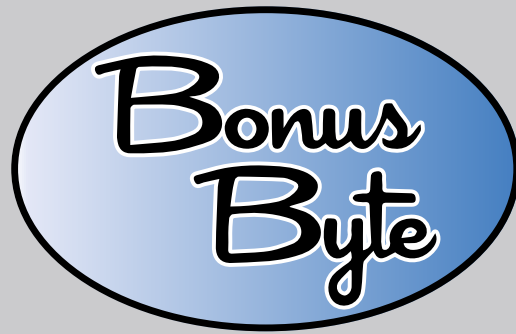


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**How Communication Style Impacts
Interactions Between People**

HOW COMMUNICATION STYLE IMPACTS INTERACTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE

by Guy Harris

The descriptions below offer some insights and perspectives on some common issues in relationships/interactions between two people with the listed primary communication styles.

Dominant-Dominant

Both people in this interaction are strong-willed, speak directly and have a bottom-line focus. When they agree on a direction, the interaction can be very powerful and productive. When they disagree, the conversation will likely be resolved quickly.

Because both parties have a task orientation, they both tend to build relationships by doing things together. When they are working together towards a common goal, they will get a great deal of work done, and they will work well together.

Strengths:

- Mutual task focus can lead to high levels of productivity and accomplishment.
- They can resolve conflicts quickly because both parties are willing to voice their opinion and both focus on action over feelings.

Potential Challenges:

- The strong-will and decisiveness they share can lead to conflict if they see the problem or the solution differently.
- Both parties willingness to engage in conflict can create an environment for other people in the area – those not involved – that feels aggressive even though there is little or no real animosity between the two dominant-style individuals.

Dominant-Inspiring

Both people in this interaction have a fast pace and an inclination towards action and involvement. There is usually a good pace match between them. Their struggle may come in the task vs. people focus between them.

The inspiring style person might interpret the dominant style person's directness as indicating dislike. The dominant style person might interpret the inspiring style person's story-telling and enthusiasm as lack of focus and direction.

Strengths:

- Mutual outgoing natures can lead to high levels of productivity and accomplishment.
- Both people are likely to voice their opinions and create dialogue about problems rather than withdraw and leave issues unaddressed.

Potential Challenges:

- The dominant person might hurt the inspiring person's feelings and create a breakdown in communication that leads to inaction.
- The inspiring person might frustrate the dominate person with stories and enthusiastic interaction.

Dominant-Supportive

This can be a very challenging interaction combination. These two styles have very little common ground to use to improve their communication. It will likely take some effort on both parts to make this combination work.

When it does work, this is a powerful combination. They can help to cover each other's blind-spots for greater combined effectiveness.

Strengths:

- The difference between their perspectives allows each person to recognize issues that the other person might easily miss.
- Together they can get things done in a way that protects relationships throughout the team.

Potential Challenges:

- The dominant person might hurt the supportive person's feelings with their bottom-line, confrontational style and create a breakdown in communication that leads to inaction.
- The supportive person might frustrate the dominate person with reluctance to act and focusing heavily on feelings over accomplishment.

Dominant-Cautious

This can be either a very powerful or a very challenging combination. Because both people have strong task tendencies, they can see the same issues and solutions clearly. However, their pace difference could create tension and frustration for both of them.

When it does work, it's so powerful because they get a great deal of high-quality work done.

Strengths:

- Their mutual task focus and different pace perspective allows them to find well-thought out solutions to tough problems.
- They can often communicate easily because both people focus on task accomplishment and problem solution.

Potential Challenges:

- The dominant person can get frustrated with the cautious person's analysis before acting.
- The cautious person might get frustrated when the dominant person acts before collecting all of the information the cautious person desires.

Inspiring-Inspiring

Both people in this interaction love to talk, tell stories and have fun. This can be an easy and free-flowing combination.

Because both parties have a people orientation, they both tend to build relationships by talking and interacting. This can become a barrier to task accomplishment if it gets out of control.

Strengths:

- They will probably like each other and communicate easily.
- They will often see the same issues and connect quickly with each other.

Potential Challenges:

- Because they like to talk and interact, they might lose focus on task accomplishment and confuse talking about a problem with solving a problem.
- They might frustrate each other as each person tries to take center stage in the relationship.

Inspiring-Supportive

Their common people focus often makes this an easy communication combination.

Sometimes, their pace difference can become a frustration. However, this is not often the case.

Strengths:

- They will probably like each other and communicate easily.
- They will often see the same issues and connect quickly with each other.

Potential Challenges:

- Similar to the Inspiring-Inspiring combination, they might lose focus on task accomplishment and spend time interacting rather than taking action.
- Sometimes their pace differences can create problems as the inspiring person wants to be more active and the supportive person wants to sit back and wait.

Inspiring-Cautious

Like the Dominant-Inspiring combination, this is a cross-style combination, and it can be a very challenging. These two styles have very little common ground to use to improve their communication.

It will likely take some effort on both parts to make this combination work.

When it does work, this is powerful combination. They can help to cover each other's blind-spots for greater combined effectiveness.

