



Rule 16

Be Direct with People Who Value Results

Of the four work styles you can find on teams, one is known as the “D” style of behavior. This stands for Direct and is my predominant approach to interacting with others. These individuals are most engaged when they can exercise control over, and see the results of, their work. They generally have strong ego strength. Those exhibiting this style may come across strong and focus on results to such a degree that others may perceive them as uncaring.

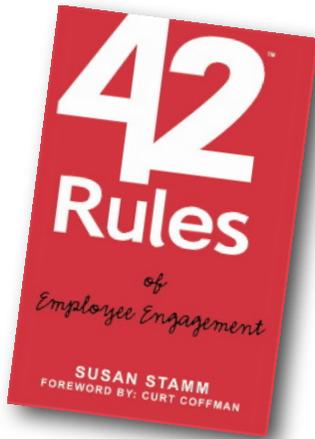
A strength of this style is making quick decisions. This ability can be both a blessing and a curse. For me, it's a curse when I find myself hitting the SEND button before reading my first draft of an email that really needed editing. Or when I've deleted a long voice mail message before hearing it through to the end where a client's home phone number was left for me to call. On the other hand this ability has allowed me to process challenging problems quickly and swing into action while others around me may still be analyzing the situation.

To be effective with a person exhibiting this style of behavior, you need to take a direct approach in communicating with them. No beating around the bush. I will never forget an evening, about a year into our marriage, when my husband and I were having dinner. He quietly commented on the meal by saying “ I really had no idea that there were so many dishes that included celery in the ingredients.” This very non-direct style of communication is his specialty, and it comes from his “S” style (see Rule 17). Being newlyweds, I went easy on him (actually, I found it amusing). But, the “D” style wants you to say: “ Hey, I hate celery. Great, and thank you for helping me understand you,” says the D person. The “D” style knows what to do with this information...she only cooks with celery when angry with her mate.

One of the real values of understanding this style is in building trust on the team. For people with this “D” style, trust will flourish when a straightforward approach to communication is utilized. If you operate from one of the more reserved styles such as the “S” (Rule 17) or the “C” (Rule 18) this will likely feel uncomfortable but it is exactly what the “D” wants and it is necessary for trust. This style does not want you to sugar coat your feelings or catch you acting in a way that is not congruent with your words. This will break down trust. Not comfortable talking directly to the “D” style person? Tell him so. He will appreciate your honesty and the fact that you are working so hard to deliver information in a way that speaks to him.

In working to prepare a leadership event for a client with strong D behavior, I was told: “No fluffy stuff!” This presented a challenge for me because some of what my client perceives as fluffy I see as crucial interpersonal skill development. So I took some of the learning points I wanted to make and rather than use any experiential exercises, I designed a series of “fact finding” exercises around interpersonal skills. The result was the same, but by packaging exercises as fact-finding and data mining, it gave the event a more serious, business-like appearance. To engage team members or customers with this style, a bottom line approach is always a good strategy.

Action: Make a list of everyone on your team who exhibits strong ego strength, moves quickly to action, and speaks clearly and directly. Ask them how you can modify your approach to meet some of their behavioral needs. By meeting these needs, you’ll increase motivation, trust and engagement.



Rule 17

Be Enthusiastic With People Who Value Enthusiasm

People exhibiting the “I” (interactive) work-style are enthusiastic, verbal and positive. Team members with this style will be most engaged if they have opportunity for positive social contact. Masters at communication, these folks seem to have a real knack for putting a positive spin on things. They may break the ice in tense situations by cracking a joke. They are not too fond of having to manage details. They tend to be “big-picture” people. They often have a great many interests and friends, which may sometimes create time challenges as they try to balance all their ‘interesting priorities.’ Most important to people with this style is their need to be liked and accepted by others.

My son, Adam, and I both exhibit a fair amount of this style. Observing our family dynamics can be quite humorous at times. On one occasion, Rick, Adam and our daughter, Sarah, were on our way to breakfast to plan a drive across the country. On the way there, we stopped at the Dollar Store so we might each pick up a notebook for planning and journaling during the trip (my husband’s idea). We parked the van far back in the strip mall parking lot and walked toward the store, which was dark and closed as we arrived. Adam and I immediately turned around without a break in our conversation, and began to walk back to the van. When we got there, we realized that Rick and Sarah were not with us. We then discovered they were still back at the store trying to figure out “why” the store was not open. Adam and I had a good laugh at how important that information was to Rick and Sarah. Rick and Sarah had a good laugh about how nonchalant Adam and I were, and at our lack of curiosity and analysis. Even though we had a good laugh, our deep respect for our differences has always enriched our family.

In the workplace, if we want to relate to a person with the “I” style of behavior, we need to be stimulating in our conversation and engage them in sharing their ideas and feelings with us. They prefer to interact with people who are a bit more like themselves: interactive, positive, verbal, big-picture oriented and stimulating. They want to be involved in discussions and planning and problem solving and want such processes to be opportunities for interaction on the team.

A client with strong “I” behavior invited me to a problem-solving meeting. When I arrived she had created an elaborate tea party for her guests, complete with real china and cakes. The showy, fun approach was a perfect back drop for the ideation session we were engaged in and was comfortable for this group of guests, each of whom had some “I” in their style. Had she invited the President of her company, however, he may have

seen the trimmings as frivolous and un-business like. Interestingly, she chose to leave this organization shortly after this wonderful event. Sometimes we instinctively feel our work style is at odds with the predominate work culture of the organizations we serve; yet for a fully engaged team, all work-styles need to be honored and accepted.

Openness is essential to building trust with an “I” style person. This style seems to have a keen sense of when they are not getting the full picture. Withholding information and feelings will likely break down trust with this style who may view such behavior as a form of personal rejection.

