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## What's Your Style, and Can You Be Flexible?

In their book *People Styles at Work*, Robert Bolton and Dorothy Grover Bolton identify four styles people exhibit at work:

- Analytical
- Driver
- Amiable
- Expressive

When the president of a small bank realized that his work style was strongly analytical, he became concerned that he wasn't doing enough to relate to the employees of his bank.

"I started as a teller," he said. "I was good with numbers and kept my focus on my work, so I was promoted to customer service. I was good with numbers and kept my focus on my work, so I was promoted to loan officer.

"I could spend 10 minutes looking at a loan applicant's tax return and accurately determine the amount of a mortgage he or she would qualify for. Naturally this meant that I could process a large number of mortgages quickly. Because I was good with numbers and kept my focus on my work, I was promoted to president.

"I know I'm not great with people skills. I know I need to be better. So I do one small thing every time I walk through the lobby. Although I have a head full of numbers, I look up and smile at every teller, employee, and customer I can see. But I wonder if that's enough."

He said this in a meeting which included managers and employees of all levels. After a moment, a teller spoke up, "We know you. We see what you're doing. It's enough. It's perfect." There were nods all around the room

His team members recognized that he was making the effort to flex his style to their needs, and they appreciated it.

It only takes small, subtle behaviors. And sometimes not even words.

- What's your work style?
- What are the work styles of your close colleagues?
- How can you flex in order to communicate successfully with them?

To learn more, read *People Styles at Work*.