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**Leadership
Communication
Styles**

Contents

- ✓ Overview
- ✓ The Styles
 - ✓ The Captivator
 - ✓ The Director
 - ✓ The Encourager
 - ✓ The Analyzer
 - ✓ The Harmonizer
- ✓ Learn More



Hi, I'm Sarah Robinson.

I've spent over 20 years as an Executive Strategist and Consultant. Based on my in-depth experience of working with leaders and organizations of all shapes and sizes, I've learned that almost every challenge I'm hired to work on comes down to one, rarely addressed, thing:

Communication.

How does that show up?



- ✓ Teams that stay at loggerheads, unable to move forward cohesively and productively.
- ✓ A C-Suite riddled with distrust, in-fighting and power grabs.
- ✓ Only one or two styles represented on the leadership team, limiting perspectives while leaving other styles feeling alienated and undervalued.
- ✓ Customers, clients and prospects choosing to work with another organization that is more of a "fit".
- ✓ A CEO and a Board of Directors who struggle to communicate about navigating the ever-changing expectations of external and internal stakeholders.

And the list goes on....

While addressing communication breakdown alone may not solve every problem, I've found it almost impossible to solve any of them without addressing communication issues first.

I created the **Leadership Now! Communication Styles Profile** to help my executive clients not only understand the strengths and challenges of their own personal communications preferences, but also to understand and adapt to the preferred styles of those they lead.

This in-depth knowledge increases their ability to:

- ✓ Develop and lead a more cohesive team.
- ✓ Prevent personality and communication conflicts from derailing organization goals.
- ✓ Understand how and why people on their team communicate the way they do.
- ✓ Experience more productive meetings and conversations.
- ✓ Understand and work with styles that are different than theirs.
- ✓ Give and receive valuable input from other styles.

And much more!

Enjoy reading about all five leadership communication styles. If you'd like to book a session to discuss using the styles to be a more effective leader, email me at sarah@sarahrobinson.com.

THE CAPTIVATOR

How to best lead others as a Captivator.

If your highest score is Captivator, you are a natural leader, charismatic, fast-moving, creative, people-focused and full of enthusiasm. You are an outgoing communicator, meaning that initiating connection and conversation with others is easier and more effective for you than waiting for others to come to you. As a free-flowing communicator, you are an expert at using stories and examples and are far more interested in hearing the bottom line without all the details and data.

Strengths

- **Innovative.** You are a risk-taker and don't mind it all if others think you and/or your ideas are weird or odd. In fact, you know how to use that as an asset as you continually think outside the box and push your team to do the same.
- **Talking to groups.** You love the attention and all you need is a microphone. You easily give impromptu speeches that inspire others. Your confidence and warmth gets people's attention and keeps them engaged.
- **Connecting 1:1.** This is a sweet spot for you as it's much easier for you to do than for the other styles. Whether you're talking to a stranger or someone you know well, your warmth and sincere interest puts everyone at ease.
- **Virtual Communication.** Another area that feels natural to you. Your relaxed but dynamic style keeps everyone's energy up and focused.
- **Social events.** You're a natural born socializer and networker, so you easily move through the room, engaging and entertaining everyone with your curiosity, questions and sheer enthusiasm. Your playful nature and flair for storytelling make people remember you long after the event is over.
- **Closing.** Boldness is built into your communication DNA, so "closing the deal" with clients, team members, even friends and family doesn't intimidate you. Getting agreements and commitments from others is one of your superpowers.

THE CAPTIVATOR (continued)

Challenges (and how to work with them):

