

Understand your business  
personality to manage and  
grow your business with ease



## Understand your business personality to manage and grow your business

### It's All About You

Ask most entrepreneurs about their list of "day job" complaints and most of them will talk about fulfillment, making a difference, flexibility and maybe money. What they won't say—even though they feel it—is that working for someone else means they have to abide by that person's rules. And I'm not just talking about vacation planning and clock punching.

When you work for someone else, you are required to abide by their rules, weather you agree with them or not.

Staff writers work the stories they are assigned—whether they're interested in the subject or not. Salespersons represent the product lines the company offers, regardless of other, better options. Teachers follow an approved curriculum—never mind that students have been shown to learn better with a more updated system.

Not only that but when you have a day job, you must conform to the company culture as well. Christmas parties may not be optional, even for a true introvert. Open doors may be policy, even if you work best in absolute quiet.

So you leave the corporate world behind. Finally, you're going to run your business your way. But then, doubts begin to creep in.

You see that super successful coach, always dressed beautifully and perfectly made up, so you start to think you have to look like that, too.

You follow another well-known business owner who is continually encouraging you to outsource everything so you can work just a handful of hours each week.

You stumble across a coach who insists that they only way to grow your following is through live, on camera webinars.

Suddenly, all that freedom you envisioned starts to feel pretty restrictive.

**Here's what you need to remember:** This is your business, and you get to run it your way.

But first, you have to know what that means. For so many of us, we've spent so much time trying to conform to what we think is expected of us, that it's nearly impossible to know what we truly want. Not only do we lose sight of what we want, but we don't know what makes us...

- Work most efficiently and effectively
- Happiest and most fulfilled
- Most comfortable when it comes to working with others



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Figure those things out, and you'll love your business as much as you thought you would when you sat down in your home office for the very first time. Even better, you'll be more successful because of it.

### Step 1: Know Your Personality Type

It's no secret that some people are energized by crowds while others break out in a cold sweat at the thought of attending a child's birthday party. This difference in personality types is what makes some of us great at sales, while others thrive in content creation or other solitary endeavors. And that would be great if business only entailed one task.

The problem for solopreneurs is that your business requires you to wear many hats. While you might get to indulge your inner introvert by hiding behind your computer monitor, your business will suffer if you don't put yourself out there in the form of marketing and networking.

No matter which side of the introvert/extrovert divide you find yourself on, managing a business can be uncomfortable. It's easier though, if you first know exactly where you fall on the scale.

According to Susan Krauss Whitbourne Ph.D. in Psychology Today, introverts are easily identified by these nine characteristics:

1. You enjoy spending time by yourself.
2. You do your best thinking when you're alone.
3. You lead best when others are self-starters.
4. You're the last to volunteer when someone asks something of a group.
5. Others ask for your opinion—because you never offer it.
6. You wear headphones in public.
7. You avoid conflict.
8. You receive more calls, texts, and emails than you create.
9. You don't initiate small talk with people who are passing acquaintances.

Extroverts, on the other hand, can be identified by their outgoing personalities. If you're an extrovert, you likely:

- Prefer phone calls over email.
- Love being the center of attention.
- Take action first, sometimes without considering the consequences.
- Enjoy working on a group project—in fact, you're probably the team captain.
- Have numerous, unrelated interests.
- Enjoy discussions about thoughts and feelings.
- Feel sad if your social calendar is too empty.



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Of course, there are those of us who display both introverted and extroverted tendencies, depending on the situation. No matter where you fall along the introvert/extrovert continuum, you're absolutely normal, but it does affect how you manage your business.

True introverts will not be happy filling their schedule with speaking engagements and on-camera interviews. Extroverts will feel wilted and be less productive if they can't get out and meet with people in real time, at least occasionally.

Knowing your personality type is only half the battle, though. The next step is arranging your business to match. For example:

- Introverts might recognize that networking is essential, so they agree to attend a conference, but plan for some "alone time" to rest and regroup.
- Extroverts know that to build a business takes dedicated focus time for content creation and planning, but schedule social activities to keep their batteries charged.
- Introverts realize that JV partnerships (such as webinars) are important for business growth, but rather than stress out over it, offer to conduct text interviews instead.
- Extroverts may be anxious to get that new program out there, but—realizing a tendency toward impulsiveness—enlist the help of a friend or colleague to review the material for completeness before releasing it.

### Exercise: Identify Your Personality Type (And the Struggles You Face Because of It)

*My Personality Type*







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### Step 3: Are You a Lion or a Wolf?

*“The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.”*

While dozens—or maybe even hundreds—of articles and books have been written espousing the merits of "early to bed, early to rise," the facts are much more complicated—as the second mouse certainly knows.

