



What's My Selling Style?

Interpretive Report

Report prepared for

SAM SAMPLE

January 16, 2007

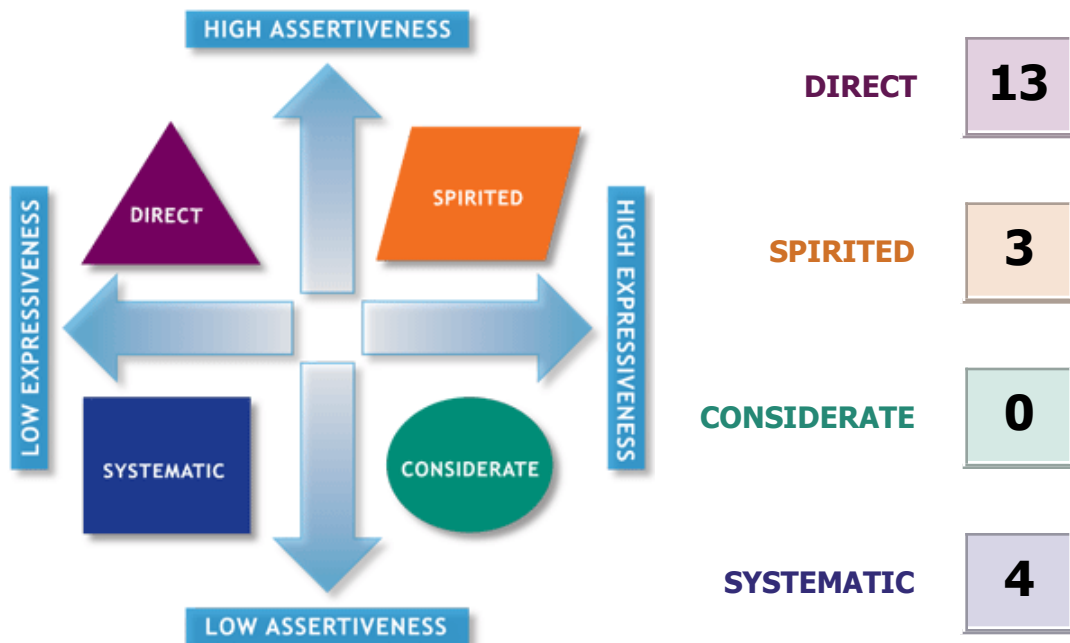
This report presents your results from the **What's My Selling Style?** assessment. It includes interpretive information about your scores, a discussion of communication styles, reference charts, and reflection questions.



What's My Selling Style?

Interpretive Report

Your Selling Style



Your Selling Style Profile

Salespeople tend to have one style they use most frequently. This is known as your dominant selling style. Dominant styles are typically indicated by scores of 8 or higher.

Your dominant style is **DIRECT**.

Although many people have a clearly dominant selling style, others are comfortable using several selling styles. Being able to flex your selling style is a key advantage in reaching your sales goals.

If your dominant style score is below 8, or you have other style scores close to 8, you are probably able to use multiple selling styles with ease.



What Is Selling Style?

Sales is not an easy profession. Those individuals who go into sales thinking that it is will quickly learn that the profession requires skill, resilience, and passion.

One of the most important skills in sales is understanding your selling style. Selling style can be defined as the way a person behaves when he or she is able to do things his or her own way. For example, when you are preparing for a sales presentation you may have a specific way of doing things. Perhaps you like to follow a tried and true format that moves you sequentially through each point. Or maybe you prefer to mentally prepare an outline and then allow flexibility in your presentation to follow the customer's needs. Either of these ways of preparing for your sales presentation is fine as long as they help you to make your sale.

But imagine if your customer has a style different from your own. For example, you like to follow a prepared sales presentation and your customer has needs you are not addressing. Or, you are working hard at building a trusting relationship through friendly conversation with your customer and he or she just wants you to get to the point. When situations like this happen, the probability for making the sale can be dramatically reduced.

Here's where your understanding of your personal selling style and the individual styles of your customers can help you become more successful. The more you understand how you behave when working with a customer, the better you will be able to identify your customer's style. You need to determine if your customer's style is similar or different from your own. People find it easier to understand and relate to individuals who share the same style. Think about your best customers. Do they share the same style as you?

