

SALES STYLE INDICATOR



Identify your preferred selling style. Understand the various customer buying styles. Learn ways to immediately improve your sales effectiveness and results with more ease and confidence.

Name of Participant:
Sample
Date of Assessment:
2008-03-31

by Terry D. Anderson, Ph.D., Ken Keis, M.B.A.,
and Bruce Wares



Published by **Consulting Resource Group**
Canada: PO Box 418 Main, Abbotsford, BC V2S 5Z5 * USA: PO Box 8000 PMB 386, Sumas WA, 98295-8000
Website: www.crgleader.com

Sales Style of Sample

Everyone is in sales! Sales success is not an accident.

The information contained in the [Sales Style Indicator \(SSI\)](#) and [SSI In-Depth Interpretations](#) and the complete sales training program/system/book, [Why Don't You Sell The Way That I Buy?™](#) will assist you and your team to increase your sales performance.

If used with other CRG resources, such as the [Job Style Indicator](#) and [Values Preference Indicator](#), you will gain a significant **competitive advantage**.



What Is The Sales Style Indicator?

The **Sales Style Indicator (SSI)** is a professionally developed, learning and communication instrument.

The SSI can assist you to do the following:

- Identify your basic Sales Style of responding to prospects, clients, and sales tasks
- Gain self-understanding, self-acceptance, and greater understanding and acceptance of others
- Identify the consequences and/or strengths of your selling style when relating with your prospects and clients
- Identify your typical reactions to sales stress and pressure and learn how to compensate for your weaknesses
- Better understand the buying style tendencies of your client and learn to interact with them more effectively
- Learn how to successfully and quickly build rapport with your clients, potential clients, and others
- Increase harmony and productivity by sharing a common language when talking with others about the style behaviors that are more effective or productive in various sales situations
- Determine your preferred selling style and work environment, to more intentionally select the best sales role, structure, and responsibilities for you
- Gain an understanding of human behavior that you can use to ease tension and promote harmony in relationships with prospects and clients and in your interactions with your fellow workers
- Develop a plan to increase your Sales Style flexibility and effectiveness during sales calls with prospects and clients and in your interactions with team members
- Facilitate sales team development through the careful assessment of team-member strengths and weaknesses



Understanding Your Sales Style



We will get to your scores in a minute. First, let's outline the Sales and Personality Development Factors. It will:

- guide you to better understand your own and others' tendencies
- provide increased clarity in both self-understanding and customer service relationships with others
- promote increased sales success

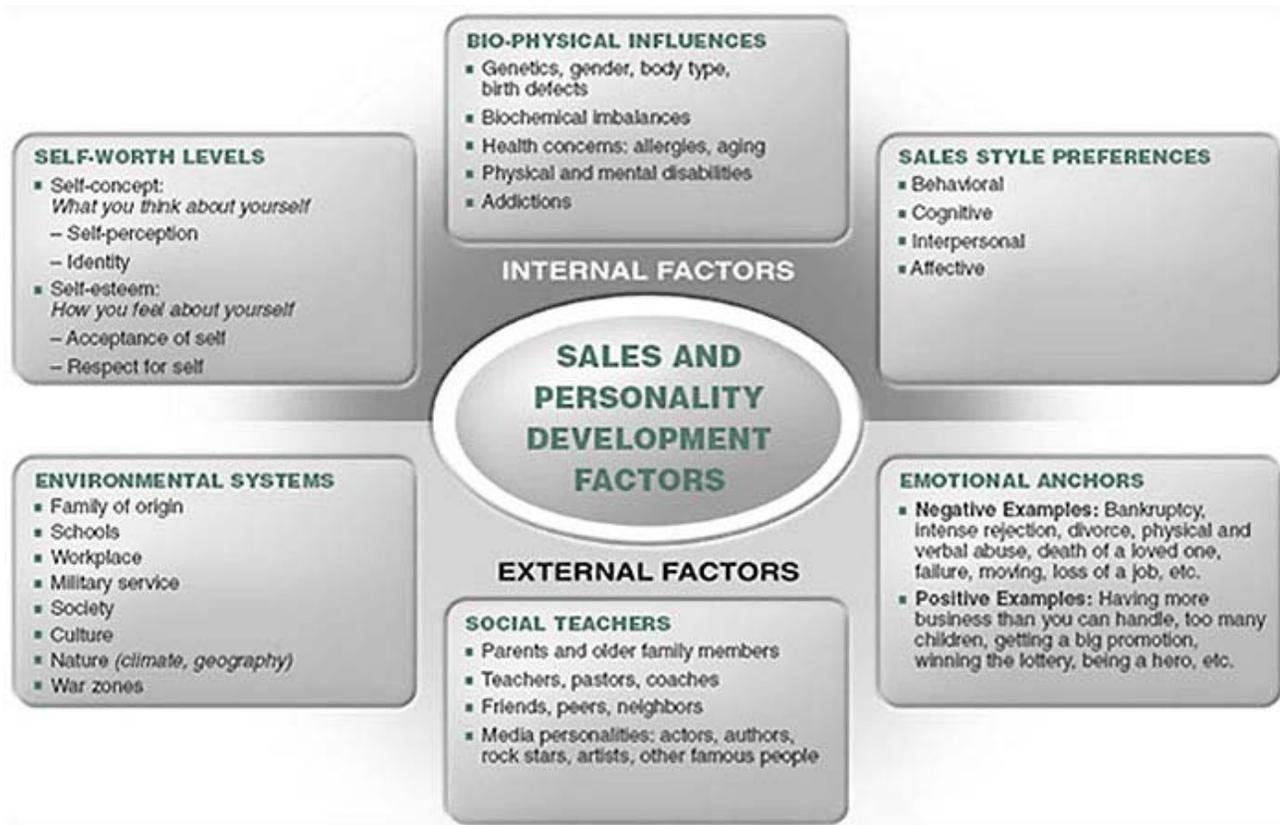
Sales style is only one part of your personality. We must acknowledge that human beings are more complex than just their Sales Style. Even though it is an important part of your personality, your Sales Style represents only one facet of you and your sales success.

