

# Personality clashes can be prevented

*The trick is to identify the different personality types on your staff and learn which combinations work well together... and which ones are deadly*

BY LARRY KIEFFER

LAKE BUENA VISTA — The manager who attributes a personnel problem to a “personality clash” just may know exactly what he is talking about, according to management trainer Jerry Travers.

## DOMINANT



Drives a Cadillac, Mercedes or Jaguar sedan in conservative colors very fast with both hands on the wheel. He's impatient and talks to himself. Whether it's a corporation or a two-person office, he's likely to be the boss. . . or want to be.

Dresses in stylish, conservative clothes, conservative hairstyle, wears a wedding ring and an expensive watch.

Walks briskly, takes control wherever he goes, is goal-oriented and is well-prepared. His desk is cluttered but organized.

Wants power, prestige, money, opportunity for advancement, challenge, results, to find out why things happen, wide scope of operation, direct answers, freedom from controls, efficiency and varied activities.

## INDUCTIVE



Drives a Porsche or other sporty convertible very fast, usually with one finger on the wheel. Talks a lot and pays scant attention to the road. He's a politician, advertising director, or vice president of marketing.

Overdresses in the latest fashions with the brightest colors, has monogrammed shirts, fashionable hairstyle with lots of jewelry, but no wedding ring.

Struts with one hand in his pocket and one eye on his reflection in a mirror or window. He flirts, takes risks, is ostentatious and keeps his large, fancy desk very neat.

Wants popularity, money to cover his expensive lifestyle, public recognition, freedom of speech, group activities outside the job, democratic relationships, freedom from control and identification with the company.

And the successful manager will know how to deal with a clash of personalities in such a way that he won't lose a valuable, skilled employee. That was the point of Travers' three-hour seminar on personality impact given to about 30 superintendents attending the Crowfoot Open at Grand Cypress Resort Aug. 6.

The seminar is one module of a large unit on stress that Travers has taught to major corporations around the world, including superintendents attending the 59th annual International Golf Course Conference and Show in Houston two years ago.

Healthy personalities break down into four basic types — Dominant, Inductive, Steady and Compliant — Travers said, "and none of them is any 'better' than any other. Ideally, you should have at least one

of each on your team."

- **Dominant** personalities are aggressive, decisive, competitive, assertive, vigorous, resourceful, venturesome, opinionated, restless and direct.

- **Inductive** personalities are outgoing, gregarious, confident, enthusiastic, persuasive, neighborly, talkative, optimistic, charming and imaginative.

Dominators and inducers frequently go together. That is, persons who score highest on one of those two traits often score second-highest on the other. Together, persons with these two prevailing traits comprise about 30 percent of the American population.

"The dominant personality is the boss. He makes decisions easily," said Travers. Dominant persons start a lot of projects but

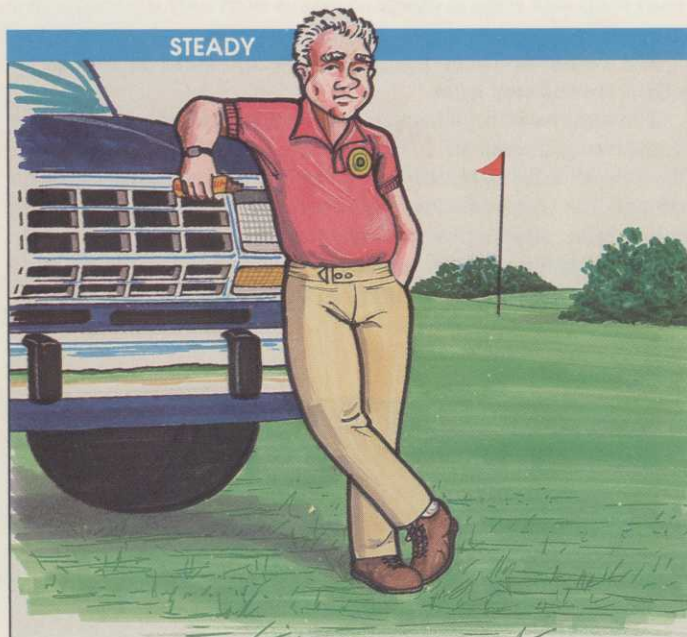
rarely complete them themselves, choosing to delegate the "mopping up" to others. "They do make sure the projects get completed," Travers said, "they just get bored with details. They don't have particularly long attention spans. Arnold Palmer and Gen. George Patton are dominant personalities."

