SIMPLE DETAILS RESOURCE · WORKING ACROSS STYLES

Working across styles.

This isn't about changing who you are. It's about knowing your own style, reading someone else's, and flexing so your message lands.

> *"Communication happens on the listener's terms."*
> Thomas Erikson, Surrounded by Idiots

Two questions sort most behavior: do you move at a faster or slower pace, and do you lean toward tasks or people? Check the words that sound like you at work, then count each box. Your highest count is likely your primary style. Most people blend two.

	TASK FOCUS	PEOPLE FOCUS
FASTER PACE	**D Direct** — FASTER PACE, TASK FOCUS Looking for: Results *"Let's decide and move."* Under pressure: Impatient, blunt ☐ Decisive ☐ Direct ☐ Competitive ☐ Bold ☐ Results-focused CHECKED ☐	**I Influencing** — FASTER PACE, PEOPLE FOCUS Looking for: Interaction *"That sounds fun. I'm in!"* Under pressure: Scattered, overcommitted ☐ Enthusiastic ☐ Persuasive ☐ Optimistic ☐ Talkative ☐ Spontaneous CHECKED ☐
SLOWER PACE	**C Careful** — SLOWER PACE, TASK FOCUS Looking for: Accuracy *"What's the data behind this?"* Under pressure: Critical, stuck in detail ☐ Precise ☐ Analytical ☐ Careful ☐ Systematic ☐ Private CHECKED ☐	**S Steady** — SLOWER PACE, PEOPLE FOCUS Looking for: Stability *"How will this work? It's not urgent, right?"* Under pressure: Resistant to change, quietly gives in ☐ Patient ☐ Loyal ☐ Calm ☐ Supportive ☐ Steady CHECKED ☐

My primary style, and the one I blend with:

The style I find hardest to work with, and why:

No style is better than another. Each brings strengths and blind spots. The goal isn't a different style. It's more range.

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Flexing by channel.

The same message can land or miss depending on how you send it. Before you hit send, ask who's reading.

	D Direct	I Influencing	S Steady	C Careful
Slack or Teams	Lead with the ask in one line. Put the deadline up front.	Open warmly. Energy and an emoji are welcome. Invite their ideas.	Say hello first. Explain the why. Don't create surprise urgency.	Put everything in one message: links, specifics, the actual question.
Email	Make the subject line the ask. Three bullets, max.	Big picture first, a personal note, then offer a quick call.	Give context, the steps, the timeline, and what changes for them.	Organized and complete. Attach the data. Check your facts.
Meetings	Start on time. Agenda built around decisions. Give options.	Leave room to talk and brainstorm. Write next steps down for them.	Send the agenda ahead. Ask for their input by name. Don't rush the decision.	Send a pre-read a day ahead. Give time to think. Follow up on questions.
Everyday conversation	Get to the point. Disagree with facts, not feelings. Let them choose.	Be social first. Listen to the story. Match their enthusiasm.	Slow down. Ask about them. Build small agreements.	Be precise. Say "I'll find out" rather than guess. Welcome their questions.
Body language	Steady eye contact, confident posture.	Smile, open gestures, animated tone.	Calm, relaxed, softer tone.	Composed and professional. Give them space.

Try it

A message I need to send this week, and the reader's likely style:

How I'll rewrite it so it lands for them:

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Why should I be the one to adapt?

It's a fair question. Here's the honest answer, and what to do when it's your turn to ask others to flex.

Adapting is influence, not surrender.

The person who flexes usually has the most influence in the room. You choose the delivery so the content gets heard.

It's temporary.

You flex for a conversation, not a lifetime. Your style stays yours.

It goes both ways.

When you name what you need, others can flex for you too. That's what team norms are for.

It costs less than the alternative.

Misread messages create rework, friction, and lost trust. A small shift up front is cheaper.

When it's fair to ask others to flex

You've flexed first. Asking lands better when people have seen you meet them halfway.

You're setting team norms. Response times, channels, meeting prep, and how decisions get made are fair to agree on together.

It's a pattern, not a moment. Name it when it keeps happening and it's costing results.

You frame it as what helps. "I do my best work when..." invites a shift. "You need to..." invites defense.

Name what you need

Flexing isn't the same as staying silent. It's fair to set expectations, especially with your own team. Share these, and ask others for theirs.

HOW I LIKE TO RECEIVE INFORMATION

WHAT I NEED BEFORE I MAKE A DECISION

BEST WAY AND TIME TO REACH ME

WHAT I MEAN WHEN I'M BRIEF, QUIET, OR BLUNT

WHAT HELPS WHEN WE DISAGREE

INTEGRATION

Reflect

Where do I expect others to adapt to me without saying so?

Take action

One team norm I'll propose, or one person I'll flex for, this week.

For a deeper dive: Surrounded by Idiots, Thomas Erikson. The four-style model traces to William Moulton Marston's work. This is a reflection tool, not a validated assessment, and it isn't affiliated with any DISC publisher.

You're welcome to share this resource, unaltered and with credit.