

/// Self-Assessment Exercise 5-1 ///

### Your Listening Skills

Select the response that best describes the frequency of your actual behavior. Place the letter A, U, F, O, or S on the line before each of the 15 statements.

- |                   |             |                |                  |            |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------|------------|
| Almost always (A) | Usually (U) | Frequently (F) | Occasionally (O) | Seldom (S) |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------|------------------|------------|
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I like to listen to people talk. I encourage them to talk by showing interest, by smiling and nodding, and so forth.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I pay closer attention to speakers who are more interesting or similar to me.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I evaluate speakers' words and nonverbal communication ability as they talk.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I avoid distractions; if it's noisy, I suggest moving to a quieter spot.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 5. When people interrupt me to talk, I put what I was doing out of sight and mind and give them my complete attention.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 6. When people are talking, I allow them time to finish. I do not interrupt, anticipate what they are going to say, or jump to conclusions.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I tune out people whose views do not agree with mine.

/// Self-Assessment Exercise 5-1 /// (continued)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. While the other person is talking or the professor is lecturing, my mind wanders to personal topics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. While the other person is talking, I pay close attention to the nonverbal communication to help me fully understand what the sender is trying to get across.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I tune out and pretend I understand when the topic is difficult.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. When the other person is talking, I think about what I am going to say in reply.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. When I feel there is something missing or contradictory, I ask direct questions to get the person to explain the idea more fully.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. When I don't understand something, I let the sender know.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. When listening to other people, I try to put myself in their position and see things from their perspective.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. During conversations, I repeat back to the sender what has been said in my own words (paraphrase) to be sure I understand correctly what has been said.

If you were to have people to whom you talk regularly answer these questions about you, would they have the same responses that you selected? Have friends fill out the questions for you and compare answers.

To determine your score, give yourself 5 points for each A, 4 for each U, 3 for each F, 2 for each O, and 1 for each S for statements 1, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 14, and 15. Place the scores on the line next to your response letter. For items 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, and 11, the score reverses: Give yourself 5 points for each S, 4 for each O, 3 for each F, 2 for each U, and 1 for each A. Place these scores on the line next to your response letter. Now add your total number of points. Your score should be between 15 and 75. Place your score here and place an X on the continuum below at the point that represents your score. Generally, the higher your score, the better your listening skills.

Poor listener 15 - - - - - 25 - - - - - 35 - - - - - 45 - - - - - 55 - - - - - 65 - - - - - 75 Good listener

## /// Self-Assessment Exercise 5-2 ///

## Your Preferred Response Style

Select the response you would actually make as the supervisor in the five situations that follow:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I cannot work with Paul. That guy drives me crazy. He is always complaining about me and everyone else, including you, boss. Why does he have to be my job partner? We cannot work together. You have to assign someone else to be my partner.
- A. I'm sure there are things that you do that bother Paul. You'll have to work things out with him.
  - B. What has he said about me?
  - C. Can you give me some examples of the specific things that he does that bother you?
  - D. I'll talk to Paul. I'm sure we can improve or change the situation.
  - E. So Paul is really getting to you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. We cannot make the deadline on the Procter Project without more help. We've been having some problems. A major problem is that Betty and Phil are recent college grads, and you know they don't know anything. I end up doing all the work for them. Without another experienced person, my team will not get the job done on time.
- A. Tell me more about these problems you are having.
  - B. Did you see the game last night?
  - C. You are really concerned about this project, aren't you?
  - D. You will have to stop doing the work and train the new people. They will come through for you if you give them a chance.
  - E. Don't worry. You're a great project leader. I'm sure you will get the job done.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Congratulations on being promoted to supervisor. I was wondering about what to expect. After all, we go back five years as good friends in this department. It will seem strange to have you as my boss.
- A. Things will work out fine, you'll see.
  - B. I take it that you don't like to see things change. Is that what you mean?
  - C. Just do a good job and there will not be any problems between us.
  - D. Is Chris feeling any better?
  - E. Tell me how you think things will change.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I wish you would do something about Gloria. Because of her short, tight clothes, the men are always finding some excuse to come by here. She loves it; you can tell the way she is always flirting with all the guys. Gloria could turn this place into a soap opera if you don't do something.
- A. So you think this situation is indecent, is that it?
  - B. I cannot tell Gloria how to dress. Why don't you turn your desk so you don't have to watch.
  - C. Don't let it bother you. I'm sure it's innocent and that nothing is really going on. You know how these younger kids are these days.
  - D. What do you think I should do?
  - E. Are you feeling well today?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I cannot take it anymore. I've been running around like a fool waiting on all these customers and all they do is yell at me and complain.
- A. Are you going to the party tonight?
  - B. What is the most irritating thing the customers are doing?
  - C. With Erin being out today, it's been crazy. But tomorrow she should be back and things should be back to normal. Hang in there; you can handle it.
  - D. The customers are really getting to you today, hey?
  - E. I told you during the job interview that this is how it is. You have to learn to ignore the comments.