To simplify and explain this complexity, CRG created the **Sales and Personality Development Factors Model**. (See illustration below.)

At various levels, all these factors have and are contributing to your Sales Success and Development. Each factor is self-evident, except perhaps Emotional Anchors, where a past experience of a positive or negative nature stirs an emotional reaction within.

Want to learn more about the Sales and Personality Development Factors? Buy the book, [Why Don't You Sell The Way That I Buy?™](#) available from CRG.

Factors that Influence Sales Development



STEP ONE**Understanding
Sales Style**

Many factors can determine your Sales Style and how much rigidity or flexibility you demonstrate. Your Sales Style is created by a complex set of behaviors and attitudes that strongly affect the way you manage tasks, solve problems, and present yourself to others. It is determined partly by your past experiences and opportunities and also by other aspects of your personality.

Research reveals you are born with a preferred Sales Style and that it is consistent throughout your lifetime. Your Sales Style is your natural

predisposition to perceive, approach, and interact with the environment- which includes time, people, tasks, and all sales situations.

Theory and research indicate that four main styles are useful in describing human behavior. Understanding these four styles will provide you with valuable insights. It is also important to understand how your Sales Style triggers much of your behavior and influences your sales choices and success.

Definition of a Successful Sales Professional

Successful sales professionals are defined in this instrument as people who— by means of vision, passion, and hard work—are able to intentionally build short- and long-term relationships with their clients and potential clients, while achieving sales results. The word “success” also means the success of the client to reach his or her goals and objectives via the product and/or service you are offering. Success is also based on the ethical behavior of the sales professional and team, within a culture of integrity, trust, respect, and credibility.

The *SSI*

will assist you to assess the extent to which you have achieved this type of success. It will also provide you with an opportunity to clarify a powerful plan for developing this kind of "total sales success" with your clients and prospects, at personal, interpersonal, organizational, and business levels.

Sales Style: The Foundation of Your General Approach to Buyers

We all tend to view the world in our own personal ways. We each perceive, approach, and interact with our surroundings in a unique manner or Sales Style. Things you pay attention to, the way you decide to act, and the people you prefer to be with are all influenced by the way you are naturally predisposed to behave and sell. Your clients are no different in their uniqueness. The key for a sales professional is to know and understand your selling style and be equally aware of your clients' buying styles.

“ It affects how you prospect and look for new business; qualify, discover, and interview; confirm needs; demonstrate and present your solutions (your products or services); handle concerns and objections; deal with rejection; ask for the order/business; and even the way you follow-up the sale with personalized service ”

Your basic Sales Style forms the foundation for your interpersonal interactions.

The way you see yourself (self-perception) influences how you act in all areas of your life. Your Sales Style directly affects your interpersonal communications and ultimately your sales success.

The **Sales Style Indicator**

provides you with an organized view of how you perceive yourself and reveals the likely consequences of your Sales Style. As you become more keenly aware of those consequences, you can plan to develop greater style-flexibility to increase your sales effectiveness.

Your personal way of viewing the environment around you and reacting to it becomes the foundation upon which your Sales Style is built. Depending upon the roles in which you find yourself, you may develop interpersonal, counseling, decision-making, learning, sales, discovery, customer service, management, and leadership styles. The way you view yourself influences how you will act in all areas of life. Your Sales Style is one manifestation of the basic personal style that underlies all your behavior.

Sales Style behaviors vary somewhat from person to person and situation to situation. For the most part and for most people, they remain consistent over time.

The general pattern you exhibit is unique and distinct from the patterns of most other people. Gaining deeper understanding of the four Sales Style dimensions will assist you to appreciate the characteristics of other styles. You can apply this knowledge later, when you want to adjust your Sales Style to be more effective and to build credibility with your clients, potential clients, and team members.

Style-shifting is a critical skill that all sales professionals must develop to maximize their potential. You can learn to be more flexible and effective without being artificial or phony in the way you present yourself.





If you want an understanding of how others perceive you—as a sales professional—ask them to complete an *SSI* for you!

Over the years, we have found this a very insightful process. You can then compare the way you see yourself with the way others see you. This strategy is great for helping sales and interpersonal relationships, team-building, communications, leadership, client selection, and many other applications.

*You may also complete the **SSI** for another person, to help you become more effective with him or her. Many sales managers have found this a very useful process for coaching, directing, and leading their sales teams.*

*Although the **SSI** should never replace getting to know someone else personally, it can help you frame a way to build credibility and awareness of others' needs and help you plan your behavior and interactions with others.*

Understanding the Four Sales Style Dimensions

Behavioral

ACTION 35

This Sales Style dimension has a strong tendency toward directly and forcefully persuading prospects and altering the sales environment in an effort to achieve well thought-out sales goals. Sales people who naturally operate mainly from this quadrant of Sales Style are likely to seem self-assured, aggressive, driven, and many times oblivious to their prospect's feelings; on a focused track of their own. As viewed by their sales team, they are often perceived as "heavy-hitters" and sales leaders because they tend to forge ahead to meet difficult sales challenges with unusual vigor.

