

Sara Lindmont: Hello everyone, and welcome to today's webinar, **Communication Style 101**, hosted by HRDQ-U and presented by Peggy Greenberg. My name is Sara and I will moderate today's webinar. The webinar will last about an hour. If you do have any questions, go ahead and type them into that questions area in your GoToWebinar control panel and then we'll either answer them as they come in or after the session by email.

Sara Lindmont: Today's webinar content is from our bestselling assessment and workshop, *What's My Communication Style?* If you are interested in delivering this training within your organization, please contact HRDQ. Now give a warm welcome to our presenter today, Peggy.

Peggy Greenberg: Thank you, Sara. I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to all of you. I am delighted to be here with you today and to talk about Communication Style 101. So I want to start out by just showing you where we're headed today, our road map for today's session, if you will. And so we're going to first start out by defining communication. It's such a huge area, huge field, and so it's important to define it.

Peggy Greenberg: Then we're going to talk about, what is your communication style? So I'm going to be identifying for your four styles, and as Sara said, this is taken from HRDQ's communication style assessment. So we're going to look at, what are the strengths and the trouble spots of the four styles? Because all styles have some strengths, but there are also some things that can make your communication not be as effective as it possibly could. So we're going to look at that.

Peggy Greenberg: Then we're going to talk about, how do you interact with people, individuals or team members, maybe your boss, other people in your family perhaps, who have a different communication style than your own? Because we will meet people with all four styles and so we have to learn how to interact with people that have a style that's different from our own. Then how can you quickly gauge the style of someone that is a new acquaintance? Because you might not have much time to spend with them, but you need to know how they're communicating so that you can be most effective.

Peggy Greenberg: So I think since this is a session on communication, I want to start by telling you a little bit about me. I have worked in a variety of different

positions. I have been the Director of Training and Organizational Development in several healthcare organizations. Most recently, I was Director of the Office of Education and Training for the United States Senate. I have also served in the capacity of being an executive coach and consultant.

Peggy Greenberg: I conduct a lot of training seminars for various organizations as well as being an online moderator for business management and communication topics. So my work, needless to say, has involved a lot of communication with people at all levels in many different types of organizations, in fact. To me, above all, the skill that is needed for personal and professional success is the ability to communicate effectively. It is a core competency.

Peggy Greenberg: So the time that you spend today and in fact, any time that you spend sharpening your communication skills is a true investment in your future success. I think it's a good investment that you're here with us today and you're eager to learn about communication style and communication skill. So the first question then is, what is communication? As I mentioned to you, this is a very big topic and it's a very big part of all that we do.

Peggy Greenberg: There are countless definitions of communication but the ones that I think summarize communication the best are first of all, communication is the process of attempting to create shared understanding. You'll notice that I say attempting to create shared understanding because really, until we get feedback on whether our message was received the way that we intended it, it's only an attempt. You really don't know until you get feedback whether or not your message was received the way that you intended it.

Peggy Greenberg: The second thing is that communication is, as all of you know I'm sure, it's both verbal and non-verbal. It's not just what we say but how we say it. We've all experienced this as well. Maybe this morning when you were coming into your office or on the train or wherever, you said good morning to someone and they said good morning back to you, but you could tell by the way that they looked and by the way that they sounded that it was anything but a good morning for them.

Peggy Greenberg: As a matter of fact, it's been noted in the research that we actually believe non-verbal communication significantly more than we believe verbal communication. So it's both verbal and non-verbal. Then finally, it's a simultaneous assigning of meaning. So as soon as you put a thought, a feeling, a word out there, some meaning is attached to it, right or wrong. So we have to be very mindful of, what are we saying and how are we saying it? Because as soon as it's out there, some

meaning is attached to it by the person or persons with whom we're communicating.

Peggy Greenberg: Now that we have some definition of communication, I want to share some key communication principals. First of all, as I mentioned, communication occurs when a sent message is received. That's when we can say we've had communication. Above all, it's not only when it was just received, but it was received in the way that we intended it. The message, very often, that's received might not be the same as the one that was sent.

Peggy Greenberg: Again, I'm sure we've all had this experience. We communicate, we say something, or we put something into an email, or whatever, and we find out that the person is upset, or we find out that the person thinks that we're angry with them or whatever. So communication, the message very often might not be received the way that we in fact intended it. The reason for that is that sender and receiver each have a history and a personal communication style. Both of these can affect the interpretation of any message.