(continued)

## /// Self-Assessment Exercise 5-2 /// (continued)

To determine your preferred response style, in the following table circle the letter you selected in situations 1 to 5. The column headings indicate the style you selected.

	Advising	Diverting	Probing	Reassuring	Reflecting
1	A	B	C	D	E
2	D	B	A	E	C
3	C	D	E	A	B
4	B	E	D	C	A
5	E	A	B	C	D
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Add up the number of circled responses per column. The total for all columns should equal 5. The column with the highest number represents your preferred response style. The more evenly distributed the numbers are among the styles, the more flexible you are at responding.



Communication Skills  
Refer to CS Question 9.

**WORK APPLICATION 5-16**

Give situations in which any two of the five response styles would be appropriate. Give the sender's message and your response. Identify its style.

As the sender transmits a message, how you respond to the message directly affects communication. Of the five styles, students tend to have the most difficulty with the reflective statement: wondering why they should paraphrase back the message already given. A major reason is to show an interest in the other person and to let him or her know you are open and listening to what he or she has to say. Psychologist Carl Rogers stated that reflecting responses should be used in the beginning stages of most communications because they lead to developing good human relations—as people want to be listened to and know that they are valued. However, there is no one best response style. The response should be appropriate for the situation. See Exhibit 5.9 for a list of the five response styles, their definitions, and when it is appropriate to use each style.

**EXHIBIT 5.9 | Response Styles**

Style	Definition	Appropriate Use
Advising	Providing evaluation, personal opinion, direction, or instructions.	Give advice when directly asked for it.
Diverting	Switching the message; changing the subject.	Use to avoid needless arguments.
Probing	Asking for more information.	Ensure understanding by getting more information.
Reassuring	Giving supportive statements.	Give to provide confidence.
Reflecting	Paraphrasing the message back to the sender.	Use to convey understanding and acceptance.

## Your Personality Traits and Communications, Emotions, and Criticism

Let's tie personality traits from Chapter 2 together with what we've covered in this chapter. We are going to present some general statements about how your personality may affect your behavior, human relations, and performance. For each area, determine how the information relates to you. This will help you better understand your behavioral strengths and weakness and the areas you may want to improve.

If you have a high *surgency* personality, you most likely are an extrovert and have no difficulty initiating conversations and communicating with others orally. However, you may be dominating communication and prefer vertical communications following the chain of command with centralized authority. Be a team player. Surgency types are often not good at dealing with emotions. You may need to be more attentive to nonverbal communication and emotions. You may be better at giving than getting feedback, so you may need to work at being receptive to feedback. You may also need to work at giving more praise and less criticism.

If you are high in *agreeableness* personality traits, you are most likely a good listener and communicator, preferring oral horizontal communications as a team player. You are probably connected to the grapevine, so be careful not to spread false rumors. You are probably in tune with emotions and nonverbal communication cues. You may be reluctant to give criticism even though it will help others improve.