The inductive person is the ideal salesman who does great in a social setting, Travers said. Jacqueline Onassis and Rich Little are inductive personalities.

- **Steady** personalities are calm, sincere, deliberate, willing, conservative, amiable, dependable, dedicated, contented.

- **Compliant** personalities are cautious, respectful, thorough, tense, precise, sensitive, strict, serious, controlled, perfection-

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Drives a 4x4 truck, station wagon or Toyota with one hand while eating with the other. Rarely gets tickets. He's a coordinator, middle-level manager or government employee.

Dresses casually and wears neckties only when absolutely necessary, hair is casual, frizzy and perhaps unruly, watch and wedding ring are unpretentious.

Slouches when he walks slowly with both hands in his pockets, gets along with everyone, is indecisive, dependable and likes structure. His inexpensive metal desk is somewhat messy.

Wants status quo, security, references, happy home life, historical procedures, sincerity, limited territory, constant appreciation, identification with the company, recognition for long service, special products and takes a long time to adjust to change.



Drives a mini-truck, Toyota, Volvo or Saab with both hands on the wheel and stops at all yellow signals.

Leisure dress is worn-out office attire, which tends to be very conservative and old-fashioned, probably purchased at a bargain store. Hair is very short or very long, carries a digital watch, wears a tie clasp, wedding ring and little other jewelry.

Takes short, precise steps or trots. Works methodically and is detail-oriented and demands structure. His practical desk is over-organized and can appear messy.

Wants standard operating procedure, limited exposure, security, sheltered environment, references, reassurance, personal attention, little responsibility and someone else to open the door for him on sales calls. Cannot tolerate sudden change.

## They'll never get anything done...

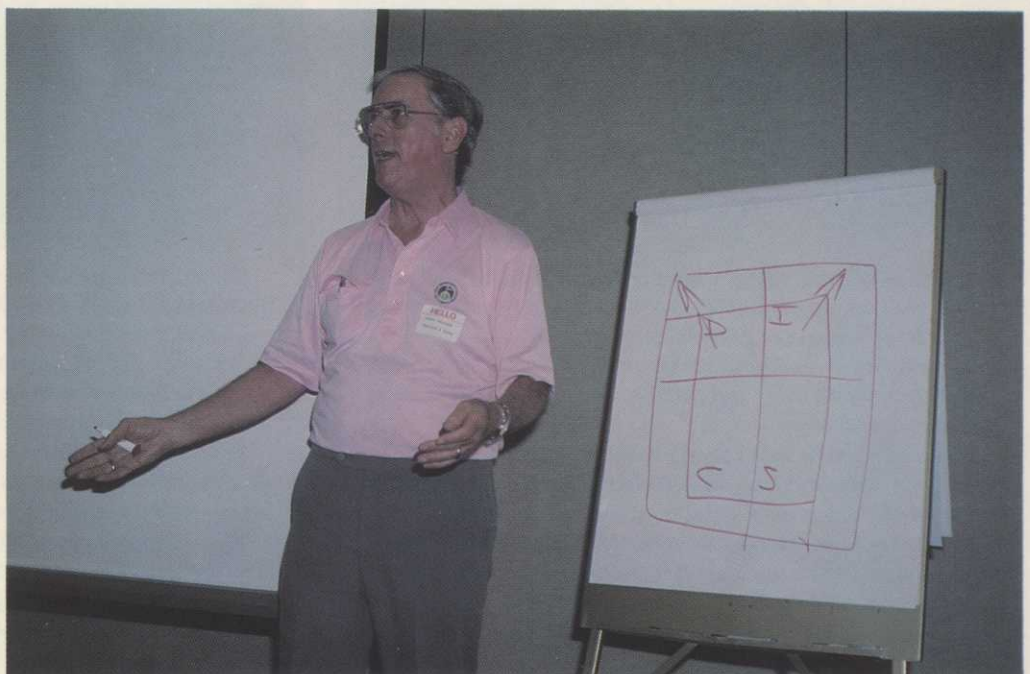
In the workplace, the best personality combination generally is Steady-Inductive. In fact, Steadies are very productive with just about everybody, as the chart below — 1 is best and 8 is worst — shows. However their symbiotic relationship with Inductives is the only one to get "full marks." The Steady keeps the Inductive's creative juices focused on task while the Inductive constantly encourages the Steady to break out of his structured mold and seek new approaches.