- **Keep track of time.** Time is hard for you to track, which means you are often late for meetings and events. You can easily go over-time when talking to people or leading a meeting. Keep a clock handy and set reminders so you arrive or finish on time.
- **Ask more questions.** It's particularly easy for you as a leader to talk too much and not listen enough. Resist the temptation to interrupt or rush to answers. Ask thoughtful, engaging questions and listen to what others say. This way you create a two-way conversation and learn more about the other person's preferred communication style. Ask an Encourager to watch you in action and give you feedback.
- **Calculate your risks.** Hurling forward into the unknown is how you operate most of the time. You thrive on change and innovation and are known to "leap before you look". Changing too much and innovating too quickly can lead to instability and even recklessness. Ask Directors and Analyzers to weigh in (see Ask More Questions) before you decide to take a risk. They'll help you be more calculated in your choices.
- **Keep your commitments or renegotiate.** Sometimes you make promises you can't keep just to smooth out a situation or to charm people. This can cost you trust and credibility. Only make commitments you know you can keep or renegotiate as soon you realize you can't.
- **Write it out.** Because it's easy for you to improvise on your feet, you're likely to "wing It" when giving presentations. Unfortunately, this leads to going off on tangents or forgetting important points. Write out what you want to say, then practice saying it out loud. Time yourself so you don't go overtime.
- **Set structures and benchmarks for yourself.** Paying attention to details is not your strong suit, so you're less likely to measure your success. You can't improve what you don't have a system for, so ask your assistant or an Analyzer to help you. Hand off tracking the details and data so you aren't the one keeping up with it but you always know where you are.

THE CAPTIVATOR (continued)

Where you'll find Captivators

- CEO of a startup
- Trial lawyer
- Actor/Singer/Dancer
- VP of Sales
- CMO
- Professional Speaker
- Artistic Director
- Head of Design and Innovation
- Social Director of any group

How to recognize a Captivator:

- Initiates conversation
- Wears bold colors
- Often late
- Gregarious and charismatic
- Interrupts often
- Appears disorganized
- Sits in a open posture
- Loses track of details
- Laughs often & loudly
- Playful, easy-going nature

Famous Captivators:

- Colonel Sanders
- PT Barnum
- Richard Branson
- Adam Neumann
- Elon Musk
- Jim Carey
- Melissa McCarthy
- Russell Brand
- Lady Gaga
- Steve Martin
- Tracey Ullman
- Conan O'Brien
- Kim Cattrall

Captivator Values:

- Flexibility
- Excitement
- Innovation
- Freedom
- Stimulation
- Adventure
- Creativity
- Taking action
- Spontaneity

THE DIRECTOR

How to best lead others as a Director.

If your highest score is Director, then you're an authoritative leader, task-oriented, face-paced, efficient, and persistent. You easily initiate connection with others rather than waiting for them to come to you, because it's more efficient. Where a Captivator leads with charisma, you lead with decisiveness. With your linear communication style, you're most likely to use structure, data and logic to make your point. Your work ethic is second to none and you do whatever it takes to reach your goals.

Strengths

- **Calculated risk-taker.** Like Captivators, you are comfortable taking risks but unlike Captivators you do your homework, researching and working through scenarios to reduce the chances of failure. You like to stay informed on leading-edge innovations. Your strong work ethic keeps you and your organization out in front.
- **Talking to groups:** You create well-structured, results-focused presentations that you deliver with an authoritative style. People respect you and what you say.
- **Connecting 1:1.** You see connecting with others as a means to an end. You are direct and to the point and don't waste time with small talk. Efficiency and results drive the way you communicate.
- **Virtual communication:** You are prepared and organized which feeds your confidence and efficiency. You are likely to measure your success so that you can improve the results you're trying to achieve.
- **Meetings.** This is your sweet spot. You excel at leading structured, productive meetings. You prepare detailed agendas and communicate clear objectives. Everyone knows their role, creating an efficient, predictable meeting flow with clear outcomes and next steps.
- **Closing.** Boldness is part of your authoritative communication style, so "closing the deal" comes naturally to you. People respect your thoroughness and authority so getting commitments and agreements is easy.

THE DIRECTOR (continued)

Challenges (and how to work with them):

- **Patience:** It can be difficult for you to be patient with those who aren't as decisive and action-oriented as you are. Pull in an Encourager to help you build and maintain relationships while you are pursuing results.
- **Build rapport.** People can see you as cold and calculating compared to the other styles. Make time to connect with others, getting to know and understand them before you jump to conclusions or put your ideas on the table.
- **Ask more questions.** With your driven communication style, it can be easy for you as a leader to dominate conversations. Slow down and ask questions, then truly listen to how they respond. This creates two-way communication and helps you understand their preferred communication style.
- **Network and socialize.** Attending events can often feel like a waste of time to you. However, networking and socializing with peers can help you further your goals so seek out those opportunities.
- **Use more stories and examples.** You love research, data, facts and statistics and can forget that other communication styles need stories and examples to understand your point. As you prepare, challenge yourself to find ways to use these as much as you use your data.
- **Flexibility** - Because you have such high standards for yourself along with high expectations of others, sometimes you can seem inflexible and unwilling to consider the ideas and solutions of others. Slow down and consider the merits of alternative points of view. Ask a Captivator and an Encourager to watch you in action and give you feedback.