Not only do we all operate on our own internal schedule, feeling energized and awake during certain hours, and sleepy and unfocused during others, but it turns out that trying to fight that personal schedule can be detrimental to your business.

As we said in Step 1, it's critical to your success to realize that this is your business and your life, and you get to run it in a way that makes the most sense to you—and that includes your daily schedule.

But it goes beyond recognizing if you're an early bird or a night owl. In fact, one researcher, Michael Breus, Ph.D.) claims there are four "chronotypes:"

- Lion—the classic early riser
- Wolf—the night owl
- Bear—your sleep schedule varies
- Dolphin—sleep? Who can sleep?

According to Dr. Breus, not only are the chronotypes linked to your personality traits, but knowing your chronotype allows you to arrange your schedule for maximum productivity and effectiveness.

For example, if you're a lion, it's best to schedule your must-do tasks first thing in the morning, since that's when you'll be most productive. You also are likely an introvert, so while you realize social activities are necessary for networking, you're the first to leave the party.

Wolves, on the other hand, only really get going several hours after waking, and do their best creative work long after the lions have retired for the night. If you're a wolf, you know to never schedule meetings first thing in the morning, and look for business partners and outsourcers who share your night-owl tendencies if it's important for you to communicate in real time.

#### Exercise: Find Your Chronotype

Take [The Power of When Quiz](#) to find your Chronotype.



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### Exercise: Design Your Ideal Schedule

With your chronotype and personal preferences in mind, create a schedule that makes the best use of your creative and productive times.

Time	Best Type of Work/Activity for Me
5 am – 7 am	
7 am – 9 am	
9 am – 11 am	
11 am – 1 pm	
1 pm – 3 pm	
3 pm – 5 pm	
5 pm – 7 pm	
7 pm – 9 pm	
9 pm – 11 pm	
11 pm – 1 am	

### Step 4: Communication Styles Matter

Closely tied to your personality type, your communication style will drive many elements of your business, including:

- How you choose business partners
- Who you hire
- The clients you work with
- The programs you create
- And even your marketing materials

Depending who you speak to, communication styles may have many names, but regardless of their titles, they all fall into one of four broad categories, as explained by Mark Murphy of LeadershipIQ.com:

- **Analytical:** You want numbers and facts to base your decisions on, not emotions or feelings. Personal communicators make you just a little bit crazy.



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- **Intuitive:** You see the big picture and often only want to know the outcome, not the details of how to get there. Speaking to a functional communicator makes you lose interest...fast.
- **Functional:** You prefer step-by-step plans and outlines. No detail is too small to be held up to endless examination and consideration.
- **Personal:** You value emotional connections and build them easily by recognizing not only how people think, but how they feel.

If you've ever sat in a meeting that seemed it would never end, while a coworker talked on and on (and on) about the budget for a project, chances are you've met an analytical communicator.

Or, if you've sat down with a JV partner to hammer out a plan for a new project, only to be met with something akin to, "We'll just create a 16-week coaching program" rather than the step-by-step roadmap and milestones you expected, you've met an intuitive communicator.

None of these communication styles are bad. They all can—and do—make great entrepreneurs, small business owners, and even coaches. The key is to know yourself and how you communicate, and which style will complement (or not) your own.

For example, if you're an analytical communicator and you're looking for a business coach, stay away from the personal communication types. Their emotional thinking won't work on you, and will only leave you feeling frustrated and out of sorts. Instead, look for a functional or intuitive communicator to help you see the big picture and make solid plans.

Likewise, if you tend toward intuitive, easily seeing and communicating the big picture with little regard to how you're going to get there, then a virtual assistant or business manager with a more functional style might be just the person you need on your team to help keep your projects on task. He or she can help you organize your thoughts and clearly communicate them to the rest of the team, so no steps are missed, and nothing gets overlooked by less experienced staff.

### Exercise: Find Your Communication Style

Do you recognize yourself in any of these four types? [Take the quiz here](#) for more insight into your personal communication style, then think about your current clients, business partners, virtual assistants and others you work with. What types of communicators are they? Which people resonate with you? Which ones stress you out or make you anxious?

*My personal communication style is:*



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*My family, friends, colleagues and team members' style is:*

Name	Communication Style	I can best work with this person by:

### Step 5: Your Management Style

Like your communication style, your management style is a critical component of your business success. Also like your communication style, there is no right or wrong type, there is just awareness of how you work best so that you can build a business that fulfills you and meets your needs.

Whether you're a total hands-off type who prefers to travel the world while your team runs the nuts and bolts of your business, or you'd rather roll up your sleeves and dive right in, that's exactly what you should do.

