

### *Talking the same language: Beth Aplin, Henderson Aplin Partnership*

This session used the Language and Behaviour (LAB) Profile tool, created by Rodger Bailey, to explore how our particular use of language can reveal how we personally get motivated, process information and make decisions. Armed with these insights we can discover both our own traits and our colleagues' and start to consider why we seem to hit it off better with some people than with others.

The LAB tool works from the premise that each individual has their own perception of reality and assumes that people who use the same language patterns exhibit the same behaviours. Understanding what motivates colleagues can be a powerful way of improving internal communications. Motivation traits can be ascertained using six diagnostic tools:

- **Criteria:** there are words which incite a physical and emotional response from people; identifying these allows us to enthuse others about team activity;
- **Level:** determines how far individuals are prepared to take the initiative;
- **Direction:** identifies whether we are self-directed or best directed by others;
- **Source:** we all have different motivational influences; understanding the source can help us motivate others;
- **Reason:** determines whether we are happy to follow procedure or need to understand the reasons behind why an activity may be required;
- **Decision Factors:** identifies how we react to change.

Participants worked in pairs to undertake exercises designed to explain each of these diagnostic tools.

#### **Motivation criteria**

In order to discover the kinds of words we find motivating, we asked ourselves what we most want from our work. Each person was left with a list of six wants, in order of importance, which contained key motivational words. For example, 'fascination', 'feedback', 'inspiration', 'learning'.

#### **Motivation level**

To discover whether we are proactive or reactive by nature, participants were asked to consider the following handout.

Proactive	<p>Sentence structure:</p> <p>Short sentences, speaks as if they are in control of their world</p> <p>Crisp and clear sentence structure</p> <p>Direct</p> <p>At the extreme, they 'bulldoze'</p>
	<p>Body language:</p> <p>Signs of impatience, speaking quickly, pencil tapping, lots of movement or inability to sit still for long periods</p>
Reactive	<p>Sentence structure:</p> <p>Incomplete sentences</p> <p>Passive verbs</p> <p>Lots of infinitives</p> <p>Speak as if the world controls them, things happen to them</p> <p>Long convoluted sentences</p> <p>Talks about thinking about, analysing, understanding or waiting or the principle of the thing</p> <p>Conditionals – would, could, might, may</p> <p>Overly cautious</p>
	<p>Body language:</p> <p>Willingness to sit for long periods</p>

Examples:

Proactive: 'I meet with my team every week'

Mainly Proactive: 'I meet with my team if it seems like we need it'

Equally Proactive & Reactive: 'I meet with my team to go over the current files, it is important to stay informed.'

Mainly Reactive: 'Even though you might wonder if it is necessary to meet with the team every week, I do it because it is important that they feel they are being listened to.'

Reactive: 'Even though everybody might wonder if it is really necessary to meet each week, it is important to consider the needs people have of being listened to.'

Participants were then asked to decide whether they were proactive, mainly proactive, equally proactive and reactive, mainly reactive, or reactive.

**Motivation direction**

Toward	Sentence structure: Talks about what they gain, achieve, get, have etc Inclusion What they want, goals
	Body language: Pointing towards something, head nodding, gestures in inclusion
Away From	Sentence structure: Will mention situations to be avoided, got rid of Exclusions of unwanted situations, things Problems
	Body language: Gestures of exclusion, shaking head, arms indicating that something is to be avoided, got rid of

Examples:

Towards: 'I would get personal satisfaction and a promotion'

Mainly Towards: 'I would get a promotion, personal satisfaction, make more money and not have to go on the road'

Equally Toward & Away From: 'I would get personal satisfaction and not have to go on the road.'

Mainly Away From: 'I would not have all this routine work, or be away from my family often, pus I would get a promotion.'

Away From: 'I would get away from this boring work, all the deadlines, and my boss who keeps looking over my shoulder.'

Participants were then questioned by their partner to help them to decide whether they were towards, equally towards and away from, or away from.

**Motivation source**

Internal	<p>Sentence structure:</p> <p>They decide or know themselves 'I know..'</p> <p>They evaluate their own performance based on their own standards and criteria</p> <p>They resist when someone tells them what to do, or decides for them</p> <p>Outside instructions are taken as information</p>
	<p>Body language:</p> <p>Sitting upright, pointing to self, may pause before answering a judgement from someone else while they evaluate it, minimal gestures and facial expressions for their culture</p>
External	<p>Sentence structure:</p> <p>Other people or external sources of information decide or judge for them</p> <p>Need to compare their work to an external norm or standard (i.e. checklist or quota)</p> <p>Outside information is taken as a decision or order</p>
	<p>Body language:</p> <p>Leaning forward, watching for your response, facial expressions indicating they want to know from you if it was all right</p>

**Examples:**

Internal: 'I know when I have done a good job'

Mainly Internal: 'I usually know. I appreciate it when my boss compliments me, but generally, I know when I have done well.'

