

## An OAD LLC Article

### Team Building And Personality Types

We are frequently asked what types of people work well with each other in the workplace and, conversely, what types may have difficulty with each other.

One simple answer is that people with similar personalities mesh well, and opposite personalities do not. However, a more accurate answer is more complicated.

Over time, good personality mixes are more the result of recognizing and fulfilling each other's needs more than sharing common characteristics. Often people with similar traits hold expectations that the other person will view and respond to events in the same way. Often they are disappointed.

Higher A's get along well if they agree on a strategy or vision. If they differ on these issues, the result is often intense and visible acrimony.

Higher D's work well together if there is mutual respect for skills and knowledge. However, if one believes the other is not competent there will be friction.

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Organizational teambuilding is one of the most effective management practices when implemented and maintained correctly. Our experiences have shown that productivity increases, absenteeism and tardiness declines, and, perhaps most importantly, the employees feel that the company is a good place to work.

Teambuilding only takes root when there are clearly defined objectives; there is trust between management and employees (and vice versa), and belief in and commitment to teambuilding by management and supervisors.

Effective teamwork is based on agreement to solve problems through mutual support and assistance. If problems are seen as being ill-defined, nonexistent, or due to causes beyond the organization's capability to handle them, then why should people get together to plan and execute a course of action? Once problems are defined and goals established to rectify them, then there is a rationale for developing teams.

First and foremost the team members must have an easily recognized stake in solving the problems. Secondly, they must possess the skills and experiences to correct them. And finally, an understanding of the individuals' roles and dispositions must be considered.

After the first two criteria have been completed, we assist clients in formulating teams based upon their personality characteristics.

Usually most team members are Lower A/Higher D's. These individuals provide the reservoir of skills and experiences, but are often too timid and focused to be solid contributors at the start. In these instances we look for individuals who have Higher Creativity scores (7-10) in their Traits pattern.

Higher D expertise combined with Higher Creativity is an extremely valuable combination. These individuals not only have hands-on experience, they also look at situations and problems from different angles and can provide ideas for innovative solutions.

Secondly, we look for a representation of slightly Higher A personalities. These individuals are more comfortable speaking up and confronting issues. It is very important that these individuals be accepted by the group. Otherwise, these Higher A personalities are viewed as being bullying or headline grabbers.

Finally, it must be explained to all team members the need for a proper mix of skills, experiences, and personalities. People with different areas of expertise need each other. Long experienced people need the fresh eyes and ideas of newer employees. And Higher A personalities need the attention to detail and focus of the High D's. Lower E analyzers need the persuasive and selling abilities of the Higher E's. Lower P drivers need the Higher P's input on implementing new systems and procedures.

Understanding and accepting differences to effectively solve problems and provide fresh solutions are absolutely essential. Getting distracted by personality differences degenerates teambuilding into squabbling and turf wars.