



Team Player Styles

This survey was constructed by Glenn Parker, a noted business consultant who has done a great deal of research on teams. The survey will take perhaps 15 minutes to complete. You must provide a score of 1, 2, 3 or 4 for each answer depending on how much like you they are.

There are no wrong answers so respond in the way that feels most like you, most of the time.

For each of the 18 questions, select your best or most frequent response, and for that, you write a 4 in the appropriate box. It might be easiest if you then choose the response that is least like what you would do. For this you will write a 1 in the appropriate box. Now you have to choose a 3, one that is your second most likely response, and 2, the response that is next to your least likely.

You cannot assign two same scores in a question or leave a box blank. Just go with the best fit.

Once you have finished your 18 questions, you are to transfer your four responses to the score sheet and count up your score for each of the four columns.

Each column represents one team player style. The column for which you have the highest score is your primary style. To see if this describes you, read the page that describes your primary style: what you are apt to do and how other people might see you.

1. During team meetings, I usually:

- a. Provide the team with technical data or information
- b. Keep the team focused on our mission or goals
- c. Make sure everyone is involved in the discussion
- d. Raise questions about our goals or methods

2. In relating to the team leader, I:

- a. Suggest that our work be goal-directed.
- b. Try to help him/her build a positive team climate
- c. Am willing to disagree with him/her when necessary
- d. Offer advice based upon my area of expertise

3. Under stress I sometimes:

- a. Overuse humour and other tension-reducing devices
- b. Am too direct in communicating with other team members
- c. Lose patience with the need to get everyone involved in discussions
- d. Complain about lack of progress toward our goals

4. When conflicts arise on the team I usually:

- a. Press for an honest discussion of the differences.
- b. Provide reasons why one side or the other is correct
- c. See the differences as a basis for a possible change in team direction
- d. Try to break the tension with a supportive or humorous remark

5. Other team members usually see me as:

- a. Factual
- b. Flexible
- c. Encouraging
- d. Candid

6. At times I am:

- a. Too results-oriented
- b. Too laid back
- c. Self-righteous
- d. Short-sighted

7. When things go wrong on the team I usually:

- a. Push for increased emphasis on listening, feedback and participation
- b. Press for a candid discussion of our problems
- c. Work hard to provide more and better information
- d. Suggest that we re-visit our basic mission

8. When necessary I am able to:

- a. Question some aspect of the team's work
- b. Push the team to set higher performance standards
- c. Work outside my defined role or job area
- d. Provide other team members with feedback on their behavior as a team member

9. Sometimes other team members see me as:

- a. A perfectionist
- b. Unwilling to re-assess the team's mission or goals
- c. Not serious about getting the real job done
- d. A nit-picker

10. I believe team problem-solving requires:

- a. Co-operation by all team members
- b. High-level listening skills
- c. A willingness to ask tough questions
- d. Good solid data

11. When a new team is forming I usually:

- a. Try to meet and get to know other team members
- b. Ask pointed questions about our goals and methods
- c. Want to know what is expected of me
- d. Seek clarity about our basic mission

12. At times I make other team members uncomfortable because they:

- a. Are not able to be as assertive as I am
- b. Don't live up to my standards of quality
- c. Don't think about long-range issues
- d. Don't care about how the team works together

13. I believe the role of the team leader is to:

- a. Insure the efficient solution of business problems
- b. Help the team establish long-range goals and short term objectives
- c. Create a participatory decision-making climate
- d. Bring out diverse ideas and challenge assumptions

14. I believe team decisions should be based on:

- a. The team's mission and goals
- b. A consensus of team members
- c. An open and candid assessment of the issues
- d. The weight of the evidence

15. Sometimes I:

- a. See team climate as an end in itself
- b. Play devil's advocate far too long
- c. Fail to see the importance of effective team process
- d. Overemphasize strategic issues and minimize short term task accomplishments

16. People have often described me as:

- a. Independent
- b. Dependable
- c. Imaginative
- d. Participative

17. Most of the time I am:

- a. Responsible and hard-working
- b. Committed and flexible
- c. Enthusiastic and humorous
- d. Honest and authentic

18. In relating to other team members at times I get annoyed because they don't:

- a. Re-visit team goals to check progress
- b. See the importance of working well together
- c. Object to team actions with which they disagree
- d. Complete their team assignments on time

Scoring

Transfer your answers for questions 1 through 18 to the appropriate box on the score sheet.
Be careful when recording the numbers as the order of the letters change for each question.

The totals for the four styles must equal 180.