Equally Internal & External: 'Sometimes I know and sometimes my customers tell me.'

Mainly External: 'Usually, when I meet the quotas set by my boss and my customers seem happy. And also I can tell when I am working well.'

External: 'My customers are happy. My boss is happy. I met my quota.'

Participants then were helped by their partner to decide whether they were internally motivated, equally internally and externally motivated, or externally motivated.

**Motivation decision factors**

Sameness	Language: How they are the same, identical What they have in common How it has not changed
Sameness with Exception	Language: How it has evolved over time It is the same except more, less, better, worse, improving, etc (comparisons on a sliding scale) Focus on the trip more than arriving at the destination
Difference	Language: New, different, changed, transformed, revolutionary Language points to an immediate switch Focus on the destination, ignore the trip
Difference & Sameness with Exception	Language: Use BOTH Difference and Sameness with Exception responses

Examples:

Sameness: 'It is exactly the *same*. I'm *still* crunching numbers.'

Sameness with Exception: 'It's the *same but* I have *more* responsibility and *less* time.'

Difference: 'It's *totally different*. Now I do outside sales.'

Difference & Sameness

with Exception: 'There have been *big changes* this year and my performance has *improved greatly*.'

Participants were helped to identify their motivation decision factor by asking themselves two questions:

'What is the **relationship** between your work this year and last year?'

OR

'What is the **relationship** between this job and your last one?'

The language we used to answers the questions revealed how far we are motivated by a need for things to be on a continuum of 'sameness' or for things to be reinvented or different.

**Motivation reason**

People’s motivation reasons are revealed in questions such as ‘why did you choose your present job’?

Options	Language: List of criteria Opportunities, possibilities Expanding options and choice
Procedures	Language: Did not choose Answers the question ‘why’ by telling ‘how’ it came to pass The facts, events leading to, a story

Examples:

Options: ‘I thought it would be stimulating, interesting and challenging.’

Mainly Options: ‘It was more interesting and had more responsibility and better pay. A friend of mine told me about it.’

Equally Options & Procedures: ‘A friend told me about it and it looked more interesting.’

Mainly Procedures ‘I had been with the same company ten years. A friend told me they were hiring in her company, so I applied and was hired. The job is more interesting and I make more money.’

Procedures: ‘I didn’t really choose. I met my boss through my brother-in-law who worked with her. They needed some Box Office staff, and I was looking for a job.’

Beth summarised the revealing language in each diagnostic tool as follows:

**Motivation criteria:**

Use the persons criteria to attract and maintain interest. When a person hears his/her own criteria, they will immediately feel the emotions attached to those words.

**Motivation level:**

Proactive	Go for it, just do it, jump in, why wait, right away, get it done, you'll get to do, take the initiative, take charge, run away with it, right now, what are you waiting for, let's hurry.
Reactive	Let's think about it, now that you have analysed it, you'll get to really understand, this will tell you why, consider this, this will clarify it for you, think about your response, you might consider, could, the time is ripe.

**Motivation direction:**

Towards	Attain, obtain, have, get, include, achieve, enable you to, benefits, advantages, here's what you would accomplish.
Away From	Won't have to, solve, prevent, avoid, fix, prevent, not have to deal with, get rid of, it's not perfect, let's find out what's wrong, there'll be no problems.

**Motivation source:**

Internal	Only you can decide, you might consider, it's up to you, I suggest you think about it, try it out and decide what you think, here's some information so you can decide, what do you think?, for all the information you need to decide – just call....
External	You'll get good feedback, others will notice, it has been approved by, well-respected, you will make quite an impact, so-and-so thinks, I would strongly recommend, the experts say, give references, scientific studies show..

**Motivation reason:**

Options	Opportunity, choice, break the rules just for you, another better way, unlimited possibilities, an alternative is, that's one way, here are the options, there has got to be a way, the sky's the limit
Procedures	The right way, speak in procedures: first.....then.....afterwards....the last step, tried and true, reliable, just follow the procedure, the procedure is

**Motivation decision factors:**

Sameness	Same as, in common, as you always do, like before, un-changed, as you already know, maintaining, totally the same, exactly as before, identical
Sameness with Exception	More, better, less, the same except, advanced, upgrade, progression, gradual improvement, similar but even better, moving up, growth, improvement
Difference	New, totally different, unlike anything else, unique, one of a kind, completely changed, unrecognisable, shift, switch, a complete turn around, brand new, unheard of
Sameness with Exception & Difference	Use both Sameness with Exception and Difference vocabulary

***Marketing, not magic: Kate Sanderson, West Yorkshire Playhouse***

This practical session aimed to generate solutions from the participants to the internal communication challenges faced by marketing departments.

Kate started by asking the seminar participants what the three biggest challenges they face in their working lives with regard to internal communications. The broad answer in both sessions was that it was to persuade other organisational departments to trust what the marketing department is doing. This was framed in a number of different ways: