

Is your communication style holding you back?

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How aware are you of your communication style? Do you tend to talk over people? Or do you listen intently before speaking? Perhaps you're the first to reply no matter what the topic.

Whether or not you're conscious of your particular pattern, make no mistake; your communication preferences come through. Those around you can likely cite how and when you're apt to express your views. People who spend time with you can probably predict your tone, volume and the speed in which you'll communicate. They can most likely forecast if you will typically stay silent or rush to speak up. They can even project the circumstances in which you are most prone to share your thoughts, views and, let's face it, your perception of truth.

How you communicate not only speaks volumes about your personality, it also affects your career success and sense of fulfillment. That's because work is a social process. It entails being in relationships with others. And the quality and caliber of your interpersonal relations is proportionate to your capacity to connect with and communicate with others.

In my coaching practice I've witnessed how clients who understand their unique slant and the three types of communication messages (i.e., verbal, paraverbal, and non-verbal), can build consistently greater trust and influence others positively. Knowing how they're coming across gives them the chance to review the impact they're having and consider if they want to make adjustments.

More often than not they chose to tweak their approach — while staying true to themselves — to improve their overall communication, and ultimately, their relations

with their peers and direct reports. The outcome of this shift is that they're propelled forward in their careers.

There are countless assessments available online to help identify your communication style and how you show up in your everyday exchanges. Just like periodically reviewing your closet to see if your clothes are stuck in the 90s (or any other decade), think about if your *modus operandi* would benefit from an audit. Maybe even a makeover.

Having a certified coach or other professional administer and debrief a questionnaire, then help you determine your next steps, can be time well spent. The insights you gain can change your ability to send messages, as well as your career trajectory and contentment level.

Crystal Campbell, PCC leads c2 coaching + consulting, a career and leadership development firm that helps spark smart career shifts and sustainable leadership changes in professionals, executives and teams. She is a seasoned executive with over 20 years of experience in communications and large-scale change management. Connect with her at crystal@c2coaching.ca.