NEXT GENERATION
LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Creating servant leaders for the African Church

MODULE 6

UNDERSTANDING YOUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

Learning Leader Guide

Servant Leadership Programme for Alumni

Jesus the Communicator

"Jesus was open to influence.
He made himself vulnerable to others and was transparent.
Jesus also asked a lot of questions."
J.M. Kouzes & B.Z. Posner, *Christian Reflections on The Leadership Challenge*, 89

Leading other rests on your ability to connect with people, share your ideas and vision, and motivate them to partner with you. Jesus was an excellent communicator – putting people first, he learned about them and their needs. He gave people a point for their head and a picture for their heart.

Matthew 13:1 – 15
"That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear." The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?" He replied, "Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. This is why I speak to them in parables:

"Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.
In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts
and in turn, and I would heal them."

It's not just what you say, it's how you say it. It's not just what you say, but how they hear it.
It's not just what you say but when you say it. It's not just what you say, but how you show it.

Synodal Reflection
A core tenet of synodality is **DIALOGUE**. Take a moment to reflect, in any way you like on how the Holy Spirit might be inviting you to grow in your ability to communicate effectively.

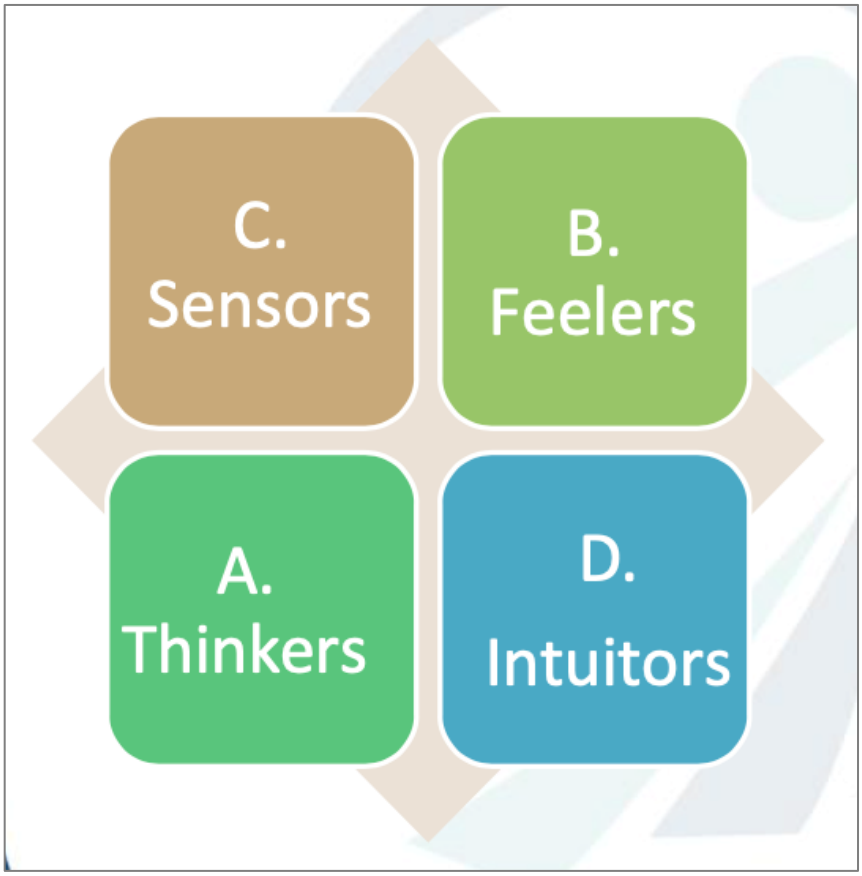
Communication Style Self-Assessment

	On each line, read the 4 choices, and select (by placing a checkmark) the word or phrase that is most descriptive of you. There is no such thing as a 'best' style, so do not choose what sounds 'best'. Choose one per line working from left to right, going across.

A.	B.	C.	D.
1.__ Like to analyze	__ Like to Interact	__Like to Decide	__Like to Explore
2.__ Objective	__ Emotional	__ Practical	__ Visionary
3.__ Logical	__ Encouraging	__ To the Point	__ Creative
4.__Consistency	__ Spontaneity	__ Determination_	__ Insight
5. __Order	__ Cooperation	__ Results	__ Concepts
6. __Value details	__ Bored with details	__ Value facts	__ Value ideas
7.__ Controlled	__ Personable	__ Action-oriented	__ Dreamer
8.__ Composed	__ Empathetic	__ Quick	__Intellectual
9.__ Cautious	__ Enthusiastic	__ Sensible	__ Original
10.__ Formal	__ Informal	__ Motivating	__ Inspiring
11.__Detached	__ Sentimental	__ Impatient	__ Preoccupied
12.__Problem-solver	__Supporter	__ Implementer	__Developer
13.__Data	__ Feelings	__ Plain talk	__ Possibilities
14.__ Critical	__ Moody	__ Driven	__ Distant
15. __ Truth	__ Harmony	__ Reality	__ Change
16.__ Precise	__Tactful	__ Direct	__ Complex
17.__ Value accurate timetables	__ Value past events	__ Value Present Events	__ Value future achievements
_____Total (A)	**_____Total (B)**	**_____Total(C)**	**_____Total (D)**

