

The Three Sensory Styles

by Neville Knowles

Visual – 50% of population

The person who is visual dominant relies primarily on visual cues when they are experiencing their environment.

Appearance and speech pattern characteristics include:

- very concerned about how things look
- dress in more colour, neat in appearance, more jewellery
- more upright in their posture as they want to get the best view possible
- create pictures in their heads when they are thinking
- speak quickly in order to describe the picture that they are seeing
- use their hands in a very animated fashion
- tonality tends to be quite varied and has a large range of expression
- use visual metaphors and words: it's clear to me, things are looking bright, I need the big picture, I see what you mean, hazy, viewpoint, see, look, bright, dazzling, unclear, vision, paint a picture, shine, show...

When communicating with a visual:

- eye contact is essential; if they can't see you, they can't hear you
- speak quickly
- use your hands
- in a persuasion situation, make sure they have something to see

Auditory – 40% of population

Auditory processors rely heavily on hearing to help them create their map of the world.

Appearance and speech pattern characteristics include:

- dress in a more neutral fashion, with fewer colours
- often have music playing around them; they have the best stereos and CD collections
- often have their head tilted to one side when listening so their dominant ear can pick up information better
- speech tempo is in a mid-range
- voices tend towards a more resonant monotone
- think in words instead of images and will therefore use their hands less in speech and rely more on their voice and tonality to convey meaning
- use sound effects (i.e. snapping fingers) when talking
- use phrases and words such as: it clicked, do you hear me, sounds good, harmonious, music to my ears, like nails on a chalkboard, noisy, tell, talk, shrill, say...

When communicating with an auditory:

- be aware of your tonality as they are very aware of unpleasant sounds
- use sound effects
- can easily carry on a conversation without seeing you
- extended eye contact may overload them and make them feel uncomfortable

Kinesthetic -10% of population

Kinesthetics use their body feelings to process their environment.

Appearance and speech pattern characteristics include:

- like comfort; wear old comfy sweaters and shoes that are “just broken in”
- they are interested in how something “feels”
- think with their bodies; they get a gut feeling and have to take that feeling, churn it around and then describe it
- slower speech patterns and response times
- use phrases and words such as: get a handle, gut feeling, get in touch, are you with me, get grounded, hands on, feeling, take it to heart, grasp, touch, solid, hold, firm, touch...

When communicating with a kinesthetic:

- physical contact, movement and something to touch are all great ways to reach a kinesthetic
- handshakes are an essential part of building rapport as is a gentle pat on the back

Most people have two sensory modalities, one that is dominate and the other secondary. The percentages of population expressed above reference dominance.

A Visual /Kinesthetic can be expressed Vk.

In effective communications you need identify the individual’s primary sensory modality and connect to it in establishing RAPPORT and out if it, TRUST.

Three Basic Sensory