COMMUNICATION STYLE ASSESSMENT
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Introduction

This assessment includes 30 pairs of statements. For each pair, read both statements and write down “a” or “b,” to indicate which statement best reflects you and what you believe or would do. No single statement is true or false for everyone, and there are no right or wrong choices. With some of the statement pairs, you may disagree or agree with both statements to some extent. In those cases, decide which statement is closest to what you believe or would do in most instances. Please be sure to answer every item. We will score this assessment when we are together in session.

Please write down “a” or “b” for each of the following pairs of statements:

1a. When I can’t avoid dealing with someone I dislike, I generally try to keep a low profile.
1b. When I can’t avoid dealing with someone I dislike, I try to find some way to have an interesting or beneficial conversation.

2a. I think I’m pretty good at thinking of effective solutions to other people’s personal problems.
2b. I think I’m pretty good at helping other people reason through their problems and arrive at good solutions.

3a. A good communicator is a person who balances what they want with the needs of other people when deciding what to say.
3b. A good communicator is a person who knows what the right response is in any situation.

4a. I enjoy persuading people and think I’m pretty good at it.
4b. I don’t enjoy situations where I have to be a salesperson or persuade someone.

5a. I try to be a helpful person, but I really don’t enjoy listening to and dealing with other people’s personal problems.
5b. I always feel sorry when another person has a problem, but I must admit I enjoy the closeness that happens when you talk with another person about their personal problems.

6a. The best way to help someone with a problem is to figure out how to make them feel better.
6b. The best way to help someone with a problem is to tell them how to solve it.

7a. I find it easy to open up and get close to people.
7b. I think it’s hard to find people I can get close with.

8a. Sometimes I think I’m not very sensitive or understanding when dealing with people.
8b. I think I understand people well enough.

9a. There are two ways to get along in the world: by being nice and pleasant or by being smart and aggressive.
9b. It’s possible to be both nice / pleasant and smart / aggressive at the same time.

10a. When someone seems to be feeling bad, I encourage them to explain why and try to reassure them.
10b. When someone seems to be feeling bad, I try to change the topic to something that will distract them.

11a. When I want to know why someone behaved in a particular way, I usually ask them to explain themselves.
11b. When I want to know why someone behaved in a particular way, I usually think about their past behavior and try to find the patterns.

12a. I dislike it and consider it inauthentic when people change their behavior depending on who they’re with.
12b. I think a good communicator changes how they act to depending on the people they’re with.

13a. I’m often curious about people’s goals, desires, and motives.
13b. People’s goals and motives are usually pretty obvious, so I’m seldom curious about why they do what they do.

14a. I’ve gotten feedback in the past that I’m a good listener and an empathetic person.
14b. I’ve gotten feedback in the past that listening and empathy are areas where I can improve.

15a. The most important ingredient in communication is knowing the appropriate response to a situation and how to produce that response.
15b. The most important ingredient in communication is understanding and fostering cooperation between people.

16a. I’m typically friendly to people I dislike.
16b. I typically avoid dealing with people I dislike.

17a. There are few people in the world that you can really trust.
17b. I think I can trust a lot of people I know, at least for most things.

18a. It’s hard to tell what someone is really like until they’re in a position to influence what happens to you.
18b. It’s easy to tell what people are like just by watching how they treat people in general.

19a. To truly resolve an argument somebody has to win and somebody has to lose.
19b. It’s possible for both people to win when they have an argument.
20a. If someone I didn’t know well unexpectedly said something nice about me, I’d probably wonder what they might be trying to get from me.
20b. If someone I didn’t know well unexpectedly said something nice about me, I’d probably think they were being friendly.

21a. In effective communication honesty is always the best policy.
21b. In effective communication honesty is a matter of degree.

22a. When someone offers to do something for me, I usually think that they’re being generous.
22b. When someone offers to do something for me, I sometimes wonder if they want something in return.

23a. People offer compromise positions in arguments when they have been persuaded that the opposite position has merit.
23b. People offer compromise positions in arguments when they realize that neither side can convince the other.

24a. When I want to figure out what someone is like, I look for an opportunity to observe them in action.
24b. When I want to figure out what someone is like, I look for an opportunity to engage them in a conversation.

25a. I seldom hurt people’s feelings, and I don’t worry about it much unless they are clearly upset.
25b. I sometimes worry that I may have said or done something that hurt someone’s feelings and that they covered it up.

26a. An effective leader gives clear orders and directions.
26b. An effective leader listens to subordinates to make sure they understand what to do and why.

27a. Even with people I dislike, I’m interested in knowing what they’re like and why they do what they do.
27b. When I come to dislike someone, I stop caring why they do what they do.

28a. It’s better not to discuss a conflict in a relationship until you absolutely must.
28b. It’s better to deal with conflicts when they arise so they don’t spoil a relationship in the long run.

29a. I occasionally try to help friends or family resolve their conflicts.
29b. When I’m around people who are having conflicts, I try to keep a low profile and not get involved.

30a. It’s pointless to analyze behavior too deeply; a lot of the things people do don’t have any deeper meaning.
30b. Everything a person does communicates feelings and intentions.
Scoring Instructions

Compare the letters below to your response for each situation pair. When your response matches the letter ("a" or "b") below, give yourself one point. An “F” means the questions was a filler question and you should skip it with no score.

Total your score. The scale ranges from 0 to 15, with 0 representing a very expressive communication style and 15 representing a very strategic communication style:

1. b  11. a  21. b
2. F  12. b  22. F
3. F  13. a  23. a
4. F  14. a  24. F
5. F  15. b  25. F
6. a  16. a  26. b
7. a  17. b  27. F
9. b  19. F  29. F
10. a  20. F  30. F