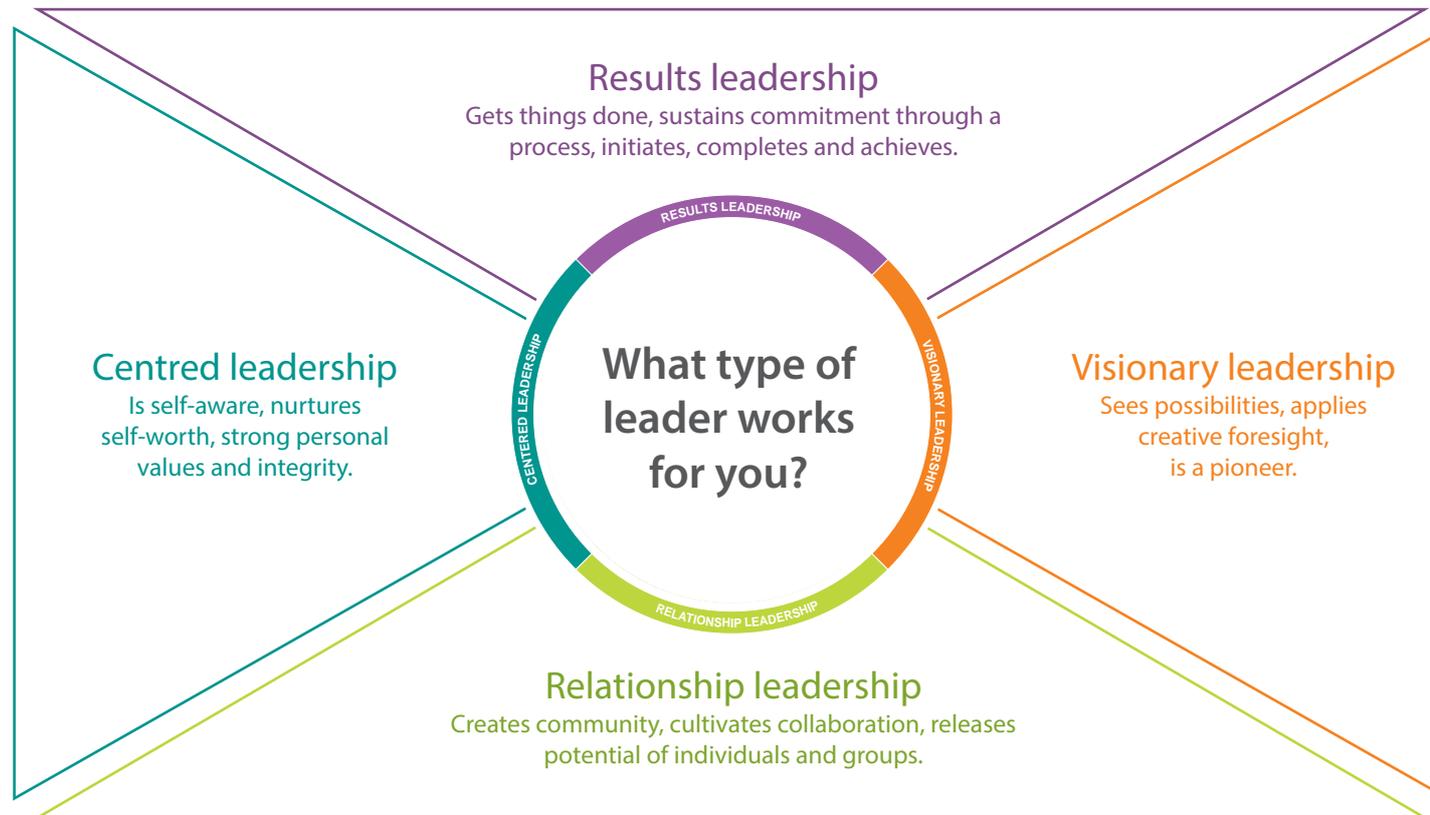
Type your leader

At Insights, we know that every individual has certain preferences – about how they like to work, what they value, their motivators, how they like

How do you like to be managed? Know which manager suits your style

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Our personal preferences mean we are likely to identify with one type of leader more than with others.





How do you like to be managed? Know which manager suits your style

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to communicate and many other factors. And this goes for leaders, too. When leadership teams are viewed through the lens of these preferences, they generally fall into four main ‘manifestations’ of leadership – and we call these Results, Visionary, Relationship and Centred Leadership.