According to Dr. Kurt Lewin, who is known for his studies on management and group dynamics at the University of Iowa in the 1930s, we all fall into one of three basic management types:

- **Democratic:** The Democratic leader is open to the opinions of her team. She readily accepts thoughts and ideas from others and is approachable in her management style.
- **Authoritarian:** This leader is the control freak. She sets a high standard and expects total conformity. In the online world, this management style is best suited to working with those who require a lot of oversight.
- **Delegative:** This leader is the laid back one. She's happy to hand off tasks to team members and fully expects them to be done without the need for constant check-ins. This manager works best with self-starters.



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Of the three types, the Democratic leader is considered the most effective. Her team is motivated, she's open to new ideas and ways of doing things, and the company culture is positive.

The authoritarian type can indeed head up a highly successful business—Steve Jobs is the most famous example of authoritarian leadership—but employees are often unhappy and stressed out.

Regarding employee happiness, the delegative leader wins, but there's a cost. Her business simply won't grow at the rate she would prefer. After all, no one is really manning the ship's wheel.

Ideally, a great business leader has a healthy mix of all three management styles and can call up each persona as needed.

With team members who need strong direction, the authoritarian is called upon.

Brainstorming new products? Enter the democratic leader.

And if you want to take off for 6 weeks in Europe, you better put the delegative leader in charge.

Knowing which type of leader you are (at least most of the time) will help you better choose and work with assistants, JV partners, and even clients. If you lean toward the delegative side, for example, you likely won't do well with a staff of off-shore virtual assistants. They'll need too much input and guidance from you.

A better choice for you would be to work with a fully trained online business manager who you trust to oversee the business growth with little input.

The same can be said of partnerships. If you are more of a "team player" and you choose a partner who is authoritarian, you'll quickly become frustrated and resentful. Instead, look for partners who closely match your management style, and you'll both be much happier with the results.

### Exercise: Know Your Management Style

*My management style is mostly:*



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*I actively seek out team members and partners who:*

Democratic	Authoritarian	Delegative
Readily bring new ideas to the group and are excited by changes in direction.	Do exactly as they are told. I have a system, and I know it works.	Work well independently. I don't want to have to oversee every little thing.
Are comfortable questioning my plans or ideas.	Need a lot of direction. I want things done my way.	Live by the philosophy, "It's easier to beg forgiveness than ask permission."
Work together to improve my business. They know that when I win, we all win.	Have little to no entrepreneurial drive. They are focused on doing their job.	Are entrepreneurial in nature. They "get me."

### Step 6: Know Your Love Language

You may have heard of the book, [The 5 Love Languages](#). In it, author Gary Chapman asserts that we each react strongly (and best) when the people in our lives "speak" to us in the language that we prefer.

The five languages are:

- **Words of affirmation.** If your day is made when a colleague or friend praises your work or other activity, your love language is very likely words of affirmation.
- **Acts of service.** Do you feel loved and appreciated most when your kids unload the dishwasher, or your spouse puts the laundry away without being asked? These are acts of service.
- **Receiving gifts.** If unexpected flowers, jewelry or other gifts make your heart sing, this is your love language.
- **Quality time.** For some people, nothing says love quite like a quiet evening at home.
- **Physical touch.** If a hug or a cuddle on the couch makes you feel most loved, then this is your love language.

If you think this only applies to personal relationships, you'd be wrong. While Chapman asserts that the five love languages are definitely in play in the workplace, he does clarify that the application differs. After all, you probably can't go around cuddling with your team members. But you might offer a "high-five" or a handshake, or even a hug, depending on the situation.



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In the workplace, the love languages are titled:

- Words of affirmation.
- Acts of service.
- Tangible gifts.
- Quality time.
- Appropriate physical touch.

You can see that there isn't much difference between personal and work relationships, but how we show appreciation changes.

You can take the love language assessment [here](#) to learn your love language.

Reading through the questions will not only give you insight into your love language, but it will help you discover your team members' and business partners' language as well. With this information in hand, you'll be better equipped to:

- Choose the right team members
- Help your team grow and improve
- Encourage your team to make positive changes where needed

Remember, it's not always money that is the great motivator in business. Many times an assistant or team member can be encouraged or lifted up simply with a few words or a small, heartfelt gift. By knowing the love languages of your team, you can better show your appreciation, and a team who knows they are appreciated will be a loyal part of your business for years to come.

### Exercise: Consider the Love Languages of Your clients and team

Name	Love Language	How I Show My Appreciation
<i>Sue Smith</i>	<i>Words of Affirmation</i>	<i>A card or a phone call expressing my happiness over a job well done.</i>