The **ACTION**-oriented style is typical of strong "closers" and those salespeople who are very persistent in scheduling appointments. This **ACTION**-oriented behavior can be perceived as both pushy and aggressive by both the **Cognitive Analysis** and **Interpersonal Harmony** Styles, as they both move forward much more slowly than this style salesperson. Decisive and bold, this Sales Style constantly seeks new or proven ways to speed along the buying process.

The **BEHAVIORAL ACTION** Sales Style characteristic (by itself, without other style influences) is extroverted and can withstand greater sales-related stress (for instance: high sales quotas) than other styles. They don't tend to use highly creative or "flashy" modes of selling, but prefer planned, proven, and very direct sales methods to achieve previously defined bottom-line sales results.

Cognitive

ANALYSIS 45

This Sales Style dimension is characterized by a strong tendency to remain in control of the sales situation. Attention to details, precision and correctness, and being on the alert for potential dangers or inconsistencies enable sales people with this style to maintain control of the interview and to avoid rejection. They want to avoid being influenced negatively by other people or by the sales environment. This sales type slowly and methodically focuses on each small detail necessary to complete the sale. They often get caught up in the sales "process" and must be encouraged to move more aggressively towards "completion" of the sale.

People with this Sales Style tend to avoid emotional intensity and unpredictability. They find that gaining trust from others is not easily attained. They may need to offer more friendly, personal contact with prospects and clients to gain some much needed trust. This Sales Style (by itself, without other style influences) is introverted, being more sensitive to actions and words of prospects and fellow workers.

The **COGNITIVE ANALYSIS** Sales Style does not prefer intuitive or emotional modes of selling, but tends toward logical analysis and exacting precision during sales tasks, with focus and interest on preparing the "perfect presentation". This aim at perfection can reduce the number of presentations made, yet can be particularly effective in technical sales situations.

Interpersonal

HARMONY 38

This Sales Style dimension is characterized by a strong tendency to adapt to individual prospects and sales situations in order to promote harmony and to provide comfort for everyone involved in the sale. People who are strong in this style dimension feel they must be personally liked and respected by each of their prospects or clients.

The **INTERPERSONAL HARMONY** Sales Style typically approaches life and people in a practical, friendly, and naturally warm manner. Adaptation to all other styles is a way of life, providing the desired career security and balance needed and preferred by those who score higher in this style dimension.

The **INTERPERSONAL HARMONY** Sales Style finds it much easier to make friends with prospects than to move ahead assertively to close the sale. They do not like to be perceived as being pushy or aggressive. Their natural tendency to gain a sense of validation and personal approval is achieved by supporting their prospects' desires. Because of this sincere effort, they are often described by prospects as warm and friendly, and service-oriented. This Sales Style (by itself, without other

Affective

EXPRESSION 39

Sales people with this style have a strong tendency to intuitively explore their prospect's emotions and the sales situation; then intuitively interact with them in order to achieve the desired sales outcome. Spontaneous expression of ideas and feelings mark the natural tendencies of this Sales Style.

People with a natural tendency toward this Sales Style use very creative approaches of speaking, gesturing, or letter writing in their attempts to persuade prospects to buy. They make artistically creative and often very dramatic presentations. They like to quickly sell others on themselves, their ideas, and the products or services which (hopefully) will be helpful and provide solutions to their prospects' problems. They often go out of their way to help prospects because they believe in the value of satisfied clients and their ongoing relationships with them. This Sales Style (by itself, without other style influences) is extroverted, not being easily over-stimulated by their prospects' thoughts or feelings, or by the sales environment. People strong in this style dimension can seem insensitive as they rapidly move ahead of others.

style influences) is introverted, being more sensitive to the words and actions of prospects. It favors a practical balance of both the logical and intuitive modes of selling; avoiding extremes in behavior. Closing the sale does not come easy for this Sales Style.

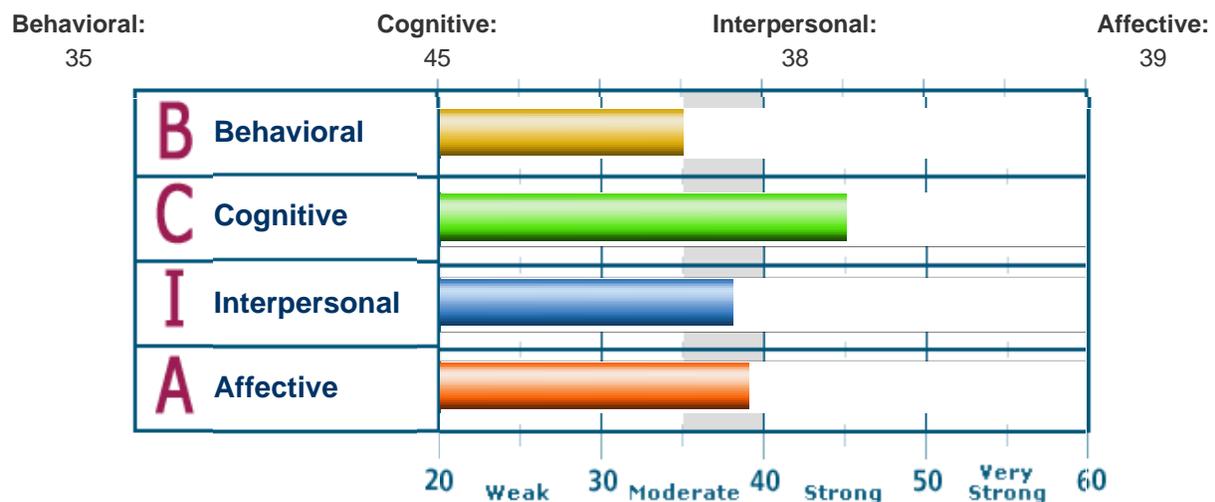
The **AFFECTIVE EXPRESSION** Sales Style generally avoids analytical or technical approaches to selling, but is more intuitive and creative in selling others on taking action. Social interaction and a focus on having a "good time" characterizes this sales style.