Peggy Greenberg: So this is why I think it's important to learn about communication and about communication style. Another reason communication is complicated is because it can and does take so many forms other than the spoken word. Each of the forms of communication or the types of communication actually add a level of complexity to what we're doing. So there are four types of communication.

Peggy Greenberg: First of all, we have verbal communication. We as individuals have complete control over the words we use, but the meaning of those words might not be shared, again, by the person that we're speaking to. Different things like our age, our experience, our background, semantics does have a tremendous effect on how a message is received.

Peggy Greenberg: I know, being someone who is in an older generation, sometimes I have to really try to figure out what some people of the younger generations are actually talking about. I know that they're speaking the same language, but because of their age, their verbal communication has words in it or phrases in it that I'm just not as familiar with.

Peggy Greenberg: A second type of communication is paraverbal communication and this includes things like the pace of our speech, the tone of our voice, the intensity, whether or not there's any irony or sarcasm that's in there. Some people are very good about being able to imply, and again, if you just looked at what the words were, the words were fine. But again, the sarcastic tone that they were expressed with certainly gets that message across.

- Peggy Greenberg: Paraverbal cues also help us interpret the meaning of what someone is saying and without these cues, unfortunately, we wouldn't be able to interpret speech forms such as irony or sarcasm or intensity. So again, like verbal communication, a mismatch of style can make interpretation more difficult and it can also make understanding communication styles more difficult as well.
- Peggy Greenberg: The third form of communication is body language, the way we stand, how we shake hands or if we shake hands, whether or not we make eye contact. All of these are forms of body language that communicate meaning to other people. So our body language can say to somebody else, I'm listening to you. I'm very attentive to you. It can communicate our emotion if we're sad or mad or whatever. It certainly can communicate our reaction to the words of another person.
- Peggy Greenberg: Facial expressions, another form of body language, I'm sure we've all heard the phrase, "It was written all over your face." So again, it's not what you said but it's how you looked when you said it or how you looked when I gave you that message. So body language is a very important way that we communicate, an important type of communication.
- Peggy Greenberg: Lastly, personal space, which includes not only the space between you and others, but also your appearance, how you choose to decorate your personal space, your office, or your cubicle, or whatever. The interpersonal distance that we keep when we're communicating with someone else, whether or not we get close to them or stand far away. So our personal space is also something that gives out messages. Again, we have to make sure that they're the ones that are intended.
- Peggy Greenberg: So there are some key principals that guide effective communication. The first one is that it is unavoidable. You can't not communicate. I don't know if any of you have ever taken a communication course in high school or college, but you might have actually seen that quote or that phrase in the beginning of the book. You have to communicate. It's unavoidable.
- Peggy Greenberg: Secondly, it contains content, what the person is actually communicating, but then there's also information about the content. So that information is the things that we get from the non-verbal. So it's not only the words we say, but there's some other messages, there's another message that gets given out just by tone of voice and, again, body language and the paraverbal things that I just talked about.
- Peggy Greenberg: An interesting principle about communication is that it produces

conflict, but it's also the only way that we have for resolving conflict. Often, miscommunication causes conflict or communication causes conflict. So what do we do sometimes? We just say, "I'm just going to stop communicating with that person. I've had it. I'm not going to communicate with them anymore."

Peggy Greenberg: So we stop communicating and then the conflict just festers and grows and never gets resolved. So communication, miscommunication produces conflict, but it's also the only method that we know for resolving conflict.

Peggy Greenberg: Next, communication is circular and complex. It is not linear, it is not I send a message, you receive, I send a message, you receive. We have to think about the whole context in which we are communicating. What's going on? Where is the communication taking place? What's the message that we used? Is it verbal? Is it electronic? What is it? So communication is circular and complex and it's not linear.

Peggy Greenberg: If we communicate in a way that says, "I send the message, you receive them, and I don't have any other responsibility," we'll probably find ourselves in situations of miscommunication. It happens within an individual's frame of reference and we all have a frame of reference. Our frame of reference was developed by how we were raised, where we grew up, what part of the country or the world we were a part of.