If you can learn to quickly evaluate which type of leader you are dealing with, you’ll be able to recognise whether their approach aligns with your own. You’ll be able to assess if they value the same things as you, if their focus is similar, if they are going to support, motivate and give you feedback in a way that feels comfortable (but also stretching) and make a sound decision based on these factors.

Four main ‘manifestations’ of leadership:

Results

Visionary

Relationship

Leadership

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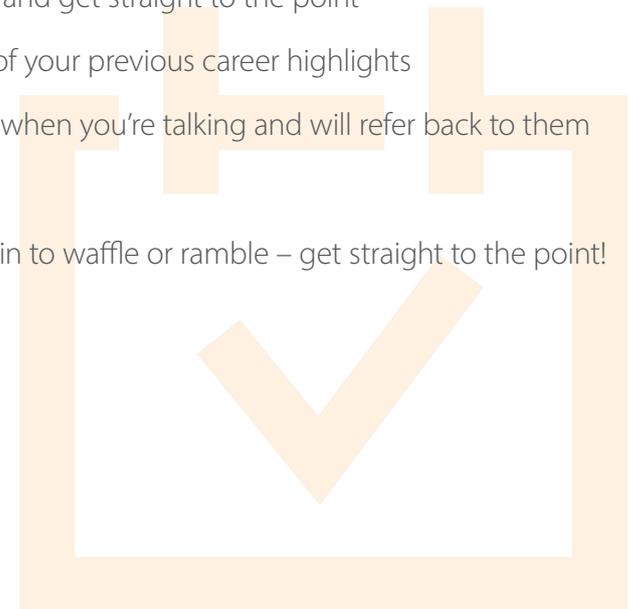
Results Leadership

A leader excelling in Results Leadership brings a strong task focus to their work. Their ability to prioritise is second only to their ability to execute. They are a model of organisation, efficiency and just getting stuff done – and done right. This leader will make decisions only after being shown some serious research; they prefer to be rigorous and objective, never relying on gut instinct.

Ultimately, they lead with their head, not their heart- this will be reflected in their leadership style. They won't be overly personal and will be interested in your life outside of work only up to a point. Then it's back to work!

When you recognise a Results Leader they may:

- Dismiss the chit-chat and get straight to the point
- Ask to see evidence of your previous career highlights
- Take extensive notes when you're talking and will refer back to them later
- Get bored if you begin to waffle or ramble – get straight to the point!





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Visionary Leadership

A Visionary Leader is less about the practical and more about the intuitive. They are inspired by thinking of possibilities, by what's happening up ahead and by the opportunities that exist. They'll pull together a team by creating a powerful vision and they know what needs to get done in order to fulfil it. A leader with this visionary style is a pioneer, coming up with creative solutions to old problems and inspiring people along the way.

They won't be troubled by the fine details of how to get there though; the details won't hold their attention. While the first project comes to fruition, they'll have generated many more ideas for the team to work on.

When you recognise a Visionary Leader they may:

- Become fascinated by where you see yourself in five years' time
- Talk big picture with accompanying hand gestures and buckets of enthusiasm
- Authentically and infectiously get excited about the company mission
- Speak fast, think fast and dream big. You'll be swept away, so hold on for the ride

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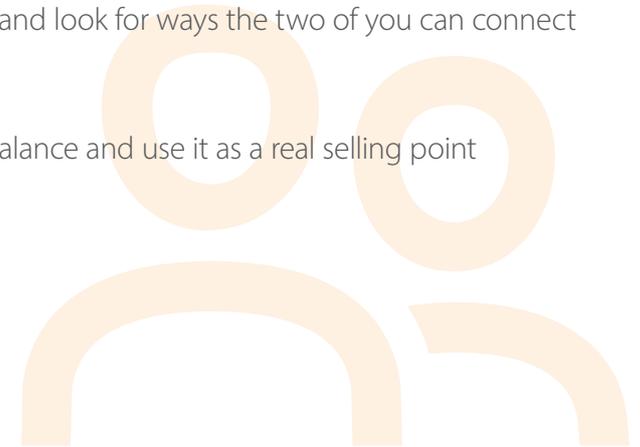
Relationship Leadership

A leader who is naturally focused on relationships is more concerned with people than task. Committed to collaboration, they're a role model of valuing, nurturing and supportive leadership. They are glad to be of service to others and want their team to be a hub of mutual respect and consideration for others.

