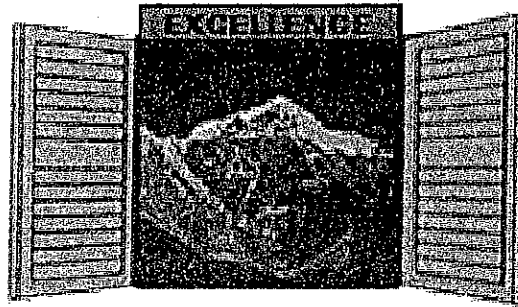


The supporting / giving-in orientation



Philosophy:

“If I prove my worth by working hard and pursuing excellence, the good things in life will come to me.”

“I value excellence.”

Goals:

Prove worth. Be helpful.

Strengths:

Principled, cooperative, dedicated, pursues excellence.

For someone who emphasises this orientation in his/her behaviour it is very important to be a “good person”, to be nice to people, to feel a worthwhile human being – one who is doing his/her share to make a contribution, and then some. There is a strong belief that ideals and values are important, and that each of us can help make this a better world to live in. Thus what is of greatest concern is a sense of mission and purpose, and the desire to behave in such a way that one can feel he/she is living up to his/her best intentions and capabilities. Key to one’s efforts is the importance of not simply preaching but being – serving as an example for others, trying to be responsive and co-operative.

There is an inner sense of satisfaction derived from behaving in this way which goes beyond external recognition. One does not boast about personal behaviour requesting recognition although there will be good feelings derived from appreciation and acknowledgement of personal efforts. There is a basic willingness to believe in the worth and value of others – to be interested in helping people grow and develop. One becomes a member of a group and shares its goals and values, and should be dedicated to enhancing its welfare, expecting appropriate guidance and direction from leaders, preferably people who have personal integrity and earned respect through their competence. One believes that rewards will come from being earned – that a “good deed” will bring its just desserts. Ideals serve as standards. Thus one is always comparing self and others to those standards, hopefully meeting them through constant striving through improvement. Failure to meet such goals often leads to disappointment, disillusionment and guilt.

In conflict situations there is a desire to deal with the other person in a fair and reasonable way with the expectation that there will be reciprocity. There is little interest in trying to take advantage of the other person and great distaste and discomfort for emotional confrontations. Often, it is difficult to directly ask for something one wants or expects, hoping for the other person to recognise the need and gratify it. When pressed hard, the person relying on this orientation is likely to accede to the other person, without expressing reservations. Thus others will often feel that this person is easy to get along with. When crises arrive, such a person all too often tends to feel overly responsible yet is willing to seek and accept advice from others who demonstrate their expertise and mastery.

Typical behaviours:

- through listening to what people have to say,
- appreciating others' abilities to solve problems,
- through providing resources necessary for others to get things done,
- through encouraging others when they meet difficulties,
- lending a hand,
- removing road blocks which may be in someone's way,
- preparing the way for someone,
- being considerate of another person's time or difficulties and not intruding with one's own needs, demands, or burdening the person with additional inputs,
- anticipating the needs of another person and taking care of them in advance,
- co-operating and collaborating with others to expedite a task, make it easier, more enjoyable, etc.,
- providing the value of one's experience and advice to facilitate progress (if requested),
- undertaking an assignment in a willing, wholehearted and dedicated manner,
- not helping, unless asked, but being willing to pitch in if asked,
- emphasises the importance of goals and values,
- providing assignments but not constantly asking for information about it,
- encouraging others to participate in problem-solving and decision-making,
- trusting others, and
- helping others develop.

The controlling / taking-over orientation



Philosophy:

“If I get results by being competent and seizing opportunity, the good things in life will be there for the taking.”

“I value action.”

Goals:

Be competent. Get results.

Strengths:

Persistent, initiating, urgent, directing.

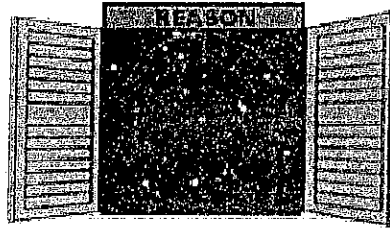
Of major concern is getting things accomplished that one desires – and quickly. The person who emphasises this orientation has high confidence in his/her capability, in the belief that given dedicated energy and imagination any problem can be solved – and usually, if within the area of his/her knowledge and experience, through personal involvement. Such a person has an interest in “making hay while the sun shines” and taking advantage of opportunities that arise. Consequently, time is of utmost importance. Further, there is a tendency to trust one’s own intuitive assessment of situations, or to rely on experts who one trusts and, having done that, to marshal the resources necessary to make things happen. This is also accompanied by an enjoyment of the power of decision-making and the delight in autonomous functioning. Challenges and variety intrigue such a person. Consequently someone who favours this orientation is usually involved in many activities. There is a belief in individual responsibility and capability.

