Successful Collaboration: Work Smarter Not Harder

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Disclosure

- We have no financial disclosure or conflicts of interest with the presented material in this presentation.

Goals and Objectives

- In this presentation you will learn:
  - The importance of collaboration.
  - Tips and tricks for productive collaboration.
  - Identify different work styles and personality types.

Why Do We Collaborate?

Collaboration is said to take place when two individuals or a group of people work together towards achieving a common goal by sharing their ideas and skills. It can happen in traditional as well as virtual teams. With advancements in technology, using cloud-based programs to share files and communicate has become commonplace. When individuals work together openly, processes and goals become more aligned, leading the group towards a higher success rate of achieving a common goal.

Collaborative communication has a positive impact on the business and its employees. It helps to:

•**Improve problem-solving** as your employees more freely share their knowledge and can find unconventional solutions to the issues in collaboration groups

•**Enhance interpersonal relationships** in the team that improve communication

•**Create a positive view of the workplace**. Good communication establishes a safe working environment in the office and employees are more willing to come to work every day. It reduces turnover and employees tend to have less sick days or days-off

•**Improves productivity**, making employees more likely to engage in the working process Their work becomes not an obligation but an interesting thing to do

•**Encourages employees to self-analyze their strong and weak points** and competencies at work

•**Helps employees to see the bigger picture of the projects they are working on**. Collaborative communication defines employees' responsibilities and shows their part is in achieving project goals.



How To Be Successful At Collaborating

Planning is Key



To be successful and efficient when working with a team it's important to never skip planning.

We all get busy, but missing meetings can put you and the group behind.

Can also created missed opportunities to add input in a timely manner.



Have an agenda

Having an agenda and sending it out ahead of your planning session gives members of the group time to make notes and research.



Follow Up

Make sure to send information on action items and any notes taken after your session.

- Shorten your Meetings
  - Set an agenda/goal, be specific “at our meeting on Thursday, we will make a final decision on the topic of our presentation”
  - To meet this goal, set the expectation that work, or discussions will need to be done offline, so each person comes to the meeting prepared.
  - Appoint a meeting facilitator –this person needs to keep the meeting moving, bring people back from side conversations.
  - Avoid distractions – private conversations, phone, etc.

Less Can Be More

Keep Everyone Involved

- The group is more effective when everyone has a job to do.
- Have an open attitude.
- Assign a facilitator to make sure meetings/projects keep moving.
- Keep work styles and personality traits in mind when creating tasks.

Let’s Dig A Little Deeper…

Working Styles Characteristics

A - Analytical

- Cautious actions and decisions
- Likes organization and structure
- Dislikes involvement with others
- Asks many questions about specific details
- Prefers objective, task-oriented work environment
- Wants to be accurate and therefore relies too much on data collection
- Seeks security and self actualization