If you have customers you have been less successful with, it's likely that they have a style different from your own. Learning how to tailor your style to work more effectively with theirs is a skill that can help you make more sales. *What's My Selling Style?* will help you analyze your **Direct** style, identify your customers' style, and take full advantage of your new knowledge of personal style!



Four Selling Styles

The four selling styles are created from the intersection of two dimensions: assertiveness and expressiveness.

Assertiveness is the effort that a person makes to influence or control the thoughts or actions of others. People who are assertive tell others how things should be. They are task-oriented, active, and confident. People who are less assertive ask others how things should be. They are process-oriented, deliberate, and attentive.

Expressiveness is the effort that a person makes to control his or her emotions and feelings when relating to others. People who are expressive display their emotions. They are versatile, sociable, and demonstrative. People who are not expressive control their emotions. They are focused, independent, and private.

Direct = High Assertiveness, Low Expressiveness

Spirited = High Assertiveness, High Expressiveness

Considerate = Low Assertiveness, High Expressiveness

Systematic = Low Assertiveness, Low Expressiveness

You might be wondering if one style is better than another. The answer is that all four styles can sell successfully. However, the most successful salespeople are those who know when and how to use all four styles. Before we continue with this idea, let's first look at the strengths and trouble spots of each selling style.



Selling Style Strengths

Your ability to capitalize on the strengths and counterbalance the trouble spots of *all* the selling styles will help you reap the greatest benefits.

Review the strengths of each style below. Make a checkmark by each item that you feel is a strength for you. Then, think about other strengths that you can add to the list for each style. Record them in the spaces provided.

Direct	Spirited
<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on the goal <input type="checkbox"/> Asks for the business <input type="checkbox"/> Keeps conversations to the point <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic <input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on generating excitement <input type="checkbox"/> Looks for creative solutions <input type="checkbox"/> Shifts gears easily <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Systematic	Considerate
<input type="checkbox"/> Detail-oriented <input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on preparation <input type="checkbox"/> Follows through <input type="checkbox"/> Handles multiple accounts well <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Customer-oriented <input type="checkbox"/> Focuses on customers' needs <input type="checkbox"/> Listens attentively <input type="checkbox"/> Patient with challenging customers <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Your Selling Style Strengths



Your Style Strengths

Your dominant style is shaded below. It is helpful to read the descriptions of all styles, however, to broaden your understanding of others' styles as well as your own.

Direct

A salesperson with a Direct selling style isn't afraid to ask customers for the sale. Being highly goal oriented they do not typically engage in idle chit-chat and try to keep sales conversations focused on business. The Direct style is very skilled at controlling sales conversations. Their competitive nature means they are dedicated to pursuing opportunities. However, when a sale doesn't come to fruition, they simply move on to the next prospect with no personal offense taken.

Spirited

The Spirited salesperson is an enthusiastic supporter of whatever he or she is selling. They enjoy social interaction with customers and work at creating professional sales relationships. It is not uncommon for this selling style to have a great sense of humor and use it as part of the sales discussion. This style is persuasive and excels at generating excitement. Although they are focused on developing long-term relationships, the confident Spirited style can handle rejection well.

Considerate

A salesperson with a Considerate selling style is dedicated to helping customers. When they engage in a sales conversation, the focus is to get to know more about the customer, both personally and professionally, in order to better meet their needs. They are excellent listeners and ask open ended questions to assist the customer in problem solving. The Considerate salesperson excels at developing long-term, repeat sales relationships. They tend to be sensitive to customer objections and rejection.

Systematic

The Systematic selling style really knows what he or she is selling. They are very detail oriented and enjoy answering specific questions and providing supporting information. Their sales presentation is prepared and practiced to provide a logical sequence of sales points. The Systematic salesperson is highly organized and can handle multiple customers with ease. They are exceptional at keeping detailed records and following-up on potential leads. Rejection is viewed as an opportunity to refine the sales process.



