# Personal Style Inventory
# Learning Kit

## Gateway to Personal Flexibility

# Introduction

The Personal Style Inventory Learning Kit (PSI) provides a resource for individual, group and organizational development. The empowerment pyramid illustrates how *respect* for diversity and *responsiveness* to change rest on a foundation of style *flexibility* and *integration*. The Strategy Profile, Rainbow of Styles, Workshop Teams and Action Plan tools that you prepare with the PSI Learning Kit will help you develop all four qualities. Through this self-discovery process, you will learn to contribute more effectively to *group efforts* whether these are in a multinational company or your immediate family.
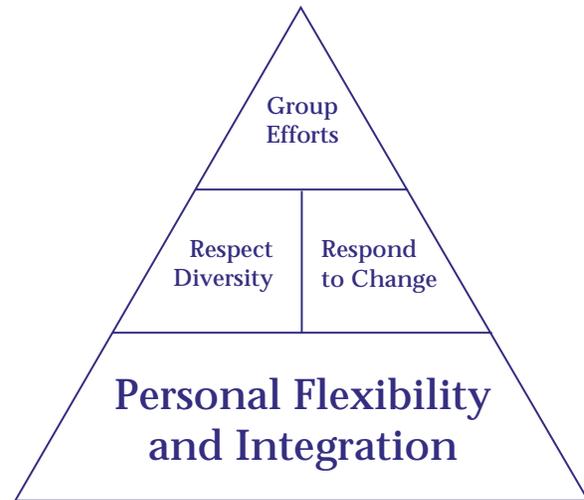
The inner directed focus of the PSI Learning Kit contrasts with the outer directed orientation of many style surveys. We believe fundamental changes in behavior are more likely when individuals decide what kinds of changes to make for themselves. The PSI encourages an in-depth discovery of what those changes might be. Used with The Intuitive Self website, the four tools of the PSI Learning Kit offer a straight forward yet dynamic approach to nurturing personal and organizational growth.

## Benefits of the PSI

This list summarizes typical benefits that users of the PSI Learning Kit have achieved working as an individual or by using the material in either informal groups or more formal organization training and development programs:

### Individual Level

- Enhances flexibility and integration by reducing reliance on overused (higher) preferences while increasing reliance on underutilized (lower) preferences.
- Fosters greater respect for individual diversity in the community.
- Expands behavior options in response to changing conditions.

### Group Level

- Utilizes individual strengths to accomplish team efforts.
- Facilitates communication with others in terms of their preferred styles.
- Encourages people to learn from mistakes caused by their style inflexibility.

### Organization Level

- Maximizes human resource value by making the most of individual differences.
- Encourages greater openness in communication.
- Creates a more receptive and responsive climate at work or at home.

We appreciate feedback. Please email psi_workbook@the-intuitive-self.org with your ideas about the strengths and weaknesses of the PSI Learning Kit.

# Completing the Survey

The PSI Learning Kit assesses your preferences for rational versus intuitive ways of doing things based on answers to 30 Survey items. This part of the kit helps you prepare and interpret your Strategy Profile and determine where you stand in the Rainbow of Styles which also can be used to create Workshop Teams. Finally you prepare an Action Plan to enhance flexibility and integration in your personal style.

The results of a preference survey depend on the role you assume when you respond to the items. For instance, the way you deal with a situation as a sales manager may be quite different from how you handle similar circumstances as a parent. We include a role data field below to encourage clarity about the responsibilities that you assume for answering the items.

To prepare for and complete the online Strategy Profile, follow these instructions:

1. Each statement in this Survey describes a behavior, a belief or a preference that most people generally have.

2. Think about the work or family responsibilities you want to profile to clarify the point-of-view you are assuming in responding to the items.

3. With your responsibilities in mind, identify your role for the Survey. (e.g. construction worker, parent, manager, supervisor, retiree, etc.)

4. Read each statement carefully in terms of the responsibilities of your role. The items are phrased in terms of work. If you choose a non-work role, interpret the statements in terms of that role.