B - Driver

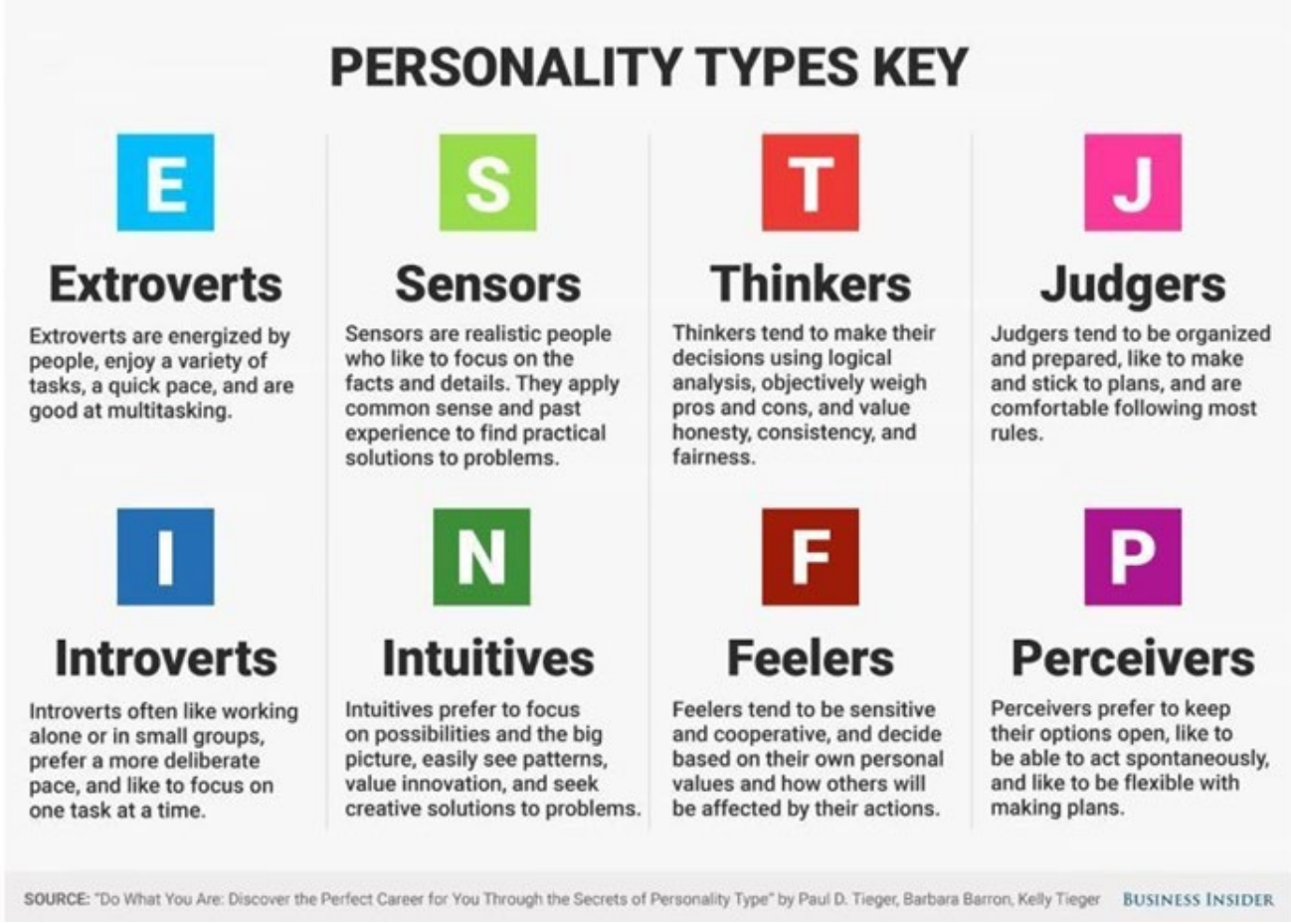
- Takes action and acts decisively
- Likes control
- Dislikes inaction
- Prefers maximum freedom to manage self and others
- Cool and independant, competitive with others
- Low tolerance for feelings, attitudes and advice of others
- Works quickly and efficiently by themselves

C - Amiable

- Slow at taking action and making decisions
- Likes close, personal relationships
- Dislikes interpersonal conflict
- Supports and "actively" listens to others
- Weak at goal setting and self-direction
- Demonstrates excellent ability to gain support from others
- Works slowly and cohesively with others
- Seeks security and inclusion

D - Expressive

- Spontaneous actions and decisions, risk taker
- Not limited by tradition
- Likes involvement
- Generates new and innovative ideas
- Tends to dream and get others caught up in the dream
- Jumps from one activity to another
- Works quickly and excitingly with others
- Not good with follow-through



- Know Your Color



- To be a good team member invest time in getting to know yourself.
- Express your strengths and weaknesses when taking on tasks.