Your *adjustment* level affects the emotional tone of your communications. If you tend to get emotional, and it is a barrier to communications, you may want to work to keep your emotional response behavior under control. Watch

your nonverbal communication because it tells people how you feel about them and it can hurt your human relations. Try not to be sensitive to criticism and not to become defensive, blame others, and give excuses for your negative behavior and performance. At the same time, don't be too critical of others.

If you are high in *conscientiousness*, you tend to have reliable communications. If you are not conscientious, you may want to work at returning messages quickly. You may be so concerned with your own success that you don't pay attention to emotions and nonverbal communication. Criticism may be painful to you, because you try hard to do a good job. But remember that it can lead to more conscientiousness and greater success.

People who are *open to new experience* often initiate communications, because communicating is often part of the new experience. If you are not open to new experience, you may be reluctant to change organizational structure and flows of communication.

**Action plan:** Based on your personality, what specific things will you do to improve your communications, emotional labor, and acceptance of criticism?

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## Determining Your Preferred Communication Style

To determine your preferred communication style, select the *one* alternative that most closely describes what you would do in each of the 12 situations below. Do not be concerned with trying to pick the correct answer; select the alternative that best describes what *you* would actually do. Circle the letter *a*, *b*, *c*, or *d*. Ignore the \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style and S \_\_\_\_\_ lines. They will be explained later.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Wendy, a knowledgeable person from another department, comes to you, the engineering supervisor, and requests that you design a special product to her specifications. You would: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
  - a. Control the conversation and tell Wendy what you will do for her. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Ask Wendy to describe the product. Once you understand it, you would present your ideas. Let her realize that you are concerned and want to help with your ideas. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Respond to Wendy's request by conveying understanding and support. Help clarify what is to be done by you. Offer ideas, but do it her way. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Find out what you need to know. Let Wendy know you will do it her way. S \_\_\_\_\_
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Your department has designed a product that is to be fabricated by Saul's department. Saul has been with the company longer than you have; he knows his department. Saul comes to you to change the product design. You decide to: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
  - a. Listen to the change and why it would be beneficial. If you believe Saul's way is better, change it; if not, explain why the original design is superior. If necessary, insist that it be done your way. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Tell Saul to fabricate it any way he wants to. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. You are busy; tell Saul to do it your way. You don't have time to listen and argue with him. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Be supportive; make changes together as a team. S \_\_\_\_\_
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Upper management has a decision to make. The managers call you to a meeting and tell you they need some information to solve a problem they describe to you. You: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
  - a. Respond in a manner that conveys personal support and offer alternative ways to solve the problem. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Respond to their questions. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Explain how to solve the problem. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Show your concern by explaining how to solve the problem and why your solution is an effective one. S \_\_\_\_\_
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. You have a routine work order. The work order is to be placed verbally and completed in three days. Sue, the receiver, is very experienced and willing to be of service to you. You decide to: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
  - a. Explain your needs, but let Sue make the order decision. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Tell Sue what you want and why you need it. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Decide together what to order. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Simply give Sue the order. S \_\_\_\_\_
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Work orders from the staff department normally take three days; however, you have an emergency and need the order today. Your colleague, Jim, the department supervisor, is knowledgeable and somewhat cooperative. You decide to: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
  - a. Tell Jim that you need the work order by three o'clock and will return at that time to pick it up. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Explain the situation and how the organization will benefit by expediting the order. Volunteer to help in any way you can. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Explain the situation and ask Jim when the order will be ready. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Explain the situation and together come to a solution to your problem. S \_\_\_\_\_
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Danielle, a peer with a record of high performance, has recently had a drop in productivity. Her problem is affecting your performance. You know Danielle has a family problem. You: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
  - a. Discuss the problem; help Danielle realize the problem is affecting her work and yours. Supportively discuss ways to improve the situation. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Tell the boss about it and let him decide what to do about it. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Tell Danielle to get back on the job. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Discuss the problem and tell Danielle how to solve the work situation; be supportive. S \_\_\_\_\_
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. You are a knowledgeable supervisor. You buy supplies from Peter regularly. He is an excellent salesperson and very knowledgeable about your situation. You are placing your weekly order. You decide to: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
  - a. Explain what you want and why. Develop a supportive relationship. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Explain what you want and ask Peter to recommend products. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Give Peter the order. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Explain your situation and allow Peter to make the order. S \_\_\_\_\_

