



# EAP SUPERVISOR ENHANCEMENT NEWSLETTER

July 2024



## DEER OAKS PRESENTS

### Supervisor Excellence Webinar Series

#### *Advanced Coaching Skills for Leaders*

Date: Monday, July 29, 2024

Time: 1:00 PM–2:00 PM CST

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# MONITORING YOUR ENERGY TO MANAGE

As a manager, the demands on your time and energy can be taxing. You need to deal with work pressure, face change with an open mind, and model a positive approach to work for your team, even in the face of adversity. You can only do all of that if you attend to your own physical and emotional needs. Here are suggestions for monitoring your energy so that you have the stamina to lead and take care of your team:

- **Attend to your health.** Exercise regularly. Eat a healthy diet. Get the sleep you need.
- **Pay attention to your emotions.** Recognize the physical signs of stress before they reveal themselves in unhelpful behavior. Know the triggers that provoke you to anger or withdrawal.
- **Take breaks to recharge.** Take short breaks during the workday to pause and relax, and breaks before or after work to calm yourself. Listen to soothing music. Meditate or use breathing techniques. Take a walk or go to the gym to release energy and regain focus.
- **Use your vacation time to get away from work and recharge.**



- **Make time for the people and activities you care about outside of work.** Carve out both "me" and "we" time—time by yourself to recharge, and time with friends and family to connect and share.
- **Reach out for support after a difficult decision, conversation, or situation.** Talk with a trusted coworker or friend, your manager, a human resources (HR) representative, or a specialist at your employee support program.
- **Be a role model for your employees.** Show how to manage stress and how important it is to attend to personal health and relationships, especially when work pressure is intense.
- **Practice mindfulness.** Mindfulness is a powerful tool to help restore energy and manage stress. Check with your employee support program to get more information about mindfulness.

Source: Morgan, H. (2020; Reviewed 2023, May [Ed.]). *Monitoring your energy to manage* (pp. 9–10). In *A manager's guide to the employee support program* (B. Schuette, Ed.). Raleigh, NC: Workplace Options.

# HOW TO DEFINE PEOPLE'S DIFFERENCES

It is truly amazing how differently people view the world: how their likes, dislikes, skills, and preferences shape the way they think, feel, and behave. People are all a kaleidoscope of different attributes, but it's possible to arrange these differences into key categories.

For some people, arranging attributes, styles, and personalities into groups questions their concept of being a unique snowflake in the world. However, clearly defining people's differences in key areas can help you efficiently and effectively communicate, collaborate, and operate together.

Defining and categorizing differences is not a new concept. Many would have heard of the Myer Briggs Type Indicator and DISC (dominance, influence, steadiness, and compliance/conscientiousness) profiling. This looks at individual's different preferences in the way they communicate, make decisions, weigh up information, and draw their energy. Both are very good models.

This article will utilize the Myer Briggs Type Indicator as it clearly outlines the four different continuums which define people's preferences as humans. This can make defining differences easier. For example, the extrovert–introvert continuum is one of the four continuums highlighted in this model.

## **The Myer Briggs type indicator defines differences across these four continuums.**

- 1. Extrovert–Introvert refers to how people get their energy—** from internal reflection or group energy?
- 2. Sensing–Intuition is what drives you—**Are you "little picture," detail-orientated, and driven by what is possible today, or a big-picture dreamer driven by the possibilities of tomorrow?
- 3. Thinking–Feeling defines how you make decisions—**Do you focus on what is logically the best decision, or are you influenced by the impact (particularly on others) of your decision? In other words, are you analytical or humanistic?
- 4. Judging–Perceiving refers to how people organize their lives—** Are you planned and methodical, and do you like being ready/finished early, or do you arrive/finish last minute, pressure prompted, and are flexible?

Looking at these four key defining areas on a continuum helps you to easily draw comparisons between yourself and others. It can help you to understand why you come to different conclusions when presented with the same information. It also explores why you may work in very different styles or go about problem-solving in different ways. In a team and leadership context, awareness of how people differ can help propagate enhanced team performance.

## **There is no correct or better combination of the above preferences.**

Those preferring to operate more in line with the perceiving end of the continuum can help those more aligned with the judging side to respond to last-minute changes to client requests or changes in circumstances. Meanwhile, those preferring the judging side can help the perceiving people to stay on track and not leave things too late. Extroverts are good at getting in a room and sharing ideas. However, introverts are more adept at listening to what those ideas are and sifting through what is good and what is lousy. Those driven by picture and "the possibilities" are great at setting a vision and goal. However, those more driven by reality (sensing) and the process help put those ideas into action and see them through.

