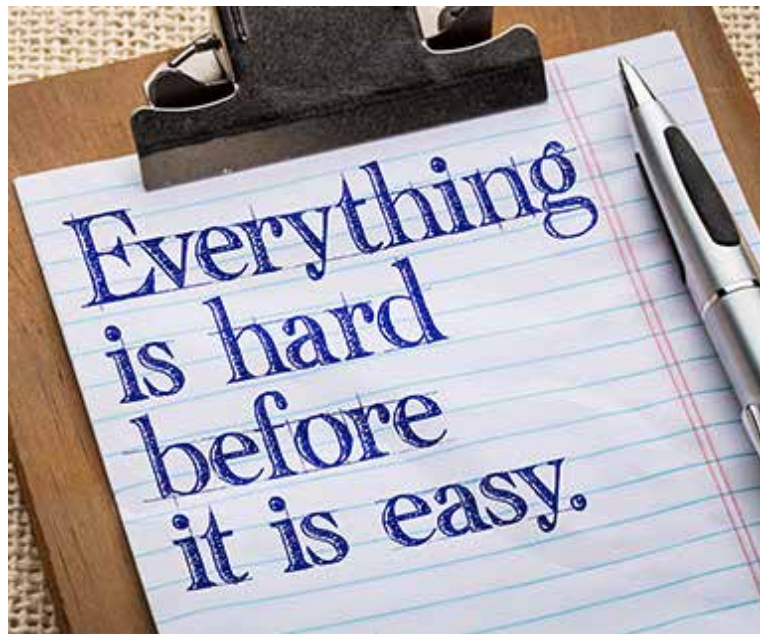


WHOSE PERSONALITY IS BEST FOR FUNDRAISING?

As development professionals, we've all met people for whom fundraising seems to come naturally. They are adept at setting up calls, quick to identify philanthropic opportunities meaningful to donors, and great at showing impact and encouraging repeat contributions. It seems like their personalities are designed for fundraising success—but what's really going on?

Even as you read this, you may have such a person in mind—but what may seem easy always requires work. Consider how hard you work yourself, and then remember: To many people, you may seem like the one for whom everything comes easily. In short, the idea that a certain personality is best for fundraising is an illusion. In reality, it is the people who are able to leverage their personal strengths and acknowledge and correct weaknesses who have the greatest professional success.

The PDP Personality Profiles tool is a great way to examine your own personality, and the personalities of others, to uncover professional habits to assist your fundraising success.



Recalling your own personality profile, use the guide below to explore what makes your personality a great one for fundraising, and how you can make it even better.

High Dominance

Natural Strengths:

This trait is great for fundraising because it causes directness, independence, and ambition. Individuals exhibiting this trait tend to work hard to be successful. They are intrinsically motivated, meaning they do not need to await direction and take action without being asked.

Cautions:

Individuals exhibiting this trait may need to take care to avoid appearing insensitive and controlling. Working with donors requires them to forfeit control in some situations, and to show more patience than they may feel is natural.

Low Dominance

Natural Strengths:

This trait helps fundraisers be peaceful and cooperative. Individuals exhibiting this trait are likely to find personal fulfillment in promoting the success and vision of others, making them great partners in philanthropy. They are eager to help donors fulfill their philanthropic passions.

Cautions:

Individuals exhibiting this trait must get outside of their comfort zone and lead the charge in some situations. Working with donors, they should show leadership over the donor development process—a habit that becomes easier with practice.

High Extroversion

Natural Strengths:

Many fundraisers exhibit this trait, because individuals exhibiting high extroversion are wonderful at many of the skills that are most necessary in fundraising. They are personable, friendly, and positive, and they tend to work well as part of a team.

Cautions:

Individuals exhibiting this trait are susceptible to infusing their conversations with so many of their own ideas that they can sometimes get carried away. Working with donors, they would do well to listen quietly more than may feel natural.

Low Extroversion

Natural Strengths:

This trait helps fundraisers to be quiet, making space for others' ideas to flourish. Fundraisers exhibiting this trait are great at forging close, intimate relationships and showing respect to donors. They also tend to be creative.

Cautions:

Fundraisers exhibiting this trait may find it more challenging than others to reach out to schedule calls, conduct meetings, and have difficult conversations. Going outside their comfort zones to do this becomes easier with practice.

High Pace/Patience

Natural Strengths:

This trait helps fundraisers show patience and sympathy to others—rare qualities that make excellent fundraisers. Those exhibiting this trait tend to be friendly and naturally good listeners, and are respectful of donors' time—even when closing a contribution takes longer than planned.

Cautions:

Individuals exhibiting this trait are likely to be slightly uncomfortable when called on to be decisive. They may need to adapt by trusting their instincts to make decisions more quickly, and they may also need to adjust to working under pressure to meet important deadlines.

Low Pace/Patience

Natural Strengths:

This trait helps fundraisers get a lot done, because those exhibiting it tend to work at a rapid pace. They also enjoy traveling and adjusting to changes in plans, which can be channeled to increase their ability to adapt to the traits and preferences of others.

Cautions:

Individuals exhibiting this trait may find the more routine aspects of their jobs to be dull and demotivating. They may need to make an effort to show increased patience when donor situations require it, and will be happiest if they infuse their routines with more activity and variety.

High Conformity

Natural Strengths:

This trait is great for fundraising because the contracts, reports, and procedures that can bog down other fundraisers are naturally preferred and enjoyed by those exhibiting this trait. Their attention to detail and thoroughness can help them provide the impact information donors crave.

Cautions:

Individuals exhibiting this trait may feel unnatural when discussing donors' personal stories. Naturally skeptical, they may need to adjust to having conversations that reside more in the realm of emotion than of reason.

Low Conformity

Natural Strengths:

This trait helps fundraisers to be successful with little supervision—in fact, those exhibiting this trait prefer it! They are also great at helping donors dream, and working with leaders and subject matter experts to escape any rule-bound habits and truly imagine what can be possible with philanthropy.

Cautions:

Because they dislike details and rules, fundraisers exhibiting this trait may necessarily have to make some adjustments in order to complete all of the tasks their roles require. They also do well to surround themselves with support staff who can help them with details.

Finally, remember that working with donors is all about adapting to the donor's style. No matter what a fundraiser's personality is, by recognizing what makes a donor most comfortable, you set the stage for successful communication, clearing roadblocks and enabling connections for meaningful philanthropy.

Want to learn more about personality profiles and adaptations? Check out a public offering of *The Art and Science of Donor Development*, or consider bringing us to your organization for a more intensive Personality Profiles workshop.