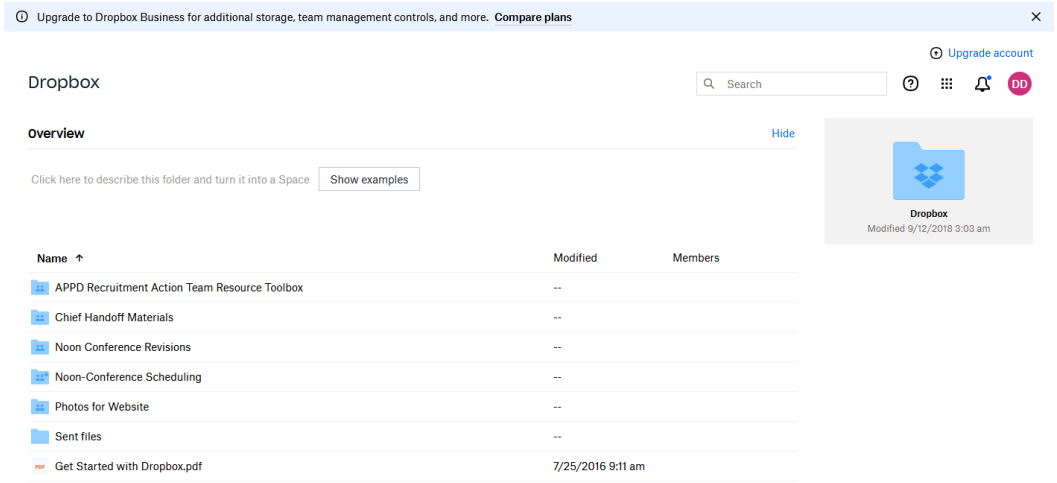
Collaboration Tools

- Most online tools support multiple means of communication – chat, instant messaging, screen sharing, file sharing
- Zoom, Zoom, Zoom (or Teams) – most of us became experts in one of these platforms thanks to virtual recruitment
- Google – can collaborate on documents (Docs), spreadsheets (Sheets), presentations (Slides), brainstorming (Jamboard) and so much more…



More Tools…

- Dropbox – file hosting service, cloud storage. Allows you to share files and folders without sending large attachments



- GME Administrators also recommend:
  - **Slack** – messaging/communication tool (desktop, mobile)
  - **Trello** – organizes projects into boards (project management)
  - **Doodle** – online meeting scheduling tool
  - **Office 365** – Teams, SharePoint, OneDrive
  - **Box** – cloud storage
  - **Docusign** – eSignature, manages electronic agreements
  - And of course, **margaritas**!



Brainstorming

- A group problem-solving technique that involves the spontaneous contribution of ideas from all members of the group.

- https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/brainstorming

Things to Keep in Mind

Starting with too much structure can limit resolution, ideas, and innovative thinking.

Brainstorming should be free thinking, where all ideas are welcomed (not criticized).

People should be encouraged to participate in their own way - as much and as little as they want to participate.

The focus should be placed on the diversity of the ideas.

Different Types of Brainstorming

What Type Works Best For You?

Reverse Brainstorming - A creative problem-solving technique in which the problem is turned around and considered from a different point of view to spur new and different solutions.

Stop-and-Go Brainstorming - A problem-solving technique in which a group alternately engages in brainstorming solutions without evaluation for ten minutes then engages in a short period of evaluation. The group continues alternating between brainstorming and evaluation.

Phillips 66 Brainstorming - A problem-solving technique in which a group of six people brainstorms for six minutes and then a spokesman for each group presents either the best ideas or all ideas to the larger group.

Brainwriting - A problem-solving technique in which participants individually brainstorm ideas and document them, then share them with a group to further push their thinking.

https://www.theedadvocate.org/the-4-types-of-brainstorming/

Getting the Most Out of Brainstorming

Remember the Individuals

individual brainstorming may be more effective in solving problems. Perhaps because people in a group may not want to participate out of fear of being judged. Sometimes groups can be dominated by stronger personalities. Individual thinking can lead to more creative solutions.

Preparation

pick a time and location that is best suited for the group brainstorming session. Include people who might bring a different perspective. Have someone record the different ideas by using a whiteboard, flip chart, or computer monitor, for example.

Presentation

in clear and concise language, define the problem.

Individual ideas can be written down and then shared with the group.

Take Charge

by guiding the discussion. Much like a tour guide – setting the pace, informing the group, answering questions, moving the discussion along, and giving everyone an opportunity to take part.

AND Don't forget to share YOUR ideas with the group.

Action

analyze the ideas by using tools (scoring them from 0-5), use themes to sort the ideas, look for ideas that are similar.

Think about costs, quality, location, reliability, flexibility, and weigh options

Electronic Methods

Survey Monkey, Doodle Polls, Microsoft Teams, and Google Docs are great tools.



Suggestions and Questions

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