When conflict occurs there is a willingness to confront differences in a confident and assertive way to get one’s way and to convince others of the value of the position that has been taken. Through intensive give and take, this person learns the value of other viewpoints and can make decisions accordingly. There is enjoyment of competitive disputation, as well as an emphasis on stating one’s views and feelings openly and directly. In stress situations, there is a desire to restore control immediately, to take actions quickly and to be involved in a number of situations personally. Prompt and competent handling of situations is valued.

Typical behaviours:

- expressing confidence that the person can achieve what is asked for (I can do that. I know it can be done),
- expressing desires directly to eliminate confusion,
- indicating specifically what one is looking for,
- making decisions quickly,
- gathering resources and directing them against the task,
- letting others know where they stand with him/her,
- being willing to take risks,
- staying on top of what is happening,
- acting directly to show what is needed,
- confronting differences,
- taking charge when there is no action,
- exercising initiative to get things done, and
- acting independently.

The conserving / holding-on orientation



Philosophy:

“If I think before I act and make the most of what I’ve got, I can build up my supply of the good things in life.”

Goals:

Be careful. Get it right.

Strengths:

Systematic, analytical, maintaining, tenacious.

The person who relies heavily on this orientation is interested in minimising loss and optimising gains. There is a keen interest in getting things done accurately and thoroughly. Analysis, planning, systems and routines are used to minimise risk and assure that everything is being handled properly. Care, caution, organisation and good systematic habits are therefore highly valued. One would feel that it’s a lot easier and less expensive, to make sure one knows what one wants to do, has surveyed alternatives to determine the best and most economical way to do it, has planned how to get it done with resources available and follows-up systematically to assure that things have been done according to plan. There is a belief that more things get out of hand because people lose focus and concentration – become distracted, instead of staying with one thing fully until it is finished. Policies and procedures are followed rigorously. Once systems, policies and procedures have been established this person favours following them until someone proves there is a better way – or one that makes more sense. Attention is paid to small details as well. Consequently there is emphasis on appropriate documentation and information retrieval systems.

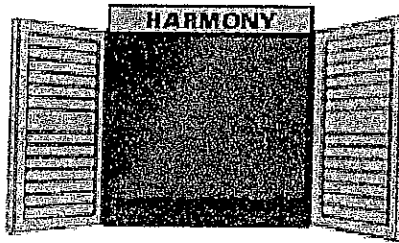
In disagreements keen attention is paid to the accuracy of facts and information, the quality of reasoning involved and the systematic covering of all aspects of the issue. There is a calm and deliberate manner preferred to deal with such situations, a reluctance to engage in emotional behaviour and a preference for spending time on research before becoming involved in arguments. Once engaged in debate, only better facts or superior logic will prevail in overcoming this person’s views. There is no rush to achieve resolution and one can hang on doggedly despite pressure.

A similar deliberateness, emphasising research and analysis, characterises the approach to extreme stress situations. Once understanding of what is involved is clear, then efforts are made to organise a planned approach to remedy the situation. Information is gathered as efforts progress to assess what is involved, to keep track of events and to evaluate performance. Long term resolutions are favoured to immediate relief.

Typical behaviours:

- double checking what has happened,
- establishing a clear structure for work efforts,
- carefully analysing what is involved before acting,
- documenting what happens,
- calling attention to the need for information before making decisions,
- spending effort to assure clarity of instructions,
- thoroughly reviewing all the details involved,
- adhering to schedules and budgets,
- attention to costs when considering proposals,
- maintaining calmness when crises arrive,
- assuring objective and fair evaluations,
- making sure everything is treated in an organised and systematic fashion,
- checking the logic and facts that underlie a position,
- encouraging attention to details,
- assuring adherence to policies and procedures,
- providing consistent behaviour, and
- requesting appropriate planning and organisation for meetings.

The adapting / dealing-away orientation



Philosophy:

"If I please other people and fill their needs first, then I can get the good things in life that I've wanted all along."

"I value harmony."

Goals:

Know people. Get along.

Strengths:

Empathetic, tactful, flexible, enthusiastic.

A basic consideration is the desire to have people like and admire you. There is keen interest in being included by others in activities and groups. A person who emphasises this orientation enjoys working with people, finds the challenge of new relationships exciting and knows that once one gets to understand people one can influence them a lot. There is effort spent observing as well as being friendly and sociable. There is the realisation that understanding how a person thinks and feels, what he/she values and what he/she is sensitive to provides important keys to gain acceptance and collaboration. This person has also learned that it is important to keep oneself open to new experiences, to be enthusiastic and willing to experiment, and to be flexible in relating to people. When one approach fails there is the feeling that there are others that can work. Even in failure situations, the belief exists that if one keeps one's eye open there will be cues that will help to discover more successful ways. There is emphasis on presenting points and ideas with tact and care. Life is viewed as a matter of give and take – this person enjoys negotiating and dealing with people.

