



## Effective Occupational Health Sales Through Personality Profiling

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The ability to “read” and connect with prospects is a vitally important trait for an effective sales professional. Yet this is not always easy, for the salesperson is dealing with a multitude of personality types, many of which are markedly different than his or her own.

Personality profiling is a technique in which one can “type” a prospect into one of four common personality styles and alter a sales presentation to suit the prospect’s style and buying motives. The technique has been around for quite some time and is described in various ways. In general, the four personality types can be described as follows:

*Domineering* (or “High D”) personality is assertive, controlling, impatient, and a no-nonsense type A individual. Think of New York Yankees boss George Steinbrenner or Alexander “I’m in charge here” Haig.

*Influential* (“High I”) types are warm, creative, enthusiastic, visionary, and personable. High I personalities are often disorganized and/or behind schedule but invariably upbeat. Think of your typical talk show host, such as Johnny Carson or Jay Leno.

*Steady* (“High S”) personalities tend to be precise, thorough, prudent, and task-oriented. They tend to be slow to decide and carefully weigh every option. They are not overly communicative. Head over to your finance department and you are likely to see a room full of “High S” individuals.

*Compliant* (“High C”) types are also highly analytical but are more idealistic and prone to group processes. They have time for everyone and prefer to avoid confrontations. Think of the quintessential team player.

Three things are necessary in order to effectively employ personality profiling:



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### The Personality Matrix

Domineering (D)		Influential (I)	
High D	Low D	High I	Low I
driving	meek	charismatic	probing
aggressive	non-demanding	gregarious	analytical
assertive	unassuming	persuasive	logical
competitive	modest	participative	reflective

  

High S	Low S	High C	Low C
Self-controlled	dynamic	perfectionist	fearless
Accommodating	intense	precise	free-spirited
Kind	energetic	thorough	independent
Patient	active	systematic	unconventional

### Steady (S) Compliant (C)

Source: Personality Profiling, Jack Mohler Associates, 1976.

1. Know both your own personality type (D, I, S, or C) and the degree to which you fall into that quadrant (i.e., are you a “High I” or just a “Moderate I”?). In addition, you should determine what variance there might be between your self-image and how the public is likely to see you.
2. Train yourself to quickly assess in which quadrant your sales prospect is likely to fall. Signals as obvious as the neatness of one’s office, intensity of their oral communication, and voice volume are often strong clues.
3. Be prepared to address each prospect differently, depending on your perception of their personality type. For example:

■ **High D prospects:** With “Domineering” prospects, be well organized and get right to the point. Ask a lot of questions to determine the prospect’s needs and “hot buttons.” Reflect their personality by being brief, to the point, and extremely benefit oriented.

Emphasize your program's potential impact to the bottom line.

- **High I prospects:** With "Influential" prospects, you want to be lively, forward thinking and visionary, and more relationship oriented. Emphasize the value of a true provider-employer relationship between the prospect's company and your program.
- **High S prospects:** With "Steady" prospects, you should be patient, thorough, and methodical. Ask a lot of questions and gather considerable data. Emphasize the logical value of a comprehensive approach to occupational health and safety.
- **High C prospects:** With "Compliant" prospects, you need to be patient, as they tend to be analytical and cautious. Emphasize a step-by-step approach to health and safety and the availability of outcome data. It is a good idea to get to know the typical High C prospect personally. Determine who else from their company should be involved in reviewing your proposal, as High C individuals prefer a consensus driven review.

*Personality profiling will help you enhance communication with the prospect.*

#### Assess Your Personality Style

Getting a handle on your prevailing personality type will help you understand the degree to which you fit the profile for that type and how consistent your private image is with your public image. If you are interested in taking the self-administered personality test, please send an e-mail to [info@naohp.com](mailto:info@naohp.com) and we will respond with an electronic copy of the test. Have your friends, coworkers and family take the personality profile assessment, as well. By identifying the personality profile of those you know, you will undoubtedly be better prepared to intuitively gauge the personality type of most prospects shortly after meeting them.

In sum, personality profiling is a fun way to gain a competitive edge. Reading your sales prospects will increase the likelihood of connecting with them early on. You do not have to artificially assume a different persona in order to be effective. Rather, mastery of personality profiling will help you utilize the most appropriate tools to enhance communication with the prospect and increase the likelihood of a successful sales call. ■

**Wearing the condom:** Insist that they maintain an agreed-upon inventory of the items critical to your center's success. In addition, use financial penalties for the percentage of your items on back order and for late deliveries of your critical items.

If you are forced to turn a patient with a laceration away because your supplier was out of a suture kit or wound glue, that vendor should be willing to pay for the loss of revenue associated with that patient being sent elsewhere.

Billing companies are another (and perhaps the most important) cog in a center's cash flow cycle. I have witnessed and, sadly, experienced billing companies ruining busy urgent care centers time and again by not processing claims in a timely manner, by not following up on claims, and by only collecting on the "low hanging fruit."

**Signs of an FTD:** Unacceptably high number of days for them to send out a claim. If the number of days increases, your day's sales outstanding (DSOs) will go up and your cash flow will suffer.

Look at the number of denied claims and how long it takes them to reprocess that denied claim. If you start to witness a revolving door of client account reps, it is time to pull out!

**Wearing the Condom:** Before contracting, evaluate the stability of your billing company by insisting that they disclose their financials on a monthly or at least quarterly basis. Ask to see their clearing house contract and inquire about their payment terms with the clearing house and whether or not they are current.

Negotiate certain performance metrics in your contract, with penalties if they are not met and rewards if they are exceeded.

Finally, negotiate an out clause which is automatically triggered in the event of default without cure for failure to hit agreed-upon or promised metrics.

Other vendors to be concerned with are those with whom your ability to offer care to your patients is dependant upon their ability to fulfill their obligations to the center. For example:

- IT vendors
- Internet connectivity providers
- Prepackaged pharmacy vendors
- Staffing agencies
- Provider recruiters
- Radiology over-vendors
- Landlords

These are challenging times to own a business. One small mistake, one contract clause overlooked, can start a business down the slippery slope toward failure. And, as George discovered, once the life blood (cash) stops flowing to your business, it is simply a matter of time before shrinkage ("Like a frightened turtle!") sets in. ■