STEP TWO**Your Sales
Style Graph**

Now you have a visual graph that represents your style pattern. Here is what this might mean to you.

- Each of us has all four dimensions, in varying intensities.
- The higher your score in one of the dimensions, the more likely this dimension is influencing the way you perceive, approach, and interact with the sales environment.

- The opposite is true for your lower scores. The lower your score in a style dimension, the less likely that dimension is influencing your choices, decision-making, and ability to sell using that dimension.

**STEP THREE****Learning about
Your General
Style
Tendencies**

There is no right or wrong answer or distribution of numbers. The majority of individuals will have two scores above 40 and two scores below 40. Some will have only one score above 40; others will have three scores 40 and above. A small percentage of the population has all four scores within 4 to 5 points.

The combination of your four scores makes up your style pattern. To deepen your understanding of the general style tendencies of each dimension, carefully read the description of each style quadrant below to gain an understanding of the general orientation, typical strengths, and common difficulties of each Sales Style dimension.

We give you permission to personalize this report to your own uniqueness. Ignore the comments that you feel do not apply to you. Identify the statements you feel reflect your Sales Style.

Understanding Your General Sales Style Tendencies

Behavioral

ACTION 35

General Orientation:

To tasks: *wants results now*
 To people: *seeks authority*
 To problems: *is tactical and strategic*
 To stress: *doubles efforts*
 To time: *lives in present and future*

Typical Sales Strengths:

Acts rapidly to get sales results
 Is inventive and productive
 Shows endurance under stress
 Is driven to achieve sales goals
 Can take authority boldly

Common Sales Difficulties:

Can be too forceful or impatient
 Can often think his/her way is best
 Can be insensitive to needs of clients
 Can be manipulative or coercive
 Can be lonely or stressed

Cognitive

ANALYSIS 45

General Orientation:

To tasks: *wants quality control*
 To people: *seeks predictability*
 To problems: *analyzes data*
 To stress: *withdraws*
 To time: *lives in past and future*

Typical Sales Strengths:

Acts cautiously to avoid errors
 Engages in critical analysis
 Seeks to create a low-stress climate
 Can handle important details well
 Can follow directives and standards

Common Sales Difficulties:

Can bog down in details and lose time
 Can be too critical or finicky, or controlling
 Can be overly sensitive to feedback
 Can seem to be lacking in courage
 Can be too self-sufficient, alone

Interpersonal

HARMONY 38

General Orientation:

To tasks: *is a reliable performer*
 To people: *seeks to help others*
 To problems: *wants practical solutions*
 To stress: *adjusts to it*
 To time: *lives in present*

Typical Sales Strengths:

Promotes harmony and balance
 Is reliable and consistent
 Tries to adapt to stress
 Sees the obvious that others miss
 Is often easy-going and warm

Common Sales Difficulties:

Can be too easy-going and accepting
 Can allow prospects to take advantage
 Can become bitter if unappreciated
 Can be low in self-worth/confidence
 Can be reluctant to take risks

Affective

EXPRESSION 39

General Orientation:

To tasks: *puts people first*
 To people: *seeks to influence*
 To problems: *is intuitive and creative*
 To stress: *escapes from it*
 To time: *lives in present and future*

Typical Sales Strengths:

Acts / sells creatively on intuition
 Is sensitive to clients' feelings
 Is resilient in times of stress
 Develops a network of contacts / leads
 Is often willing to help others

Common Sales Difficulties:

Can lose track of time and be late
 Can overwork and overindulge
 Can be too talkative
 Can lose objectivity, be emotional
 Can be too self-assured

Exercising Caution when Assessing Your Own and Others' Styles



The following explanation will prepare you to begin reading the many interpretive comments available to you in this section.

We should never pigeonhole individuals or try to stuff someone into a personality “box.” When provided with crisp, neat categories, we have a temptation to use these models as a shortcut for getting to know people. The CRG models were intended to provide clarity and insight about a person’s personality, which is constantly changing, somewhat unpredictable, and often a surprise to even careful observers.

Some people have said of others, “Oh, he’s a Cognitive type” or “She’s an Affective type,” pronouncing clear judgment of another person’s personality. This type of simplistic thinking is to be avoided, especially when you share your style patterns with clients, potential clients, and co-workers.

The [Sales Style Indicator](#)

is just that—an indicator, not a test. It is meant to provide a common language to assist you to understand yourself and communicate with others regarding the important issue of personal styles.