It's essential to understand how these differences can be utilized to a team's advantage to be a great contributor and leader. Getting annoyed at your coworker because they're seeing things differently or being quiet is ineffective. This will invariably break down your team's performance.

Open discussion within your team about the differences that exist, each individual's strengths, and when these apply can help define and utilize these differences effectively. This is more constructive than letting them splinter and divide your team. This also helps assign the appropriate tasks to the appropriate people, setting them up for success. There's no point asking the perceiving person to organize the conference, and there's no point getting the intuitive person to write the to-do list.

Source: Veretis. (Revised 2024 [Ed.]). *How to define our differences?* (B. Schuette & E. Morton, Eds.). Raleigh, NC: Workplace Options (WPO).

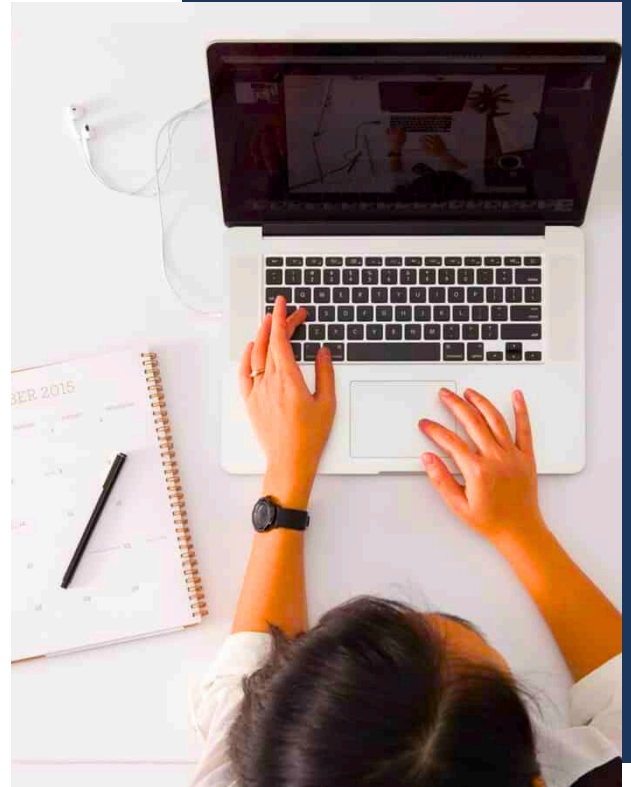
# ASK YOUR EAP!

**Q. I am a new supervisor, and I would like to start developing leadership skills now rather than discover these on the job. Is there a way to explain to me how I can “think like a leader”?**

A. You can study leadership, but learning on the job is key to success. Some key principles of leadership are worth knowing. The following list is not exhaustive, but it’s a good start. Begin by having a vision for your role and work unit. It is easier to apply leadership skills when you have goals and imagined outcomes. Be aware that employees naturally observe and analyze your behavior. So, be an example for them to follow, rather than having them gossip about you behind closed doors. Encourage employees to be proactive and take the initiative, and support them with resources where possible. Communicate and foster open and honest communication with each employee, not just the group. Discover what each one aspires to be and achieve in their career. Offer mentorship, coaching, and training opportunities. Create a supportive and inclusive work environment and intervene quickly in situations that threaten this environment. Last, but not least, strive for continuous development of yourself.

**Q. I suggested my employee visit the EAP for a personal issue. She’s a competent worker but could likely improve. I didn’t request feedback from the EAP because I don’t think the issue is serious. Is this considered a supervisory referral or a self-referral?**

A. From the EAP’s perspective, this would be treated as a self-referral, but if the employee-client mentions your role, it may be considered an “informal supervisor referral.” Not all EAPs recognize informal supervisor referrals, but it can be important to an organization to know that supervisors are proactive in referring employees to any degree. This helps establish program value. The assumption is that a supervisor who prompts a referral formally or informally often is identifying employees who are less likely to self-refer. Some severely troubled employees may not self-refer because of denial that they have a problem, stigma, or fear of what may be entailed with appropriate treatment. These roadblocks can lead to greater risk for the organization. When making an informal referral for an employee, consider contacting the EAP to mention your role. The EAP may decide later that there is a good reason to have the employee sign a release enabling limited information to be provided to you that will be beneficial to the employee’s care.



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