Peggy Greenberg: So we all have an individual frame of reference and all communication goes through that individual frame of reference. It's almost like a filter. But our frame of references are all different. Then finally, semantics matter. Words matter. Words mean different things to different people. I moved to Boston many years ago from Louisiana and I honestly thought that I had moved to a foreign country because the semantics here were different than in the south.

Peggy Greenberg: So you might be asking yourself, why bother? This sounds hard. Already, this sounds difficult to me. Why bother is because communication or miscommunication is the number one reason why relationships fail, and again, maybe some of us bear some personal scars as a result of a relationship failing because of miscommunication. It's why job performance is not what it needs to be because communication between employee and employer is not what it needs to be and as a result of that, the individual's performance suffers.

Peggy Greenberg: It's the number one reason why sales are lost and it's the number one reason why customer service in so many organizations fails to satisfy customers, because of miscommunication. So why bother is also, as Peter Drucker, the great management guru once said, "As soon as you

move one step up from the bottom, your effectiveness depends on your ability to reach others through the spoken and written word." So again, our success really depends on our effectiveness in communication.

Peggy Greenberg: And Paul Meyer once said that, "Communication, the human connection, is the key to personal and career success." Again, I think that is absolutely true. But sometimes it takes courage to communicate. Communication, again, is the basis for all of our relationships, work, personal, all of our relationships. That means that sometimes we have to summon the courage to get a message across or find the courage to listen to what someone else is trying to communicate to us, what we're hearing from other people.

Peggy Greenberg: So sometimes it definitely does take courage to communicate. So we explored some definitions of communication and some important key principles, and each of us have a way of communicating, which is in fact our communication style. So what is communication style? Well first of all, it's how we act when we can do things our own way. It's what's most natural and comfortable to us. In fact, our communication style is behavior that's so consistent that it's actually predictable.

Peggy Greenberg: So as I describe for you four communication styles, I want you to think about the people that are important to you, the people that are in your world, in your personal life, in your work life. Chances are, based on my descriptions, you will be able to predict what their style is as well because again, our communication style is behavior that's so consistent that it's predictable. It's behavior also that seems typical of our personality or we begin to expect it most of the time.

Peggy Greenberg: For example, if someone is friendly, they're just very friendly, that person becomes known as that friendly person. So the second that person isn't friendly for whatever reason, everybody wonders what's going on with them. That's because that behavior became so typical, it became such a part of their personality that everyone has come to expect it most of the time.

Peggy Greenberg: So there are some benefits to all of us about understanding our communication style and the communication style of other people. First of all, it improves our interaction and our relationships with others. It absolutely ... If we're able to understand communication style, it helps us to understand the behavior of other people. It also helps others to interpret your behavior and it helps you to interpret the behavior of other people.

Peggy Greenberg: So again, it's an important thing to have a handle on. I think at the end of the day, it influences our success. If we're aware that working with

people means that we all have a different style or potentially we all have a different style, then we know that if we need to work with that person, maybe we need to get something done with them, maybe we're on a project or an assignment with them, maybe we manage them, if we know that their style is different, we can flex our style in order to be most successful.

Peggy Greenberg: So understanding your communication style very definitely influences your success. So that leads us to the next question, what's your communication style? I'm going to be describing some styles to you. Again, this is based on the HRDQ Style Model. There are two dimensions to our communication style. First of all is our expressiveness. Expressiveness is the effort that a person makes to control his or her emotions when relating to other people.

Peggy Greenberg: So for example, people who are expressive display their emotions and they tend to be very versatile, very sociable, very demonstrative, and people who are less expressive control their emotions and they tend to be a little more private or a little bit more focused, a little bit more independent. So one dimension of our communication style is our degree of expressiveness.

Peggy Greenberg: The second dimension of our style is the degree of our assertiveness. Assertiveness is the effort that a person makes to influence or control the thoughts or the actions of other people. So people who are assertive tell other people how things should be and tend to be very task oriented, very active, come across as being very confident, and people who are less assertive ask others how things should be and tend to be more process oriented, more deliberate, and seemingly more attentive.

Peggy Greenberg: So we have two dimensions to our style and out of that grows the four different styles. Again, this is the HRDQ Communication Style Model. If you look around the edges, you see two measures, expressiveness and assertiveness. The two styles in the left hand side of the diagram, direct and systematic, are lower in expressiveness and the two styles in the right hand side of the diagram, spirited and considerate, are higher in expressiveness.