THE DIRECTOR (continued)

Where you'll find Directors

- CEO of an established corporation
- COO
- Chief of Staff
- Lawyer
- Politician
- Police Officer
- Stockbroker
- Military Officer
- Journalist
- Management Consultant

How to recognize a Director:

- Serious demeanor
- Always on time
- Takes notes
- Takes a leadership role
- Powerful and formal presence
- Highly organized
- Asks challenging questions
- Has strong opinions
- Laughs, but not as often or as loudly as a Captivator

Famous Directors:

- Steve Ballmer
- Jeff Bezos
- Andrew Carnegie
- Sheryl Sandberg
- Warren Buffet
- Simon Cowell
- Steve Jobs
- Candace Bergen
- Clint Eastwood
- Madonna
- Tom Cruise
- Angelina Jolie
- Arnold Schwarzenegger
- Margaret Thatcher
- Stephen Colbert

Director Values:

- Structure
- Efficiency
- Organization
- Consistency
- Speed
- Drive
- Results
- Preparation

THE ENCOURAGER

How to best lead others as an Encourager.

If your highest score is Encourager, you are more easy-going and indirect than Captivators and Directors and more people-focused than task-oriented. You value relationships over goals, so you lead with a gentle, warm, relatable style. Because you are open-minded and a great listener, people see you as kind and emotionally intuitive. You actually prefer supporting a leader to being the one out in front. As a free-flowing communicator, you naturally use storytelling and examples to draw people to you rather than initiate conversation or connection.

Strengths

- **Coaching.** Because you are a great listener and read people really well, you are a natural coach. You enjoy helping others succeed and people seek you out when they need direction.
- **Conflict Resolution.** Because you are adept at articulating other people's concerns and you are able to see what will best serve the situation and the individuals involved, you excel at conflict resolution. Your patience and open-mindedness help you smooth out communication issues and get everyone moving in a productive direction.
- **Connecting 1:1.** This is your sweet spot, just like a Captivator, but the way you do it is very different. Because of your caring, gentle nature, people want to talk with you about deeper issues and seek you out for guidance and feedback. You love to help and are generous with your time.
- **Virtual Communication.** You do best when you can pre-record virtual communication because you can go back and edit. When that's not possible, you pre-plan everything you're going to say, often rehearsing it to get it just right.
- **Social events.** You prefer small, intimate gatherings to large crowds because this allows you to have deeper, more relaxed conversations.

THE ENCOURAGER (continued)

Challenges (and how to work with them):

- **Initiating conversations.** Because you lean toward being emotionally sensitive, initiating conversations – especially difficult ones – can be more challenging for you than for a Captivator or a Director. Ask them to help you learn strategies and techniques to get better at taking the initiative.
- **Use more facts, statistics, and data.** You are superb at using stories, examples and metaphors and can forget that other styles need statistics, examples and data to understand your point. As you prepare, challenge yourself to find ways to use these alongside your stories.
- **Talking to groups.** Because of your more reserved communication style, addressing large groups can feel intimidating to you. To increase your confidence and comfort, practice in front of a small group first and connect 1:1 with a few audience members before taking the stage. This will draw out your warm, friendly style and allow you play to your strengths.
- **Ask for the close.** Because you value relationships above all else, you may shy away from asking others for a commitment when that's exactly what you need to do. Most people actually resist committing to action or change and need to be asked in order to get the ball rolling. Captivators and Directors can help you with your approach so you can get bolder in your interactions.
- **Take some risks.** You don't like to rock the boat and the approval of others is very important to you, so stepping out and taking risks feels challenging. Start with small risks and build from there, getting input from the other three styles to increase your comfort level.