5. Then choose the phrase that best describes how frequently the statement applies as you carry out those responsibilities. Here is a sample item:

| Survey item statement: | Phrase choices: | |
|---|---|---|
| I plan ahead realistically. | 1 | Never |
| | 2 | Once in a while |
| | 3 | Sometimes |
| | 4 | Quite often |
| | 5 | Frequently but not always |
| | 6 | Always |

6. Write the phrase number you choose for a statement in the corresponding box on the right hand side of pages 5 and 6.

7. Please work carefully but quickly. If you dwell on your response to a statement, you will not get your true first and usually most accurate response.

8. Some items may sound alike, but they are different in some way.

9. First respond to the fifteen statements on page 5. Then continue to page 6 and respond to the remaining fifteen items.

10. Finally follow this link at www.the-intuitive-self.org:

    Introduction –> Assessing –> Personal Style Inventory –> Strategy Profile

    to complete the data collection form and transfer your 30 item responses to the online Survey to automatically generate your Strategy Profile.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Never | Once in a while | Sometimes | Quite often | Frequently but not always | Always |

1. When I have an important activity due in a week,
I carefully outline what is required to get the job done. ....................... ☐

2. To meet our shared responsibilities,
I coordinate with my teammates. ............................................. ☐

3. In problem solving, I analyze step-by-step
what is required to arrive at a solution. ............................... ☐

4. I use imaginative
ways of doing things. ............................................................ ☐

5. In completing a task, I believe that
it is important to follow prescribed guidelines. ................... ☐

6. I look at a problem as a whole
approaching it from all sides. ............................................. ☐

7. When I have a special job to do,
I organize it carefully from the start. ................................. ☐

8. To get a job done, I cooperate
with the members of my group. ........................................... ☐

9. To clearly see how they relate,
I classify the elements of a problem. .................................. ☐

10. In selecting a future course of action,
I create new avenues using imaginative skills. ................... ☐

11. I follow established rules
in completing a task assignment. ......................................... ☐

12. I believe a solution should synthesize the
elements of a problem into an integrated whole. ............... ☐

13. I prioritize my assignments
to meet future objectives. .................................................... ☐

14. In our assigned tasks, I participate
with other members of the team. ......................................... ☐

15. I identify the steps required
in arriving at the solution to a problem. ............................. ☐

*Remember to respond to all statements. Continue to the next page to complete the survey.*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Never | Once in a while | Sometimes | Quite often | Frequently but not always | Always |

16. Getting ready for a new project, I improvise novel ways of doing things. ☐

17. To accomplish a task, I focus on the procedures required to do the job. ☐

18. I combine the elements of a problem so that I can see the issue as a whole. ☐

19. In deciding how to complete a new project, I arrange tasks in their proper order. ☐

20. I believe that combining our talents in a group effort helps us get the job done. ☐

21. I investigate a problem by specifically evaluating its elements. ☐

22. I conceive future directions by combining new ideas. ☐

23. I believe following specific procedures helps ensure the timely completion of a task. ☐

24. When problem parameters are incomplete, I surmise what I need to do. ☐

25. To complete a new task on schedule, I anticipate what may cause delays. ☐

26. I approach task accomplishment by networking with other team members. ☐

27. In order to understand its elements, I break a problem down into its parts. ☐

28. I visualize novel ideas in setting the direction for a new assignment. ☐

29. I believe policies and procedures help ensure efficiency in getting work completed. ☐

30. I explore the elements of a problem situation for a global perspective. ☐

*Remember to respond to all statements. Continue to the next page to prepare your profile.*

# Preparing Your Profile

The PSI Learning Kit encourages you to move toward an integrated, flexible style that *prepares for the future*, *solves problems* and *approaches work* in ways that are most appropriate for activities in your work and personal life. The Human Information Processing (HIP) Metaphor integrates three streams of scientific research into a comprehensive model for understanding personal style. For more detail, read "Elaborating the HIP Metaphor" in the following publication:

Author -> Publications -> Assessing PSI Styles.

After you completed the data collection form and online Survey, your Strategy Profile was displayed in the browser along with your percentile results for each of the three rational and three intuitive modes. These modes are illustrated on pages 9 and 10. The version of the metaphor on page 9 "verbally" summarizes each mode while the graphic version on page 10 uses a "visual" image to represent each mode.

