

# Organizational Physics

## PSIU Management Style Indicator Report for

### Sample

October 5, 2011

### About this Management Style Indicator

The PSIU Management Style Indicator is an interpretation of how the Producing, Stabilizing, Innovating, and Unifying (PSIU) forces shape your management style, what your organization demands from you, and how you would actually *prefer* to express yourself. In other words, it maps how you are, how others want you to be, and how you want to be in your work.

Individual management styles are powerful and pervasive forces that affect every aspect of an organization. Understanding your own management style allows you to be a better manager of yourself, others, and situations.

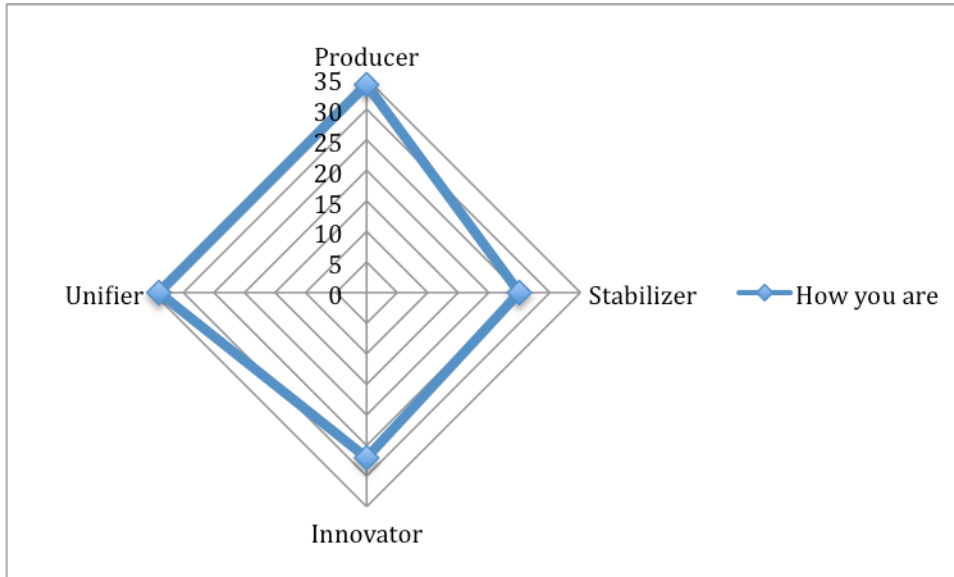
### Your Profile

|                           | <b>Producer</b> | <b>Stabilizer</b> | <b>Innovator</b> | <b>Unifier</b> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| How you are               | 34              | 25                | 27               | 34             |
| How others want you to be | 33              | 25                | 25               | 37             |
| How you want to be        | 38              | 27                | 30               | 25             |

- You are currently demonstrating a high drive to produce and unify. It seems that most of your time is spent doing the daily work and keeping your team and clients working well together and on the same page or dealing with interpersonal issues on the team.
- Your demands from the organization are that you do what you're doing now but with slightly less innovation while unifying even more. It seems that the organization wants less change and more strategic clarity. If there was a fly on the wall listening to the thoughts of your staff it might hear something like, "We want you to keep producing results as you are now but help us to understand the current strategy before giving us any more changes and help us to understand where we each fit in the strategy and company's future and help us to all get along."
- You personally desire to produce more, to bring some more order out of chaos, to figure out the next set of strategic moves, and to unify significantly less. It seems that the needs of others and the needs of the team and/or clients are costing you more energy than you are getting in return right now. If you had your choice, you would prefer to just go and execute and get caught up on work while bringing some additional efficiency to the process. Then you'd like to find the right strategy or have improved strategic clarity and continue to execute rapidly.
- To improve your level of happiness and productivity, seek to bring strategic clarity to the organization so that the team is aligned and you can produce more and unify less.

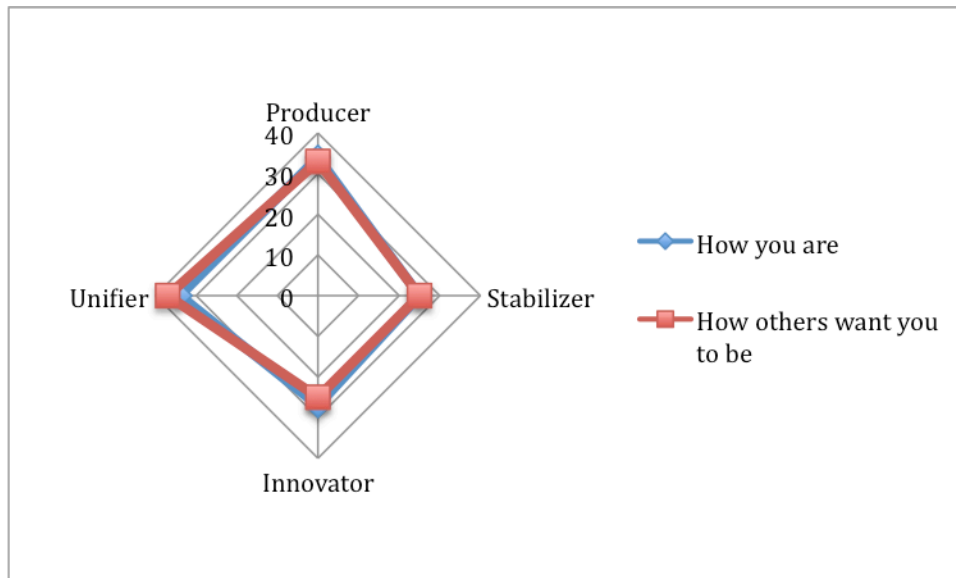
## How You Are

This dimension refers to how you currently show up in your day-to-day work. It represents what actually *is*, as opposed to how you *want* to be or how others think you *should* be. Specifically, how you are reflects how you tend to use the finite energy available to you each day to manage your environment. Over time, certain tendencies become habits that give rise to your current management style.