Peggy Greenberg: The lower half of the diagram represents the two styles that are lower in assertiveness, systematic and considerate. In the upper part of the diagram, direct and spirited represents styles that are higher in assertiveness. So I'm going to describe these a little bit more to you, but you understand the two dimensions, assertiveness and expressiveness, and I'm going to describe the four styles to you. I want you to think about the one that sounds the most like you.

- Peggy Greenberg: So first of all, we have our direct communicators and again, direct communicators tend to have very direct speech. These are individuals who like to take charge. They prefer to be in control so they might have a very loud tone. Their body language tends to be very much like their style, a very firm handshake so that you know that they're there with you. They very often will speak very forcefully along with that firm handshake that they give you and their strength is that they present their position strongly.
- Peggy Greenberg: This is a communication style of people very often that are in leadership positions, not all, but very often. Direct people, because they are take charge people, tend to be in leadership positions and they possess very strong leadership skills. Honestly, they are not afraid to take risks and to get what they need.
- Peggy Greenberg: Then we have spirited communicators. Spirited communicators are very persuasive people, tend to be very enthusiastic and very friendly. So they have a lot of vocal inflection. You can tell when a spirited person is in the room. You can usually hear them, actually. Their body language is enthusiastic. They have an enthusiastic facial expression, an enthusiastic handshake, and they tend to be people who are very good at telling stories.
- Peggy Greenberg: That's a strength for them, but if you look at where they operate from, like their personal workspace for example, you might wonder how they get anything done because it's very difficult to see through the clutter, perhaps, that might be in their personal workspace.
- Peggy Greenberg: Then we have our considerate communicators and these are the verbal signs of a considerate communication. They have very supportive language. Their tone is softer, certainly softer than spirited or direct communicators, and they have a gentle handshake, which goes along with the warmth that they demonstrate. Considerate communicators are absolutely the best listeners of the four styles, and they're great listeners because they take the time to build trust.
- Peggy Greenberg: So you'll notice, for example, in their personal space a lot of sentimental items, a lot of photographs of children or grandchildren, or animals, or whatever. You would know something about them just by being in their personal space for a short period of time. Again, because they do take the time to build trust and they're always aware of other people's feelings, they're very good communicators and they're very good listeners, and therefore, very good communicators as well.
- Peggy Greenberg: Then finally, we have our systematic communicators. Systematic

communicators have very precise language because they tend to be very organized, very orderly, and so their language is very precise. They don't put lots of extra words in their language. They tell you what you need to know and they tell that in as few words as possible.

Peggy Greenberg: People who are systematic communicators very often will stand back a little bit, touching is not something that someone who is a systematic communicator is very interested in doing, so this isn't the person that you want to necessarily give a big hug to, for example. And their delivery of their speech, again, is not very elaborate, it's very even. That's how you know, that's a cue that you might be communicating with someone whose style is systematic.

Peggy Greenberg: Again, their strength is that these are the information seekers and these are the problem solvers. They make their decisions based on fact and they're very objective and very accurate, in fact, as well. So systematic communicators are the ones that we want to make sure that we don't eliminate or not listen to because they might be a little bit quieter.

Peggy Greenberg: So my question to you is, what do you think your predominant communication style is? Are you direct, spirited, considerate, or systematic? I'm going to give you a minute.

Sara Lindmont: Great. So we have the poll open there. You can go ahead and click on any of those radio buttons and then just make sure that you hit Submit so that comes through. And we definitely have people participating here, so I'll give it another couple of seconds, make sure we capture everybody.

Peggy Greenberg: Great.

Sara Lindmont: Okay. So here's our results. We have 21% said direct, 19% spirited, 23% said considerate, and 37% said systematic.

Peggy Greenberg: Wow, okay. Great, thank you. Thank you, Sara. So it looks like the greater majority of you fall into the considerate and systematic communication style. Again, I don't know why that is. I'm not sure if that has to do with the kind of, again, where you came from, or the kind of work that you do, or whatever, but this is a pretty good spread. We have people representing all the four styles, which is certainly something that we're always looking for.

Peggy Greenberg: So keep your predominant style in mind because I want to talk now about some of the trouble spots of each of those four styles because each style has its flip side of the traits that I just shared with you a few minutes ago. These are like our blind spots, you know? What happens is

that they occur when we carry our strengths to extreme. So we're really good at being a take charge kind of person, but maybe that's not what's called for. Maybe that's not what everyone else wants.