Question

1	a		b		c		d		
2	d	_____	a	_____	b	_____	c	_____	
3	c	_____	d	_____	a	_____	b	_____	
4	b	_____	c	_____	d	_____	a	_____	
5	a	_____	b	_____	c	_____	d	_____	
6	d	_____	a	_____	b	_____	c	_____	
7	c	_____	d	_____	a	_____	b	_____	
8	b	_____	c	_____	d	_____	a	_____	
9	a	_____	b	_____	c	_____	d	_____	
10	d	_____	a	_____	b	_____	c	_____	
11	c	_____	d	_____	a	_____	b	_____	
12	b	_____	c	_____	d	_____	a	_____	
13	a	_____	b	_____	c	_____	d	_____	
14	d	_____	a	_____	b	_____	c	_____	
15	c	_____	d	_____	a	_____	b	_____	
16	b	_____	c	_____	d	_____	a	_____	
17	a	_____	b	_____	c	_____	d	_____	
18	d	_____	a	_____	b	_____	c	_____	
Totals		_____		_____		_____		_____	= 180
		Contributor		Collaborator		Communicator		Challenger	

The highest number indicates your Primary Team Player Style. If your highest numbers are the same or within three points of each other, consider them both as your primary style. The lowest total indicates your Least Active Team Player Style.

Your primary team player style defines a set of behaviours that you use most often as a member of a team. It does not mean that it is the only style that you use. All of us have the capacity to use any one of the four styles. We simply use one style – our primary style – more often.

Glenn Parker Team Player Styles

If you have one primary style:

Contributor - Task Oriented

The contributor is a task-oriented team member who enjoys providing the team with good technical information and data. You do your homework, push the team to set high performance standards, and use your resources wisely. Most people see you as dependable although they believe at times you may become too bogged down in details or data. The contributor does not see the big picture or the need for positive team climate.

Most of the time you:		But sometimes you:	
	Complete all team 'homework' in a timely and efficient manner and detailed		Go into data overload with reports that are too long
	Freely share all of the information and materials you have		Push for unrealistic performance standards
	Push the team to set high performance standards		Lose sight of the big picture - the goal or charter of the team
	Provide technical training for team members and serve as a mentor		Lack patience with team climate and process issues
	Can be depended upon to do what is asked of you		Become impatient with other team members who do not live up to your standards

Usually people see you as:		However, occasionally you are perceived as:	
	dependable		short-sighted
	systematic		data-bound
	proficient		perfectionist
	efficient		narrow
	practical		cautious

Collaborator - Goal Oriented

The collaborator is a goal-directed member who sees the vision, mission or goal of the team as paramount. You are flexible and open to new ideas, willing to pitch in and work outside your defined role and are able to share the limelight with other team members. Most people see you as a big picture person but they believe, at times, you may fail to periodically re-visit the mission. The collaborator often does not give enough attention to the basic team tasks and overlooks the individual needs of the other team members.

Most of the time you:		But sometimes you:	
	Help the team establish goals, objectives and action plans		Do not give attention to the basic team tasks
	Pitch in to help out other members who need help		Fail to periodically re-visit or challenge the mission or goals
	Are willing to work outside your defined role to help the team		Do not focus on the individual needs of team members
	Are willing to share the lime- light with other team members		Publicly complain about team failures
	Work hard to achieve team goals even if you don't agree with them		Do not give sufficient attention to the process by which goals are reached

Usually people describe you as:		However, occasionally you are seen as:	
	forward-looking		too future oriented
	cooperative		not task-focused
	independent		unrealistic
	flexible		unconcerned about group process
	imaginative		a dreamer

Communicator - Process Oriented

The communicator is a process oriented member who is an effective listener. You are a facilitator of involvement, conflict resolution, consensus-building, feedback and the building of an informal, relaxed climate. Most people see you as a positive people person but they find that, at times, you may see process as an end in itself. The communicator does not confront other team members or not give enough emphasis to completing task assignments and making progress toward team goals.

Most of the time you:		But sometimes you:	
	Help the team relax and have fun by joking, laughing, and discussing personal interests		See team process and climate as an end in itself
	Step in to resolve process problems (e.g. conflict, lack of involvement)		Fail to challenge or contradict other team members
	Listen attentively (while withholding judgment) to all viewpoints		Do not recognize the importance of task accomplishment
	Recognize and praise other team members for their efforts		Overuse humour and other process techniques
	Encourage all team members to participate in team discussions and decisions		Do not give enough emphasis to long-range planning

Usually people see you as:		However, occasionally you are seen as:	
	encouraging		impractical
	enthusiastic		vague
	supportive		manipulative
	humorous		not sufficiently serious
	relaxed		not bottom-line focused

Challenger - Question Oriented

The challenger is the team member who questions the goals, methods and even the ethics of the team. You are willing to disagree with the leader or higher authority and encourage the team to take well conceived risks. Most people appreciate the value of your candour and openness although, at times, you may not know when to back off an issue. The challenger often becomes self-righteous and tries to push the team too far.

Most of the time you:		But sometimes you:	
	Are willing to disagree with the team leader		Do not know when to back off
	Candidly share your views about the work of the team		Push the team to unreasonable risks
	Challenge the team to take well-considered risks		Become rigid and inflexible
	Push the team to set high ethical standards for teamwork		Paint yourself into a corner
	Are willing to back off when your views are not accepted		Are too direct in communicating with other team members.