Being of a more personal nature, they're a leader who wants you to be happy at work. They'll be thrilled to help you develop and their patient nature means they'll be a stable and encouraging force who's always in your corner.

When you recognise a Relationship Leader they may:

- Make sure you're comfortable and put you at ease with a coffee and a biscuit
- Ask about your family life and shares stories (and most likely pictures)
- Root quietly for you, and look for ways the two of you can connect further
- Be big on work-life balance and use it as a real selling point





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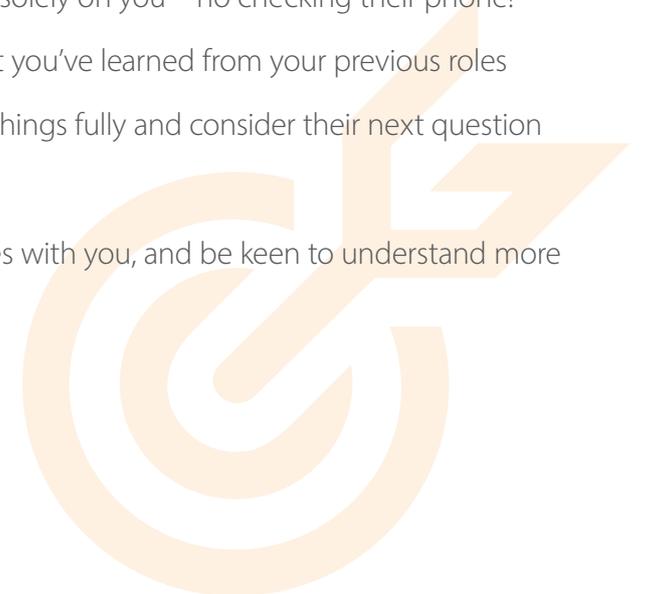
Centred Leadership

Unlike Visionary and Relationship Leaders, the Centred Leader tends to focus inward instead of on the outside world. They will spend time carefully considering how they feel about things, their values and what motivates them. They are very aware of how their beliefs and values impact their work and will be deeply uncomfortable if they find these are in conflict with each other.

They are always alert to what's happening and will pay full attention to what's going on in the moment. If you need their attention, it will be all yours.

When you recognise a Centred Leader they may:

- Focus their attention solely on you – no checking their phone!
- Show interest in what you've learned from your previous roles
- Take time to explain things fully and consider their next question carefully
- Share their core values with you, and be keen to understand more about yours



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What does it all mean?

Well, this knowledge could take you in one of two directions.

You might be looking for a leader who you can be totally aligned with - someone who you know will be motivated by the same things you are, whether that's a big fat salary, a big fat holiday allowance or the ability to drop it all at a moment's notice when your children are ill.

If this is your approach, that's all good. It's great to feel part of one big cohesive work family, from sharing your workload to Friday night cocktails. Sharing motivations, values, beliefs and a strong purpose with your leader can be the key to a long and happy career.

Just be sure that you're not too comfortable, though. To progress in your career and develop as an individual, you need to be stretched. And the main person to carefully assess how to do that is your manager. They'll want you to reach further than ever before, but in a way that makes you feel safe and excited by the opportunity that it brings.

Opposites attract – right?

On the other hand, you might be more of the 'opposites attract' persuasion. While you may be all about nurturing relationships, your instinct might tell you that you need a Results Leader to get your projects over the finish line. Or while you're a creative generator of ideas, you can see that a Centred Leader might just keep your feet on the ground.