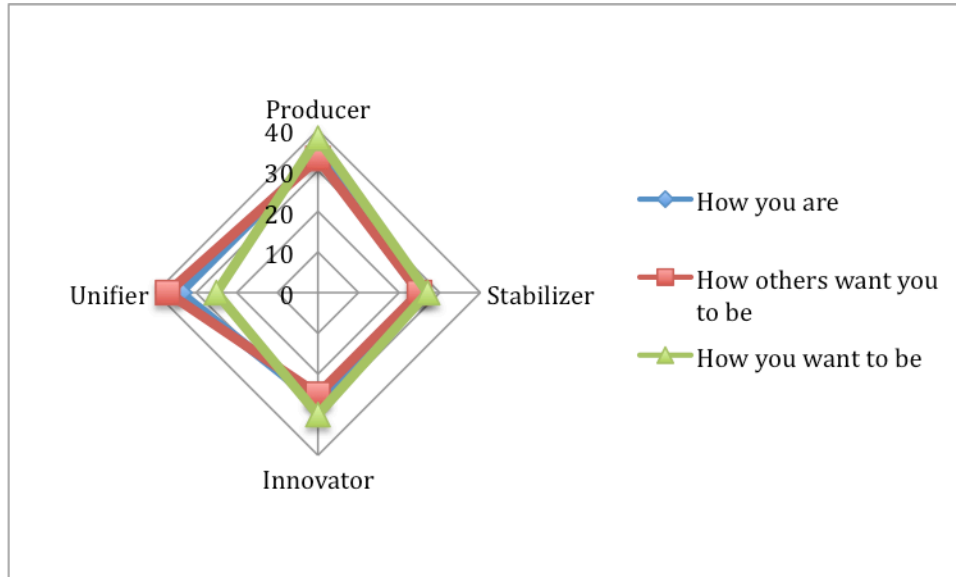
## How You Are vs. How Others Want You to Be

“How others want you to be” represents your perception of the expectations placed upon you by others in the organization. These demands can be explicit, such as those found in a job description, or implicit, like those you sense from your colleagues’ feedback or the social norms within your organization. Comparing how you are *versus* how others want you to be allows you to see where there’s a discrepancy between the two. A difference of ten (10) points or more is considered high and tends to result in the feeling that you’re not meeting others’ expectations or that you are not supported, accepted, or validated in your current role.



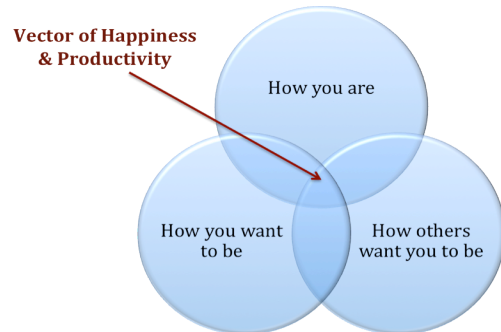
## How You Are vs. How Others Want You to Be vs. How You Want to Be

“How you want to be” represents what you personally desire. It tells you what you *want* to have happen, as opposed to what *is* happening or what *should* happen. How you want to be provides the fuel for change. As in the previous example, comparing how you are, how you are expected to be, and what you really want allows you to spot discrepancies among the three. When there is misalignment among these dimensions, you will tend to feel a sense of restlessness or dissatisfaction with your work. A difference of ten (10) points or more is considered high and tends to result in increased stress, frustration, and reduced productivity over time.

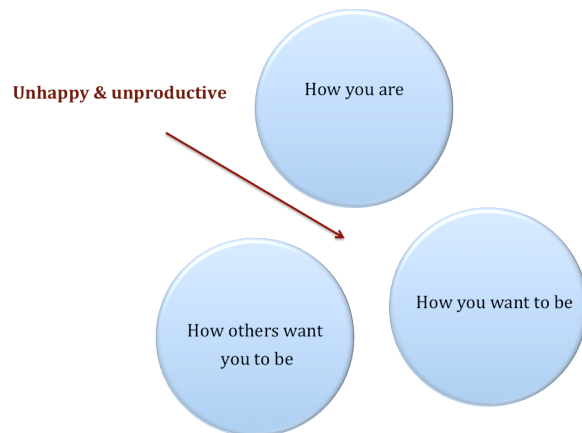


## The Vector of Happiness and Productivity

The area of alignment between how you are, how you want to be, and how others want you to be, is your Vector of Happiness and Productivity. This makes sense. If you're being true to who you are, doing what you desire, and meeting the perceived needs of those you care about, you'll feel aligned and productive over time.

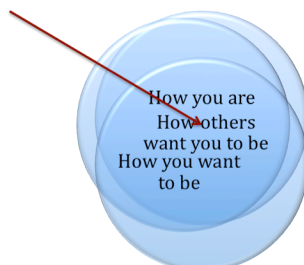


On the other hand, when these three dimensions don't overlap in any way, you will experience greater friction and frustration. Your productivity and job satisfaction will suffer because of this lack of alignment.



The greater the alignment between how you are, how you want to be, and how others in the organization want you to be, the greater your happiness and productivity over time.