STEP FOUR

Determining Your Interpretive Summary for Your Style



We will outline the process on how to determine your style pattern(s). As mentioned earlier, the combination of your four scores (patterns) reflects your Sales Style. On the next page are 21 different style patterns. Most of us will have one, perhaps two, or even a maximum of three interpretive summaries with which we best identify.

Let’s determine your Primary Style Pattern for all your scores 40 and above. Because there are special rules for how this is determined, please read the following before going to your Interpretive Summary or Summaries.

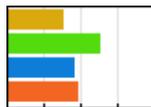
Even though the Sales Style Indicator is full of information, significant additional value comes from going through the second booklet, the Sales Style Indicator In-Depth Interpretations. This 48-page booklet contains two pages of detailed narrative about each of the 21 style patterns. It outlines your Sales Style related Strengths, Common Difficulties, Reactions to Stress, Sales Team Functioning and Compatibility with Others, and Leadership Implications; it also offers suggestions to Increase Your Sales Effectiveness. No sales professional or manager should be without it.

You can also expand on the practical application of the SSI by accessing the Sales Training Program/Process and book, *Why Don’t You Sell The Way That I Buy?*™ designed specifically for the SSI. To find out more about this process, please contact the CRG Partner who provided this SSI to you or contact CRG.

Primary Pattern

C

Probing

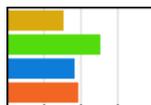


If anything could go wrong in a sale, you can rely on the **probing** type to be able to discover the potential errors. They tend to be bloodhounds who easily detect inconsistencies, holes in sales logic, errors in financial projections, or flaws in a sales proposal; they just can't rest until they find the inconsistencies and correct them

Secondary Pattern

B, C, I & A

Synergistic



Synergistic salespeople have an excellent inner resource for developing relationships with people with any style pattern. With equal strength in each of the four dimensions (**B, C, I & A**), they have the natural ability to perceive the sales environment and connect with other people, regardless of the personal style pattern the other person might have. This allows them to be good salespeople, team players, and negotiators with diverse groups of people.

These salespeople have strong flexibility and adaptability that provides them with an advantage in many sales situations. This style pattern allows them to have many interests and to prefer variety in the widest sense of the term. Their drive toward being task-oriented is balanced with their need to have harmony with others. They can be both sales leaders as well as support sales staff; they like working alone as much as with others. They tend to talk and verbally express themselves but can also listen well. They often like to let their actions speak for them. This style pattern lends itself toward support and problem-solving sales situations where the **synergistic** individual's wide range of interests and skills can be appreciated and rewarded.

In-Depth Interpretation(s)

Primary Pattern

C

Probing

Strengths

If anything could go wrong in a sale, you can rely on the **probing** type to be able to discover the potential errors. They tend to be bloodhounds who easily detect inconsistencies, holes in sales logic, errors in financial projections, or flaws in a sales proposal; they just can't rest until they find the inconsistencies and correct them.

The **probing**

style of salesperson tends to be masterful at handling a mass of details or developing systems to organize complex information and is usually conscientious and patient when it comes to recording and reporting data, for instance, sales call reports and expense reports. It seems that these salespeople's self-identity and self-worth often rest upon their being right and accurate in all that they do. If they already have the necessary skills for a sales job, you can likely count on them to be careful, conscientious, and consistent in their work. They will produce high-quality results that, many times, will be completely error-free. Time needed for such careful preparation can be costly in a time-sensitive sales situation. Overpreparation can interfere with the need for a consistently high number of sales calls.

People with this style are often highly introverted in nature and can pick up on small cues or clues that most people miss in the sales environment. They are careful and critical observers of even subtle events happening around them. They are comfortable being quiet and sitting very still, watching prospects, and waiting. This helps them to have a clear plan in mind before closing the sale. (You can see the image of the watchful cobra: alert, expectant, analyzing the situation for the right and precise moment to strike with deadly accuracy.)

Common Areas of Difficulty

Individuals with the **probing**

Sales Style are likely to be intolerant of others who interfere, get in the way, or disrupt established sales procedures. They also have difficulty being patient with others who are sloppy and untidy in shared work spaces; they are critical especially of **Affective**

sales types that they see as being overly emotional, easily distracted, and unable to concentrate on the sales task at hand. The **probing**

type of salesperson is likely to have trouble seeing others' points of view because they have researched their own views thoroughly and believe their way is the correct way to think or act. They seem to be either/or thinkers, lacking flexibility or versatility in the way they approach sales situations. Sometimes other salespeople will describe them as being closed-minded, stubborn, fault-finding, and dogmatic.

If you offer a new sales approach to people with this Sales Style, they are likely to say, "Where has this method been tried before?" or "Where is the proof that it will work?" It sometimes doesn't matter how good a new idea is; they may discount its value simply because it isn't well established (or just isn't what they would do). Conservative in approach, they are the aggressive sales manager's nightmare! They are slower to take new sales approaches than most people. Thorough and time-consuming, they look at all the angles and often react negatively to any emotionally charged approach to motivate them to do something new or different. Before making decisions to sell anything new, they most likely will do background reading in consumer magazines or will ask others to provide critical assessments of competing products. They typically want just the facts. Emotions are possibly the last thing these people want to be influenced by—especially negative emotions.