## Printing and Saving Your Profile

You can prepare a summary profile to print on one page. Use the link in your browser profile to generate the summary in a separate browser window. Send that page to your printer from the "File" pull down menu to prepare a hard copy of the summary and follow the instructions below to transfer your results to page 11.

If the profile does not fit on one page, use "Page Setup" to adjust the page margins (PC) or set the reduction percentage to a smaller value (Mac). If the profile still does not print on one page, you may have to change the default font settings of your browser to a smaller size.

While you are still online, save the summary page as html source to reopen in your browser at another time. Your browser will automatically retrieve the files needed to view your profile online. Choose "Save as..." from the browser "File" pull down menu. In the "Save" window, choose "Web Archive" for Internet Explorer or "Source" for Netscape Communicator for the "Format" option.
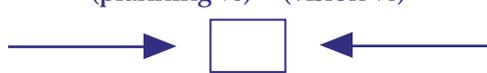
## Transferring the Profile

Transfer your Strategy Profile from the browser page to the PSI Learning Kit:

1. If you printed the one page online profile, use that page in place of page 11. Otherwise transfer the information in your browser window to the corresponding locations on page 11 as described in steps 2 through 5.

2. Enter the percentile values in the "%" box above the profile bar for each mode.

3. Next use a red maker to shade the "%" bar corresponding to the percentage. The bars measure from 0 to 100 from the center out to the left for the rational modes and from the center out to the right for the intuitive modes.

4. Then use a marker to highlight the phrase for each mode where you had a percentile score less than 30% (green) or greater than 70% (red). Later you will select one of these phrases to prepare an Action Plan.

5. Finally continue to the next page to determine your relative position in the Rainbow of Styles and to use your position to create Workshop Teams.

# The Rainbow of Styles

Copy the percentiles for the four modes below from your profile to the boxes in the left and right hand columns. Use these values to calculate the difference between the planning (on the left) and vision (on the right) percentages and enter that value in the center column. Do the same for the difference between analysis and insight. Sum the differences retaining the algebraic sign and divide that result by "2." If you have a "+" value, shade in the "R" circle. If the value is "–," shade in the "I" circle.

| Rational Percentiles | Modes | Difference Caculation | Modes | Intuitive Percentiles |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | (planning %) – (vision %) | | |
| ☐ | Planning ⟶ ☐ ⟵ | | Vision | ☐ |
| | | (analysis %) – (insight %) | | |
| ☐ | Analysis ⟶ ☐ ⟵ | | Insight | ☐ |
| | | (algebraic sum of the differences ÷ by 2) | | |
| **Rational** | Ⓡ ☐ Ⓘ | | | **Intuitive** |

The final result indicates your overall preference for the rational versus intuitive ways of doing things. The larger your value in either direction, the stronger your preference for that style compared to others who have taken the PSI. The closer you are to "100" R or I, the more difficulty you may have moving around the Rainbow of Styles to respond to situations requiring preferences that differ from your own.

## Workshop Teams

The challenges of style flexibility and integration are highlighted when you complete the PSI Learning Kit in a group. Array yourselves in a "U" shaped rainbow from the largest positive (+) number decreasing in value for "R" results and then increasing in value to the largest negative (–) number for "I" results. The following link provides detailed instructions for arranging a Rainbow of Styles and using it to create teams:

Introduction –> Assessing –> PSI –> CC Examples  –> CC Teams

Once you are arrayed around the center of balance for your team, you can explore the impact of individual differences on the way you and your colleagues *prepare for the future*, *solve problems* and *approach work*. The (1) paired opposite, (2) similar and (3) dissimilar teams allow you to explore the relative contributions of different styles to group outcomes. Using these teams, workshop activities can be designed to encourage integration and flexibility by calling attention to less preferred styles. The importance of respect for diversity and responsiveness to change can also highlighted.

The remainder of the Learning Kit helps you explore your Strategy Profile in more depth and prepare a personal Action Plan. On pages 12 and 13, use the Strategy Profile to assess your above and below average scores. This brings out the strength of your preferences compared to others who have completed the Survey. Finally beginning on page 14, develop a personal Action Plan to help you develop more flexibility and integration in your approach to daily responsibilities.