Four Communication Styles

Everyone has their own major and minor communication style they can use in their work and personal life based upon four primary styles. Also, there are behavior patterns associated with each style:



STYLE	FUNCTION
Thinker	• Analyzing, ordering in logical fashion
Feeler	• Relating to and understanding experience through emotional reactions and response to feelings
Sensor	• Experiencing mainly based on personal sensory perceptions…'just do it' style
Intuitor	• Conceiving, projecting, inducing

Group Activity: Exploring Your Communication Style

As a group with similar communication styles, discuss the following questions. Assign a scribe to record key points from your discussion. These will be used for a conversation with the larger group.

What are some of the characteristics of your group's communication style?

In what ways do others sometimes misunderstand your communication style?

How could others who have different communication styles deal more effectively with you?

What would you like to tell the other communication styles about your style?

Notes: Communication Styles Group Activity

Use the grid below to jot down your notes from the group activity.

- What would you like to remember about others' communication styles?
- What would you like to remember about your communication style?

Sensors

Feelers

Thinkers

Intuitors

Characteristics of the Four Styles of Communication

SENSORS	
Positive Characteristics	**Negative Characteristics/Perceptions**
▪ Are resourceful, determined, practical and down-to-earth ▪ Have a talent for getting things done ▪ Make decisions quickly based on facts and past experience ▪ Focus on actions, results and rewards ▪ Like to get to the "bottom line" or "cut to the chase" ▪ Enjoy the present moment ▪ Work steadily with a realistic idea of how long it will take.	▪ Impulsive ▪ Competitive ▪ Aggressive ▪ Impatient ▪ Disregard long-term consequences of actions/decisions ▪ Under stress may alienate others ▪ May be poor listeners often interrupt ▪ Might create 'messes' for others to 'clean up"
FEELERS	
Positive Characteristics	**Negative Characteristics/Perceptions**
▪ Are good at building rapport and communicating tactfully ▪ Consider the impact on other people when making decisions ▪ Have a talent for empathizing and creating harmony ▪ Are naturally friendly and have a good sense of humor ▪ Take an interest in the person behind the job ▪ Treat each person uniquely	▪ Overly personalize situations ▪ Relationships can cloud judgment ▪ Might overlook important details ▪ Lack of planning can cause disorganization ▪ May spend too much time socializing ▪ Ask a feeler "how are you" and they will tell you more than you ever wanted to know.
INTUITORS	
Positive Characteristics	**Negative Characteristics/Perceptions**
▪ Are visionary, seem to see into the future and are good, long-range planners ▪ Love to learn new skills ▪ Have great imaginations ▪ Focus on how things can be improved ▪ Are able to identify creative solutions and fresh and novel approaches	▪ Absent-minded" scattered ▪ Long on vision, short on action ▪ Avoid nitty-gritty, hates phone coverage ▪ Hard to read ▪ May come across as 'superior', arrogant, or condescending ▪ May not follow-through on tasks ▪ May procrastinate
THINKERS	
Positive Characteristics	**Negative Characteristics/Perceptions**
▪ Are good at putting things in order. ▪ Have a talent for analyzing a problem or situation ▪ Make objective decisions based on logic ▪ Tend to be brief and businesslike ▪ Value accuracy and preciseness ▪ Follow policies and rules ▪ Are sought out for problem solving abilities	▪ Can be overly cautious or too slow ▪ Might miss the forest for the trees ▪ Can hurt other's feelings ▪ Might not give enough positive feedback ▪ Their knack for remembering policy, adhering to policy and attention to detail can cause a Feeler to think the Thinker is looking for things to criticize

Strategies for Flexing Your Style

To flex to the Feeling Style, communicate in a way that is:

- Acknowledges other people's feelings
- Translates other people's feelings into words that others can understand
- Hospitable, welcoming

To flex to the Intuitor Style, communicate in a way that is:

- Open to new ideas
- Open to asking, "what would happen if," instead of "that won't work because"
- Willing to stay in the "discovery phase" longer
- Interested in the future (ecology, next generation, issues of conscience) and today's actions' effects on it.

To flex to the Thinker style, communicate in a way that is:

- Structured, organized, "bulleted"
- Focused on the goal
- Interested in checking out/verifying their facts.

To flex to the Sensor style, communicate in a way that is:

- Focused on results, actions, deadlines
- Offers them opportunities to lead, set the agenda
- Direct
- Open to tolerating/taking risks

Additional Resources for Leading and Learning

	Articles and Media ● NGLP Resource: Understanding Your Communication Style: ○ Communication Style Descriptions ○ Motivating and Rewarding the Four Primary Styles ○ Reading Others' Communication Styles ● The Social Style Model
	Assessments ● Self- Assessment Social Styles
	Lessons and Activities • Activity: Communicating More Effectively • Tracom: Social Styles • Social Styles Reference Card • Social Styles: Four Style Facilitation