

Before you hire anyone, consider personalities

The first step is defining your personality, the second is hiring different ones.

by Charles Vander Kooi

■ There are four kinds of personalities in this business. In order to grow a company [or department] and a good management team, you need all four personalities.

When people do things that fit their personality, they love to work. When they are forced to do things that don't fit their personality, they become frustrated. As you grow, you can eliminate this frustration by hiring the right person for the job.

I will equate these personalities to the building of a project, using "man" in the general form, a member of the human race.

Let's say I have 40 acres upon which I want a new office building. Here are the people I'd need:

1) An Idea Man—Idea men are the architects, interior designers, arts people, computer programmers. They always have ideas (most of which are impractical). They are constantly saying, "What if...?"

If I'm putting up this building, who's the first person I call?

An architect. He comes to the site and says, "I have an idea, let's design a building that looks like an escarrot. The roads leading to the building can look like his slime trail."

Every project needs an idea man, as does every company. I've seen companies that are doing things the way they did it

20 or 30 years ago. You can feel and smell the stagnation.

Every company needs an idea man to keep it on the cutting edge.

2) A Happening Man—Happening men are contractors. They take other people's ideas and make them happen.

So I have my idea for the office building and now I need to make it happen. Who do I get? A contractor. He takes the plans and tells the architect to "get out of my face."

He calls in the excavator, the concrete people, framers, masons, glass people, dry-wallers, electricians and plumbers.

Every company needs someone who makes things happen. Have you ever been in a meeting where everyone has all kinds of ideas? However, after you leave the meeting, nothing comes of those ideas.

That's because there was no "happening man." A happening man stays behind and collects an idea or two that he likes and makes them happen.

3) Managing Men—Managing men are coaches of teams and people who can take care of the details on an everyday basis.

When the contractor—who made it happen—gives me the keys to the office building, who do I need? A property manager. Someone who will rent the building, have janitors and people to mow the lawn. Someone who will take care of the every-

day details of running the building.

Every company needs a "managing man:" someone who will see that the payroll is done, bills are sent out and collected, materials ordered, job costing, financial statements produced and a myriad of other details taken care of.

4) Maintenance Men—These are accountants, janitors and people who like a regimented lifestyle. They like to do the same things every day or every week.

Now that I've got the building and someone to take care of the details, I need people who will sweep the floors, clean the toilets and mow the grass.

Maintenance men, who like to take directions, are the lion's share of workers in the workplace. Every company needs lots of regimented maintenance people.

Which are you?—You personally probably dominate in two of the four traits I've described. Whichever you are will indicate why you are frustrated when you have to do things that run counter to your personality type. It will also indicate the type of personalities you should hire—people diametrically different in personality than you.

Before hiring anyone, then, consider these concepts.



—The author is a landscape consultant headquartered in Littleton, Colo. This article is excerpted from an article which appeared in "The Landsculptor," the magazine of the Metro Detroit Landscaper's Association. It is reprinted with the permission of the author.