Quite often their sales presentations to prospects come across as aloof, matter-of-fact, lukewarm, or pure business. They enter into close relationships very slowly and cautiously. They can have particularly high expectations of themselves and of others. This can lead to very frustrating customer relations, especially with prospects who have quite opposite temperaments and attitudes to theirs. **Probing**

salespeople do not find it easy to give praise to others or congratulate them for doing well, often because of a tendency to focus on what was not achieved or not quite right in their performance. Consequently, the **probing** salesperson sometimes seems to be a perfectionist who is almost impossible to satisfy. While having high standards can be a strong asset when working alone with complicated problems or preparing sales call reports, it can be a definite handicap when interacting with others, especially if this strength is not consciously controlled and counterbalanced with empathy for the views and feelings of others.

Reactions to Stress

The predominantly **probing**

type of salesperson tends to become preoccupied, withdrawn, and anxious when things do not go as planned or expected or when prospects or clients become aggressive. If any policy or rule is being broken, salespeople of this type tend to become overly critical and judgmental of those breaking the regulations. Rule-breakers and policy-benders can cause these **probing**

salespeople enormous distress, sometimes out of all proportion to the crime committed, especially when the wonderful job they have done in ordering things properly has been distorted, thwarted, or ruined.

Since they tend to shrink from conflict, particularly when the situation is fused with strong emotion, the **probing** sales types must be careful they don't become

carpets for tough prospects to walk on. They can easily get themselves into a fluster trying to keep their offices, files, or even other people in order because of their strong desire to be right, correct, and proper in all that they do. Trying to be less demanding on themselves and others, being less intense, and letting go of the need to achieve perfection every time will help to promote relaxation and to drastically improve human relations at the same time. Some people have strong emotional reactions toward the **probing**

types who can make them feel harassed with this constant focus on always getting things done the right way.

Sales Team Functioning and Compatibility with Other Styles

This highly **Cognitive** Sales Style tends to become impatient with a team's or company's lack of orderly procedures. The **probing**

style tends toward less participation on a team because, quite often, other sales team members can be more forceful. A group of **probing**

people on the same sales team would be happy to follow strict regulations that governed their behavior together, such as "101 Specific Steps to the Perfect Sale."

The **probing**

sales types can feel more comfortable when working alone or with others who have a similar style. They tend to be less comfortable with "know-it-alls" or "motor-mouths" (which is how they often regard the **Affective** types) and resent the steamrolling, aggressive approach of the **Behavioral** types. They like the friendliness and support they often can get from **Interpersonal** types, except in work situations where the **Interpersonal** people tend to lose their focus on the sales task at hand and just want to chat.

Leadership Implications

People with this Sales Style have difficulty assuming leadership positions because of the complexity and unpredictability of events that any sales manager will inevitably encounter. They have to stretch their preferred Sales Style pattern to include the more risk-taking, social, and expressive aspects inherent in sales-team leadership. They do not actively seek to be at the forefront of what is going on. They rarely want to be in the role of Director of Sales and Marketing or Sales Manager if this involves responsibility for motivating salespeople rather than merely having authority over procedures. If they unexpectedly find themselves standing under the spotlight or having leadership thrust upon them, they tend to freeze up, because their standard operating procedures do not work in a constantly changing environment over which they don't have complete control. They prefer being procedure-checkers and sales-presentations critics to being in charge of people in a dynamic environment.

To Increase Effectiveness

Gaining improved style flexibility while expressing themselves and their feelings should be a priority for **probing** salespeople to enhance their emotional and physical health. Taking courses in assertiveness training and stress management, engaging in the creative arts, doing cardiovascular (aerobic) exercise, and talking through problems with a close friend or counselor can all be highly preventative measures against the build-up of stress, and thus be effective methods of improving sales performance and preventing illness.

The **probing**

type of salesperson could also benefit from striving for deeper self-awareness of feelings and emotions. Learning to express these feelings to others in a constructive manner, especially in client relationships, could promote personal growth as a human being and help bring clients closer to them.

Quite often **Probing**

salespeople are very emotionally sensitive to rejection. The mere suggestion that their sales proposal is being rejected or that they will not receive personal appreciation can be interpreted as personal rejection. Developing closer relationships

with others who accept them and can be relied upon will be strengthening for all **Cognitive** types because receiving personal validation from those they depend on helps them to feel secure, valuable, and worthy.

There is clinical evidence that these types of salespeople have more sensitive reticular activation systems (in the brain stem) than any of the other types of salespeople. This could account for their difficulty in handling negative emotions; they detect them and experience them more acutely than most salespeople. They are often advised by the more **Behavioral** style of salesperson to stop being so sensitive or are asked, "Why don't you relax and have fun once in a while?"

Comments like these often make **probing**

salespeople burn all the hotter inside because they feel misunderstood or feel their sales efforts are unappreciated.

Learning to accept that other people are not as sensitive to (or conscious of) everyday events or personal interactions can assist the **Cognitive**

sales types to build better and longer-lasting relationships and help them be more accepting of their own sensitive natures and rather fragile egos.

Sales Training

should focus on increasing sales performance by developing greater personal warmth and sensitivity to the feelings of clients, and being less detail-oriented during presentations. The **probing** salesperson must learn to focus less on details and specifications and respond with greater flexibility to client-relationship needs and the desired results of buyers.

Secondary Pattern

B, C, I & A Synergistic

Strengths

Synergistic

salespeople have an excellent inner resource for developing relationships with people with any style pattern. With equal strength in each of the four dimensions (**B, C, I & A**), they have the natural ability to perceive the sales environment and connect with other people, regardless of the personal style pattern the other person might have. This allows them to be good salespeople, team players, and negotiators with diverse groups of people.