THE ENCOURAGER (continued)

Where you'll find Encouragers

- Executive Director of a Non-Profit
- Head of Human Resources
- Life Coach
- Nurse
- Minister
- Social Worker
- Therapist

How to recognize an Encourager:

- Warm & Friendly
- The first to offer help
- Open posture
- Laugh quietly
- Prefer low-key interactions
- Great listeners
- Casual, attractive clothing
- Show gratitude easily and often
- Use stories & humor
- Go out of their way to accommodate others

Famous Encouragers:

- Tony Hsieh
- Walt Disney
- Jack Ma
- Sam Walton
- Truett Cathy
- Michelle Williams
- Sandra Bullock
- Dan Akroyd
- Jimmy Kimmel
- Oprah
- Ashton Kutcher
- Paul Rudd
- Jennifer Lawrence
- Beyonce

Encourager Values:

- Relationships
- Cooperation
- Calm
- Warmth
- Authenticity
- Personal Growth

THE ANALYZER

How to best lead others as an Analyzer.

If your highest score is Analyzer, you are indirect and quiet like an Encourager while being task-oriented like a Director. You are known as a problem-solver because of your analytical, detail-oriented nature. Because of your linear communication style, orderliness and accuracy are among your highest values. You tend to focus on goals over relationships. You often prefer solitude and are far more low-key and low-profile than a Captivator or Director. Your natural ability to create systems, structures and solve problems draws people toward you, which is good because you rarely initiate communication.

Strengths

- **Objectivity.** Everyone counts on your objective point of view because you simply look at the data, research and facts. Emotion rarely comes into play when determining the best course of action.
- **Consulting.** Because you excel at analyzing, processing and solving problems, people come to you for formal or informal consulting. You enjoy the challenge and feel rewarded when you discover the perfect system or structure that creates a solution.
- **Virtual communication.** Given a choice, you prefer using the phone over live video. When video is required, you use screen-share and create a detailed PowerPoint presentation, with charts, graphs and research.
- **Systems and Processes.** This is your sweet spot. You can spend hours creating the perfect system or process to streamline efficiency and you've never met a spreadsheet you didn't like.
- **Forecasting.** Your love for data, facts and statistics gives you the edge when spotting trends and forecasting what will happen next.

THE ANALYZER (continued)

Challenges (and how to work with them):

- **Connecting 1:1.** Because you are introverted, connecting with people one-on-one can be more challenging for you than for the other styles. Try getting to know people in a small group setting first. This way, you can start to understand their challenges, discover their preferred communication style and offer solutions in a tailored way.
- **Building rapport.** Like a Director, people can perceive you as cold and analytical, so take the time to get to know them before making snap judgements. It's also helpful to understand their preferred communication style so you can present your ideas in a way that they will best receive them.
- **In-Person and Virtual Group Communication.** Talking to groups in-person or virtually can feel uncomfortable to you. When you must, develop an excellent slideshow and ask a Captivator to help you create an engaging script. Rehearse your presentation out loud and in-front of a small group to build your confidence.
- **Asking for the close.** You avoid conflict at all costs, so you are hesitant to ask others for a commitment when that's exactly what you need to do. Most people actually resist committing to action or change and need to be asked in order to get the ball rolling. Captivators and Directors can help you with your approach so you can get bolder in your interactions.
- **Using more stories and examples.** You prefer using facts, figures, and other hard data to illustrate your points, forgetting that other communication styles need stories and examples to understand your ideas. As you prepare, challenge yourself to add these alongside your data. If you get stuck, ask an Encourager for help.
- **Break the rules sometimes.** Your cautious, analytical nature and love for systems and structure can make you a strict rule follower. However, sometimes bending or even breaking the rules is exactly what the situation calls for. Start small and build your comfort level from there. The other three styles can encourage you and build your confidence.

THE ANALYZER (continued)

Where you'll find Analyzers

- CEO of a bio-tech start-up
- CFO
- Chief of Engineering
- Head of IT
- Electrician
- Scientist
- Repair shop owner
- Personal assistant to the CEO

How to recognize an Analyzer:

- Stays serious; rarely laughs
- Values structure & organization
- Takes copious notes
- Does not initiate conversation
- Sits in a closed posture
- Keeps to themselves
- Wears simple, functional clothing
- Needs facts, figures & statistics to stay engaged

Famous Analyzers:

- Mark Zuckerberg
- Tim Cook
- Marissa Mayer
- Steve Wozniak
- Bill Gates
- Ellen DeGeneres
- Deepak Chopra
- Barbara Streisand
- David Hyde Pierce
- Tina Fey
- Woody Allen

Analyzer Values:

- Details
- Systems
- Structure
- Data
- Efficiency
- Logic
- Order
- Accuracy

THE HARMONIZER

How to best lead others as a Harmonizer.