# Verbal HIP Metaphor

## Rational Modes

## Intuitive Modes

### How do you *prepare for the future*?

**Planning**
(Develop Proposals)

**Vision**
(Develop Scenarios)
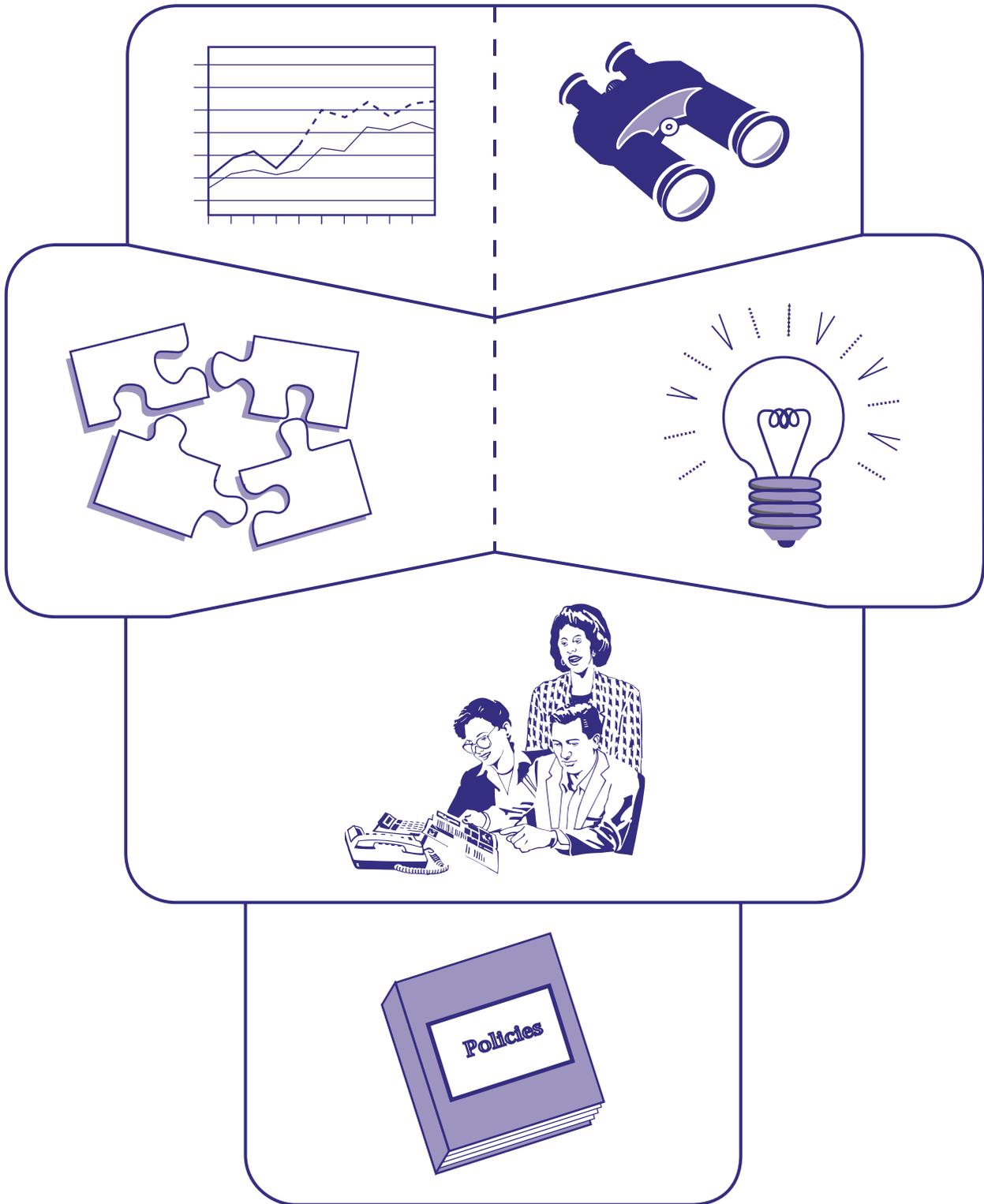
### How do you *solve problems*?

**Analysis**
(Specialist)

**Insight**
(Generalist)

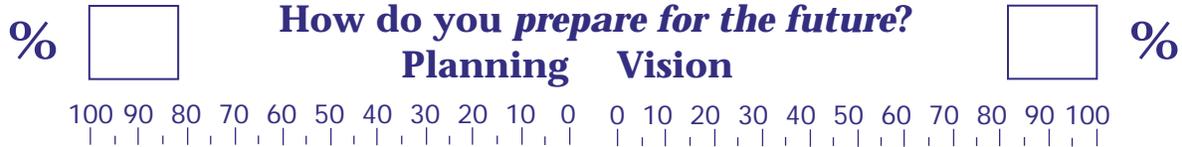### How do you *approach work*?