**Happy & productive**



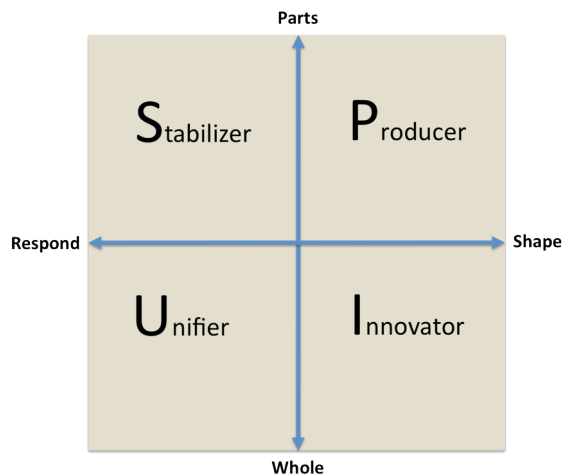
In order to find more alignment between how you are, how you want to be, and others' expectations, you begin by recognizing the discrepancy and then making a new commitment to change. The deeper your commitment to change, the easier it is to let go of competing demands and desires, and the faster new habits and new results can be created.

The purpose of revealing any discrepancies between these dimensions, then, is to help you gain insight on the nature of this gap so you can begin the process of integrating them and experience greater satisfaction in your life and work.

## Understanding Your Management Style Indicator Results

According to Organizational Physics, an individual's management style is the result of the interplay among four basic forces: Producing, Stabilizing, Innovating, and Unifying. These forces can be mapped on two axes, representing (1) a continuum between the drive to *shape* and *respond* to the environment and (2) a continuum between the drive to focus on the *whole* and the *parts* of an organization.

Take a look at the graphic below. Let's take the Stabilizer, for example. The Stabilizer is primarily moved by a drive to *respond* to the environment and focus on the functioning on the *parts*. The Innovator, on the other hand, is moved by a drive to *shape* the environment and to focus on the *whole*.



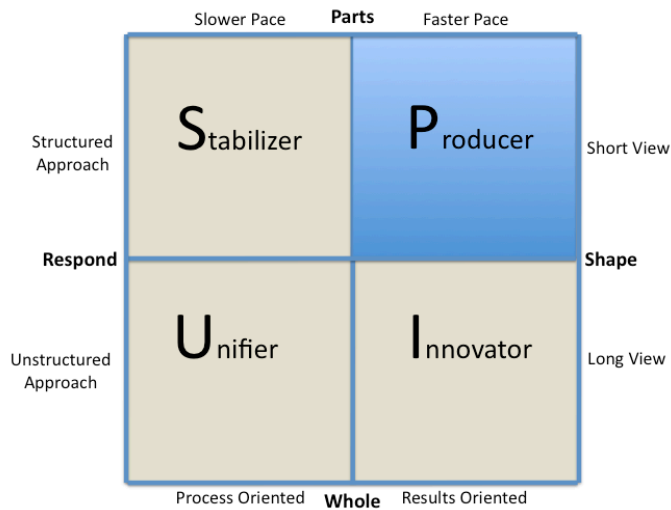
Each of us expresses a management style that reflects our own unique combination of the Producing, Stabilizing, Innovating, and Unifying forces. All four forces are present in each of us in some form, but usually one or two are dominant and come to us more naturally than others. Also, when one force is relatively strong, one or more of the other forces will be relatively weak.

While we may modify our general style depending on circumstances, stepping out of our natural strengths generally costs us more energy than when operating within them. For example, imagine a highly innovative entrepreneur who is forced to do bookkeeping for a week. Sure, she may be able to do it, but she's also going to feel extreme tedium, effort, and a loss of energy as a result. It's because of this energy cost that most of us express fairly consistent characteristics. Effective leadership therefore

requires understanding your own style and its relative strengths and weakness, as well as the styles of the people around you.

The following sections will help you to better understand each style. As you read through each section that follows, note the strengths and weaknesses of your own style(s) and seek to recognize the styles of your bosses, peers, subordinates, key customers, and important vendors.

## Producer Style



The Producer has a high drive to shape the environment and is focused on the parts. Thus, it moves at fast pace, takes a short-term view, is results oriented, and follows a structured approach. The Producer is focused on what to do now and working hard to get it done rapidly. To get an immediate sense of the Producer's qualities, think of a fast-charging, focused, determined, high-energy person who thrives on working long and hard. That's a Producer. If you put this person in a rowboat and say, "Row!" What will they do? Well, they'll just start rowing straight ahead — and fast! They don't need to ask questions, plan a route,

understand where they should go, or even how long they'll be gone. They just row and keep rowing until you say, "Stop!"

The Producer has a tremendous capacity to work hard to accomplish a goal and takes great pride in winning. That could be winning the new account, completing the project, achieving a goal, or beating the competition. A Producer is decisive and makes decisions based on what can be accomplished now, without waiting for all the information to be in hand. Instead, they figure it out as they go. Our best Producer qualities are our ability to act, lead the charge, overcome obstacles, urge a team to action, and be effective, assertive, and victorious. A Producer is a lot like the engine of a car. The bigger the engine, the faster the organization can go.

When the Producer trait is exceedingly strong, we call it a Big P. A Big P is like a hammer. It sees every problem as a nail and the solution is to hit it. Hit it with hard work, more work, and faster work. The Big P comes into work very early and leaves work very late. If they have an office, it's likely very messy with lots of projects and tasks to complete (and usually awards and trophies on display). The Big P doesn't like to have meetings unless they're short, to the point, and focused on the most pressing task at hand. Their biggest frustration is that things aren't getting done fast enough according to their own internal clock. Their common complaint is that others aren't working as hard as they do. Their answer to most problems is to work harder, longer, and faster. Because of this, they tend to overestimate the amount of work that can be accomplished by a team. Therefore, when getting schedule estimates from a Big P, recognize that they are going to significantly underestimate the actual time it will take to complete a team project. If they say one month, it will be more like three to four months.