Peggy Greenberg: So it's good to be aware of your blind spots because that can help you to balance your strengths and to be aware of the fact that, okay, I don't want to overdo that because that might not be what's appropriate for the situation or what's appropriate for the people that I'm communicating with. So as I review the trouble spots, I want you to ask yourself, based on what your style is that you just self-identified, I want you to think about, what can I do to limit these behaviors?

Peggy Greenberg: So for example, a direct person, that communicator that likes to take charge and move ahead could be, as I mentioned before, a poor listener. Very often, of the four styles, the direct style is the poorest listener of all. That's because of the fact that people with a direct style tend to be impatient and they don't really care about feelings. They just want to get it done.

Peggy Greenberg: So again, very often that poor listening leads to perhaps not listening to the advice of someone else or not really listening to all the details because I just want to get it done. So again, a trouble spot for direct people is poor listening. A trouble spot for people who are spirited, and again, we love the spiritedness of spirited people, but a trouble spot can be that spirited people might tend to exaggerate and they gloss over the details. Perhaps they tend to generalize.

Peggy Greenberg: And as a result of that, the drama of spirited people sometimes can be a turn off to other people, for example, and it can also mean that they're not really listening to details because they're so excited or they have such a need to be in the front of the pack that they might not, again, listen to details.

Peggy Greenberg: The considerate communication style, very often a big trouble spot for a considerate style is that the considerate style, in their quest to avoid conflict, will sometimes tell other people what they want to hear. They might not be totally authentic with other people because they don't want conflict or they don't want that person to be upset with them or angry with them or whatever. So considerate folks prefer what's comfortable.

Peggy Greenberg: So again, we'll often tell other people what they want to hear and as we all know, sometimes that's not the best thing. We've got to tell people what they need to hear as opposed to what they want to hear. So again, a trouble spot for the considerate style is that unwillingness or that lack of willingness perhaps to be totally authentic with other people in an

effort to avoid conflict.

Peggy Greenberg: A trouble spot for the systematic style is that systematics focus too much on details. Again, they put accuracy ahead of feelings and as a result of that, that can be a real turn off to other people. In their quest again to get it right, they might not notice that they're getting it right but nobody's with them, nobody else understands, or nobody else is on the same page as they are.

Peggy Greenberg: So again, the focus on detail very often can lead the systematic communication style to ignore others and to ignore other people as they focus on data and only data in their quest to get the work done. So again, all of the styles have some trouble spots and we just need to be aware of those and to know what our style is and potentially what some trouble spots might be for us considering our individual communication style.

Peggy Greenberg: So what about the communication style of other people? The reality is that it's very likely that your boss or your close work colleagues and maybe even members of your family will often be a different style than your own. The next question is, how do we get along with these different styles? How do we make it work? Well, the strongest difference in style will be if you have a style that is diametrically opposed to that other person or those other people in your important environment, your work environment, your home environment.

Peggy Greenberg: So for instance, there's nothing that will drive a direct communication style more crazy than a considerate communication style that wants to ask everybody's opinion. Let's find out, let's do a poll, or let's put it out for everybody to chime in on. The direct communication style just wants to get it done. That diametric opposition will be difficult for the direct person.

Peggy Greenberg: A considerate communication style person might be overwhelmed by the pace and the forcefulness of someone who is direct as they lay out directives or they tell everybody what to do. Likewise, there's the diametrically opposed styles of spirited and systematic. There's hardly anything that's going to drive a systematic more crazy than, again, having a spirited person who wants to brainstorm vague ideas or generalities without getting down to the details or not having that backed up by some sort of research or some data or something that we definitely know.

Peggy Greenberg: Conversely, spirited people might feel very constricted by a systematic style who consistently just wants to, let's get it done and let's limit the creativity. We don't want creative ideas, we want facts, we want

research, we want data points. We don't want creative ideas. So who in your world might be ... What's the style of someone that's important to you in your world?

Peggy Greenberg: Maybe your direct supervisor or your boss, or maybe it's a colleague who you work with closely, or maybe a spouse or a partner on the home front. So we're going to do another poll and my question to you is, what is the style of that other person? Is it the same as yours, is it different but it's next to yours so it's not diametrically opposed? Or do you have a style that's diametrically opposed to that other important person in your world? I'm going to be quiet and let you all think about that for a second and answer that poll.