He/she believes that it pays to go through life making as many friends as possible – and keeping one's options open. A friendly and optimistic attitude is valued as a basic asset to achieve success. One tries, whenever possible to communicate positive feelings about others – to be generous in offering compliments and statements of acknowledgement and appreciation for efforts that others have made. Sensitivity to feelings and social amenities is highly valued. Humour and light touches are appreciated and utilised whenever possible.

There is a win-win attitude reflected in conflicts and disagreements. One is attentive to the other person's viewpoint, acknowledges its value and tries to utilise understanding to provide convincing arguments for one's own position. Critical and demeaning comments are rarely employed. The major effort is made to be persuasive without antagonising the other person. Humour and other tension-relieving remarks are made to defuse tension and preserve relationships. A willingness to compromise and achieve mutually satisfactory agreements is demonstrated readily. In stress situations there is attentiveness to morale as well as resolving difficulties. Such a person is flexible and open to new ideas, willing to experiment with any approach that could be successful. An optimistic outlook is maintained and communicated to others, both staff and superiors.

Typical behaviours:

- expressing appreciation for efforts,
- sensing feelings and acknowledging them,
- expressing empathetic remarks,
- listening to new ideas in a positive way,
- encouraging flexibility and experimentation,
- building harmony and friendly relationships,
- providing information how people are likely to feel if treated in a particular way,
- awareness of customer needs and attitudes,
- willingness to see the other side of the issue,
- negotiating in a positive and win-win way,
- expressing remarks that make people feel good about themselves,
- providing a sense of fun in what is being done,
- expressing and encouraging enthusiasm and optimism,
- willingness to approach changes in a positive manner,
- ability to deal positively with the public and other groups,
- willingness to try something first before accepting or rejecting it, and
- tactful and diplomatic behaviour in dealing with delicate situations.

Stress

Stress is the enemy of high performance. Sure a sleepy organisation is rarely a high performing one but all experinec suggests that stress is the most debilitating affliction rending high performing inididuals incapable of reaching their potential.

The Lifo® method Stress Style survey helps individuals and teams look at how people behave under stress. The tool allows them to compare their own behaviours in a business setting under normal circumstances and how they change under stress. Once you understand how behaviours change you can flex your working partern and working environment to accentuate the positive changes and minimise the negative which cause stress.

Here are some example so of stress and how they affect all of us. The Lifo® method defines all us into four preference groups **SUPPORTING**, **CONTROLLING**, **CONSERVING** and **ADAPTING** here's how each may react under stress:

LIFO® Orientations distress behaviour

SUPPORTING	CONTROLLING	CONSERVING	ADAPTING
depressed	panic reactions	withdraw and wait	drifting, can't pay attention
self-blaming	hyper-irritable	find fault with others	reassure myself that all is OK
worry a lot	combative	analysis paralysis, delay	make unreal promises
complain a lot	jump from one thing to another	lose perspective, lost in detail	feel slighted, unrewarded
keep hoping and wishing	over-react precipitous	overly systematic, act too late	make a stab at lots of things
dependent	can't concentrate	no response doesn't complete things	over-concerned with status and other people's opinion

Perhaps more important than knowing how individuals react under stress is to look at what causes stress in individuals. The following table shows some common causes of distress as identified in the Lifo® method Stress Style

LIFO® Orientations distressors

SUPPORTING	CONTROLLING	CONSERVING	ADAPTING
Made to feel insignificant	Checking up too much	Lack of planning	Demeaning critical remarks
Required to do meaningless work	Excessive instructions	Unexpected events	Failures
Treated unfairly or dishonestly	People failing to get things done	Lack of guidelines	Impersonal treatment
Violations of personal norms, rules & values	Not receiving needed resources	Too many and too sudden changes	Monotony/detail
Excessive requests	People needing everything spelled out in detail	Ambiguous situations	Social isolation
Personal criticism	Lack of authority	High emotions	Loss of status
Ridicule	Countermanded	Changing rules	Public embarrassment
Failures due to disliked own efforts	Loss of power	Forcing decisions	No approval, being
Lack of support for ideals and values	Unreliable people	Accelerating schedules	Inflexibility
No appreciation	No reciprocity	No reasons for or illogical requests	Excessive structure

How to use the Lifo® method Stress Style survey with my organization

The Lifo® method Stress Styles questionnaire is the basis of our approach by taking team members through what are their own preferred styles and what makes them tick they can start to understand what makes others tick too.