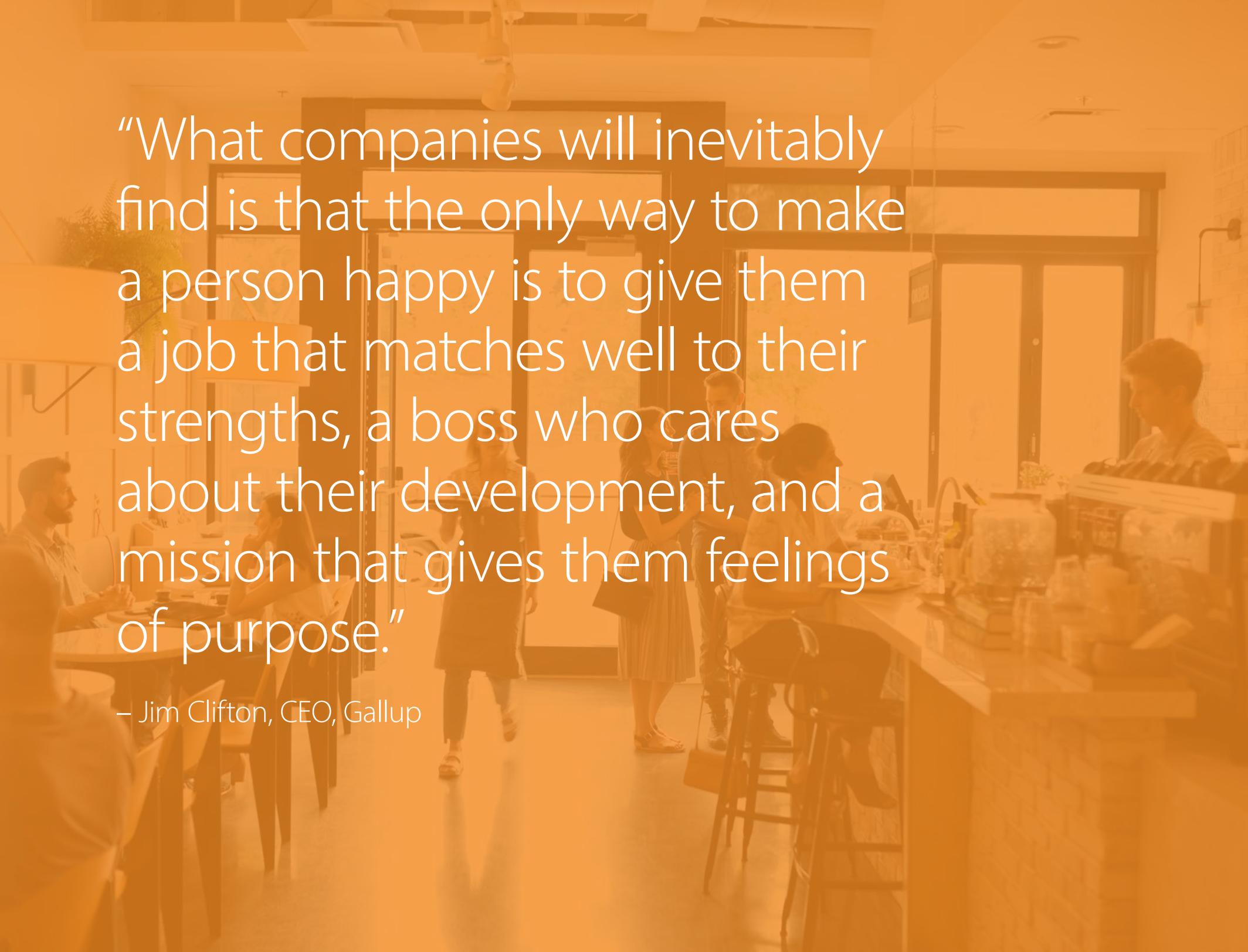
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Again, there's risk inherent in this approach. A little honest feedback or constructive criticism can be invigorating, and a great primer for personal development. But if the difference between you and your leader is an unbridgeable gap, then you could be in for a rough ride.

So the key to finding your perfect manager, like so many other things in life, is understanding yourself first. Get really familiar with the manifestations of leadership above and you'll feel the pull of a certain type of leaders over the others. Watch for some of the cues when you meet with them and you'll soon begin to get a feel for what you want in a leader – or perhaps more importantly, what you need.



A blurred office scene with people working at desks and a coffee bar, overlaid with a quote. The image has a warm, orange-toned filter. In the background, several people are visible: some are seated at desks, others are standing and talking. There's a coffee bar on the right with a person behind the counter. The overall atmosphere is busy and professional.

“What companies will inevitably find is that the only way to make a person happy is to give them a job that matches well to their strengths, a boss who cares about their development, and a mission that gives them feelings of purpose.”

– Jim Clifton, CEO, Gallup

Chapter five

How do you instigate change? Make it happen and get it right

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So over the last few chapters, we've shown you:

- How to understand yourself
- How you can help your team communicate with you
- What desks can tell you about you and your team
- How to find an ideal manager

But how about the external forces that make your working life more difficult? It might be that your organisation is traditionally slow to change,

meaning that you are surrounded by outdated processes or technology. It could be that the structure of your team just doesn't suit the way business is done in the 21st century, and that's damaging your ability to provide an amazing customer experience. It could be that, while you work in a fun, inspiring, engaging company, none of the paperwork your clients receive reflects that – and it's hurting your brand.

