

---

# Different Strokes For Different Folks

by JOHN BOE

Have you ever wondered why you seem to hit it off right away with some customers, while with others it's more like oil and water? That's because we respond intuitively to the natural chemistry, or lack thereof, between temperament styles. Our temperament style not only determines our behavioral traits, body language pattern, and "buying style," but it also influences our compatibility with others.

**T**oday we have access to innovative tools such as the Internet, cell phones, faxes and voice mail, all designed to enhance our communication and support us in selling more effectively. Nevertheless, even with all of these technological tools at our disposal, the alarming number of failed relationships, dissatisfied employees, and lost sales all reflect the fact that none of us is as effective at understanding others as we would like to believe.

For example, what about that sale you thought you had made and at the last minute your prospect changed their mind and didn't buy — or at least they didn't buy from you. Chances are you lost that sale because of your inability to recognize your prospect's buying style.

**Research in the field of psychology tells us that we are born into one of four primary temperament styles (Aggressive, Expressive, Passive, or Analytical) that are unrelated to race or gender.**

---

## Styles of Temperament

---

Research in the field of psychology tells us that we are born into one of four primary temperament styles (Aggressive, Expressive, Passive, or Analytical) that are unrelated to race or gender. Each of these four behavioral styles requires a different approach and selling strategy.

Hippocrates, the father of medicine, is credited with originating the basic theory of the four temperament styles 2,400 years ago. Since the days of ancient Greece, there have been many temperament theories and a wide variety of evaluation instruments, but essentially they utilize the four temperament styles that Hippocrates identified. Hippocrates observed that these four styles have a direct influence on our physiology, character traits and outlook on life.

- **The Aggressive or Worker style is:** *Extroverted — Determined — Demanding — Domineering — Controlling — Practical — Self-reliant — Decisive — Insensitive*

The impatient and goal-oriented worker prefers a fast, bottom-line presentation style. Be on time and well prepared. Avoid small talk and get right to business.

They are generally quick to make a decision. Workers are focused on results and ask "what" questions. Keywords to use are "results," "speed" and "control."

---

Give them options so that you don't threaten their need for control.

• **The Expressive or Talker style is:** *Extroverted — Enthusiastic — Emotional — Sociable — Impulsive — Optimistic — Persuasive — Egotistical — Unorganized*

The playful and friendly talker prefers a fast and entertaining presentation style. They are quick to make a decision and tend to be impulsive shoppers. Keep them focused on the subject and allow time for them to express their opinion. Talkers seek social acceptance and ask "who" questions. Keywords to use are "exciting," "fun" and "enthusiastic." Keep your presentation big-picture — avoid details and numbers. Use colorful pie charts or graphs. Use testimonials with the status-conscious talker.

• **The Passive or Watcher style is:** *Introverted — Accommodating — Harmonious — Indecisive — Patient — Uninvolved — Sympathetic — Supportive — Stable*

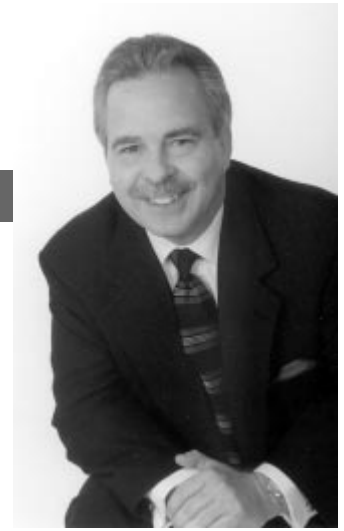
The peaceful and stoic watcher prefers a slow, deliberate presentation and requires time to warm up. They are very sensitive to conflict or perceived "sales pressure." Watchers have a need to accommodate others and ask "how" questions. Keywords to use are "family," "service" and "harmony." Condition watchers for change; they are natural born procrastinators who love the status quos. Help the watcher make a decision by giving them assurance.

• **The Analytical or Thinker style is:** *Introverted — Thoughtful — Organized — Critical — Shy — Detailed — Pessimistic — Introspective — Private*

The cautious and frugal thinker prefers a slow, detailed presentation and requires time to warm up. They are skeptical and typically research before they purchase. Thinkers want detailed information and ask "why" questions. Keywords to use are "logical,"

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

*John Boe helps companies recruit, train, and motivate their sales force to achieve peak performance. He is an authority on body language and temperament styles. To have John Boe speak at your next event, visit [www.johnboe.com](http://www.johnboe.com) or call (831) 375-3668.*



"safety" and "quality." Expect them to take their time "thinking it over." They will "shop your numbers" to make certain they are getting the best deal possible. Help thinkers reduce their fear of making a mistake by giving them evidence and guarantees.

While there are certainly many factors that influence the selling process, by far the most important is learning how to identify your prospect's buying style. In fact, the majority of lost sales can be directly attributed to poor communication and failure to establish trust and rapport. Once you learn how to quickly and accurately determine your prospect's buying style, you will be able to develop trust and rapport quickly and thereby dramatically increase your sales effectiveness!

Copyright © 2004, Manufacturers' Agents National Association

One Spectrum Pointe, Suite 150, Lake Forest, CA 92630-2283 • Phone: (949) 859-4040 • Toll-free: (877) 626-2776

Fax: (949) 855-2973 • E-mail: [mana@manaonline.org](mailto:mana@manaonline.org) • Web site: [www.manaonline.org](http://www.manaonline.org)

All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.