## /// BMV-6 Self-Assessment Exercise 5-4 /// (continued)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Jean, a knowledgeable person from another department, has asked you to perform a routine staff function to her specifications. You decide to: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
- Perform the task to her specifications without questioning her. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Tell her that you will do it the usual way. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Explain what you will do and why. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Show your willingness to help; offer alternative ways to do it. S \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Tom, a salesperson, has requested an order for your department's services with a short delivery date. As usual, Tom claims it is a take-it-or-leave-it offer. He wants your decision now, or within a few minutes, because he is in the customer's office. Your action is to: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
- Convince Tom to work together to come up with a later date. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Give Tom a yes or no answer. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Explain your situation and let Tom decide if you should take the order. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Offer an alternative delivery date. Work on your relationship; show your support. S \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. As a time-and-motion expert, you have been called in regard to a complaint about the standard time it takes to perform a job. As you analyze the entire job, you realize one element of the complaint should take longer, but other elements should take less time. The end result is a shorter total standard time for the job. You decide to: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
- Tell the operator and supervisor that the total time must be decreased and why. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Agree with the operator and increase the standard time. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Explain your findings. Deal with the operator's or supervisor's concerns, but ensure compliance with your new standard. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Together with the operator, develop a standard time. S \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. You approve budget allocations for projects. Marie, who is very competent in developing budgets, has come to you. You: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
- Review the budget, make revisions, and explain them in a supportive way. Deal with concerns, but insist on your changes. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Review the proposal and suggest areas where changes may be needed. Make changes together, if needed. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Review the proposed budget, make revisions, and explain them. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Answer any questions or concerns Marie has and approve the budget as is. S \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. You are a sales manager. A customer has offered you a contract for your product with a short delivery date. The offer is open for two days. The contract would be profitable for you and the organization. The cooperation of the production department is essential to meet the deadline. Tim, the production manager, and you do not get along very well because of your repeated requests for quick delivery. Your action is to: \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style
- Contact Tim and try to work together to complete the contract. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Accept the contract and convince Tim in a supportive way to meet the obligation. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Contact Tim and explain the situation. Ask him if you and he should accept the contract, but let him decide. S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Accept the contract. Contact Tim and tell him to meet the obligation. If he resists, tell him you will go to his boss. S \_\_\_\_\_

To determine your preferred communication style, in the table below, circle the letter corresponding to the alternative you chose in situations 1 to 12. The column headings indicate the style you selected.

## /// BMV-6 Self-Assessment Exercise 5-4 /// (continued)

	Autocratic	Consultative	Participative	Laissez-faire
1.	a	b	c	d
2.	c	a	d	b
3.	c	d	a	b
4.	d	b	c	a
5.	a	b	d	c
6.	c	d	a	b
7.	c	a	b	d
8.	b	c	d	a
9.	b	d	a	c
10.	a	c	d	b
11.	c	a	b	d
12.	d	b	a	c
Total	_____	_____	_____	_____

Add the number of circled items per column. Adding the numbers in the Total row should equal 12. The column with the highest number represents your preferred communication style. There is no one best style in all situations. The more evenly distributed the numbers are between the four styles, the more flexible your communication style is. A total of 0 or 1 in any column may indicate a reluctance to use that style. You could have problems in situations calling for the use of that style.

### Selecting the Appropriate Communication Style

Successful people understand different styles of communication and select communication styles based on the situation. There are three steps to follow when selecting the appropriate communication style in a given situation.