These salespeople have strong flexibility and adaptability that provides them with an advantage in many sales situations. This style pattern allows them to have many interests and to prefer variety in the widest sense of the term. Their drive toward being task-oriented is balanced with their need to have harmony with others. They can be both sales leaders as well as support sales staff; they like working alone as much as with others. They tend to talk and verbally express themselves but can also listen well. They often like to let their actions speak for them. This style pattern lends itself toward support and problem-solving sales situations where the **synergistic** individual's wide range of interests and skills can be appreciated and rewarded.

Common Areas of Difficulty

As is true with all the other Sales Style patterns, self-management is vital to increase effectiveness and communication; this style provides quite a challenge to understand and apply in many sales situations. Because the style dimensions are so equally matched in power, they can tend to cancel each other out. For example, when **synergistic** salespeople want (or need) to make a decision, the **B** dimension wants them to make the decision based on **B** style, while the **C, I, and A** dimensions also want the decision based on their separate styles. This can pull the individual in different directions, feeling confused, torn, or frustrated.

If salespeople with this style are not in control of their pattern, they may also feel very hesitant in making decisions, especially ones in very important areas of their life such as relationships or careers. Internal turmoil and stress could be the direct result of these four dimensions fighting within them to influence life choices. Since each dimension is equally strong, no single one can dominate the others, leaving these salespeople feeling as if they have a split personality. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth; they just need to get the four dimensions to work together as a sales team, rather than letting them fight it out as competitors.

Salespeople with this pattern may experience concern about their identity—a strong sense of not really knowing who they are or their purpose in a sales situation. This sensation occurs because nothing outside of them totally meets the inner needs they have in all four dimensions. While certain relationships or things meet some of their needs, other needs—which are just as important—may go unsatisfied. Once they start to doubt their sales-related choices, that often leads to their starting to doubt themselves.

Others may have great difficulty understanding these salespeople because of their wide range of preferences and behaviors. While all these characteristics are real, others could perceive them as being contradictory, double-minded, indecisive, confusing, or hard to read. In short, others are never totally sure what these salespeople might do or say. Others might even sometimes consider individuals with this pattern to be wishy-washy in what they say and believe. This can lead to communication breakdowns and conflict in sales relationships.

Reactions to Stress

While people with this Sales Style pattern have a natural tendency to get along well with others, they also have a natural tendency to not get along well with themselves. The inner dogfight going on among the four dimensions can really take a toll on their nerves if they are not focused on taking charge of this inner conflict. Too often, salespeople who have four fairly equal style dimensions are unable to please any of them, because they are trying too hard to please all of them at the same time.

Individuals with this type of style pattern can also find it very stressful when they are in sales situations where someone else, for example, a sales manager, is demanding that they function in a consistent manner for a long period of time. Their natural tendencies are to move back and forth among all four dimensions, not to stay put in just one. When they get locked into sales situations where they have to stay in just one strength area for long periods of time, they get bored, frustrated, or stressed. They love variety and change in the sales setting.

While sometimes these types of salespeople work well under stress, there are also other times when they can overreact to stress. This contradiction can undermine others' confidence in their ability to cope consistently under pressure. It can hurt their reputation for being reliable when the stress increases beyond normal day-to-day conditions. To offset this, courses on how to manage inner conflicts and the contradictory demands of the four style dimensions are recommended.

Sales Team Functioning and Compatibility with Other Styles

Generally, this Sales Style pattern functions well with others in sales and team settings. Their natural style-shifting tendencies work well with those who have patterns that lack the flexibility of this pattern. Quick comprehension of others' points of view can make people with this pattern valuable sales team members. They have a strong balance between being task-oriented and people-oriented and can get along well with others while getting things done. They also have a natural empathy for other style patterns because their strong scores in all four patterns helps **synergistic** salespeople identify with others' style patterns.

The wide range of style dimension strengths allows this salesperson to connect with many individuals in different areas of compatibility. This individual has a component that can communicate with people where they live while also expressing his or her interests, ideas, likes and dislikes in a clear way. The natural balance between being verbal and non-verbal is a strong asset to any sales team.

Leadership Implications

This Sales Style pattern has excellent potential for sales leadership positions because of a balance among the tendencies of each of the four dimensions. The **Behavioral** dimension gives this salesperson a strong tendency to be extroverted and task-oriented. It also provides the salesperson with a strong need for goal setting and action planning, along with a natural drive to be in control of sales situations. The strong **Cognitive** dimension also allows the individual to be task-oriented with the advantage of being mentally and verbally focused on quality. It lends itself to problem solving and enhancing systems for continuous improvement.

On the people-side of the sales leadership continuum, the **Interpersonal** dimension gives these salespeople the advantage of being able to be sensitive to others. It also allows them to serve, as well as to lead others. Salespeople with this pattern are willing to seek out others' opinions and to listen to what they have to say. They are real sales-team players and tend not to dominate. The **Affective** dimension allows them to be fun, creative, and spontaneous. These characteristics soften the task side so that others don't think they are all work and no play.

Generally, salespeople with this pattern have good speaking abilities over the phone and in front of others, including groups of people they may or may not know. Their success as sales leaders will greatly depend on how they take charge of their inner self, the four style dimensions, and the way they learn how to use them to help others accomplish sales tasks and build sales relationships.