**Control**
(Procedure Centered)

**Sharing**
(People Centered)

# Your Strategy Profile

**Role:** _____

## How do you *prepare for the future?*

**%** ☐     **Planning**     **Vision**     ☐ **%**
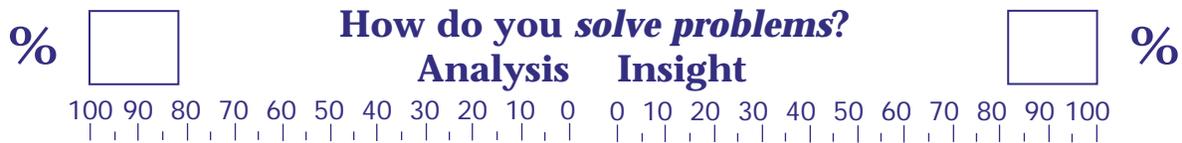
100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0    0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

In developing proposals, you carefully outline what is required to get a job done when you have an important activity due. In completing a project on schedule, you arrange tasks in proper order, and you anticipate what may cause delays in the task schedule. When you have a special job, you organize it carefully from the start, and you prioritize assignments to meet future objectives.

In generating scenarios, you use imaginative ways of doing things. Getting ready for a new project, you improvise novel ways of doing things, and you conceive future directions by combining new ideas. In selecting a future course of action, you create new avenues using imaginative skills, and you visualize novel ideas in setting the direction for a new assignment.

## How do you *solve problems?*

**%** ☐     **Analysis**     **Insight**     ☐ **%**

100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0    0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

As a specialist, you analyze step-by-step what is required to arrive at a solution. To clearly see how they relate, you classify the elements of a problem, and you identify the steps required to achieve a problem solution. In order to understand its elements, you break a problem down into its parts, and you investigate a problem by specifically evaluating each of its elements.

As a generalist, you look at a problem as a whole approaching it from all sides. Since you believe a solution should synthesize problem elements into an integrated whole, you explore the elements of a situation for a global perspective. When problem parameters are incomplete, you surmise what you need to do, and you combine problem elements to see the issue as a whole.

## How do you *approach work?*

**%** ☐     **Control**     **Sharing**     ☐ **%**

100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0    0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Being procedure centered, you believe following specific procedures ensures timely task completion. To accomplish a task, you focus on the procedures required to do the job, and you follow established rules in completing an assignment. Since you believe procedures ensure efficiency in getting work completed, you think that it is important to follow prescribed guidelines.

Being people centered, you approach task completion by networking with other team members. To meet shared responsibilities, you coordinate with your teammates because you believe to get a job done, you should cooperate with group members. In your assigned tasks, you participate with other team members since you believe combining talents in a group effort helps get the job done.

# Interpreting Your Profile

As we have emphasized, the PSI Learning Kit encourages a flexible, integrated approach to situations. Those who have ease of movement among and full access to all six modes are more likely to choose what is best in any situation. Study this section to discover opportunities suggested by your Strategy Profile for a more integrated (full use of all six modes) and flexible (ease of moving from one mode to another) style in expressing the rational and intuitive ways of being in the world.

However a word of caution is appropriate before moving on. The PSI Learning Kit is a preference survey, not an ability test. Your percentiles represent relative preferences for ways of doing things compared to other people who have taken the Survey. Although the PSI does not measure your skill, you are more likely to practice what you prefer to do. Therefore you are probably relatively more skilled in your stronger modes, since you use them more often. But this does not mean that you are more or less skilled than someone else.