Strengths:

- The difference between their perspectives allows each person to recognize issues that the other person might easily miss.
- Together, they can find creative solutions to problems that are well supported by analysis.

Potential Challenges:

- The cautious person might hurt the inspiring person's feelings with many questions that sound critical and attacking from the inspiring person's perspective.
- The inspiring person might frustrate the cautious person with their free-flowing, unstructured communication style.

Supportive-Supportive

This will likely be an easy and friendly interaction combination. They will probably see and focus on the same issues.

The danger is that they can be so focused on supporting and helping that they fail to initiate action plans.

Strengths:

- Their mutual kind and helpful nature will probably make this communication combination low stress.
- They are both sensitive to other people's feelings.

Potential Challenges:

- They could fail to take action; if they get so focused on helping and supporting that neither of them pushes for action.
- If hurt feelings or miscommunications do happen, it could spiral out-of-control because neither person wants to talk about it.

Supportive-Cautious

This will often be a good communication combination. Since they both have a slower approach to communication, they are both careful with what they say.

Like the Supportive-Supportive combination, they might fail to initiate action plans as the supportive person does not want to push too hard and the cautious person analyzes before acting.

Strengths:

- Their mutual quiet nature often makes it comfortable for both to communicate with the other.
- Both sides of this interaction often consider their words carefully. So, there is a good chance that they will communicate clearly.

Potential Challenges

- The supportive person's focus on feelings might frustrate the cautious person.
- The cautious person's factual, logical approach might seem cold and uncaring to the supportive person.

Cautious-Cautious

This will often be a good communication combination because of the similar focus.

Because both are likely confident in their ability to collect and evaluate information, they can sometimes get locked in debate and analysis that leads to inaction and conflict rather than action.

Strengths:

- Their mutual analytical nature often makes it unlikely that they will miss an important technical detail.
- Both sides of this interaction often consider their words carefully. So, there is a good chance that they will communicate clearly.

Potential Challenges

- The lack of people focus in this interaction could cause them to miss the emotional or relational impact their communication style has on other people.
- They can get into a "who's more right" type of debate that has no real end.

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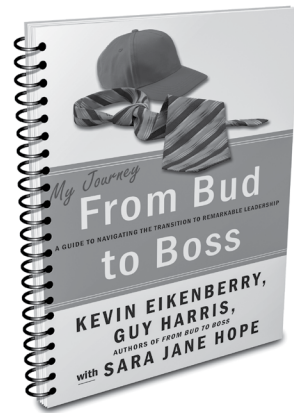
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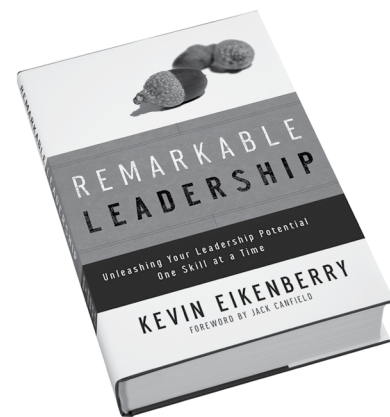


My Journey From Bud to Boss

A companion volume to the From Bud to Boss book, the Journey is a workbook designed to help you apply the knowledge gained to actual work experiences. It includes activities, questions, and exercises designed to take you beyond the concepts introduced to you during the Workshop or the book. And while this book is completely designed to be written in, all of the templates and tools are available in both PDF and Word document form so that you can use them over and over.

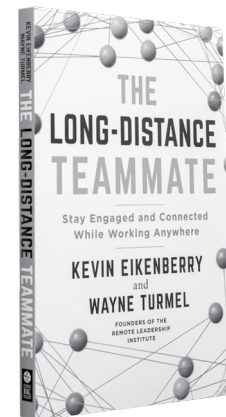
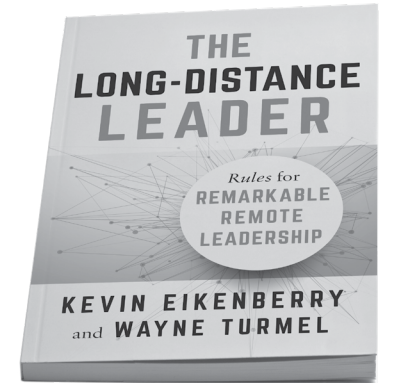
Remarkable Leadership

is a practical handbook written for anyone who wants to hone the skills needed to become a remarkable leader. This book outlines a framework and a mechanism for both learning new things and applying current knowledge in a thoughtful and practical way. It explores real-world concerns such as focus, limited time, incremental improvement, and how we learn.



The Long-Distance Leader

is a practical, candid look at what it takes to lead people, projects and teams in today's dispersed workplace. The book showcases 19 rules for being a remarkable remote leader, and offers practical models, tools, and best practices to tackle the real-world challenges from how we work and communicate virtually.



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Written by the founders of the Remote Leadership Institute, this book is the most authoritative single resource for helping remote workers get work done effectively, build relationships that are both productive and satisfying, and maintain a career trajectory when they are not in constant close contact with their leader, coworkers, or the organization in general.

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