

# SOCIALSTYLE<sup>SM</sup>

## TRACOM Sneak Peek

Excerpts from

# Improving Managerial Effectiveness with Versatility

The Application of SOCIAL STYLE



CONCEPTS GUIDE

 **TRACOM GROUP**

The creator of SOCIALSTYLE



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## Introduction

### AS A MANAGER, WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO LEARN ABOUT SOCIAL STYLE<sup>SM</sup> AND VERSATILITY?

This guide is designed to teach you about SOCIAL STYLE and Versatility concepts and how they can help you to develop skills that will make you more effective as a manager. So, what does this mean and why should you care? The short answer is, by applying the SOCIAL STYLE and Versatility concepts that you will learn throughout this guide, you can get more done faster and with less effort. Plus, your direct reports will most likely increase their levels of support and respect for you as a manager.

Here's how it works. You have ways that you prefer to act and interact with your direct reports. For example, when you undertake a project you may prefer to move fast, gather just the necessary facts, make assignments, and get things going right away; or you may prefer to take things a little slower as you sort out the details, consider alternatives, and contemplate the consequences of taking one course of action versus another. These behavioral preferences and patterns of behavior are a part of your **SOCIAL STYLE**.

Each of your direct reports also has their own behavioral preferences or SOCIAL STYLE. As you might imagine some of their styles can be quite different from your own. How interpersonally effective you are with your direct reports depends on how well you take into account their preferences as well as your own. The impact and effectiveness of your chosen behaviors on your direct reports is a result of another key concept, **Versatility**.

Think about the different people who report to you. Perhaps one speaks loudly and tends to be the center of attention; another is highly focused on getting the job done; another goes out of his way to be friendly to just about everyone. These and many other characteristic ways of acting and interacting with people at work are expressions of a person's SOCIAL STYLE.

Your success in managing a diverse group of people depends on your technical skills and specialized knowledge as well as your ability to make your relationships mutually productive. Your ability to do this in a way that increases the interpersonal effectiveness and productivity of both you and your direct reports and earns you their support and respect is the essence of Versatile Managing.

In addition, Versatile Managing can help you more effectively do such things as delegate, provide feedback, coach, and mentor your direct reports. It can also help you to resolve, or even head off, unnecessary conflict caused by “interpersonal friction.”



## SOCIAL STYLE<sup>sm</sup> Fundamentals

### DIMENSIONS OF BEHAVIOR

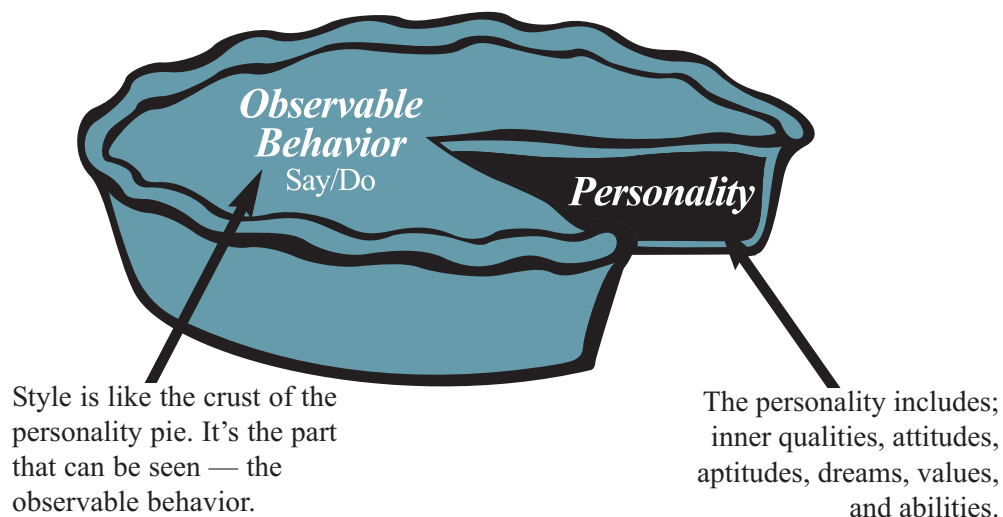
**A**s an individual, you have a unique personality made up of a jumbled collection of emotional patterns, mental processes and thought patterns, values, and behavior patterns which are all influenced by genetics and personal experience. Accurately describing and explaining your personality would not just be difficult, it would be impossible.

It's little wonder that great minds like Albert Einstein stuck to simpler tasks like figuring out the nature of matter and energy in the universe. The SOCIAL STYLE Model, following this wise example, doesn't try to figure out your personality either.

SOCIAL STYLE deals with just your behaviors, that part of your personality that can be objectively observed. The word *personality* comes from the Latin word *persona*, which means "mask." This is appropriate, since personality comprises both visible and hidden qualities. In a simple analogy, personality can be compared to a pie. The inside of the pie, like much of your personality, is out of direct view and contains a mix of ingredients that gives the pie a unique texture and flavor. Behavior is like the crust, the outer part of the pie that everyone can see and describe in more or less the same way.