- **Step 1: Diagnose the situation.** Answer the questions for each of the four situation variables. In Self-Assessment Exercise 5-4 you were asked to select one alternative situation. You were told to ignore the \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_ information \_\_\_\_\_ acceptance \_\_\_\_\_ capability/ \_\_\_\_\_ style and S \_\_\_\_\_ lines. Now you will complete this part in the In-Class Skill-Building Exercise 5-3 by placing the style letters (S-A, S-C, S-P, S-L) on the lines provided for each of the 12 situations.
- **Step 2: Select the appropriate style for the situation.** After analyzing the four variables, select the appropriate style for the situation. In some situations, where variables support conflicting styles, select the style of the most important variable for the situation. For example, capability may be outstanding (C-4), but you have all the information needed (S-A). If the information is more important, use the autocratic style even though the capability is outstanding. When doing In-Class Skill-Building Exercise 5-3, place the letters (S-A, S-C, S-P, S-L) for the appropriate styles on the style lines.
- **Step 3: Implement the appropriate communication style.** During In-Class Skill-Building Exercise 5-3, you will identify one of the four communication styles for each alternative action; place the S-A, S-C, S-P, or S-L on the S lines. Select the alternative *a*, *b*, *c*, or *d* that represents the appropriate communication for each of the 12 situations.

The table below summarizes the material from the chapter on pages 145–146 and in this section. Use it to determine the appropriate communication style in situation 1 below and during In-Class Skill-Building Exercise 5-3.

/// Self-Assessment Exercise 6-1 ///

### Your Preferred Transactional Analysis Style

Turn to Skill-Building Exercise 6-1, Transactional Analysis, on page 194. Ignore the directions, steps 1 to 4. Go directly to the 10 situations. Put yourself in the responder's position (1—Sue, 2—Saul, . . . 10—Mike), and place a check mark after the letter (*not* on the line) of the one response that best describes what you would say in each situation. Be honest; don't try to pick the response you think is correct. After selecting your 10 responses, circle the letter of your response for each situation in the table on the next page.

/// Self-Assessment Exercise 6-1 /// (continued)

Situation	Critical Parent	Sympathetic Parent	Natural Child	Adapted Child	Adult
1.	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>
2.	<i>d</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>
3.	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>
4.	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>a</i>
5.	<i>e</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i>
6.	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>c</i>
7.	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>
8.	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>a</i>
9.	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>e</i>
10.	<i>a</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>b</i>
Total					

**Scoring:** Add the number of letters circled in each column. The number in each column should be between 0 and 10, and the total of all columns should equal 10. The column with your highest total is your preferred TA style. If it's not adult, or even if it is, you may want to improve your TA behavior.



Communication Skills  
Refer to CS Question 1.

**Transactional analysis (TA)** is a method of understanding behavior in interpersonal dynamics. In fact, there is an International Transactional Analysis Association ([itaaworld.org](http://itaaworld.org)) that publishes the *Transactional Analysis Journal*. Eric Berne developed TA in 1960 in the field of psychology. A few years after its development, Berne applied TA to business in his bestselling book, *Games People Play*.<sup>9</sup>

In this section you will learn about your preferred TA style (called ego state in TA jargon), the types of human relations transactions you have, and your attitude toward yourself and others (called life positions). You will also learn about giving positive and negative feedback (called stroking) during human relations.



## ASSERTIVENESS

Begin this section by completing Self-Assessment Exercise 6-2 to determine your use of the assertiveness style, which is sometimes included with the situational communication styles discussed in Chapter 5.

### /// Self-Assessment Exercise 6-2 ///

#### Your Use of the Assertiveness Style

Turn to Skill-Building Exercise 6-2, Assertiveness, on page 197. Ignore the directions. Go directly to the 10 situations. Put yourself in the situation, and place a check mark after the letter (*not* on the line) of the one response that best describes what you would say or do in each situation. Be honest; don't try to pick the response you think is correct. After selecting your 10 responses, circle the letter of your response for each situation in the table below.