Sara Lindmont: It looks like we have ... Oh, we're still getting some answers. So click on the radio buttons and then make sure you click Submit. Okay, I think we've got everybody.

Peggy Greenberg: Great.

Sara Lindmont: Okay. So here are our results. Same as yours, 18%. Different style but next to yours is 48%, and diametrically opposite is 34%.

Peggy Greenberg: Woo. Okay. Well, thank you all for that. That is certainly food for thought. The ones of you who have the same style as the important person in your world, whatever you chose, those who have the same style, you're the lucky ones. However, being the same style isn't always a guarantee of complete success in communication because sometimes when we have the same style, we're missing out on other points of view or we're missing out on looking for a different idea, or a different suggestion, or a different path to take.

Peggy Greenberg: So you're lucky because you probably approach things in the same way but again, think about the fact that you need different points of view very often. Maybe you need to play another style if you happen to have the same style. Those with a different style but not an opposite style, you need to be able to adapt or adjust to that different style. As you work with that person, as you live with that person, you need to be cognizant of, what is that communication style about and how can I adjust in order to be most successful?

Peggy Greenberg: Those with a diametrically opposed style, 34% of you, you really have your work cut out for you and I'm probably not telling you something you don't already know because if there's someone who's important in your world and you have a diametrically opposed communication style, you probably already sense that. Maybe you haven't put words to it or you haven't put style names to it, but you know that we approach it in

different ways or we go about this in different ways.

- Peggy Greenberg: You really have to think about that and you really have to consider, what's that person's style and what do I need to do in order to be most successful with them? I'm often asked about communication style in teams. One of the things that we know the truth is, is that there's not right or wrong style. We need all those four styles that I've been talking to you about today.
- Peggy Greenberg: What I have found and I have used the HRDQ Communication Style Assessment in many organizations and with many different levels and different organizations. What we know is that the best teams are the ones that have similar representation from all four styles. So again, think about a team of all direct people. It would be very chaotic of, for example, a team of all direct people.
- Peggy Greenberg: A team of all spirited people might sound like it could be fun but again, is that what you really want? A team of all considerate people or a team of all systematic people? So success happens when we learn how to flex our style. I want you to engage in your imagination here just for a moment and I want you to imagine that I'm standing in a room, let's say it's like an auditorium room or a conference room for example.
- Peggy Greenberg: I'm at a point on one wall and we're going to call that point A, and I need to get to the other wall, which is called B. Alright? So how the four styles get to B, if I am direct and I'm at A and I need to get to B, I am just going to go. I'm not going to ask any questions, I'm not going to talk to anybody about it, I'm direct, I'm an A, I need to get to B, I'm just going to go.
- Peggy Greenberg: If I'm spirited and I'm at A and I need to get to B, I'm going to make sure that everybody else in that conference room knows that I'm going to B. I'm going to make sure that I've made that very well known, I've talked to everybody and let them know what I'm doing and where I'm going.
- Peggy Greenberg: If I'm systematic and I'm at A and I need to get to B, I'm probably going to check for directions or I'm going to ask questions about, why do we need to get to B? What's happening at B? What's the goal that we're trying to achieve? Or I might take a few steps and then go back and make sure that I have it right if I'm systematic.
- Peggy Greenberg: Then finally, if I'm considerate and I need to get to B and I'm at A, I'm going to ask other people too. Hey, I'm going to B. Do you want to go with me? Or hey, do you need help getting to B? So the moral of the story is, everybody gets to B but we go about it in slightly different ways. So again, as you think about and maybe are challenged by dealing with

people and working with people with different communication styles, I hope you'll remember that again, we all get to B.

Peggy Greenberg: One of the things that we have to do in order to all get to B is to style flex. So again, this is like, it's about adapting your communication style in order to be most effective with the person that you're trying to communicate with. So just like you need to work on your trouble spots, it does take effort to flex our [inaudible 00:43:16] style.

Peggy Greenberg: But the payoff is that it really can, I think it makes a huge difference when it comes to productive communication or unproductive communication or productive relationships and unproductive relationships. But practice makes perfect so you really do have to practice it.