If your scores are almost evenly split across the four styles, you are very likely a Harmonizer and bring the best of each style to the way you lead. You are adept at reading situations and people and easily shift into the best communication style to achieve your goal.

Harmonizers can be both people-oriented and task-oriented. You can flip between an easy-going or fast pace and easily move from free-flowing to linear communication, reflecting the preferred style of others. You are warm and open at times and more closed and reserved when that works best.

This communication flexibility serves you well as a leader for two reasons:

1. You are able to deliver and receive information from all of the styles effectively. There is rarely a communication breakdown with clients, team members and other stakeholders.
2. Building positive, productive and cohesive relationships and teams helps you achieve personal and organizational goals more easily.

Strengths

- **Innovative.** You balance out-of-the-box thinking and acting on unconventional ideas with calculated risk-taking. Because you surround yourself with different styles, you seek out alternative points of view in order to make the best decision.
- **Talking to groups.** You are relaxed and at ease in front of groups, taking your cue for the right energy, pacing and data/storytelling balance from the preferred styles in the room.
- **Connecting 1:1.** Because you can easily shift between styles, connecting one-on-one using the other person's preferred style gives your conversations an added sense of mutual understanding.

THE HARMONIZER (continued)

Strengths (continued)

- **Virtual Communication.** Another area that feels relaxed for you. You know when to bring the energy to the screen to get everyone focused and are happy to be the calm voice of patience and reason when that's what is most needed.
- **Conflict Resolution.** Conflicts rarely arise under your leadership, but when they do, your ability to understand and "translate" the different communication styles, along with your patience and open-mindedness help you mediate and resolve disagreements.
- **Meetings.** Whether you are in a private one-on-one meeting or leading a team meeting, you are focused, prepared and respectful of other people's time. You ask thoughtful questions and listen intently to the answers and are comfortable deviating from the agenda if that produces the very best outcome.
- **Social events.** You understand that social events are an important part of your role as a leader. You can energetically "work the room" at a large event or seek out important, quiet conversations at more intimate events.
- **Closing.** Because you've built a strong rapport using your prospects preferred communication style, closing the deal is just a natural extension of the conversation. You know when the timing is right and how to position your organization in a way that makes you the natural fit for your future client.

THE HARMONIZER (continued)

Where you'll find Harmonizers

- CEO
- Realtor
- Mediator
- Actor
- Crisis Manager
- Hostage Negotiator
- Novelist

How to recognize a Harmonizer:

- Balanced and level-headed
- Flexible in attire
- Sits in a neutral posture
- Socializes as appropriate
- Listens, watches and takes notes
- Initiates conversations and listens when appropriate
- Prefers a balance of structure and fluidity, facts and stories

Famous Harmonizers:

- Volodymyr Zelenskyy
- Ronald Reagan
- Jackie Kennedy
- Brene Brown
- Meryl Streep
- Charlie Chaplin
- Albert Brooks
- Elaine May
- Tom Hanks
- Nikola Tesla
- Stephen Hawking

Harmonizer Values:

- Balance
- Flexibility
- Multiple points of view
- Trust
- Self-direction
- The Bigger Goal
- Solutions

What People Are Saying About Sarah

"Every audience is drawn in by Sarah's dynamic energy. She easily connects with everyone - from top executives to our frontline people. They walk away with the knowledge and the confidence to lead, influence and impact any audience - on the stage, in the room, at the table. Sarah delivers the goods."

~ Microsoft ~

"What a fabulous night! Thank you, Sarah, for your engaging and empowering talk on Women's Leadership, Mentorship, and Diversity & Inclusion. We are recharged and ready to tackle the new year!"

~ Women in Construction ~

"Sarah gave the highest rated session of our entire Sales Conference. She even managed to get everyone in the audience to put away their cellphones and laptops while she spoke. That's no easy feat in room full of salespeople. It was the most talked about session at dinner that, too. She made a real impact."

~ Nextiva ~

"Sarah easily connected with our audience of leaders from around the country, surprising and challenging us with her "Know, Do, Be" leadership model. We've already booked her for another event and can't wait!"

~ National Homebuilders Association ~

Executive Communication Coaching & Consulting



**We would love to talk with you about how
Sarah can partner with you to reach your goals.**

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