To Increase Effectiveness

The real key to increasing effectiveness is to take charge of their Sales Style pattern. While this is obvious—and true for all of the style patterns—it is especially true of this one. The natural balance among all four Sales Style dimensions will either make or break this person in his or her sales relationships.

Sales Training should focus on self-management and decision-making, so that the **synergistic** person becomes capable of making a clear and focused presentation and avoids confusing the client (with too many options). The **synergistic** person should build strong client rapport, become disciplined and systematic in following a consultative sales process, and create a structured and professional follow-through.

STEP FIVE

Developing Style-Flexibility and Increasing Your Sales Success



To be successful, most businesses will benefit from all the Sales Styles, at various levels. You can now use the powerful information found in the SSI to establish your winning sales process and sales team. If you are in a sales position or your responsibilities are clashing with your natural Sales Style, we know that, over time, that will be stressful; it will effectively lower your success level and maybe even result in failure. This is a critical concept that every sales manager/leader must and should implement when building and coaching a successful sales team.

Sales success is highly influenced by your ability to meet your clients' and buyers' styles, not yours. After you are able to recognize Behavioral style patterns in your own and others' behaviors, you will be better prepared to develop your sales awareness, approach, and versatility. Each of us already has a capacity for a certain amount of flexible behavior toward another person, depending on the needs of the moment. The further development of your awareness of self and others will allow you greater freedom to be more intentional and conscious in your dealings with others, for your benefit and theirs.

Having determined your Sales Style pattern from the preceding section, you should now read the specially developed SSI In-Depth Interpretations that correspond to the pattern or patterns that come closest to yours. This will give you further insight into the nature of your Sales Style and some specific strategies for your increased success. You will also discover practical suggestions for developing your sales prowess and professional effectiveness.

Style-Matching to Avoid Style-Clashing

We can clash with others simply by virtue of our natures. People naturally get along with some people better than others. Those clients, prospects, and co-workers with whom we have style-clashes can be respected and valued more if we are willing and able to shift into behavioral patterns in which they are more comfortable.

This is not to say we should stop being ourselves, but we can learn to be ourselves in ways that are more effective in adapting to others' styles. If we can only sell or be with people who are "like us," we will immediately put our sales success and potential at risk.

Style-Shifting Guidelines

The diagram below illustrates the five steps for effective style-shifting. On the following page, you will find guidelines to assist you to be more aware of how you might behave differently with various types of buyers/clients who, in some situations, exhibit and prefer types of behavior diverse from yours.

Note: Even though Style-Shifting is an effective process, it is only one part of sales success. The SSI is a very powerful tool, especially when used as part of an overall sales strategy and system. In most cases, it produces dramatically increased sales results.



Sales Professionals' Style-Shifting Guidelines

In the four style boxes below, you may wish to note the names of clients, prospects, or co-workers with whom you wish to style-shift.

Behavioral

ACTION 35

Want sales people to:

Give them summarized facts and the big picture
Respect their judgments
Support them to reach specific goals
Cope with unwanted details
Cooperate fully with them

Get most upset when sales people:

Are too slow in making process/presentation
Get in their way of progress or goals
Talk too much
Try to be in control
Waste their time

Respond best to:

Direct and honest sales presentations
Logical, presentations; alternate choices
Fair, open communication
An impersonal approach
Getting bottom-line results quickly

Cognitive

ANALYSIS 45

Want sales people to:

Give them detailed information and specs
Ask for their opinions
Treat them with respect
Do quality work the first time
Not interrupt their work

Get most upset when sales people:

Move ahead too quickly
Don't give them enough time
Are vague in their communications/answers
Confuse them with too many choices
Are too personal or emotional

Respond best to:

Diplomacy; facts, challenges
Presentations based on facts
Freedom from immediate sales pressure
Friendliness, not personal contact
Complete and thorough service

Interpersonal

HARMONY 38

Want sales people to:

Make them feel important and effective
Be patient through the sales process
Be kind, considerate, thoughtful
Trust them with important decisions
Value them as individuals

Get most upset when sales people:

Get angry, blow up, or are mean
Demand that they decide quickly; apply pressure
Take advantage of their goodness
Are manipulative or unfair
Are judgmental of them or others

Respond best to:

A gradual approach to closing
A factual, practical approach
Comfortable, friendly sales interviews
Respecting their established boundaries
Conventional, established ways

Affective

EXPRESSION 39

Want sales people to:

Listen; give them opportunity to speak
Admire their achievements
Be influenced by them in some ways
Take care of details for them
Value their opinions; offer alternatives

Get most upset when sales people:

Are too sales -task -oriented (closing)
Confine them to limited selection
Are not interested in them personally
Compete for and win others' attention
Seem judgmental; talk down to them

Respond best to:

Being challenged in some way
A dynamic, persuasive sales approach
Testimonials of admired business leaders
Genuine caring and personal contact
Having a good time and fun

STEP SIX

**Designing Your Plan
To Increase Your
Sales Effectiveness**



The outline below provides you with an opportunity to briefly summarize what you have learned about yourself through the **Sales Style Indicator**. Enter your responses in the sections below. Remember to **save** your responses.

The Main Strengths of My Sales Style:

The Main Difficulties of My Sales Style:

What I Could Do to Become More Flexible in My Selling Style:

Behaviors I Would Like to Have More Control Over:

What I Could Do to Be More Effective with Certain Buying Styles:

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