Situation	Passive	Assertive	Aggressive
1.	<i>b d</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>a e</i>
2.	<i>d e</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>a b</i>
3.	<i>c e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b d</i>
4.	<i>b d</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>a e</i>
5.	<i>a e</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c d</i>
6.	<i>a d</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c e</i>
7.	<i>b d</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>c e</i>
8.	<i>b c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>a e</i>
9.	<i>a c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>b e</i>
10.	<i>b c</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d e</i>
Total			

**Scoring:** Add the number of letters circled in each column. The number in each column should be between 0 and 10, and the total of all three columns should equal 10. The column with your highest total is your preferred style. If it's not assertive, or even if it is, you may want to improve your assertiveness behavior.

In this section, you will learn to express feelings, ask for favors, give and receive compliments, request behavior changes, and refuse unreasonable requests. You can ask for what you want in a direct, straightforward, deliberate, and honest way that conveys self-confidence without being obnoxious or abusive. When people stand up for their rights without violating the rights of others, they are using assertive behavior.<sup>12</sup>

**Assertiveness** is the process of expressing thoughts and feelings while asking for what one wants in an appropriate way. You need to present your message without falling into stereotypical "too pushy" (aggressive) or "not tough enough" (nonassertive-passive) traps.

**Assertiveness Is Becoming More Global** For example, the employees in Thailand are becoming more assertive, and the Japanese now include more strategies of assertiveness.

In China, workers are assertively asking for raises and better working conditions, and getting them.

/// Self-Assessment Exercise 6-3 ///

### Determining Your Preferred Conflict Management Style

Below are four situations. Rank all five alternative actions from 1, the first approach you would use (most desirable), to 5, the last approach you would use (least desirable). Don't try to pick a best answer. Select the alternative that best describes what you would actually do in the situation based on your past experiences.

1. You are the general manager of a manufacturing plant. The purchasing department has found a source of material at a lower cost than the one being used. However, the production manager says the current material is superior, and he doesn't want to change. The quality control manager says that both will pass inspection with similar results. You would:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a. Do nothing; let the purchasing and production managers work it out between themselves.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ b. Suggest having the purchasing manager find an alternative material that is cheaper but acceptable to the production manager.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ c. Have the purchasing and production managers compromise.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ d. Decide who is right and make the other comply.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ e. Get the purchasing and production managers together and work out an agreement acceptable to both parties.

## /// Self-Assessment Exercise 6-3 /// (continued)

2. You are a professor at a college. You have started a consulting organization and have the title of director of consulting services, which the dean has approved. You run the organization through the business department, using other faculty and yourself to consult. It has been going well. Randy, the director of continuing education, says that your consulting services should come under his department and not be a separate department. You would:
- a. Suggest that some services be under continuing education, but that others, like your consulting service, remain with you in the business department.
  - b. Do what you can to stop the move. Go to the dean and request that the consulting services stay under your direction in the business department, as originally approved by the dean.
  - c. Do nothing. The dean will surely see through this "power grab" and turn Randy down.
  - d. Go and talk to Randy. Try to come up with an agreement you are both satisfied with.
  - e. Go along with Randy's request. It's not worth fighting about; you can still consult.
3. You are a branch manager for a bank. One of your colleagues cut you off twice during a managers' meeting that just ended. You would:
- a. Do nothing; it's no big deal.
  - b. Discuss it in a friendly manner, but try to get the colleague to stop this behavior.
  - c. Don't do or say anything because it might hurt your relations, even if you're a little upset about it.
  - d. Forcefully tell the colleague that you put up with being cut off, but will not tolerate it in the future.
  - e. Tell the colleague that you will listen without interrupting if he or she does the same for you.
4. You are the human resources/personnel manager. You have decided to have visitors sign in and wear guest passes. However, only about half of the employees sign their guests in before taking them to their offices to do business. You would:
- a. Go talk to the general manager about why employees are not signing in visitors.
  - b. Try to find a method that will please most employees.
  - c. Go to the general manager and request that she require employees to follow your procedures. If the general manager says to do it, employees will comply.
  - d. Do not require visitors to sign in; require them only to wear guest passes.
  - e. Let employees do things the way they want to.

