



USING KEIRSEY TEMPERAMENT THEORY TO SELECT, TRAIN, COMMUNICATE, AND CARE FOR YOUR TEAM

In the children's book, *Who is the Beast?* by Keith Baker, animals of the jungle voice traits of a young tiger as he mysteriously moves through the rain forest; "I see his stripes, yellow and black...his legs, sure and strong... and, his eyes, green and round." Yet, the surprise ending reveals a gentle lesson of how we can celebrate our similarities and respect each other's differences.

People's uniqueness is an expression of natural diversity. Just like a pumpkin seed cannot grow into a tree, nor can people trade their true temperament and character for that of someone else's.

Why do dogs bury bones? Why do beavers build dams? Why do hens sit on eggs? And, why are lions social while tigers are solitary in nature? Just like animals differ, we too differ from each other in fundamental ways. So, why do people attempt to reshape others to reflect their own personality?

According to Dr. David Keirsey, psychologist and author, "There is much to be gained by appreciating differences, and much to be lost by ignoring them or condemning them. But the first step toward seeing others as distinct from yourself is to become better acquainted with your own traits of character. "

According to Keirsey, there are two sides to personality: temperament (nature) and character (developed). Temperament is born within us. It is the reason dogs hide bones, beavers dam up streams, and why birds form a clutch of eggs. It is also why some people are expressive while others are reserved. Character is developed by our upbringing, experiences, genetics, and education. Together, they build our personality. We are unique individuals with fundamentally diverse ideas, who see the world very differently from each other. It is why we react differently to different situations, respond emotionally to each other, and why we handle matters of crisis in various ways.

by Christine Townsend

There are, however, different schools of thought on personality. Sigmund Freud (neurologist) believed that physical pleasure was the basic motive for all human beings, while Harry Sullivan (psychiatrist/psychoanalyst) believed social status was the real motivator. Abraham Maslow (psychologist) felt that self-actualization and growth was the basis of human behavior, while Alfred Adler (physician/psychotherapist) maintained that people strived for superiority and supremacy. Keirsey, studied all these theories and determined that all four quests are part of human nature. In fact, they are the core pursuits of each of the four temperaments that have been repeatedly observed in human and animal behavior for over two thousand years. The Keirsey four temperaments are described as:

1. **Artisan.** Artisans make up 30% of the world population. They are dreamers, fun-loving, optimistic, spontaneous, creative, and impulsive. Artisans have a natural ability to excel in the arts. Not only fine arts or performing arts, but also athletic, military, political, mechanical, and industrial arts. They are also excellent in business, for their intelligence in tactics provides them a flair for the "art of the deal." Artisans are leaders like President Bill Clinton, Madonna, Stephen Spielberg, President Donald Trump, Meryl Streep, and Michael Jordan.
2. **Guardian.** 45% of the world population is made up of these genuine and hard-working people. They are dependable, loyal, focused, cautious, and responsible. Guardians are the foundation of society and they have a desire to serve and preserve our communities. They have a natural talent for keeping business running smoothly. Using their logistical intelligence, Guardians

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excel in supervision, planning, teamwork, organization, and maintenance. Some famous Guardians are Queen Elizabeth, President Jimmy Carter, Barbara Walters, Vince Lombardi, Warren Buffet, and Rosa Parks.

- 3. Idealist.** These enthusiastic, intuitive, kind-hearted, authentic, spiritual, and inspirational personalities encompass 15% of the world population. With a high intelligence in diplomacy, Idealists have a talent for written and oral communication. They provide harmony in the workplace for they combine fluency with language and sensitivity to individual and group needs. Idealists use their interpersonal skills as managers, mediators, counselors, teachers, and public speakers. You may recognize an Idealist in Oprah Winfrey, Mother Theresa, Ghandi, C.S. Lewis, Bono, Maria Shriver, and Princess Diana.
- 4. Rational.** Only 10% of the world population is made up of these masterminds. They are problem solvers, focused, independent, even-tempered, and they trust logic. Rationals are highly intelligent in strategy. Their expertise in knowledge have contributed to many advances in technology and medicine for they are problem solvers of complex systems. Being of curious nature, Rationals can analyze any system that makes up the world around us. They include Bill Gates, Hillary Clinton, Steve Jobs, Albert Einstein, Lee Kuan Yew, President Barrack Obama, and Walt Disney.

Trying to determine which temperament is best is like trying to determine which color of the rainbow is the finest, for they all play a perspective role in society.

Under the four temperament resides 16 personalities that are made up of our temperament and character combined. In looking at the interactive roles people play out in their social context, one can determine which team members are naturally more directive and which ones are more informative, as well as which ones are more pre-empting (leads), contending (wins), collaborating (includes), or accommodating (considers).

By investing time to understand oneself and each member of the team, one can better select, train, communicate, and care for their team members. In doing so, doctors can establish and sustain the values and vision for the practice, as well as develop a culture that reflects a sense-of-belonging for both their employees and patients.

Much like *Who is the Beast?* presents a timeless message to young readers, the Keirsey Temperament theory gives adults in the workplace a true understanding of each other.

More on Keirsey

Keirsey's mission is to change the world by helping people understand each other.

Keirsey is the world's most widely used personality assessment. More than 100 million individuals from 170+ countries have taken the assessment. The Keirsey assessment is used by the U.S. Government, all branches of the U.S. military, academic institutions, 75% of the Fortune 500 companies, numerous global consulting firms, social enterprises, and faith-based organizations. ♡

Sources

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