The Big P can't stomach falsity and they're often brutally honesty in their communications. If you went into their office, the first thing you'd hear about is how hard they've been working and how much they still have to complete. When this person supervises others, there's a lot of anxious waiting by the staff because the Big P is not very effective at delegating. Often, they delegate at the very end of a project when they just can't do the work themselves and a deadline is fast approaching. The staff then leaps into action to try to solve another last-minute crisis.



The reason that the Big P always has so much work to do is because they value themselves and others based on how much work they do. Delegating tasks or planning ahead to avoid a crisis actually decreases the Big P's sense of self-worth. The Big P thrives on averting crises. And the bigger the crisis, the better. In fact, sometimes the only way you can get their attention is to present a new crisis for them to fix.

### **Big P Under Stress**

When the Big P is under extreme stress, they tend to become erratic in their actions. They will tend to make a lot of mistakes because they can't see the big picture, understand the details, or communicate and unify the rest of the organization. It's the classic "Fire, Ready, Aim!" When angry, the Big P tends to lash out verbally, tell others what to do, and becomes domineering or aggressive.

### **Big P and the Other Styles**

The Big P gets along really well with other Producers because they value hard work and move at the same fast pace. They don't mind Stabilizers as long as the Stabilizers don't create "unnecessary" barriers to getting work done. But if they do, watch out. Producers respect an Innovator's ability to see into the future but dislike Innovators who cause too much chaos or changes in strategy because that requires Producers to have to re-focus and change their work. That's hard for a Big P to do. Producers will often judge Unifiers as sycophants who don't do any real work, chitchat all day, and play the political winds – unless, of course, a Unifier can help the Producer alleviate obstacles that are in the way of getting tasks completed. In that case, they'll form an uneasy alliance.

### **Managing Down**

If you're managing a Big P, you never have to worry about them working hard enough or finding the inner motivation to complete a challenging task. Instead, you need to be mindful that they don't run too far in the wrong direction. While another style might require the symbolic whip to trigger them into action, the Big P will need a set of reins to slow them down. A Big P needs a high level of autonomy in their tasks and the best way you can support them is to help eliminate obstacles that prevent the work from getting done. Be mindful also that, because the Big P is outstanding at completing the tasks at hand, they may have blind spots around how the work is impacting others, how the big picture has changed, and the intricate details involved. If you praise them for being productive and celebrate and honor their victories, you'll have a loyal employee.

### **Managing Up**

If your boss is a Big P, you will need to demonstrate your value based on measurable achievements and by how long and hard you work. That is, if you're working long and hard and producing tangible results such as sales wins, products launched, hours billed, or capital raised, then you'll be in good standing with your boss. If you need a request fulfilled, you better phrase it quickly and to the point and be able to show how it is necessary for completing short-term tasks and goals. The Big P values actions more than words and has little patience for politics, bureaucracy, or anyone and anything they view as standing in the way of what they want to achieve.

The Big P thinks and speaks literally. They are plain spoken. A "yes" means just that and a "no" does too. Therefore, a Big P takes you at your word as well. If you say you'll do something, even in an off-hand way, they'll remember it and hold you to it. If you follow through, you'll be accepted and rewarded. If you fail, you'll lose favor with the Big P, regardless of the surrounding circumstances. The Big P loves to reward and promote for performance and to fire for a lack of performance. It's black and white. So when its time to discuss your performance review, be prepared to validate your wins and state how you

will mitigate your losses going forward. If you keep failing to hit your stated goals, you're at risk of getting fired, regardless of the circumstances.

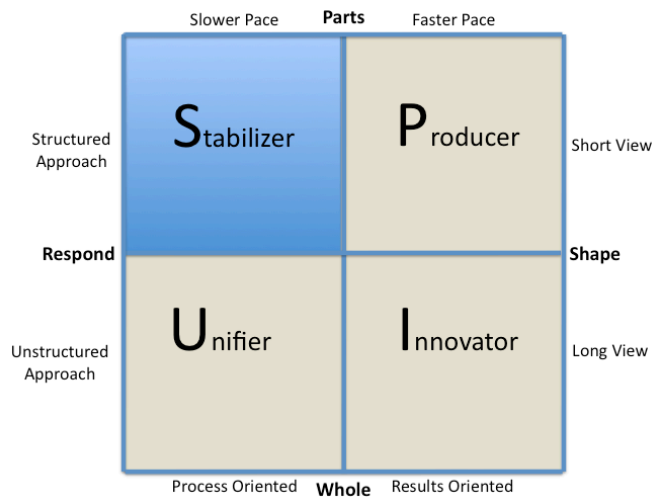
In the 1992 movie *Glenn Gary Glenn Ross*, Alec Baldwin plays an extreme Big P. His character, Blake, is sent in by Mitch and Murray, the faceless owners of a real estate office, to motivate the salespeople. Blake shows up with a pair of brass balls, cusses out the sales team, and announces a contest where only the top two salespeople will get the more promising leads and everyone else will get fired. That's a Big P. Perform or else – and do it quickly.