The fact is that approximately [70% of change initiatives fail](#) in the long term. We think it's time that everyone took responsibility for sustainable, engaging, change – and that includes you.

FACT
CHECK

Approximately 70% of change initiatives fail in the long term.



How do you instigate change? Make it happen and get it right

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It's time to step up

There are a million reasons to want to instigate change, of any size. From what's on the lunch menu to your organisational structure, being adaptable and willing to change is essential to the success of any company today. So, are you going to instigate and make change happen?

Yes, you.

Why not you?

You're no good at that sort of thing?

We don't believe it. We know that no matter who you are, you can find a way to successfully provoke change; you just have to learn how to use

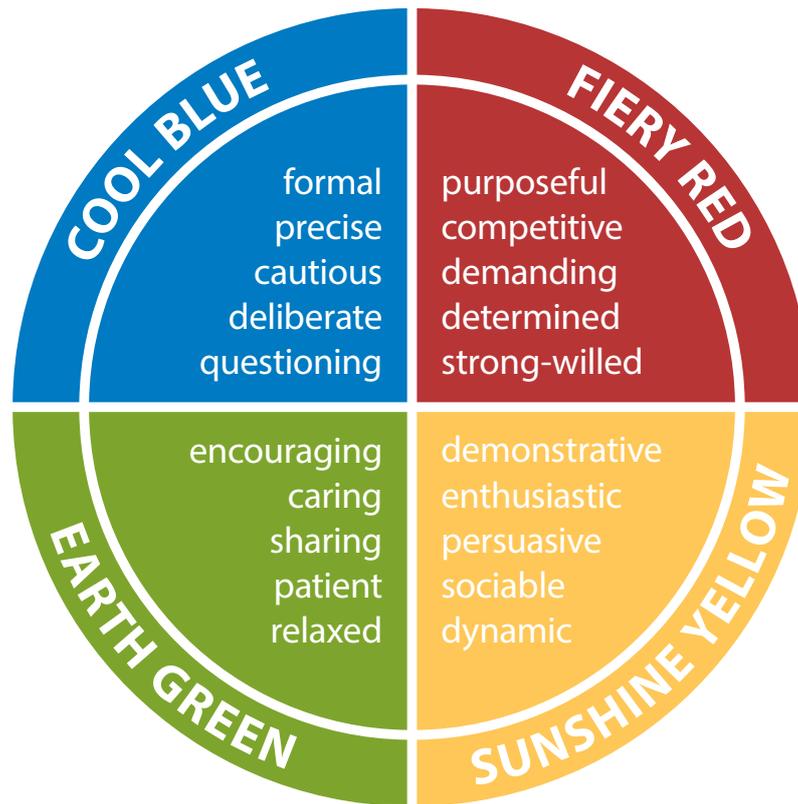
your natural gifts in order to take the rest of the organisation with you.

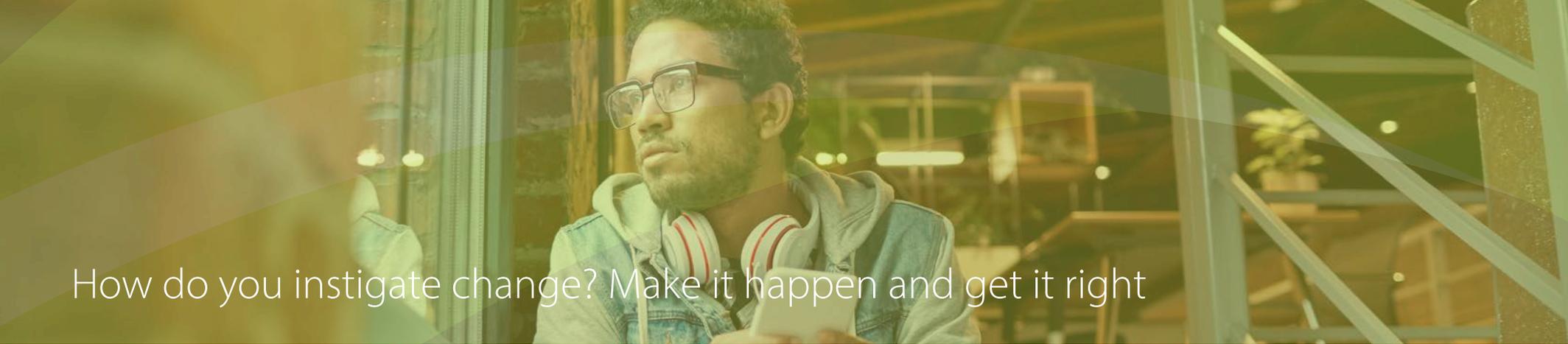
Remember the four main Colour Energies we talked about earlier? They are the basis of the Insights Discovery methodology. Have a look here and remind yourself which colour you most identify with.

