Social Style Responses
(adapted from Flight Training Magazine, Jan 96)

by Bob Gabhart, VP Sales and Service, King Schools, Inc.

To increase your effectiveness in working with or selling to others, you need to have more than a basic understanding of people and how to relate to them. People are creatures of habit who become comfortable doing things in certain ways. Behaviorists describe an individual's collection of comfortable procedures as a social style, and we like to relate with others in our social style because it is comfortable. But staying within our comfort zone is not conducive to effective collaboration or marketing.

When I learned this, I looked at the customers I had sold. Their social styles were similar to mine, but they comprised just 25 percent of my prospects. To become successful, we have to relate well with all people, not just those whose social styles are close to ours. Before we can relate to others, we have to know our individual social style.

There are four social dimensions:
1. Assertive vs. Easygoing, and
2. Formal vs. Informal.

Assertive people try to influence or control the thoughts and actions of others. They voice their opinions, tell others what they need, emphasize ideas with their tone of voice, and use quick, clear statements. Easygoing people ask more than tell. They seek various points of view in order to analyze the situation and do not state their opinion until all the facts are in. They go slow and need facts.

Formal people do not make small talk; they are reserved, unresponsive, and want facts and details. They keep a tight rein on their feelings and never cry at the movies. They are cool and calm. They are Mr. Spock. Informal people let their feelings run free. They share feelings and like to make small talk. They do not push for facts and details, but would rather get a feeling for their decisions. They are Dr. McCoy.

The combination of these dimensions result in four basic social styles:
1. Analytical
2. Expressive
3. Driver
4. Amiable.

Here are some do's and don'ts for working with each of them (based on a sales or influence approach):

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th><strong>Don’ts</strong></th>
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| **Analytical** | 1. Provide a written plan.  
2. Make your presentation organized, thoughtful, and systematic.  
3. Appeal to safety needs, if applicable.  
4. Use examples of how and why things work.  
5. Demonstrate actions that will assure there will be no surprises between the two of you.  
6. Be confident in recommending a specific course of action after your presentation.  
7. Go slowly with all the facts.  
8. Close your presentation with an alternative choice. | 1. Don’t be disorganized or messy.  
2. Don’t try to build personal relations at first.  
3. If you disagree, take issue the with facts, not with the person.  
4. Don’t rush them with a ready-made decision.  
5. Don’t leave loopholes or cloudy issues, if you don’t want to be zapped.  
6. Don’t ramble or waste their time. |
| **Expressive** | 1. Plan a presentation that supports their dreams and intentions.  
2. Leave time for relating and socializing.  
3. Provide testimonials from students whom Expressives may see as important or prominent.  
4. Take time to be stimulating, fun-loving, fast moving, and entertaining.  
5. Offer special, immediate, and extra incentives for their willingness to get involved right now in the big package. | 1. Don’t deal with too many details.  
2. Don’t “dream” with them for too long or you will lose too much time.  
3. Don’t be curt, cold, or tight-lipped.  
4. Don’t leave things in the air or they will hang there.  
5. Don’t kid around too much or stick to the agenda too much.  
6. Don’t talk down to them. |
| **Driver** | 1. Be clear, specific, brief, and to the point.  
2. Stick to business.  
3. Show respect.  
4. Come prepared with all requirements and objectives in a well-organized “package.”  
5. Motivate by referring to the objective and results they are seeking from flight training.  
6. Let them feel that they are in control.  
7. Close your presentation by offering them alternative choices. | 1. Don’t waste time or ramble.  
2. Don’t try to build a personal relationship at first.  
3. Don’t direct or order.  
4. Don’t leave loopholes or cloudy issues - you will get zapped!  
5. If you disagree, don’t let it reflect on them personally.  
6. Ask for the order; they will respect you for it. |
| **Amiable** | 1. Show sincere interest in them as people; find common interests.  
2. Patiently draw out personal goals and tell them how you will help achieve them.  
3. Move slowly, casually, and informally.  
4. Provide guarantees that will minimize their risks.  
5. Provide personal assurances and maximum guarantees. | 1. Don’t rush into a business agenda.  
2. Don’t tell them how much you know until they know how much you care.  
3. Don’t try to push them into an agreement just because they probably won’t fight back.  
4. Don’t leave them without support during their training. They need extra help, especially at the start.  
5. Don’t debate about facts and figures; Amiables will get lost.  
By learning and using social styles you can better understand both who you are and the needs of your prospective students. This understanding will help you adapt your behavior to become more versatile and effective as an instructor and a salesperson. |