**Summary**

Producer qualities allow us to work hard, achieve our goals, and be decisive and effective in our actions. They provide the engine for accomplishment. When taken to an extreme, they turn into Big P – a giant hammer that only sees what's in front of it, gets overwhelmed by taking on too much, and seeks to alleviate its frustration by pushing things to go faster.

| <b>Preferred Work Habits</b> | <b>Producer Role</b>                          |
|------------------------------|---|
| Enjoys                       | Completing tasks                              |
| Personal work space          | Cluttered/Busy                                |
| Normal communication style   | Energetic/fast/to the point                   |
| Primary work focus           | Implementing the game plan/producing output   |
| Typical complaint            | People aren't working hard enough             |
| Decision-making behavior     | Quick. Figures it out along the way           |
| Addresses problems by        | Working harder, getting others to work harder |
| Like to be praised for       | Being productive. Working hard                |
| Excels at                    | Taking action                                 |
| Most satisfied when          | Scores a victory                              |

## Stabilizer Style



The Stabilizer has a high drive to respond to the environment and is focused on the parts. Therefore, this style moves at a slower pace, takes a short-term view, is process-oriented, and follows a structured approach. The Stabilizer is focused on *how* to do things and working methodically to get them done the right way. To get an immediate sense of the Stabilizer's qualities, think of a very structured, process-oriented person who likes to analyze the data before making a decision. This person is highly organized, has outstanding attention to details, and takes their time in their words and actions. That's a Stabilizer. If you put this person in a rowboat

and say, "row!" What will they do? Well, first they'll analyze the rowing mechanism and plan the most efficient stroke. Then they'll want to understand where they are rowing, for how long, what the best route is, when the water and food breaks will occur, and the prevailing winds and currents. Once everything is planned in detail, with two contingency plans in place, then they'll start to row!

The Stabilizer has a tremendous ability to find better, more efficient ways of doing things. They excel at organizing, planning, controlling, and systematizing things. They create order out of chaos and usually have outstanding retention of pertinent details. The Stabilizer tends to value control over freewheeling innovation, unless that innovation can be analytically justified. They have little patience for errors, sloppiness, or anyone or anything violating a defined process or procedure without good cause. A Stabilizer is methodical and makes decisions based on analyzing the data and finding more efficient solutions. Naturally, it takes time to gather and analyze data and to understand the intricate details involved in a decision. Consequently, the Stabilizer moves at a deliberate pace in their thoughts, words, and actions.

When the Stabilizer trait is overly high, we call it a Big S. A Big S is like a bureaucrat that seeks to control for change by establishing and following processes. They value efficiency over effectiveness, even to the extreme. The Big S comes into work on time and leaves on time. If they have an office, it's likely very clean and orderly with files neatly arranged and spreadsheets and objective data readily on hand. The Big S schedules regular meetings and always has an agenda prepared in advance. Their biggest frustration is that others aren't following the process. Their common complaint is that others don't pay close enough attention to important details.

The answer to most problems for a Big S is to analyze the data and document a plan. Because of this, they tend to falsely believe that proper planning can account for any contingency. Therefore, when getting schedule estimates from a Big S, recognize that the schedule will look excellent on paper. It will be very specific, down to each nut and bolt, but also totally incorrect because change is a constant. Consequently, there will likely be several creative ways to accomplish the same objective but much more quickly.

If you walk into their office, the first thing you might hear is how there's a need for more process and control. When this person supervises others, there are usually a lot of other Stabilizers on the team because the Big S values adherence to standards and protocols as a top priority. They delegate frequently and monitor the work being performed using project plans and milestone reviews. Unlike the Big P, a Big S can't manage a crisis well. There's too much noise and confusion for them to quickly and accurately get a read on the situation.

### **Big S Under Stress**

The reason that the Big S must always plan is that they fear a lack of control. For them, a lack of control leads to bad things happening. So to ask the Big S to move more quickly, be creative, or take a huge risk is to ask them to face their biggest fear. When the Big S is under extreme stress, they tend to withdraw inwardly and focus on unimportant but controllable details. For example, Humphrey Bogart in the classic movie *The Caine Mutiny* played an extreme characterization of a Big S in the role of Captain Queeg. When under stress from a life or death naval crisis at sea, Captain Queeg could only resort to enforcing rules about the consumption of strawberries and his crew was forced to mutiny to survive.

### **Big S and the Other Styles**

The Big S gets along really well with other Stabilizers because they value process, control, and planning. They don't mind Producers as long as the Producer is not violating any procedures. But if they do, watch out. They distrust fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants Innovators because Innovators have three new ideas per week, all of which cause more work and headaches for the Big S. They find Unifiers to require way more interpersonal connection and emotional support than they're willing to give, so they prefer to avoid them entirely. If avoidance isn't an option, they'll smile tightly and find an excuse to get back to their private office where they don't have to engage in intimate conversation.

### **Managing Down**

If you're managing a Big S, you rarely have to worry about them making errors and omissions. Instead, you need to be alert that they don't fall into paralysis by analysis. A Big S needs lots of structure in their tasks and the best way you can support them is to give them the relevant data to analyze and then allow them time to process it. Be mindful also that, because the Stabilizer is outstanding at understanding the details, they may have blind spots around how the work is impacting others, how the big picture has changed and thus impacts the work being performed, and/or the real work effort involved in executing the plan. If you praise them for being accurate and thorough, you'll have a grateful employee.

### **Managing Up**

If your boss is a Big S, don't expect a warm and open door policy but do expect a highly controlled and efficient work environment. If you have a need or a request to make, expect to hear "no" a lot since it's hard for a Big S to say "yes." This is because they tend to need a lot of information and time to analyze an issue before committing to a course of action. Therefore, a "no" from a Big S is more like a "not yet, I need more information." Even if you get a "no" from a Big S, you can usually return with more information and revisit the decision later. Once you get a "yes" from a Big S, you can take it to the bank. It's very unlikely that they'll change their mind.