The second-best combination is Steady-Dominant. The latter makes decisions easily and the former is happy to do the detail work when the Dominant goes charging off in search of new windmills. Dominants also work fairly well with Compliant.

On the other hand, Dominants do not work well together or with Inductives. The difficulties in the first relationship are rather obvious — there can be only one boss — while those in the second are a little more subtle. The absolute worst working combination, however, is a pair of Inductives. "They have such a good time feeding off each other's creativity that they never get anything done," says Travers.

WORK ENVIRONMENT				
Combination	Dom	Induct	Steady	Comp
Dominant	5	5	2	4
Inductive		7	1	3
Steady			3	3
Compliant				3

*Jerry Travers has taught his seminar on personalities and stress to the world's major corporations. He conducted a session at the 59th annual Golf Course Conference and Show in Houston in 1988.*



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SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT				
Combination	Dom	Induct	Steady	Comp
Dominant	4	3	6	8
Inductive		1	4	8
Steady			1	2
Compliant				2

## Nothing beats this pair at playtime

For the very same reason that makes them unproductive workmates, two Inductives by themselves can make the world's biggest party. . . anytime, anywhere. Two Steadies also make an excellent social combination as do a pair of Compliant. The Steady-Compliant combination is nearly as good.

Dominants get along best in the social world with Inductives, who don't really care who's in charge so long as everybody is having a good time.

The Dominant-Steady combination, which works so well at the office, is a dud after hours.

The worst social combinations, however, are Compliant with either Inductives or Dominants. In the first case, one really gets caught up in the flow while the other can't help being distracted by the ripples on the current. The Dominant-Compliant clash often centers on the former's penchant for following his own whims and the latter's need for structure and predictability. If a pair of Inductives constitute a walking party, a Dominant-Compliant couple make up a moving war zone.

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istic.

Compliance and steadiness can be companion traits — persons who score high in one often score second-highest on the other. Together, they comprise 70 percent of the American population, with compliant types outnumbering the steadies, Travers said.

The steady person is loyal, possessive, service-oriented, low-key and persistent. "He becomes an old friend and will stick with you to the end," Travers said.

The compliant person, above all, is a perfectionist, Travers said. He is thorough, organized, systematic and seldom caught off guard. "Jack Nicklaus is a perfect example of the compliant personality," he said.

Everybody has at least a little bit of each trait but one almost always prevails. Each person's mix will vary slightly, depending on whether he is in a business setting or a social one, but the principal characteristic

(dominant, inductive, steady or compliant) should remain the same regardless of the situation. A person's perception of his own personality rarely matches exactly the personalities others see.

The key for managers is to learn the work habits and emotional needs associated with the various personality traits and assign tasks and responsibilities accordingly.

It also is especially helpful to know which personalities work well together and which ones clash. As the accompanying charts show, certain traits mesh differently, depending on whether the situation is task-oriented or social.

For instance, two inductive personalities make a great combination socially, but a terrible one at work. "They're so busy having a good time, feeding off each other's creativity that they'll never get anything done!" Travers said.

On the other hand, the inductive-steady

combination makes the best work combination, but only a fair matchup in social situations.

While everyday behavior can give the perceptive supervisor several clues to an employee's personality, those assessments should not be used for critical action unless they have been validated by tests, Travers said.

On the other hand, if a superintendent has two gregarious employees whose work generally is satisfactory except when they're assigned to work together, he might be wise to split them up: they could be inductive personality types having too good a time.

All seminar students completed a personality profile test to learn their own traits. Superintendents who wish to have themselves and their employees profiled can contact Travers at 5438 Ralston Court, Atlanta, GA 30338; phone 404-394-2331.

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