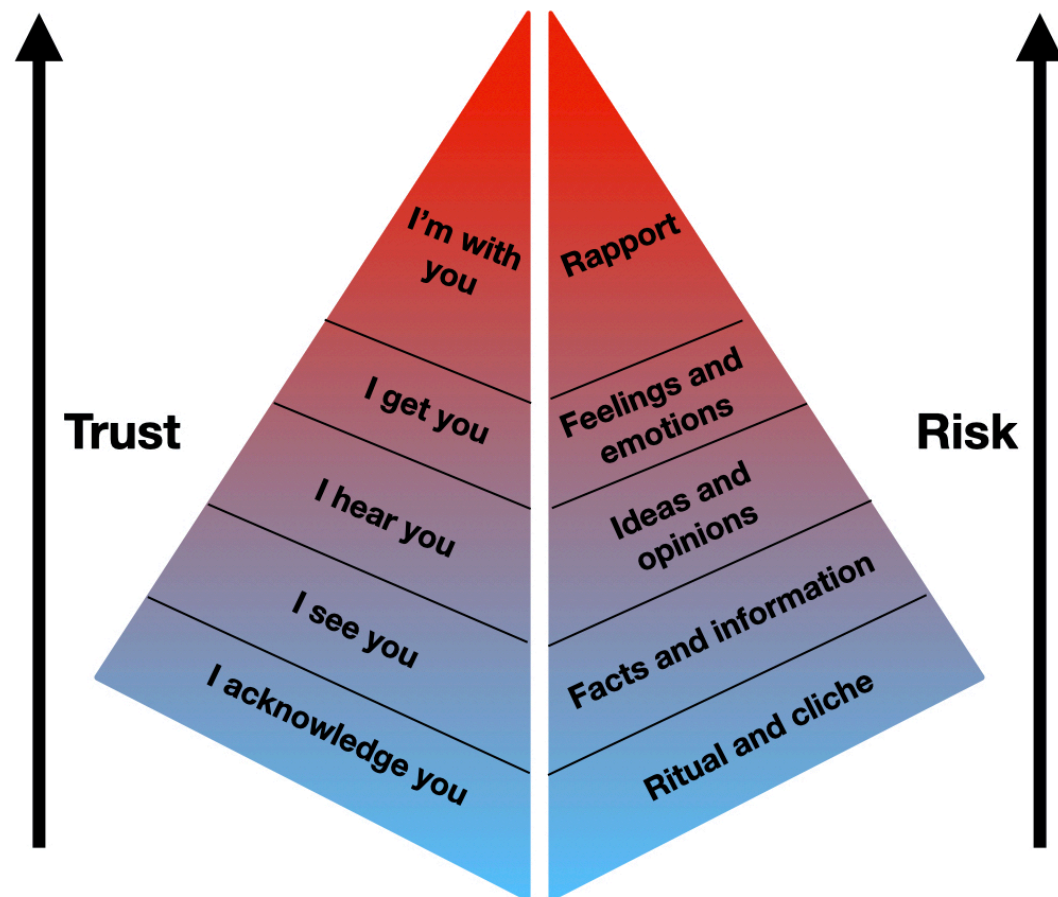


AHDB Team Boost

Building trust through improving the quality of your conversations

The better we know and understand each other, the better we will work together. And one indication of how well we know each other is through analysing the quality of the conversation between us. 'The Communication Pyramid' is a simple model that shows the different levels and what that really means in reality connection-wise between two people.



The Communication Pyramid

5

And the more we get comfortable with more in-depth conversations without ending up in conflict, the more we will end up in *Rapport*, where talking is just easy and we can talk about anything. And that's when we can really collaborate and support each other. Just think of your best friend - that didn't happen by accident, it took effort and risk to climb the pyramid!

4

But if you really want to understand and 'get' someone else, then you have to take it to the next level and make it safe to share *Feelings and Emotions*. "To be honest I'm a bit frustrated just now. How are you feeling about it?". They may be the same or maybe not. But just because someone has a different feeling that doesn't make them wrong, it just makes them different!

