

## **Four Ways Leaders Need to Communicate**

The leader is the broker of a message. The manager is a broker of information. And yet, managers can be leaders. It all depends on the significance of the message and what they do with it. Adept managers can take an old message and re-tool it and then leverage it into greater influence.

That is what leaders do. They influence others. It may be formal influence in their employment. It may be entrepreneurial as it is with the small business owner or network marketer. It may be personal such as occurs in volunteer work in charities and churches. Whatever the venue, the line between managing and leadership is discerned by looking at the message and how effectively it is brokered.

Let's say you are the leader next door. Is your message information or vision? Is it cold facts or does it have passion and life? How much do you believe in the message and identify with it? For a leader to have significance the message must have significance. Significant to the audience (the follower) – not the leader!

### **What do you need to know about the audience?**

I always recommend doing a written audience analysis. Do it as simply as possible without putting its effectiveness in jeopardy. If you are familiar with the audience, it may be as simple as setting down with a paper, breaking down the audience into segments, and listing characteristics of each segment. Then find connecting points between the segments and the message.

Audience segmentation can be based upon a combination cultural characteristics, gender characteristics, educational background, economic background, sports, or favorite TV programs. These and other may give insight into what stories, illustrations, or metaphors might effectively help the audience focus and listen.

### **What does psychology have to do with it?**

You should probably consider the psychological aspect of audience analysis. The personality types of the audience. Since the times of the ancient Greeks, four distinct personality types have been recognized.

Most people are a combination of more than one type and may exhibit characteristics of other types. Many adapt their personality type because of self-awareness, education, training, life experiences, or influences of social situations or stressors.

You will often be more effective as a leader when you design your message to include connecting points for all four personality types.

### **How do you target messaging for each personality type?**

The first thing is to understand the type. Many systems have been developed to explain them. Some systems use colors, some use a form called DISC. Another system uses four different animals to represent each type.

Although initially introduced to another system, I prefer the Greek designations because of the quality of the literature that has been written using them. I think it is worth the effort to learn them.

### How do you communicate with choleric?

In alphabetical order, the first type is the Choleric personality. This type of personality is extroverted, tends to see the big picture, and has no trouble taking charge. Choleric tend get upset when people do not do what they want.

Choleric tend to make quick decisions and delegate work. They are more goal-oriented than they are people sensitive. Timid people sometimes see choleric personalities as rude or overbearing. Choleric lead through taking charge.

To convince choleric you have to gain their respect. If they view you as uncertain or unprepared you lose. They like winners. If you want to convince choleric to attend a function, tell them all the leaders will be there. Let them know how what you offer will make them a better leader. Choleric lead through the force of their personalities.

### How do you communicate with melancholy?

Melancholy is the next type. Melancholies tend to be introverted and see the details. Melancholy personalities like rules to follow. They like to know that they have done things right. They get upset with rule-benders.

Melancholies make decisions based upon facts and rules. They are always hungry for more information and it is sometimes are paralyzed by their analysis. They are sometimes seen by other people as nit-picky. They lead through detailed policies and procedures.

To convince melancholies you need to have details. They want to see all of the points on the PowerPoint and have them explained. You may want to provide supplemental material with lots of details to them. If you want to convince melancholies to attend a function, tell them that they will get all the information they want.

### How do you communicate with phlegmatic?

Phlegmatics are highly relational. They like lots of time to make decisions and don't like to be rushed. They are not as rules driven as Melancholies, but like to weigh the relational impact of decisions. They look out for others and are willing to sacrifice their own interests to help others.

Because they tend to be non-confrontational they may not verbalize their feelings, but they often resent those who run roughshod over them or hurt others. They will often go along with a strong personality, but when they reach their limit they often break away completely to avoid on-going conflict.

To convince a phlegmatic you have to show them how things are in the best interest of the group. You often need a format where they are asked their opinion. You may need to communicate in a way that levels the playing field and keeps them from being dominated. They lead by forming alliances.

## How do you communicate with sanguines?

Sanguines want to have fun. They are people sensitive but use that sensitivity to manipulate to place themselves as the center of attention. Sanguines are often so concerned about having fun that they are disorganized.

Sanguines relate well with people. They are often seen as winsome and charming. They are usually uninhibited in social settings and get over their own mistakes and those of others very quickly. After all, it ruins the fun to hold grudges.

If you want a sanguine personality to attend an event, tell them how much fun it will be or give them a position up front where they will be noticed. A sanguine would probably make a great master or mistress of ceremony for an event. Sanguines lead by being using their ability to be winsome.

## In conclusion.

Personality type is a pre-disposition. Everyone has to learn to compensate for the weaknesses of their preferred mode. In communicating, it is important to know your own personality so that you balance your preferences with the needs of those in the audience who may be a different personality type.

It is a good idea to look at your communication i.e. your speech, sales pitch, article, and ask yourself. "What is in it for each of the different personalities?" When combined with a segmented audience analysis, it will help you create powerful communication strategies.

## About the author

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