

Identifying Personalities on The Trade Show Floor

Below is a summarized version of how to quickly identify personalities and effectively communicate your message to your customer. For more detailed information check out the article starting on page 2.

The Director: Practical & Logical Thinker

Appearance: formal, traditional, strong solid colors

Meeting Style: structured, schedule oriented, straight to the point, values time, takes control

Body Language: precise & controlled movements, hands on hips with elbows out, dominating demeanor

They Will Ask: What? What's the ROI? What are the facts?

Frustrations: off-track communication, lack of supporting data, over sharing of personal feelings

Advice: Avoid small talk, state the facts, and say, "Let me send you specific information"

The Organizer: Detailed, Methodical, & Systematic Thinker

Appearance: neat, pressed, creased, and tucked; slim briefcase, bag, or purse

Meeting Style: structured, organized, want detailed handouts

Body Language: closed off & precise movements, respects personal space

They Will Ask: How? How does it work? How will this make me more efficient?

Frustrations: unorganized, lack of attention to detail, spontaneity, high risk

Advice: Make sure to provide them with a brochure and offer to provide more details

The Socializer: Expressive & Emotionally Driven Thinker

Appearance: bright colors, big/flashy jewelry, attention seekers, loud & excessive talkers

Body Language: big gestures, excessive hand movement, personal space invaders

Meeting Style: unstructured, want the highlights, will easily venture off topic

They Will Ask: Who? Who will be affected? Who will be happy or upset?

Frustrations: critical comments, lack of emotion, impersonal, boring details

Advice: Use short, fast, moving stories to sell your point. Be careful not to lose too much time socializing

The Creative: Innovative & Strategic Thinker

Appearance: trendy, fashionable, color coordinated, lack attention to detail

Body Language: open, big gestures, excessive use of hands

Meeting Style: unstructured, brainstorming, likes bullet points, thinks about the "Big Picture"

They Will Ask: Why? What would our customers like this? Why would we use this and where would it take us?

Frustrations: too much detail, structure, repetition, lack of humor

Advice: Focus on what's new and exciting. Point them towards your bullet points in your graphics.

******BODY LANGUAGE CLUES TELLING YOU TO CHANGE YOUR APPROACH******

Folded arms, hands clasped in front of their bodies, arms behind back with one hand grabbing the wrist of the other arm, and feet/foot pointed away from you. These are the most common examples of how all personality types act when frustrated.

Identifying Personalities on The Trade Show Floor

People's personalities are derived from different components of the brain and come in a variety of combinations. Individuals that are strongly dominated by one portion of the brain are easier to read. The people that are more evenly distributed will take more practice to quickly identify. Whatever the makeup of the individual is, the advice below will help you understand how to recognize behaviors and effectively communicate your message.

The Director: Practical & Logical Thinker

Appearance: Tends to dress more formal and traditional with strong solid colors. Think bold blues, dark reds, neutrals, or black and white. Majority of their business attire will consist of these colors. Their clothing tends to send the message of power, structure, and stability.

Meeting Style: Structured and schedule oriented. Ask them their plan for the Trade Show and more than likely they will have a Trade Show Planner with allotted times for each booth. They tend to be in a hurry and want to get right to the point. Directors naturally take control and will not be shy in letting you know that your time is up and they need to move on.

Body Language: Precise and controlled movements. Pay attention to hands on hips, chest out and elbows out to sides (subconscious way of attempting to intimidate others with size), they will invade other's space but will not tolerate the other way around, good posture, uses finger pointing and closed fist pounding on/into other hand when speaking. Look for exposed thumbs (hands in pockets with thumbs hanging out, uses thumb first when counting) individuals will use this as a display of superiority. These are a few examples but their overall demeanor will be a dominating one.

They will ask: What? What are the facts? What is being measured? What is the logic behind this? Note that when they speak it will be with intensity and purpose. Remember to state the facts and link new information to existing knowledge. A good thing to say "Let me send you specific information."