Peggy Greenberg: So how do you flex to other styles? If you know that the person that you're trying to communicate with is direct, you need to think about that strength and that wanting to get right away to B. So you need to ask questions directly, you need to speak quickly, you need to be very well organized because the direct person is not going to have very much patience with you if you're not direct.

Peggy Greenberg: If you need to flex to that spirited communication style, be very upbeat. Talk about things as though it's an exciting new concept or let's brainstorm a little bit. Share ideas frequently and whatever you do, don't hurry the conversation because the spirited person is going to want to throw out some different possibilities.

Peggy Greenberg: If you need to flex to a considerate style, keep that relaxed pace that the considerate style person has, you know? Support their feelings, slow down your speech so that they're certain that they're hearing everything that you're trying to say. Obviously, if you're communicating with a systematic style, you want to give them that data. You want to give them the rationale, you want to be very thorough, very organized, and make sure that you're focusing on facts because again, that's what's going to make the biggest difference to the systematic style.

Peggy Greenberg: So flexing to other people's styles, that's what we need to think about. We need to try to do a quick assessment of what their style is if it's not someone that we know and then we need to flex to that style. So how can you speed read the style of someone else? Maybe it's somebody that you're just meeting for the first time, or that you don't know very well, or you're just working with them for the first time. Well, listen to them, look at them.

Peggy Greenberg: The direct person is the person who gets to the point. They don't have a

lot of ... Their distance is further away. They suggest power and they're very bold. You might assume, probably rightfully so, that that person has a direct communication style. The spirited person, you'll hear their enthusiasm. This is the person who's telling good stories who might want a physical distance that's closer to you, perhaps. They tend to be very quick. Look at their workspace. What does that look like? Does it look like they can't find anything or their workspace is as energetic as they are? That might be the spirited person.

Peggy Greenberg: The considerate person, how do you speed read that? Well again, this is a person who maybe has a softer tone. They might not be speaking up very much. You can look at them and tell that they're listening very carefully, tend to have slower body movements, and again, if you're in their personal space, what does it look like? Is it very clinical looking or does it look more inviting because of personal items that are there and photographs and that kind of thing?

Peggy Greenberg: Then finally, you can speed read systematics because you'll hear the precision in their voice and you'll hear them talking in fact more than feelings, a very controlled movement, and again, a workspace that is in fact extremely organized and tidy so that they can find anything in a moment. So you can actually speed read other people's styles fairly quickly.

Peggy Greenberg: So a couple of reminders as we close down our session here, first of all, your dominant style is the one that feels the most natural to you when you're enjoying your work, and your life, and you're at your most natural and comfortable. There is no right style. We need all four and again, the best teams are the ones that have representation from all four of the communication styles.

Peggy Greenberg: It's very helpful to think about your style and to think about, what are my trouble spots? What are the things that can potentially make me a less effective communicator and how can I practice improving on those trouble spots? Remember that you can flex to accommodate other people's styles so that you have more successful interchanges with them.

Peggy Greenberg: This doesn't mean that you're abdicating your style or you're being less than yourself. It means that you're being smart and that you know that if I'm going to communicate effectively with you, I've got to see what works for you. Then I've got to flex my style in order to be most effective with you.

Peggy Greenberg: Finally, we all get to B. It's just a matter of how we get there. So keep that in mind as well. So I want to thank you all for your participation

today and for being here. I hope that this has shed a little light on communication style for you. I'm going to turn this back over to Sara.

Sara Lindmont: Wonderful. Thank you so much, Peggy. That was great. We definitely appreciate you looking to HRDQ for your training needs so just for those who are new on the line today, I'd like to introduce HRDQ so you get familiar with us. We publish research-based experiential learning products that you can then deliver in your organization.

Sara Lindmont: So you can check out our online or print assessments like the What's My Communication Style, the foundation of today's webinar. We also have up out of your seat games and reproducible workshops that you can customize. So check out our website or give a call to our customer service team. And if you do need help either learning a training program or you want one of our experts like Peggy to deliver it for you, we also provide those services as well.

Sara Lindmont: That is all the time we have for today. Thank you so much, Peggy.

Peggy Greenberg: You're welcome. Thanks, great to be with you.

Sara Lindmont: And thanks, everyone for participating today. We'll see you at our next webinar.