Action: Make a list of who on your team exhibits great verbal skills, is enthusiastic and loves interacting with others. Chances are these people have the “I” style as their preferred behavioral approach. Ask them how you can meet some of their behavioral needs to build trust and engagement on the team.



Rule 18

Be Accepting with People who Value Sincerity

People exhibiting the “S” work style are relational and reserved. This work style is most engaged in environments that are steady, cooperative, warm, calm and patient. The person with this style is apt to be good listener and a keeper of tradition. They may be slow to accept change and will likely exhibit great loyalty to their team, friends and family. Warm and people-oriented in their approach, people with this style will work at a steady pace and make major contributions to the team and family through their methodical, systematic approach to getting things done. Most important to this style is achieving stability and accomplishing tasks through cooperation with others.

My husband Rick, and son, Adam, both exhibit this style of behavior in their approach. The thoughtfulness and loyalty of this style has provided many wonderful moments in the life of our family. One day Adam came home from elementary school with a spelling test that had 13 wrong. The paper had so much red ink on it I was afraid that maybe he had been bleeding. Upon closer inspection, I gasped when I saw a note from his teacher. Adam just patted my knee and reassured me by saying “Don’t worry about it Mom, it was a really good try.” The instinct to calm people down, especially those of us who tend toward excitability, is one of the treasured traits of the “S” style. The idea that this was not the end, that learning spelling was something that he would plug away at and improve over time, illustrated the methodical nature of this style which can have such a calming effect on those of us with a strong sense of urgency.

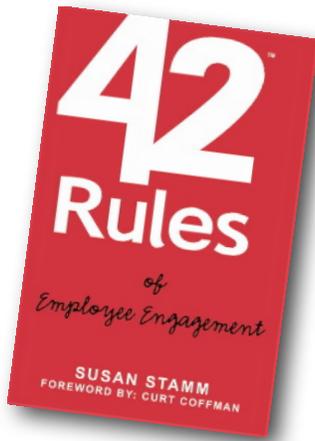
The “S’s” loyalty to their team and family is another wonderful trait. One evening, after we were first married, Rick could not locate me in our apartment until he discovered me sound asleep in bed. Operating from my “D” approach (Rule 16), I went from point A to point B, focusing on the next task, which was sleep. My husband, an “S” style, was hurt that I had not said goodnight before turning in. It was one of those early marriage opportunities to learn about each other.

The “S” style is an asset in the workplace and is often the glue that holds teams together with its relational, calm approach. The principal at our children’s elementary school exhibited a strong S work style while living out Tom Peter’s advice of “managing by wandering around¹.” He knew the names of every student in his school because he was a visible member of the school community. He was outside greeting students and seeing the busses off everyday of his career. He made a fuss over anyone who retired from his school during his time at the helm, and celebrated special achievements the

students earned as well. He'd be welcoming parents warmly at the door of any concert and shaking hands with everyone. His approach was not forceful or showy, just warm and approachable. Everyone seriously missed him when it came time for retirement.

To build trust with the "S" style person, you need to be accepting toward everyone on the team. The welfare of the entire team concerns the "S" person and how you treat others and accept others will not go unnoticed by people with this style.

Action: Make a list of the members of your team who are calm, patient, loyal, steady, helpful and good listeners. Chances are these are the members of the team exhibiting the "S" style of behavior. What can you do to develop a stronger relationship with them? Ask them how you can meet some of their behavioral needs to build greater trust and engagement on the team.



Rule 19

Be Reliable with People Who Value Quality

The “C” style stands for Careful. This style is most engaged by results, but those results need to be “right.” The “C” will use time and restraint to be sure they get it perfect. The “C” wants to concentrate on details, to think analytically, and to perform thorough analysis of work and projects they participate in. Most important is that their work is perceived as accurate and of high quality.

My husband is a strong “C” style and his concern with my lack of attention to details has been a “point of interest” in our working relationship over the past twenty years in business together. One memorable discussion had to do with our checkbook. Rick seems to think that when you use a check from the checkbook, you should enter the date of the transaction, indicate to whom the check was written, and record the amount of the transaction in the register. While I would agree these are all very important details, sometimes it is easy to get caught up in the excitement of the moment and forget to do these things. When I explained to Rick that the bank provides a statement each month to help you fill in these blanks, I could tell we had a different understanding of the purpose of a bank statement.

Early in our business when I was just getting comfortable with behavioral styles, I made a sales call in a high state of excitement about my ideas for this individual. I noticed my prospect had gotten quiet. It seemed that he was trying to move backward in his chair as if to escape. I immediately realized my “I” style (Rule 17) had gone out of bounds and I was scaring my “C” style prospect half to death. I worked to slow down my breathing and speaking and noticed an immediate improvement. Over time, I was able to build a relationship with this client resulting in significant business thanks to my ability to adjust and meet his needs.

On another occasion, while running a training event, a client approached me with a grave look causing me to think he hated the training and was about to fire us. He told me he had counted the coffee cups, and we were two cups short for the number of people in the room. I almost burst into laughter, but my knowledge of his “C” style was a reminder that this kind of detail was very important to him. I tracked down the hotel staff and had more cups delivered to our room as fast as they could bring them.

To increase engagement and trust with the “C” styled person the key need is to be reliable. If you appear unreliable, if you show up late, if you do not meet a deadline, or if

your data is wrong... this is going to have serious implications in being trusted by the "C" style.

Action: Make a list of the members of your team who have a strong need for accuracy, who need to be right, and who care deeply about quality and precision. These team members are likely operating from a "C" style and could benefit deeply from you providing them with the time to think things through so that they can produce a quality product. How else can you meet the needs of team members with this style? Ask them how you can support their need for quality and correctness?