The best way to get a Big S to take action is to point out how something is violating an existing policy. If you can do that, mountains will move. If not, the next best course of action is to point out how the new decision will improve efficiency for the organization. But don't try to appeal using your personal needs or by pursuing an innovative risk. For example, if you need a raise, don't say, "My husband lost his job and we can't afford to pay the bills." That's a personal appeal and it will fail. Instead say, "According to

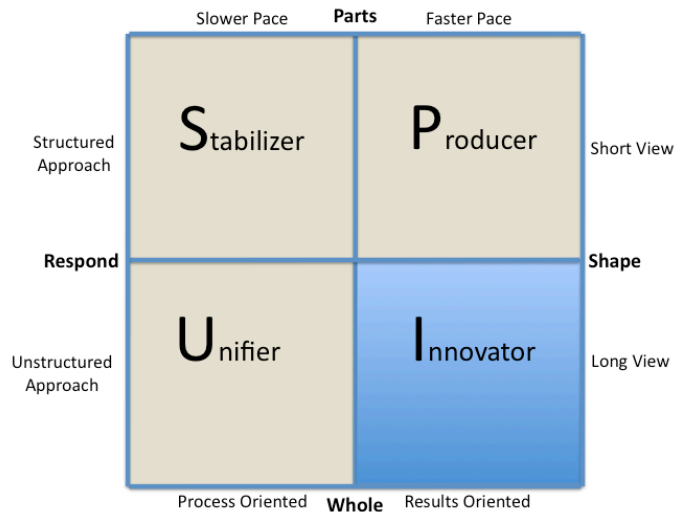
HR Policy 254, Level 2 employees shall be rewarded per annum by 5%.” And then make a case that based upon your job duties, you actually should be reclassified as a Level 1 and thus earn a higher salary.

**Summary**

To recap, the Stabilizer qualities are what allow us to be accurate, secure, and efficient. It permits the factual, deliberate, and methodical approach to planning and decision-making and creates a sense of order out of chaos. It promotes high quality and follow-through. It helps us to be cautious, thoughtful, and prudent when faced with the unknown. When taken to an extreme, the Big S becomes a liability by always valuing efficiency, even at the cost of effectiveness, and is at risk of paralysis by analysis.

| <b>Preferred Work Habits</b> | <b>Stabilizer Role</b>                                     |
|------------------------------|--|
| Enjoys                       | Analyzing problems and tasks                               |
| Personal work space          | Practical/organized  |
| Normal communication style   | Factual/deliberate/methodical                              |
| Primary work focus           | Planning/organizing/systematizing                          |
| Typical complaint            | People are not following the process                       |
| Decision-making behavior     | Methodical. Decides once everything is understood          |
| Addresses problems by        | Implementing new systems, revising policies and procedures |
| Like to be praised for       | Finding efficiencies, high quality, creating order         |
| Excels at                    | Analysis   |
| Most satisfied when          | Achieving high quality                                     |

## Innovator Style



The Innovator has a high drive to shape the environment and is focused on the whole. Consequently, it moves at a fast pace and is results-oriented like the Producing Force, but takes a long view and operates in an unstructured way. The Innovator is focused on driving change while finding new and better ways of doing things. To get an intuitive sense of the Innovator's qualities, think of a dynamic, creative, big-picture person who has a plethora of new ideas and is usually excited by the latest one, until a new one strikes again. That's an Innovator. If you put this person in a rowboat and say, "Row!" What will they do? Well, they'll start

to come up with new ideas! "Why don't we put a sail on this baby? How about a glass bottom? That would be pretty cool! Come to think of it, a 250hp motor would do just the trick; I bet we can find one at the marina. Be right back."

The Innovator has a tremendous ability to peer into the future and to anticipate how seemingly disparate trends will (or can be made to) merge together. They are highly conceptual and get easily excited about new ideas and opportunities. Because an Innovator can sense change occurring faster than other styles, they spend a lot of time trying to get others to see the same thing they do. They usually attempt to do that by explaining the idea and sharing their enthusiasm, and by trying to get others to understand and be enthusiastic too. Our best Innovator qualities are our ability to anticipate change, to be imaginative, charismatic, and inventive. Without the Innovator force, we would have no ability to adapt to changes in our environment and we would quickly become irrelevant or extinct.

When the Innovator trait is exceedingly strong, we call it a Big I. A Big I is like a mad genius. It's always cooking up one crazy sounding idea after the next. The Big I comes into work whenever they want and leaves work whenever they want. If they have an office, it's likely a testament to their own unique individuality and creativity. The Big I doesn't like to have meetings unless it's to discuss a new idea and as long as they get to do most of the talking. Their biggest frustration is that things are stymied in production and implementation or that they get bogged down in managing release schedules and milestone dates, rather than working on the next new thing. Their common complaint is that others "don't get it." Their answer to most problems is to come up with a new idea.

The Big I is not usually comfortable giving schedule estimates because they recognize they just don't have the interest (or a clue) as to how long something will actually take. Those are details for others to figure out. But they're happy to give predictions on when market trends will converge. However, because they see a future (not necessarily the accurate future) so clearly, they tend to overestimate when something will actually occur. Therefore, if they think the market demand will tap out in two years, in reality it's probably just getting started then. But if and when demand finally does arrive, the Big I is already bored with it — OMG, that's so last decade! — and has moved on to yet undiscovered things.

The Big I gets bored with the *status quo* really easily. Their past creations are never good enough because something new keeps being invented. If there's nothing new to build or think about, they prefer to destroy what's already been built. "Hey, let's tear this old thing down and rebuild something new." If you walk into their office, the first thing you'll hear about is their latest idea and why it's important and revolutionary. When this person supervises others, there's a lot of chaos among the staff, projects, and schedules. They'll usually have a right-hand person who suffers while trying to keep up with the extreme amount of innovation, has learned to separate a passing notion from a true need for implementation, and struggles to coordinate all the moving pieces.

