

# Reflector – Observationally Focused



**Description:** Reflectors tend to stand back to ponder experiences before coming to any conclusions. They observe issues from many different perspectives. They collect data from a variety of sources. They tend to postpone reaching conclusions in hopes of gathering more data. They prefer to take a back seat in meetings and discussions. Instead, they prefer to observe others. Their philosophy is to be cautious. When they act, it is part of a larger picture which includes the past as well as the present and includes the observations of others as well as themselves.

## **Strengths:**

- Very careful
- Thorough and methodical
- Thoughtful
- Good at listening to others and assimilating information
- Rarely jumps to conclusions

## **Challenges:**

- Tendency to hold back from direct participation
- Slow to make up their minds when decision making
- Tendency to be overly cautious and not take risks
- Not assertive
- Not particularly forthcoming

## **Self-Development Activity: (What you can do to build your abilities as a Reflector)**

- At meetings, when appropriate, study people's behavior by keeping records of who talks, interrupts, and listens. Notice non-verbal communication.
- Keep a daily diary writing down details of each day. Reflect on the day's event and try to draw conclusions from them. Write a detailed account of these conclusions.
- After a meeting go back and list which event went well and which didn't and why. Analyze what you learned from your understanding of what didn't go well.
- Research something requiring the gathering of detailed information. Use the research to write an iron tight policy or procedure.
- Slow people down who want to rush into action.

**Tips for Interacting With A Reflector:** Establish a personal and agreeable environment; When in a learning situation show interest in people; Use "How?" questions to elicit opinions; Be patient when assisting an individual in establishing a plan or goals; Give people a chance to depart from the norm; Help people define new roles and their place within a plan and personally assure your support.

# Actor – Action Focused



**Description:** Actors are interested in trying out new ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They are constantly looking for new ways of doing things and take every opportunity to experiment with applications. They are people who can't wait to try out new ideas presented in training. They act quickly and confidently. They tend to be impatient with ongoing discussions and would rather get to the point and move on. However, they are practical, down-to-earth people who like to make practical decision when solving problems. They see challenges as opportunities and work on the philosophy that it's worth trying to find a better way.

## **Strengths:**

- Eager to test things in practice
- Practical
- Down to earth
- Realistic
- Businesslike
- Gets straight to the point
- Technique oriented

## **Challenges:**

- Tendency to reject anything without an obvious application
- Not interested in theory or basic principles
- Tendency to seize the first solution to a problem
- Impatient with indecision
- Task oriented
- Not people oriented

## **Self-Development Activities: (What you can do to build your abilities as an Actor)**

- Seek techniques for addressing task in a practical manner. For every assignment prepare a detailed action plan with a set of next steps for you and the others
- Experiment with unfamiliar ways of doing things. Ask others with expertise to coach; giving you both instruction and feedback
- Tackle a challenging do-it-yourself project
- Learn a foreign language
- Assess a portion of your work by analyzing statistics, identifying enablers and barriers, identify problems and seek solutions

**Tips for Interacting With An Actor:** Provide direct answers to questions; Facilitate learning by asking "what" questions; Define how they will benefit from the outcome of learning; Emphasize the importance of using new ideas and approaches; When appropriate, agree with facts and ideas resulting for new learning; Link timelines to the end result and make them available to all involved with the project.

# Sensor – Interpersonal Focus



**Description:** Sensors involve themselves fully in new experiences. Even though Sensors enjoy the “here and now”, new experiences excite them. They tend to become heavily invested as they enthusiastically trying new things. They are open-minded and not skeptical. Their philosophy is: “I’ll try anything once.” They tend to act first and consider the consequences later. Their days are filled with activity. They tackle problems by brainstorming. As soon as the excitement of the activity dies down, they are busy looking for the next. They tend to strive on the challenge of new experiences, but are bored with implementation and thinking about the long-term. Sensors are gregarious people, constantly involving themselves with others, but often seek to become the center of attention.

## **Strengths:**

- Flexible and open-minded
- Ready to take action
- Like to be exposed to new situations
- Optimistic about anything new and therefore likely to embrace change

## **Challenges:**

- Tendency to take the most obvious action without thinking
- Often takes unnecessary risks
- Rushes into action without sufficient preparation
- Gets bored with implementation

## **Self-Development Activities: (What you can do to build your abilities as a Sensor)**

- At least once a week do something you have never done before.
- Read an article with views different from yours. Change the layout of your office furniture.
- Practice “small talk” with strangers by initiating a conversation.
- Deliberately fragment your day with a break every half-hour to change activities.
- Force yourself to be in the limelight.
- Volunteer to chair a meeting.
- Identify a problem and bounce possible solutions off a colleague.

**Tips for Interacting With A Sensor:** Provide a friendly environment to talk about new ideas; Provide ideas for transferring talk into action; Provide time for stimulation and fun activities related to the use of what has been learned; Provide details in writing about activities for learning; Provide an open and supportive coaching environment. Provide incentives for applying new learning.



## Thinker – Logic Focused

**Description:** Thinkers integrate observations into complex, logical and sound theories. They assimilate random facts into coherent theories. They tend to be perfectionists who tend to work relentlessly until things are tidy and fit into rational schemes. They like to analyze and synthesize. They place high value on rationality and logic, often asking, “Does this make sense?” They tend to be detached analytical approaching problems with logic. They reject what they see as not fitting in. They feel uncomfortable with quick decisions, snap judgments, lateral thinking and things said in a joking manner.

### **Strengths:**

- Logical, vertical thinking
- Rational and objective
- Good at asking probing questions
- Takes a disciplined approach to most tasks

### **Challenges:**

- Limited in lateral thinking
- Low tolerance for uncertainty, disorder and ambiguity
- Intolerance with anything subjective or intuitive
- Full of shoulds, oughts, and musts

### **Self-Development Activities: (What you need to do to build your abilities as a Thinker.)**

- Read something “heavy” such as philosophy 30 minutes a day.
- Practice identifying inconsistencies or weaknesses in other people’s arguments.
- Analyze organizational charts to look for inconsistencies and overlaps
- Conduct a detailed analysis of how you spend your time each week
- Take two op-ed pieces of differing view and compare them
- Take a theory unfamiliar to you and try to identify the underlying assumptions
- Practice asking probing questions by refusing to accept vague answers

**Tips for Interacting With A Thinker:** Discuss the pros and cons of the use of learning materials; Use data to support decisions; Explain how activity fits into the “big picture”; Provide help by offering step-by-step approach to learning; Be specific when agreeing; When disagreeing do so with the context not the person; Be patient when providing explanations