



Belbin's Team Roles

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Background

- Dr Meredith Belbin studied the behaviours of managers from all over the world for nine years(!)
- Studied personality traits, intellectual styles and behaviours
- Different clusters of behaviour were identified as underlying the success of the teams: Team Roles



The Theory

- The most effective teams have a mix of all the roles
- A good mix which is managed well can ensure teams progress and deliver quality results
- Applies both in and out of work
- Series of questions helps identify your strongest and weakest team roles and can include observer assessments



What is a team role?

"A tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way."

Action-oriented roles	Shaper, Implementer (Company Worker) and Completer Finisher
People-oriented roles	Co-ordinator (or Chairperson), Teamworker and Resource Investigator
Thought-oriented roles	Plant, Monitor Evaluator and Specialist

All team types have strengths & “allowable weaknesses”



Team roles (thought-oriented)



- **Plant**

Tend to be highly creative and good at solving problems in unconventional ways

Strengths: Creative, imaginative, free-thinking, generates ideas and solves difficult problems.

Allowable weaknesses: Might ignore incidentals, and may be too preoccupied to communicate effectively.

Team roles (thought-oriented)



- **Monitor Evaluator**

Provides a logical eye, making impartial judgements where required and weighs up the team's options in a dispassionate way

Strengths: Sober, strategic and discerning. Sees all options and judges accurately

Allowable weaknesses: Sometimes lacks the drive and ability to inspire others and can be overly critical

Team roles (thought-oriented)



- **Specialist**

Brings in-depth knowledge of a key area to the team

Strengths: Single-minded, self-starting and dedicated. They provide specialist knowledge and skills

Allowable weaknesses: Can only contribute on a narrow front and tends to dwell on the technicalities

Team roles (people-oriented)



- **Coordinator**

Needed to focus on the team's objectives, draw out team members and delegate work appropriately

Strengths: Mature, confident, identifies talent. Clarifies goals. Delegates effectively

Allowable weaknesses: Can be seen as manipulative and might offload their own share of the work

Team roles (people-oriented)



- **Teamworker**

Help the team to gel, using their versatility to identify the work required and complete it on behalf of the team.

Strengths: Co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic. Listens and averts friction

Allowable weaknesses: Can be indecisive in crunch situations and tends to avoid confrontation

Team roles (people-oriented)



- **Resource Investigator**

They provide inside knowledge on the opposition and made sure that the team's idea will carry to the outside world

Strengths: Outgoing, enthusiastic. Explores opportunities and develops contacts

Allowable weaknesses: Might be over-optimistic, and can lose interest once the initial enthusiasm has passed

Team roles (action-oriented)



- **Shaper**

Provide the necessary drive to ensure that the team keep moving and do not lose focus or momentum

Strengths: Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure. Has the drive and courage to overcome obstacles

Allowable weaknesses: Can be prone to provocation, and may sometimes offend people's feelings

Team roles (action-oriented)



- **Implementer**

Needed to plan a workable strategy and carry it out as efficiently as possible

Strengths: Practical, reliable, efficient. Turns ideas into actions and organises work that needs to be done

Allowable weaknesses: Can be a bit inflexible and slow to respond to new possibilities

Team roles (action-oriented)



- **Completer Finisher**

Most effectively used at the end of tasks to polish and scrutinise the work for errors, subjecting it to the highest standards of quality control

Strengths: Painstaking, conscientious, anxious. Searches out errors. Polishes and perfects

Allowable weaknesses: Can be inclined to worry unduly, and reluctant to delegate

Our very own experiment!

Build a tall Giraffe which is able to stand.

Which are you?

Individuals tend to have one strong 'type'

- May have several others as secondary roles which can be utilised
- It's snapshot – people change and so do their behaviours!



How can Belbin help you?

- Don't try to be something you're not!
- Use the information you get back
- Understand your strengths and how to make the most of them
- Understand where you need assistance or support or where others can help
- Understand how others perceive you
- Understand how to manage your relationship with others



Why use Belbin profiling?

- It can help with your personal development
 - Understand how you work better to improve your work with others
 - Can link to learning styles
- It can support the development of working relationships
 - Explains fundamental difficulties in relationships
 - Helpful when analysing challenging behaviour
 - Can help when putting a team together or pairing people to work together



Nature or nurture?

- Both!
- You can't deny your natural tendencies, especially when under pressure
- External factors such as cultural setting, your level of responsibility within the organisation and other members of the team can have an influence



Further reading and questionnaires

www.belbin.com

Understanding Organisations by Charles Handy

www.businessballs.com

<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/teamsuv.html> (print out)

Any questions?

- Or if you think of anything later, contact me:
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