The reason that the Big I always pursues so many different ideas and opportunities is that they're afraid of standing still and being trapped. To stand still is risk boredom and there's not much more terrifying than that. So to ask a Big I to focus on one thing and complete it is like asking a crack addict to put down the crack pipe. It's very, very hard and not a lot of fun at all.

### **Big I Under Stress**

When the Big I is under extreme stress, they tend to talk themselves into a corner. Because they see so many options, it's hard to choose one. Thus, they'll want the flow of options and counter options to stop so that they can pick a path and get out of the mess they've created. The Big I tends to seek escape when under duress. So if things are going poorly in the office, you can expect to find them thinking of a new idea, dreaming of a vacation or a fun new purchase, diving into entertainment, or generally trying to avoid reality. When angry, the Big I can get very volatile and hypercritical of others.

### **Big I and Other Styles**

The Big I appreciates Producers because they act really fast to implement their vision. However, sometimes it can be frustrating to have to explain to the Producers why the Big I is changing the strategy again. "Can't they see it? It's so obvious!!" Besides, they are kind of boring and uncreative. They absolutely loathe Stabilizers who are finicky, slow, and say "no" a lot! They distrust other Innovators and view them as arrogant competition. They enjoy Unifiers because the Unifier is easy to be around, always has a supportive and encouraging word for their latest idea, and can be a useful ally in galvanizing support for their latest vision.

### **Managing Down**

If you're managing a Big I, you have an outstanding idea generator and a terrible implementer. If you have a good relationship, they'll want to bounce new ideas off you frequently because they need to talk things through and weigh different possibilities. Often they can be scattered and inconsistent so you'll need to make sure that the work is actually getting done and that the details are being well managed. Because the Big I is capable of generating so many new ideas, they are often unaware of how the changes they propose are hard for everyone else to keep up with. They overlook the intricate details involved in implementation and conveniently forget all of the half-completed projects they've left in their wake. If you praise them for having great ideas and get excited with them, you'll have a loyal employee.

### **Managing Up**

If your boss is a Big I, you will need to demonstrate your value by helping them complete the pieces of the puzzle they see in their mind. But whatever you do, don't add to or change the vision for them. That would be like taking their paintbrush and drawing on their half-completed canvas. It's very risky and the Big I may never forgive you for it. Instead, ask questions, gently point out gaps in the planning, and

always try to be enthusiastic about their ideas. Because a Big I changes their mind so frequently, you'll need to be able to discern between a passing notion and real action item. "Oh that, we're not doing that any more, I changed my mind this morning. Didn't I tell you? Here's what we're doing now..." is something you'll hear frequently.

The Big I thinks and speaks conceptually in big patterns and generalities. They see things others just can't. They promote people who they believe can help them achieve their vision. They fire people who no longer fit the vision or who seem to be creating obstacles to achieving it. If they are away on a long airline flight, you can expect them to show up at the office with a list of fifty new ideas and improvements.

The Big I can't stomach saying "no." For them, saying "no" means shutting the door to new opportunity. If you present a proposal to a Big I and they do say "no", unlike a Big S, you can't go back and try again. That's it. It's over. They'll likely snap your head off if you try again. Consequently, a "yes" from a Big I doesn't really mean "yes" either. A "yes" for a Big I is more like "sure, sounds pretty good, let's explore it more." For example, if you were to ask a Big I, "Mr. Jones, what do you think about this new prototype?" and Mr. Jones responds, "Hey, I like it! Very cool! We could also make it do this..." That's not a legitimate go-ahead signal. When Mr. Jones comes back in two weeks and you show him the progress on the prototype, he'll probably say something like, "What? Why are you working on this? I didn't approve of this. It's time you focus on the XYZ project, we're already three months behind schedule!" So a "no" is a final "no" from a Big I but a "yes" is more of a "maybe."

In the hit 1985 movie *Back to the Future*, Christopher Lloyd plays Doc, a madcap inventor and a pretty good depiction of a really Big I. He always seems to have three new ideas running through his head; he has a garage full of half-completed inventions; he's enthusiastic; he loves to think big; and the viewer is never quite sure if he's for real or insane because he's so far out there on the edge.

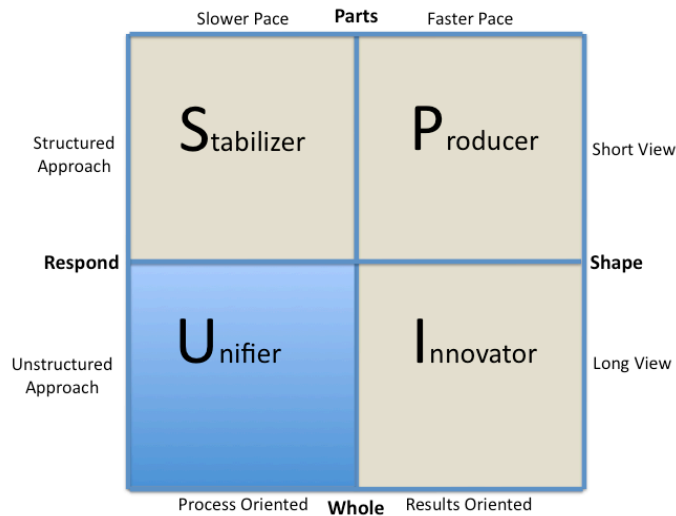
### Summary

To recap, Innovator qualities are what allow us to sense and adapt to change and to find creative solutions and new opportunities. Innovators are creative and dynamic. They have an innate ability to see things others can't yet see. When taken to an extreme, the Innovator turns into a Big I and can become overzealous in pursuing too many different strategies, all half-baked and constantly changing.