Frustrations: Off-track communication, lack of facts or data, inappropriate informality, and over sharing of personal feelings, to name a few.

The Organizer: Detailed, Methodical, & Systematic Thinker

Appearance: Clothing is neat, pressed, creased, and tucked. Good posture. Notice their attention to detail. Their hair will be perfectly in place, nails will or appear to be manicured (even men), cuff links can be a clue but sometimes these are used to represent status. Briefcase, bag, or purse will be slim due to efficient organization. Ask for a business card and make note of their quickness to reach for it and the method they've used to store them.

Meeting Style: Structured & organized. They want to know the details. They appreciate handouts and guidelines with the facts. Make sure to have your brochures readily available at your Trade Show Booth and be prepared to go over your products in full detail. You won't have to worry about your brochure ending up in the trash with this individual. Ask them a question and make note of their answer. Their responses are typically in order of events as they occurred, providing detail on each event.

Body Language: Gestures are closed and precise, making them harder to read, so you will have to pay close attention. They will be quick to back up if you get too close, however their reaction will not be as dominate as your Directors.

They will ask: How? How does it work? How will this be systematic? How will this make me more efficient?

Frustrations: Unorganized, lack of attention to detail, and spontaneity. Try asking them if they've ever gone on a last minute vacation, or if they enjoy surprises. Organizers tend to like plans and do not like it if things do not go accordingly.

The Socializer: Expressive & Emotionally Driven Thinker

Appearance: Bright colors, big/flashy jewelry, big hair (whatever draws attention). Socializers are easy to spot and will naturally draw your attention when you look out to the Trade Show floor. Look for the people that are louder than others and doing all the talking.

Body Language: Big gestures, excessive hand movement, lots of arm touching, close talkers, and should remain relaxed when you casually test their personal space.

Meeting Style: Unstructured and will tend to venture off topic. They will want to know about you and who you are. Tend to have a short attention span, so stick to bullet points and who your product will help and how happy people will be. Make sure to be personable with this personality type. Be cautious of your time, it's easy to get caught up talking with The Socializers.

They will ask: Who? Whom this product will affect? Who will be happy? Who will be upset? Use short, fast, moving stories to sell your point. Socializers are run by emotions and feelings. They tend to use phrases like: I can't quite grasp what you're saying, I feel you, I sense you are trying to tell me something, When can I get a hold of this, etc.

Frustrations: Lack of interaction/emotions, boring details, no eye contact, critical comments. Stick to the highlights and show enthusiasm.

The Creative: Innovative & Strategic Thinker

Appearance: Trendy, fashionable, visually appealing, and color coordinated. The Creative feels the need to express themselves through clothing. They will look put together like your Organizer, however will lack attention to detail. Look closely and you will notice their hair is tossed around, nails are jagged/lack a polished look, eyebrows need to be plucked, shoes are scuffed up, clothing isn't perfectly creased, and any other little details you can think of. These things will help you decipher between the two personalities.

Body Language: Big gestures with excessive use of hands, both hands and arms will be open (unless frustrated)

Meeting Style: Unstructured (tend to run late), love to focus on brainstorming. Driven by concepts and new ideas. They have short attention spans and only want the highlights. Ask them about spur of the moment vacations/decisions and odds are they will have a story for you. These are your risk takers.

They will ask: Why? Why would I want to use this? Why would our customers like this? They are going to want ideas delivered as concepts. They have a strategic way of thinking, so talk to them about where you could take them. They are excited about new ideas. Creatives are visually driven people and will also use phrases such as: I see what you're saying, I get the picture, Can you look into that, That's perfectly clear, etc.

Frustrations: Repetition, slow, boring, overly structured, absence of humor, and too much detail. Stick to highlights by focusing on what's new and exciting, be enthusiastic, and dream with them. Remember they are visually driven people, so point them towards the bullet points in your graphics