Selling Style Trouble Spots

A strength taken to an extreme can become counterproductive. Recognizing your trouble spots is the first step to overcoming them. Review the extreme aspects of each style below. Do you recognize some of your own trouble spots?

Direct	Spirited
<input type="checkbox"/> Impatient with objections <input type="checkbox"/> Underestimates the value of developing relationships <input type="checkbox"/> Misses important nuances <input type="checkbox"/> Overly aggressive <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Exaggerates claims <input type="checkbox"/> Talks more than listens <input type="checkbox"/> Misses important details <input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't prepare well <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Systematic	Considerate
<input type="checkbox"/> Overwhelms customers with facts <input type="checkbox"/> Gives lackluster presentations <input type="checkbox"/> Misses the big picture <input type="checkbox"/> Overly opinionated <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Becomes emotionally invested in a poor account <input type="checkbox"/> Struggles when customer needs can't be met <input type="checkbox"/> Listens attentively <input type="checkbox"/> Patient with challenging customers <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Your Selling Style Trouble Spots



Your Style Trouble Spots

Your dominant style is shaded below. Understanding others' style trouble spots will help you to recognize times when you need to adjust your own style to improve communication.

Direct

The goal-driven Direct selling style can become aggressive at times, which may cause customers to avoid future interactions. Considerate and Systematic customers are particularly put off when they feel pushed to buy. This style may be impatient and miss the small nuances that help to make the sale. Direct salespeople like to get right to the point and often overlook the long term sales opportunity in developing relationships.

Spirited

The enthusiastic Spirited selling style can become a bit of an exaggerator, which may cause customers to become skeptical about the product or service. This is especially distracting and annoying to Direct and Systematic customers. Humor is another attribute of the Spirited style that is not always viewed in a positive light. Being a "spur of the moment" kind of style, they often lack pre-call planning.

Considerate

The relationship-focused Considerate selling style can go overboard trying to please by avoiding tough conversations, which may cause customers to feel misled later on. Direct and Systematic styles want the straight story and are likely to be irritated by this trouble spot. This style may falter when making the move to close a sale. The Considerate salesperson can become too attached to customer relationships and thus takes rejection personally.

Systematic

The detail-oriented Systematic selling style can become obsessed with presenting every feature and function of the product or service, causing customers to feel overwhelmed, especially those who are Spirited and Considerate. This style moves through a sales cycle methodically and struggles to be spontaneous when the situation calls for it. The Systematic style has difficulty seeing the big picture and therefore does not focus enough on developing relationships.