You might, at a glance, think that Fiery Red energy seems the most likely to successfully embed change, but we all have some amount of that piratical, entrepreneurial spirit in us. And whether you operate mainly with Fiery Red, Sunshine Yellow, Earth Green or Cool Blue energy, you can absolutely become a change agent in your own way. It's just a matter of your approach.

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Fiery Red Change

If any colour energy embodies that reforming spirit, it's Fiery Red, right? Actually it's in everyone to some degree, but yes, it will likely show up pretty strongly in someone who leads with this energy.

Someone with high Fiery Red energy might suffer in silence at first, willing to ignore what's wrong in order to get business done. Their task-focused style means they'll be keen to stay on-track, rather than get distracted by what needs done in order to make long-term improvements.

However, once their best laid plans are compromised and their ability to produce top-class output is affected, they'll realise that something has to

change. That's the advantage of a determined Fiery Red nature - it won't put up with laborious or outdated systems for long.

However, the disadvantage is that they just might jump headlong into a solution, without giving due consideration to all the possibilities, or to what others in the team think might work. Their tendency to hastily make a decision and be overwhelmed by tunnel vision when other alternatives are suggested should not be overlooked.

However, those with a lot of Fiery Red energy need to be aware of the importance of bringing people along with them. While their ability to get things happening will be key, they will need to spend time gathering requirements and listening to the views of others, in order to make sure that their solution to the problem is the best available.

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That's how to create long-lasting change that is truly embedded; ensure that all key stakeholders are consulted right at the beginning, create a solution that everyone can buy in to - then dial up that Fiery Red energy and make it happen.

Sunshine Yellow Change

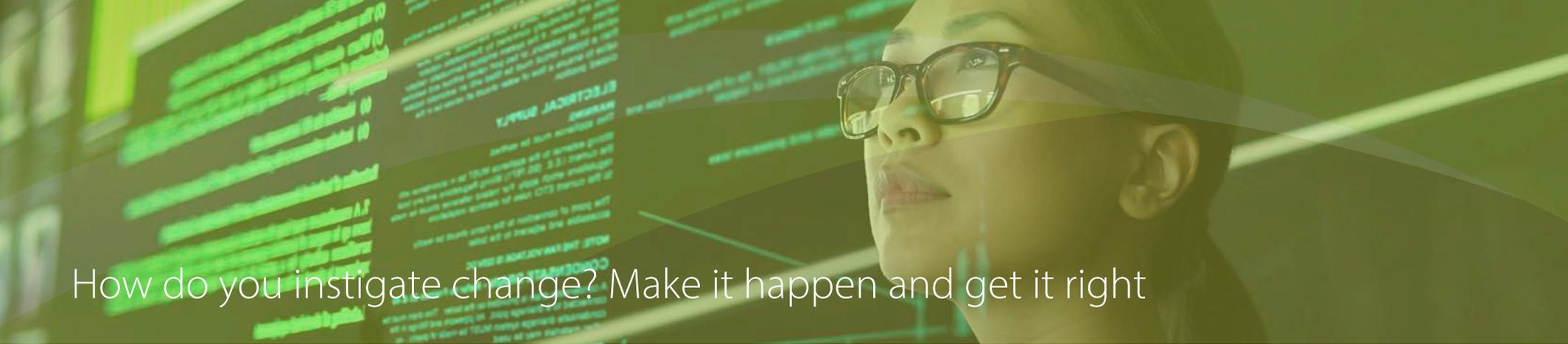
When change is brought by someone with dominant Sunshine Yellow energy it is a delightful mixture of possibilities, blue sky thinking and just a dash of crazy inventor.

It's the Sunshine Yellow ability to keep 100 balls in the air at a time, mixed with their natural optimism, that means they will be breezily unaffected by difficult processes for a while. But Sunshine Yellow energy does not like

its' enthusiasm dampened by grim reality, so anything old, out-dated or unfit for purpose will eventually become a real sticking point.

This person will want to talk about whatever is bringing them down – a lot. They'll tell everyone from the CEO to the cleaner about the problem, and how they think it can be fixed. They speak to think, so every time they retell their story, they're also gathering ideas and dreaming up possible solutions. They're keenly aware that everyone should be part of the solution, because they instinctively know that a happy team is a productive team.

On the other hand, they might just tend to let their natural enthusiasm run away with them. Not only will they enthusiastically tackle the



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immediate problem, they can get carried away with their own creative ideas and end up trying to bring about world peace. Sticking to the task at hand is difficult for those of a Sunshine Yellow nature, but making the effort to be super-focused, even in short bursts, allows them to bring all of their creative flair to bear on one problem, rather than many.

Earth Green Change

You may think that those with a lot of Earth Green energy would shy away from change given their patient, stable nature; but what is it they always say? It's the quiet ones you have to watch the most...

People with high levels of Earth Green energy become change agents

precisely because of their patient nature. They will quietly keep working until they can see that a certain process or system is making their colleagues frustrated. That's their line in the sand.

Any solution that they devise will have people at its heart. Often thoughtful and slow to change, they will make sure that when a change is implemented, it is right for all parties involved. Totally unwilling to sacrifice the people for the process, they're the key to making sure that the change that's coming is the right choice.

However, they should be aware of the possibility of becoming stubbornly attached to one solution, rather than opening their minds up to some of the more 'out-there' ideas. They'll also feel stressed by late or

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unconventional changes to the plan. Trying to stay open to suggestions and using their gifts to see the change through to completion is the Earth Green way.

Cool Blue Change

Someone with high Cool Blue energy can be a major force for change because they will do the research upfront. Once a problem or blocker has been identified, they will happily spend time immersed in gathering requirements, conducting thorough research and creating a spreadsheet listing possible options with pros and cons of each. In short, they'll make such a compelling case that it'll be hard to shut them down.

The bonus is they're not only bringing a problem to the table; they're also

bringing potential solutions. They'll put together a watertight argument for why improvements need to be made: the costs, risks and benefits. They'll get everyone on board with their unassailable logic.

And that's fantastic . However, in the time they have spent researching, fact-checking and delivering unbiased reports, it's possible that someone of a less meticulous nature could have come along and implemented a faster, more short-term change, making the more considered opinion a moot point. They should be wary of spending more time on research than implementation. They'll also need to think about how best to 'sell' the change, as being persuasive and passionate doesn't come easily to their more theoretical nature.

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What does it all mean?

We're all responsible for making improvements in the workplace where we can. And it shouldn't matter what your natural strengths are, as long as you're also aware of where you might find yourself more challenged.

If you have little affinity with the Fiery Red rebellious spirit, get someone on board who has it and will follow through. Similarly, if you're a creative genius, you'll need to get some Cool Blue research on your side to give your ideas weight.

So if you're stuck with a process that's draining your enthusiasm for that job you love, gather a working group that's going to cover all the bases. With your unconventional solutions, the research to back up your proposal, the people-focus that's keeping you honest and the drive to get it done, as a team you'll have the best possible shot at making that change.

A woman with curly hair is sitting in a meditative lotus position on a wooden table in a kitchen. She has her eyes closed and a calm expression. The kitchen background includes white cabinets, a double oven, and a wooden shelf with various items. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

“To create a change, you must do some active work. The idea of change isn’t enough; you must buckle down and do something.”

– John Fleming Ph.D, Gallup

Conclusion

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Thanks for reading! It's time to get back to the real world and start putting what you've learned into practice. From knowing how your personal style might be perceived by others, to finding a manager whose style is just right for your needs, you've boosted your self-awareness and supercharged the next chapter of your career.

To take self-awareness to the next level, for individuals, teams or even whole organisations, Insights can help. We provide people development programs that help companies all over the world get the very best from their people at work.

Our solutions are based on Jungian psychology and use a broad range of psychometric models of increasing depth, which are used to help people communicate more effectively, understand themselves and others, and tackle your most pressing business challenges.



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Find out more about how we help customers face their business challenges at www.insights.com or contact us right now at solutions@insights.com.

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“Be brave enough
to start a conversation
that matters.”

– Margaret Wheatley, American writer

Get in touch!

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