3

Now let's dig a little deeper. To do that we have to be up for taking a bit of risk, and sharing a little more of our own views to get others to open up. "Here's what I think of that new technique - what's your *opinion*? What *ideas* do you have to improve productivity? Here's a couple of my thoughts". Then you'll really start to hear someone, but only if you make it safe to do so

2

The next level up is called *Facts and Information*, where we exchange just that. "How did the milking go yesterday? Did that delivery arrive? How are you getting on with that stock take?" Just task based transactional chat. But at least we are conversing and as such listening to each other and in turn 'seeing each other'. But so far this is just safe and shallow conversation

1

Ritual or Cliché – just polite conversation. Morning, how are you, how was your journey, isn't the weather lovely? But are we even listening to what comes back? Or is this just our usual daily ritual that doesn't really add much value other than acknowledging someone

So why not give it a go with your colleagues. Just think about what level your dialogue is at now with each person in your team and try to take it to the next level by making the effort and taking a little risk!

AHDB Team Boost

Understanding ourselves and others better

A tool to help you understand yourself and get to know one another, is a simple personality diagnostic called 'Social Styles', which categorises our underlying social preferences under four 'types'. To find out your own preference all you have to do is read the statements and then tick those that you feel reflect the way you prefer to operate. It's normal to have a spread across two or more boxes. We are a heady mix, but your highest score is your 'default' mode.

Social Styles

Analytical

- Does things one step at a time
- Cautious about actions & decisions
- Prepares & studies things in advance
- Relies on & uses facts to back arguments
- Neat & organised
- Numerate
- Presents information clearly & sequentially
- Works precisely & slowly alone
- Knows how to access data for facts & information
- Relies on the presentation of data to prove arguments
- Needs a framework to solve problems
- Prefers a lot of detail on which to base decisions

Score: ☐

Driver

- Likes control
- Wants firm actions & decisions
- Dislikes inaction
- Prefers freedom to manage oneself / others
- Knows and applies the rules
- Low tolerance for feelings, attitudes & advice of others
- Technically proficient
- Breaks things down
- Good at solving problems
- Likes making decisions
- Focused
- Does not like to waste time

Score: ☐

Those with an *Analytical* style are cautious, thorough, methodical and logical. They are more likely to make decisions based on the facts at hand rather than emotional reasoning or gut. They just want to be right. Overdone strength: Can over analyse, be too cautious and deliberate too long, especially if the facts are missing

Those with an *Amiable* style are friendly, supportive, fair and helpful. They like nothing more than creating an environment of harmony and being inclusive so that no one feels left out. They are all about doing the right thing by others. Overdone strength: Can put others needs before their own and become over burdened

Those with an *Expressive* style are often the life and soul of the party. They live for the moment, like to be the catalyst for bringing people together, are big picture thinkers and relish taking risks. They also talk a lot, and about anything! Overdone strength: Can lack focus and attention to detail, and take unnecessary risks

Those with a *Driver* style thrive on getting things done. They are goal driven, want to win, and have little tolerance for anything that gets in the way. They are also opinionated. Overdone Strength: Can sometimes be poor listeners and in their haste might miss someone else's suggestion that could get an even better result.

Amiable

- Needs to feel comfortable with others
- Good at gaining support from others
- Prefers to be a team player & not a loner
- Seeks security & belongingness
- Good at counselling others
- Needs support for goal setting & self-direction
- Reads people well
- Intuitive & sensitive to others' predicaments
- Good ice-breaker and socialiser
- Looks for the workable compromise
- Wants to 'keep the peace'
- Finds it difficult to say no & ask for things from others

Score: ☐

Expressive

- Does things spontaneously
- Tends to dream & get others caught up in the dream
- Thinks about the 'Big Picture'
- Likes to inspire others
- Strives to get others on board through charm
- Likes overt approval & praise
- Enjoys variety & change
- Good 'platform' skills (enjoys giving a show)
- Prefers to keep moving & not standing still
- Likes others to involve him/her as much as possible
- Needs a 'sounding board'

Score: ☐

Adapted from the original research by Merrill Reid

So which is your default? And which are others? And what is it you can do to modify your own behaviour so that you are playing to your strengths rather than being 'overdone'. And how can you adapt your own style to be more accommodating of the other styles? Because each has its own value, and if we just take a step towards each other and think what is it I could do to connect better with them, we'd all get along a little bit better. Give it a go and discuss the results as a team!