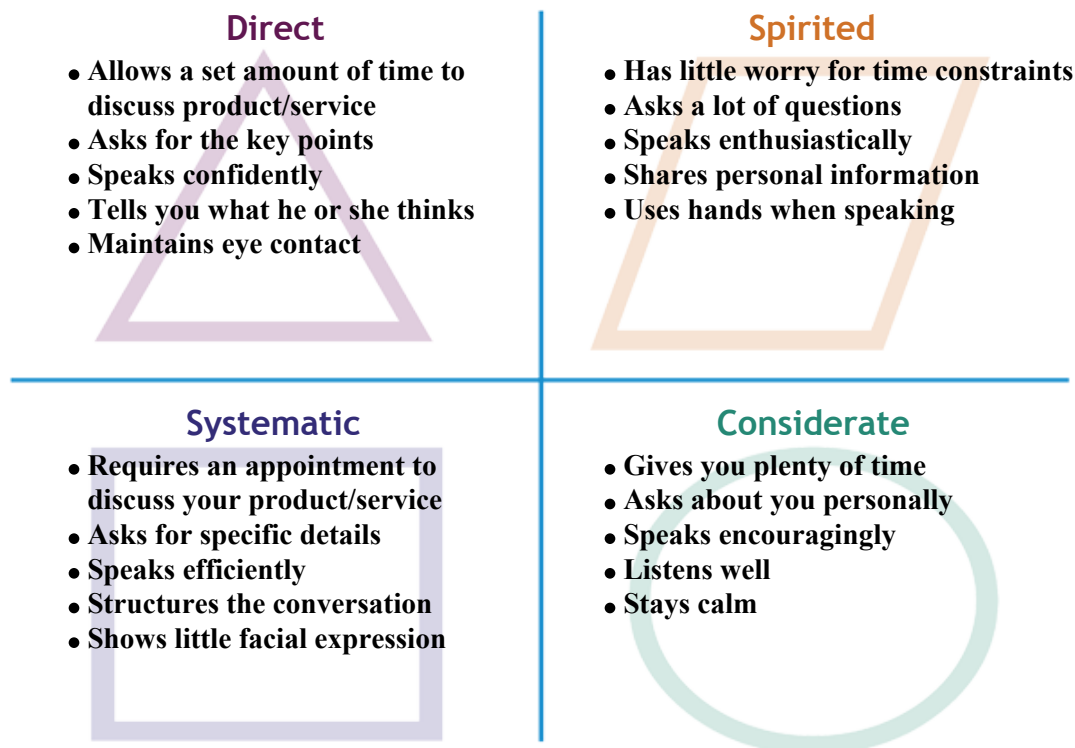
Identifying Different Styles

In sales you must be able to recognize your customer's personal style as soon as possible. Sometimes you will know this in advance based on a previous interaction; other times you will have to make this determination in the first minutes of your meeting.

Accommodating the needs of your customer's style puts him or her more at ease and helps you to achieve your goals more readily. It takes some willingness and effort to expand beyond your own style to interact with others. However, it is generally appreciated and may make the difference between success and failure in making the sale.

Although there are no guarantees in correctly determining an individual's style, we can make an educated guess based on some simple observations. Remember that some people use more than one style. Therefore it might be difficult to pinpoint a single, dominant style. When this happens, try to match your style with the one your customer is using at the moment.

Here are a few behaviors that may indicate your customer's personal style:











Interacting with Different Styles



Selling to Every Style

The following chart offers some suggestions for selling to every style, including your own!

		CUSTOMER'S STYLE			
		 DIRECT	 SPIRITED	 CONSIDERATE	 SYSTEMATIC
YOUR SELLING STYLE	 DIRECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch out that you don't butt heads. Both of you will be focused on a goal, but that goal may be different for each of you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on being a little more flexible with your customer. Make sure that you don't get right down to business without some informal conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasize how your product meets the needs of the people who will use it. Keep your assertiveness in check. You don't want to overwhelm or intimidate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to be patient with the customer's need for specific information. Make sure your information is accurate; if it isn't, you won't be trusted.
	 SPIRITED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point out the big picture and make sure you let them know how your product fits in. Try to limit anecdotes or stories — they won't be appreciated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch out that you don't get so involved in conversation that you miss a sales opportunity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow down the pace of your speech and really focus on the customer's needs. Keep the use of persuasion to a minimum; too much might create an agreement that won't be followed through. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep your exuberance under control. Exaggeration can create distrust Make sure you do some planning and preparation before the sales call.
	 CONSIDERATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try not to allow what the customer says about the product (or you) to affect you personally. Make a scheduled appointment with your customer and stick to your allotted time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to keep pace with your customer so you don't get left in the dust. Take some deep breaths when you are feeling overwhelmed with your customer's energetic nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch out for over-sensitivity to each other's feelings that prevents you from saying what you really need or leaves you in limbo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information in a logical order that places emphasis on the important sales data. Do not worry about presenting too much sales data, facts, or figures.
	 SYSTEMATIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to sift through your information so that you provide only the most pertinent data. Offer some factual information during your presentation, but make your key point within the first few minutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to be flexible and allow for some detour from the topic. Go out of your way to do something nice for your customer. This goes a long way toward building respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the needs of your customer versus following your own agenda. Try to explain the data in terms of the impact your product has on the customer instead of providing facts and figures alone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch out that the two of you don't get so bogged down with the details that you are not able to close the sale.



Flexing Your Selling Style

1. What style do you find most difficult to sell to? Why?

2. Is there a particular customer you can think of that fits this style?
What are some of the behaviors that point out this customer's style?

3. Describe a situation in which your style differences were apparent.

4. Brainstorm ways that you can tailor your style to work better with this customer's style.