

“What sort of Communicator are you? Here we define the Feeler”



This article continues with the third communication style that people, according to Carl Jung the noted Swiss psychoanalyst, normally use. The first two styles were people who use:

- **Intuitor style:** characterised by those who primarily are conceptual, synthesising, inductive, reasoning and projecting
- **Thinking style:** characterised by those who primarily are logical, objective, systematic, and principled

The third style is what Carl Jung called the “**Feeler**” style and those who use this style are individuals who place great value on personal experience and harmony in their interactions with others. They enjoy the stimulation of "personal" relations and are responsive to the needs and feelings of the people with whom they come in contact. As a result, Feelers are keenly attuned to subtle changes in other people's moods, and astute in reading between the lines about what motivates them. They are good at providing encouragement and support to others, and may go out of their way to do so.

Whether in their work or in their voluntary activities, Feelers are attracted to situations in which they can demonstrate their personal values and provide a service to others. They are sought after for their ability to listen and empathise and for their patience in assisting others in need of support and understanding. In team activities they have an unwavering ability to identify the needs of those affected by the group's decision making. Feelers are often perceived as being understanding and attentive to others, demonstrating sensitivity to the needs and wants of others. They are adept at noticing discrepancies between speech and expression or between outward behaviour and inward feelings. They are perceptive observers of their own motives and the motives of others. Others

may seek out Feeler types for their ability to sort through complex emotional problems and situations, to interpret the meaning of behaviours, or to assess the climate or morale of a group. They are likely to be effective in anticipating or predicting the way others may respond or react to a projected change or action.

The positive Traits of Feelers are therefore that they are seen at their best as being:

- Truly perceptive and astute
- Extremely skilled communicators and facilitators, if outward looking or if inward looking,
- Respected for their patience, listening skills, and the accuracy of their observations
- Keenly insightful in assessing organisational politics
- Able reduce resistance to change and increase the likelihood of cooperation and teamwork among co-workers
- Good at facilitating harmony and are often experienced as being well meaning and thoughtful.

However the challenges facing Feelers are that at their worst they are seen as being:

- More often concerned with the human processes of an interaction than with the objectives of the interaction. Thus goals are sometimes sacrificed for the sake of maintaining relationships
- Less interested in the mechanics of doing something than in facilitating cooperation/agreement.
- Reluctant to reach a decision until everyone is happy with the decision.
- Less on logic than on "gut feelings" about the way people and things impress them
- Described as "big hearted" but "soft headed."

- Guilty of taking their own emotional reactions as representing fact
- Defensive, if confronted, as they feel that others are criticising them for their thoughtfulness
- Overly sensitive and too subjective.

Under Stress however Feelers run the risk of being seen as:

- Thin-skinned, emotional, and over reactive
- Outspoken or dramatic, especially if they feel their personal values are being threatened
- Uneven or erratic in their manner due to widely fluctuating moods
- Oriented, as far as time is concerned, more to the past than to the present or future

Do you know such a person? If not here are some clues you might look for:

1. **Their communication style:** Since Feelers assume that others see and do things as they do they expect their actions and communication to be understood by others. They tend to be friendly, approachable, and agreeable, communicating sympathy and support toward others. They are good at pointing out the positive attributes of others and are compassionate, tending to exercise tact over honesty. It is not unusual for them to expect the same consideration from others. When this does not happen, they may feel slighted and interpret actions as being insensitive and thoughtless.
2. **Their approach to problem solving:** The Feeler's strong values and sensitivity to others are strong motives guiding their problem solving and decision-making. When working with others, harmony is an important issue. The Feeler can be good at facilitating cooperation.

3. **Their writing style:** It is not unusual for the different types to engage in written communication that reflects their personal style or preference for verbal communications. For the Feeler style such people will tend to extend their understanding and personal approach to others to their written communications. They often write in a manner that reflects important values and that attempts to appeal to the personal knowledge or experience of the reader. When arguing a point or disagreeing, Feelers express empathy with or understanding of the other person's point of view. Ideas are often stated in terms of ideals and expectation of shared beliefs. The assumption is that the reader is, or should be, equally as affected by the issues presented.

Feelers can benefit from remembering to express their written opinions, requests, etc., in a manner that emphasises the facts, and that respect the objective interests or logical concerns of the reader.

Are you a Feeler type? If so then you need to appreciate the difficulties others may experience when communicating with you and adjust your style to accommodate them. This will mean that you need to be able to identify their style and then speak their language. If you're not a Feeler, Thinker or Intuitor, your style has to be the last one. So stay focussed if you want to be a more effective communicator particularly at that all-important interview.