



What's your (personality) type?

Ever wonder why a member of the condo corporation prefers to communicate in a certain way? Why a fellow member of the property management team has certain work preferences? Why someone's office is neat and tidy versus one's own office, which is the exact opposite?

BY MICHAEL LE PAGE



The answer is as simple as it is complex. It is because all individuals are unique and have distinct personalities. Personalities impact how people work, how and when people play, how people communicate, what people value, what stresses and frustrates individuals and what brings individuals joy and happiness.

Having an increased awareness of one's own personality and that of others can help improve communication, connectivity and build stronger relationships. And it is important for management companies to build solid, long-lasting relationships with the communities they serve.

To best serve communities and individuals, firms must first understand

the individual and understand their community. One way to do this is to complete a personality assessment and subsequent training on how to capitalize and leverage this information.

The writer's firm uses the Canadian assessment tool Personality Dimensions®, which is based on leading-edge research into what motivates behaviour in people with different personalities or temperaments. The tool helps users understand why they behave the way they do and why they don't always see and do things the same way as others, using colours, descriptive words and symbols to identify those preferred temperaments.

The four basic personality types are described as follows:

1. **The Authentic Blues** are ethical, honest and sincere and have a great ability to persuade and facilitate organizational growth and development. However, they are extremely sensitive to criticism and conflict.
2. **The Inquiring Greens** are logical, rational, global and strategic thinkers. To others they can come across as impatient and arrogant.
3. **The Organized Golds** are task-oriented, dependable and reliable, possess a strong sense of right and wrong, but can be rigid and resistant to change.

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4. The Resourceful Oranges are independent, resourceful, and competitive and can think well on their feet. Although they are easy going and entertaining, they can act too quickly and may not follow through.

Through training, participants learn how to understand and appreciate differences, and capitalize on them rather than view them as faults to be fixed.

Experience has shown that this can be an effective management training tool, helping company executives in facilitating team building; increasing corporate communications; and enhancing customer service and satisfaction by providing

innovative solutions to common problems encountered by property managers.

Employees learn how to use practical tools to effectively manage people issues, coach staff to solve interpersonal problems and stop minor conflicts from escalating. The strategies for communicating and identifying problems covered by personality training can improve interpersonal skills in all aspects of one's life (work, home, family and school).

The strategies also equip staff to deal with diverse communities. For example, one board of directors may prefer to provide loose guidelines and give the property manager the freedom to try new ways of getting the job done with minimal feedback. The next board of directors may prefer to provide detailed instructions and give the property manager strict timeframes with very little room, if any, for anything other than its specific direction.

The property manager can very easily take the latter personally and allow this misconstrued "personality conflict" to taint the relationship. With training, it's possible to depersonalize these situations by "speed reading" others, recognizing different personalities, and altering communication to ensure that messages are received as intended.

In this writer's experience, personality assessment and training has led to improved work performance, more effective team building, enhanced cooperation and workplace relationships, improved morale and retention, decreased conflict within departments, improved critical judgement and greater customer service and satisfaction.

It's important for management companies to recognize what clients want and need, and deliver it to them in a way that they would like to receive it. Personality assessment and training is one way to support that goal, and more broadly, can offer a competitive edge and attract quality management professionals. □

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