To determine your preferred conflict management style, place your numbers 1 to 5 on the lines below.

**Situation 1**

- a. Avoiding
- b. Accommodating
- c. Compromising
- d. Forcing
- e. Collaborating

**Situation 2**

- a. Compromising
- b. Forcing
- c. Avoiding
- d. Collaborating
- e. Accommodating

**Situation 3**

- a. Avoiding
- b. Collaborating
- c. Accommodating
- d. Forcing
- e. Compromising

**Situation 4**

- a. Collaborating
- b. Accommodating
- c. Forcing
- d. Compromising
- e. Avoiding

/// Self-Assessment Exercise 6-3 /// (continued)

Now place your ranking numbers 1 to 5 that correspond to the styles from the four situations in order; then add the four numbers.

Situation 1	Situation 2	Situation 3	Situation 4		
_____ a.	_____ b.	_____ d.	_____ c.	= _____	total, Forcing style
_____ b.	_____ c.	_____ a.	_____ e.	= _____	total, Avoiding style
_____ c.	_____ e.	_____ c.	_____ b.	= _____	total, Accommodating style
_____ d.	_____ a.	_____ e.	_____ d.	= _____	total, Compromising style
_____ e.	_____ d.	_____ b.	_____ a.	= _____	total, Collaborating style

The total with the lowest score is your preferred conflict management style. There is no one best conflict style in all situations. The more even the totals are, the more flexible you are at changing conflict management styles. Very high and very low totals indicate less flexibility.

It is also helpful to identify others' preferred styles so that you can plan how to resolve conflicts with them.

## Your Personality and Interpersonal Dynamics

People with the same personality type (Chapter 2) tend to get along better and have less conflict than those with different personality types. So be careful during human relations with people different from you.

If you have a high *surgency* personality, watch your use of the critical parent ego state and be sure to give lots of positive strokes to help human relations. You may be in the "I'm OK" life position, but make sure that you treat others as "You're OK." As a surgency, you also need to be careful not to use aggressive behavior to get what you want. You most likely have no problem confronting others when in conflict. However, be careful not to use the forcing style with others.

If you have a high *agreeableness* personality, you tend to get along well with others. But be careful not to use the sympathetic parent ego state, and watch the appropriate use of the child ego state. Don't let others take advantage of you so that you put them in the "You're not OK" life position, and so that you can stay in the "I'm OK" position. Be careful not to be passive and not to use the avoiding and accommodating conflict styles to get out of confronting others; you need to satisfy your needs too.

How well you deal with your emotions, especially anger, is what *adjustment* is about. If you are not high on adjustment personality traits, you will tend to use the parent or child ego states. You may be in the "I'm not OK" position, and others will be in the "You're not OK" position. Based on your adjustment personality, you can be passive (let people take

advantage of you) or aggressive (try to take advantage of others), and poor adjustment can lead to violence. Low adjustment people are usually poor at dealing with conflict, because they tend to avoid and accommodate or to force in conflict situations. Try not to be low in adjustment and get too emotional. Use the tips on dealing with emotions, especially anger.

There is a relationship between adjustment and *openness to experience*. If you are not well adjusted, you are probably not open to experience. If you are low on openness, you may not handle conflicts well since their resolution often requires change. So try to be open to new experiences.

If you are a high *conscientious* personality, you can still transact from the parent or child ego state. You may be in the "I'm OK" life position, but be sure not to put others in the "You're not OK" position. Watch your use of aggressive behavior to achieve your objectives. You may be good at conflict resolution, but be careful to meet others' needs too.

**Action plan:** Based on your personality, what specific things will you do to improve your TA, assertiveness, and conflict management skills?

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