The scales show the strength of preference for each mode measured from the center of the profile in both directions. The length of shading on the bar corresponds to the percentile in the box above the bar. Since you could assign a value from "1" to "6" for each item in the Survey, you may have high or low percentiles for all six modes, or any combination of highs and lows. The description for each mode reflects the behavior of a person with that preference. The larger the percentile, the more accurately the description is likely to represent that person's behavior.

## What do the Percentiles Mean?

Your numerical score represents the percentage of people who have an equal or lower preference than yours for that mode. For instance, if your control scale percentile is 38 that means 38% of the people who have taken the Survey have a preference equal to or lower than yours. On the other hand, it means that 62% expressed a stronger preference (100 - 38 = 62).

With the scales measuring out from the center, you can look at all six percentile bars at once to get an overview of your Strategy Profile. Then reading the paragraphs describing the characteristic preferences for each mode, you gain specific insight into your behavior pattern if you are strong on that scale. Finally the highlighted phrases identify your distinguishing behavior for that mode either for it's underemphasis (green) or overdevelopment (red).

Your percentile pattern indicates the degree of challenge you face in achieving a flexible and integrated style that shifts among and uses all six modes. Percentiles greater than 70% indicate you are more likely to use those ways of behaving even when they are not appropriate. Percentiles less than 30% suggest you are likely to ignore those behaviors even when they are the best approach. Behaviors for modes in the middle range from 30% to 70% are easier to adapt to suit changing situations.

## Using the Highlighted Phrases

For any scale where you scored greater than 70%, the words that capture your most preferred behavior for that mode are highlighted in red. On the other hand for any scale where you scored less than 30%, the phrase that describes your least pre-

ferred behavior for that mode is highlighted in green. Finally for scales where you scored in the range from 30% to 70%, no phrases are highlighted.

The red highlighted phrases identify behaviors that you may be overusing. This can lead to situations where you use one approach in a situation when a different especially complementary approach may be better. You may want to decrease reliance on these ways of doing things to move toward a more integrated, flexible style.

You may find it hard to understand why you would want to do less of something you really prefer. But an old adage states this idea clearly, "If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail!" We may use a strongly preferred way of behaving even when it is not best for the situation because we tend to go with what we know.

On the other hand, green highlighted phrases suggest behaviors that you may not be using often enough. This can result in situations where you overlook an approach that would be just right in those circumstances. Here you may want to increase your reliance on these ways of doing things to achieve a more flexible, integrated style.

Behavior patterns associated with scales in the 30% to 70% range are less likely to be either overused or overlooked. In these areas, you will find it easier to change your behavior in response to different situations. Even though you can respond in a flexible way to fit the circumstances, you may want to encourage style integration by more frequently using behaviors in those modes which have the lowest percentiles.

## Degrees of High and Low

Now take a closer look at your percentile results. Here are the ranges for moderate, significant and extreme high and low percentiles:

| High | | | Degree | Low | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| High | ≥ | 70% | Moderate | Low | ≤ | 30% |
| Higher | ≥ | 80% | Significant | Lower | ≤ | 20% |
| Highest | ≥ | 90% | Extreme | Lowest | ≤ | 10% |

Scores in the moderate 70s or 30s range for a mode indicate those behaviors are easier to change than those that are significant in the 80s or 20s. Scores in the extreme 90s or 10s range highlight behaviors for which you are least flexible in situations that call for a response that differs from your preference. Notice the increasing challenge to flexibility as your numerical scores get closer to either the 0% or 100% end of the range.

We recommend moderating high as well as enhancing low style preferences. Since moderating a strength is unusual, another word of caution may be helpful. While moderating strong preferences is just as important as enhancing lower preferences, take care not to "throw the baby out with the bath water." Success sometimes depends on inflexible individuals using dominant behaviors to get things done.

Also enhancing underused and moderating overutilized behaviors may sound like trying to water down areas of individual strength. But moderating a strong preference does not mean giving up the passion and power of that strength. Another way of expressing this is "passionate flexibility." This means honoring the preferred behaviors while developing the less preferred so that either can be used at will.

# Preparing an Action Plan

The Verbal HIP Metaphor on page 9 shows that planning, analysis and control are the rational modes and that vision, insight and sharing are the intuitive modes of personal style. Analyze each of mode in your Strategy Profile to discover opportunities for greater flexibility. Then use this insight to prepare an Action Plan for transforming specific behaviors to achieve flexibility and integration in specific situations.