Like the crust of the **Personality Pie**, SOCIAL STYLE behaviors are particular patterns of action that people can observe and agree upon for describing a person's usual behavior.

### PERSONALITY PIE

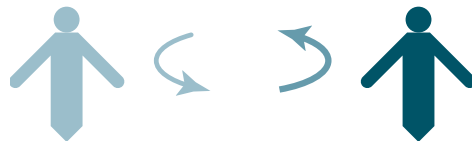


# SOCIAL STYLE<sup>sm</sup> Fundamentals

## THE “SAY AND DO” STANDARD

Observable behaviors are what you say (verbal behaviors) and do (non-verbal behaviors) with no judgments by the observer as to why. Observable behaviors are interactions between two people whose behaviors can be observed and verified by others. The interaction could be between you and your direct reports or between two of your direct reports. Notice that the **“Say and Do” Behaviors** listed below are not “either-or” propositions. Rather, they represent continuums, for example, from quieter to louder or from less to more direct eye contact.

### OBSERVABLE “SAY AND DO” BEHAVIORS



- Quieter - Louder
- Slower paced - Faster paced
- More facially controlled - More facially animated
- Less inflected voice - More inflected voice
- Less direct eye contact - More direct eye contact
- More casual posture - More rigid posture
- Leans back - Leans forward

# SOCIAL STYLE<sup>sm</sup> Fundamentals

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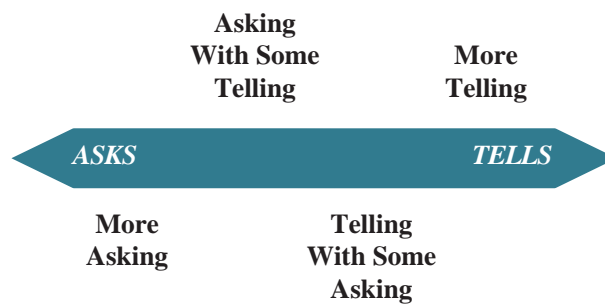
## BEHAVING WITH STYLE

SOCIAL STYLE is measured on two basic dimensions of observable human behavior. These dimensions are “assertiveness” and “responsiveness.”

### Assertiveness

Assertiveness is a dimension of observable behavior that measures the degree to which others perceive you as tending to ask or tell in interactions with others. “Assertiveness” as used in SOCIAL STYLE is not an indicator of whether you are introverted or extroverted, but rather the way in which you initiate action with others. In SOCIAL STYLE, assertiveness is considered neither positive nor negative; it is neutral. That means there is no good or bad place on the **Assertiveness Scale**.

## ASSERTIVENESS SCALE



## SOCIAL STYLE MODEL™

### The Amiable Style “One for all and all for one.”

People with an **Amiable Style** openly display their feelings to others. However, they appear less demanding and generally more agreeable. They seem more interested in achieving a rapport with others, who often describe them as informal, casual, and easy going. People with an Amiable Style tend to be sensitive to keeping relationships with others on a friendly, personal basis.

People seen as having an **Amiable Style** appear to:

- Focus their attention on the present and interpret the world on a personal basis by getting involved in the feelings and relationships between people
- Prefer to get things done with and through others
- Look for personal motives in the actions of others
- Have difficulty understanding that some people react to the information available, or the practicality of the situation, rather than relationships
- Be good team players
- Develop effective social networks
- Be easy for others to communicate and share with
- Stick with the comfortable and the known
- Avoid decisions which might involve personal risks and conflict in relationships
- Add joy, warmth and freshness to social situations
- Be undisciplined in their use of time

### AMIABLE STYLE HIGHLIGHTS

- Slower paced
- Make efforts to relate
- Show less concern for affecting change
- Work in the present time frame
- Show supportive action
- Tend to avoid conflict

# SOCIAL STYLE MODEL™

## UNLOCKING THE KEYS TO SOCIAL STYLE

From the pattern of behaviors associated with each style, we can make certain inferences about the key characteristics of each style.

These **Key Characteristics of SOCIAL STYLE** are referred to as the SOCIAL STYLE Need, Orientation, and Growth Action. The Need is a primary motivating force for this person. The Orientation is how a person with this style typically goes about achieving the Need. And, the Growth Action is what a person of this style tends to overlook, ignore, or avoid in their interactions with others. Growth Action behaviors tend to be infrequently used in favor of the preferred behaviors of each style and they are viewed by others as the greatest “weakness” of that particular style. For example:

- The **Driving Style's** growth action is “to listen,” which may get overlooked in favor of charging ahead to get their results.
- The **Expressive Style's** growth action is to check, that is, to stop and think about how their spontaneity and seeking personal approval may be getting in the way of a productive relationship.
- The **Amiable Style's** growth action is to initiate, that is, to take action that may involve personal risk or cause an increase in tension in a relationship.
- The **Analytical Style's** growth action is to declare — to deliberately stop analyzing and make a decision or at least share what is causing them to not make a decision.

As a manager understanding these key characteristics puts you at an advantage, when developing successful strategies for interacting with your direct reports and for building productive interpersonal relationships with them.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL STYLE

