

# Greater Leadership in Less Time, with Less Stress and More Creativity

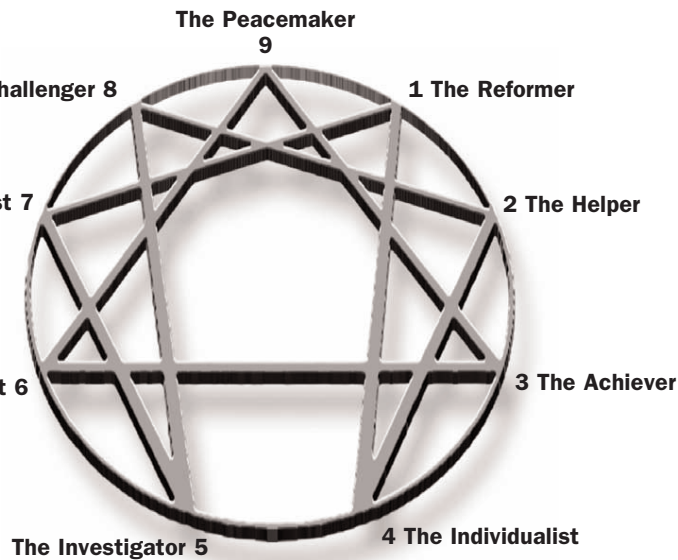
## The Enneagram Personality Profile

By Tom Dyer

The dynamics of the workplace are continually asking leaders to be more effective in less time with more creative outcomes. This pressure is changing how leaders relate to everyone at work. Since the development of the computer, solutions to problems and creative new strategies can come from anyone or any level inside the organization. This shifts the nature of working relationships, moving away from the patriarchal, top-down management style to a “peer-to-peer” approach with different areas of responsibility and decision-making authority.

Many leaders are not personally ready for this shift. It requires them to have more effective interpersonal skills. For that to happen, leaders need a better understanding of their own wiring and ability to manage it in a way that keeps the workload moving towards the desired outcomes without forcing others, pulling rank or using threats. It also requires them to know how others are wired and how to facilitate them through their issues, enabling them to remain productive and not go emotionally out of balance.

Much of this capability can be learned through understanding personality types and how they influence the development of skills as well as identifying issues that lower productivity. Recent studies have shown that 35% of leadership is dependent upon emotional intelligence. The emotional component of the personality is different for each type which therefore presents different issues that need to be handled in order to step into leadership and achieve higher levels of productivity. The Enneagram is a personality profiling system that yields great depth of information about different personality types, and can be



### The Enneagram with Riso-Hudson Type Names

very helpful in the workplace. It breaks the population into nine different types and lays out their basic belief structures and emotional dispositions. There are distinct communication patterns for each type, which makes some relationships easy and others laborious. In my experience, failure to understand these differences explains about 40% of the sandpapering and miscommunication at work. Conversely, a good understanding of these concepts can have a real, positive effect on the bottom line of organizations, showing up as reduction of stress and shortening the amount of time necessary to get projects done with the level of creativity desired.

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## Know Yourself to Understand Others

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Let's look at each type and what is important to it, and where each type normally stumbles. See if you can see any of your working relationships in this construct.

Type	Valued Criteria	Issue
1. Reformer	Accuracy/Integrity	Overcritical
2. Helper	Supporting others	Wanting approval
3. Achiever	Achievement/ looking good	Seeking limelight/ arrogance
4. Individualist	Unique/special	Dramatic/moody
5. Investigator	Information/intelligence	Intellectual arrogance/ lone wolf
6. Loyalist	Support boss/consensus	Indecisive/fear
7. Enthusiast	Big Picture/fun	Avoid details/scattered
8. Challenger	Results/get it done	Misuse of power/anger
9. Peacemaker	Keeping the peace	Avoids conflict/ withdraw

For instance, when a Challenger (8) manager who wants quick results is working with an Individualist (4) who is focused on being highly creative, it's easy to see how they might irritate each other. The foundational belief structures of the different types and their highly valued criteria come into play. (Of course it's much harder to be aware of this conflict in real time when working at warp speed.)

Consider two obvious sandpapering situations: first, two Challengers (8) each see the same situation differently, creating what they perceive to be a win/lose orientation; and second, a Reformer (1) reporter is working at obtaining all the accurate details of a story and an Achiever editor (3) simply wants the story to look good. If we were to look at the same situations with an understanding of the Enneagram types involved, they might look quite different. Two Challengers (8) might divide up a project so that each can have dominion over one area. The Achieving editor (3) may communicate to the creative Individualist reporter (4) that this can be a very creative piece, but the deadline is looming so the story must be the best that can be produced by that deadline.

Projects take less time when people are conscious of their own and others' types and are able to flex their style in order to avoid sandpapering. When I sit in on meetings, I can tell when someone's highly valued criteria are violated and can predict in 15-minute increments how much longer the meeting is going to take by the degree of violation. What's also noticeable is the toll it takes on relationships. These situations are the invisible thieves of time and creators of stress. Outcomes are almost always compromised. When types are given consideration in workplace interactions, time necessary for project completion is reduced and creativity is elevated, and involved parties feel more fulfilled.

For each of the types there are three levels of emotional health: healthy, average and unhealthy. For example, Martin Luther King Jr. was a healthy Challenger (8) and Saddam Hussein was an unhealthy Challenger (8). The aim is to have as many healthy behavior choices as possible for any situation, based upon the theory that given a choice of behaviors a person will choose the one most productive for the desired outcome for the situation. What this requires is the awareness of personal dynamics in each situation. Emotional intelligence plays a large part in this awareness and determines to a large degree one's productivity. When the intensity of an emotion hits a particular level, people typically lose choices in behavior — mostly the productive ones. The choices left tend to be survival strategies, which again are different for each personality type. For example, the Peacemaker (9) would disappear or withdraw under stress and the Challenger (8) would move to intimidate or attack any perceived threat. As one moves up the corporate ladder, these behaviors become more sophisticated and not as apparent, but they still exist.

In either case a successful response to this stress is to shift awareness back inside and go through a process such as the following:

- Bring to mind the shared goal in the situation
- Scan yourself for emotions and thoughts for greater internal awareness
- Start talking to yourself to bring yourself back into balance
- Review and increase your choices of how you want to participate
- Express your feeling-level experience - not a mental thought
- Try to bring forward your best choice in behavior
- Afterwards review the situation and pull out of it as much learning as possible

This all happens in a nanosecond, but this is where the competitive advantage can be found in leadership. The objective is to remain productive given the stated desired outcomes.

Here are a few guidelines to reducing time and increasing the creativity of outcomes for all types:

- No two people can be out of balance in the same conversation at the same time
- The person with the greater awareness needs to drop the defenses first
- Always start with finding the shared goal first
- Listen twice as much as you talk (two ears, one mouth)

*Tom Dyer is co-founder of LeadershipU.org, an educational affiliate of A&R Consulting, a leading-edge management consulting practice serving Fortune 500 companies throughout the U.S. and abroad. He will be a featured discussion leader at API's Critical Management Skills seminar in September.*