Once again, it is important to emphasize that you are more likely to prefer your dominant (highest percentile) modes. We suggest that you reduce your reliance on those ways of behaving or complement your style by using an opposite mode. Also you are challenged to increase your use of non-dominant (lowest percentile) modes or supplement your style by using a companion mode. Look for behaviors where you can improve flexibility and integration by moderating your stronger (higher) preferences or enhancing your less frequently chosen (lower) preferences.

To get the process started, review your highest and lowest modes to discover opportunities to achieve greater flexibility. These opportunities arise when any of your percentiles are in the moderate, significant or extreme categories listed on page 13. When one or more modes clearly stands out from the others as having a higher or lower percentile (even if it does not fall within the high or low categories), this represents an opportunity for increased flexibility.

On the next page, space is provided for you to write out an Action Plan. A complete plan example appears on page 16 to illustrate the content of all six sections. To moderate high (or relatively high) and enhance low (or relatively low) modes, review your Strategy Profile by asking yourself the following questions:

1. Which behaviors shown in green or red are candidates for change?
   (If none are highlighted, select a behavior from your highest or lowest mode.)
   Copy the phrase for that behavior in part 1 of your Action Plan.

2. What role or situation for that role will you use for working on this behavior?
   Identify the role or situation in part 2.

3. What roadblocks might stand in the way of changing the behavior?
   Part 3 provides space for listing the potential roadblocks.

4. What specific steps can you take to change the behavior you have identified?
   Make a list of these concrete actions in part 4.

5. How will you know if you are making progress in achieving the change?
   Describe some measurable milestones in part 5.

6. Finally decide on a date to check your progress, record that in part 6 and make a note of the checkpoint on your calendar.

Keep the Action Plan handy as a reminder of the goals that you have set for yourself. Taking these concrete steps will help you open the gateway to *flexibility* in your personal style. As you achieve the change you desire, you will notice that you are becoming more *integrated* in preparing for the future, solving problems and approaching work. At the same time, you will acquire a greater *respect* for diversity and an increased *responsiveness* to change when you confront challenging situations in your work and personal life. Good luck as you continue this self-discovery process!

# Your Action Plan

1. Copy your *highest* or *lowest* percentile highlighted behavior here:



2. Identify the *role* or *situation* you will use in working on this behavior:



3. List the potential *roadblocks* that you may encounter:



4. Outline what you want to do to  *moderate* a high percentile behavior or *enhance* a low percentile behavior:



5. Describe how you will know if you are making *progress*:



6. Set a date to *review* you progress:

# Action Plan Example

1. Copy your *highest* or *lowest* percentile highlighted behavior here:

   | |
   |---|
   | *carefully outline what is required to get a job done when I have an important activity due* |

2. Identify the *role* or *situation* you will use in working on this behavior:

   | |
   |---|
   | *Shift Supervisor* |

3. List the potential *roadblocks* that you may encounter:

   *Needing to write everything down so that I don't forget.*
   *I have so many obligations that I need to keep track of them.*
   *Wasting time thinking about what to do instead of doing it.*
   *Feeling pressure due to the expectations of others.*
   *If I don't do it, it may not be done or may be done incorrectly.*
   *Fearing that things will be more expensive if they aren't done carefully the first time.*

4. Outline what you want to do to *moderate* a high percentile behavior or *enhance* a low percentile behavior:

   *Spend less time outlining what is required to do.*
   *Only outline those things that are high priority.*
   *Increase my time doing and spend less time thinking about it.*
   *Spend more time in accomplishing a particular objective than in the planning process.*
   *Try to realize that unplanned time is not necessarily wasted time.*
   *Be open to other opportunities than those I have planned.*

5. Describe how you will know if you are making *progress*:

   *I will know that I'm making progress if I feel less pressure when I'm facing a particular task to do.*
   *If I don't make a "list" of everything that I need to do.*
   *When I go to sleep without reviewing in my mind all the things that I didn't do during the day.*

6. Set a date to *review* you progress:

   | |
   |---|
   | *Three weeks from today* |