Usually people see you as:		However, occasionally you are seen as:	
	candid		rigid
	honest		arrogant
	principled		self-righteous
	assertive		aggressive
	ethical		unyielding



If you have two primary styles:

Contributor and Collaborator

You are well focused on both the short and long-term aspects of the job. You will do whatever it takes to complete the immediate task and reach the team's overall goals. Such things as sharing your expertise, training, pitching in and working outside your designated role comes naturally to you.

You focus on the strategic and tactical issues which mean that you may not give sufficient attention to the internal dynamics of the team. You may be so focused on the work that you may fail to raise important questions about the team's efforts.

Contributor and Communicator

Some may say this is the best of all possible combinations because you emphasize both task and process – getting the job done and how it gets done. You push the team to do excellent work and you are able to facilitate a supportive work environment by encouraging involvement, using your listening skills and resolving differences.

At times, however, you may lose sight of the big picture – where your team is going. You may be reluctant to criticize anything about the team for fear of disrupting the positive climate.

Contributor and Challenger

You bring to the team an emphasis on delivering quality work and meeting deadlines combined with an ability to question the team's tasks and process. You push the team to set higher standards, live up to those standards and to periodically question both the standard and the work produced. While you like to get things done, you are willing to consider alternatives when legitimate questions are raised.

You may push the team to unrealistic standards, excessive analysis and fail to see the need to move forward expeditiously toward the long-term goals. Extensive questioning combined with a strong task focus may result in a lack of concern for internal team climate.

Collaborator and Communicator

Some people may refer to you as a participative visionary because of your emphasis on long-term goals combined with a need to get team members involved in the development and implementation of the goals. Your willingness to pitch in and work outside your defined role meshes nicely with the capability to help establish a supportive and positive team climate.

At times you may not give sufficient attention to the immediate task or short-term objectives of the team. You also may not be concerned with the need to create a climate which welcomes critical comments about the team's goals and internal dynamics.

Collaborator and Challenger

You bring to the team a focus on the future and constant reminders to stay on track coupled with a willingness to question the team's purpose, goals and methods. When necessary, you can be the team's risk taker as you suggest that the team take a hard look at some innovative and far-reaching ideas.

However, if you go too far or are confrontational you run the risk of being disruptive to the team's dynamics. Your strong emphasis on the future and the big picture may mean you become impatient with other team members who are concerned with the team's near-term deliverables and the maintenance of a positive climate.

Communicator and Challenger

Your primary contributions are on the process side of the team's success. You insure that the members work well together while you push the team to address important questions about their strengths and weaknesses.

However, you run the risk of seeing process as an end in itself. You need to keep in mind that the team must set long-term goals and work hard to deliver high quality products and services that satisfy current customer needs.

If you have three primary styles...

Look at the strengths of each of these styles and recognize that you use each of them with about equal frequency. You have the flexibility to use many behaviours as required by the needs of your team. However, you may want to look at the one piece of the puzzle which is missing.

- If your least active style is Contributor, ask yourself if you are sufficiently task-oriented.
- If your least active style is Collaborator, are you sufficiently focused on the long-term aspects of the team's work?
- If your least active style is Communicator, are you adequately concerned about developing and maintaining a positive team climate?
- If your least active style is Challenger, do you see yourself as willing to candidly question the team's mission, goals, work quality, internal climate and other important factors?

If your results show a uniform pattern...

If your scores on all four styles are within three points of each other you have the capacity to easily use the strengths of all four styles. Since you are not strongly committed to one style you have the flexibility to provide the team with what is needed at the appropriate time. You should also have the ability to easily relate to other team members.

However, your impact as a team player may be diffused because you have no strong preference for one type. Other team members may find you hard to read and understand because you lack a dominant style.

Increasing your Effectiveness as a Team Player

Here are some tips for making use of the information you have learned about yourself through completing the Team Player Survey.

- Affirm your strengths. Acknowledge that you're O.K. Look for ways to add to your strengths. Be the best Contributor, Collaborator, Communicator, or Challenger.
- Look for teams and organizations where your strengths are appreciated; avoid those situations where they are not valued. For example, Challengers should avoid conservative, risk-adverse environments.
- Extend your repertoire by incorporating more of the strengths of other styles. For example, if your least active style is Communicator, develop a plan to increase your skills as a group facilitator.
- Develop your ability to analyze your team. When you observe the need for a particular strength (i.e. to challenge complacency) provides an appropriate intervention and/or encourage others to do the same.

Be aware of your tendencies to become an ineffective team player – to use your strengths to excess. If possible, work with a colleague or use feedback from the Team Player Survey provided by colleagues to identify your potential excesses, when they are likely to appear and what you can do, perhaps with the help of others, to minimize the tendencies.