| Preferred Work Habits      | Innovator Role   |
|----------------------------|--|
| Enjoys                     | Spotting new opportunities                                   |
| Personal work space        | Unique/creative  |
| Normal communication style | Charismatic/expressive/excitable                             |
| Primary work focus         | Moving the next latest thing forward/spotting trends         |
| Typical complaint          | People aren't getting it                                     |
| Decision-making behavior   | Bold. Decides once the opportunity is sensed                 |
| Addresses problems by      | Looking for a new approach or idea                           |
| Like to be praised for     | Finding creative solutions that work, getting others excited |
| Excels at                  | Conceptualizing  |
| Most satisfied when        | Thinking outside the box                                     |



## Unifier Style



The Unifier has a high drive to respond to the environment and is focused on the whole. Therefore, a Unifier moves at a more measured pace and is process-oriented like the Stabilizer, but takes an unstructured freewheeling approach and a long view of change like the Innovator. The Unifier is primarily focused on who is involved and the interpersonal dynamics of the group. To get an immediate sense of the Unifier's qualities, think of a very likeable, gregarious, warm, people person. That's a Unifier. If you put this person in a rowboat and say, "row!" What will they do? Well, they'll want to know where everyone else is! You can't

expect them to row all by themselves. They'll need a team of people, ideally their friends, to climb in the boat and all row together.

Unifiers are excellent communicators and team builders and are especially good at listening and empathizing. They tend to make everybody else feel uplifted, listened to, and respected and thus improve teamwork and loyalty in the workplace. They always have time for a chat and are genuinely concerned with how you are doing and how they can help you. They are excellent at smoothing things over and intuiting how someone else is really feeling. For example, if a Producer and a Unifier went on a sales call together, the Producer could only interpret what the client was actually *saying* while the Unifier can tell exactly how the client is really *feeling* beneath the words. Our best Unifier qualities are our ability to create rapport, understand and motivate others, build cohesive teams, and create sound organizational cultures based on caring, empathy, and loyalty. Without the Unifier force, we would have no ability to respond to change efficiently because the organization couldn't act as a whole.

When the Unifier trait is extreme, we call it a Big U. A Big U is like a politician who always seeks to curry favors and plays the political winds to their own advantage. On the one hand, they value and leverage personal relationships; on the other, they can't really be trusted with their words or actions because their loyalty will shift with the prevailing political winds. The Big U comes to work when expected and leaves when expected. If they have an office, it's likely very warm and inviting and personable. The Big U likes to have meetings because it gives them a chance to see and connect with others and gauge which way they really stand on an issue. During the meeting, they prefer to sit and listen while others do the talking. Their biggest frustration is when others won't engage with them in a dialogue, shut them out, or keep up a stoic guard. Their common complaint is that others aren't working well together and thinking of the team.

The answer to most problems for a Big U is to gather input from others and process their feelings. This includes their own feelings as well as the feelings of others. This takes time and that's why a Big U tends to move at a slower pace than a Producer or Innovator. Therefore, when getting schedule estimates from a Big U, recognize that before committing to any schedule, the Big U will insist on getting input and buy-in from those who will be impacted. The result will be a very safe, prudent schedule that will

account for the needs of all the different constituents. Thus, there are likely several ways to improve the speed or direction of the plan if you're willing to step on some proverbial toes.

If you went into their office, the first thing a Big U would do is warmly invite you in, offer you some tea or coffee, and give you all the time in the world to speak and be heard. When this person supervises others, there are usually a lot of other Unifiers on the team because the Big U values camaraderie and teamwork. They delegate frequently but don't tend to follow up too vigilantly because that can create conflict, something the Big U prefers to avoid.

Sometimes a Big I can appear as a big people person or a Big U. However, the Big I is really motivated to connect and influence people to move forward their own vision. When the time for selling the vision is through, a Big I will want to retire and be alone. For a Big U, however, being with people is a joy unto itself.

In the classic movie *The Godfather*, Michael Corleone's older brother Fredo (whom Michael ultimately has killed in *The Godfather Part II*) plays the part of a Big U. Fredo is always seeking approval, wants to be liked, is trapped within his own feelings, and prefers to avoid conflict. It's hard for Fredo to take a stand, so competing factions within the Mafia easily influence him. Ultimately, he betrays his family and justifies it because life has never been fair to him. That's a pretty good depiction of an extreme Big U. Nice enough, always wanting to get along, but underneath he can be spineless, wishy-washy, and seek power by currying favors.

### **Big U Under Stress**

During a crisis, the Big U can fail to be decisive. There are too many conflicting viewpoints and hardened positions for a Big U to have the time to navigate. When under extreme duress, the Big U acts as if they're imploding under the weight of their own emotions. It's hard for them to see the big picture, do the work, make decisions, or even get out of bed. They'll need lots of time and companionship to process their emotions, restore their energy, and get reinvigorated again.

### **Big U and the Other Styles**

The Big U gets along really well with all the other styles, especially those in power — all other styles, that is, except for other Big U's with political power! In this case, they become highly suspicious and seek to either carefully and guardedly curry favor or quietly usurp the other Big U entirely. The Big U prefers to create a harmonious, low-conflict environment. But if they ever feel betrayed, they really castigate the offender.

### **Managing Down**

If you're managing a Big U, you will need to give them a lot of one-on-one attention and show that you care about them personally. Be aware that because a Big U can be outstanding at helping a group work in harmony, they won't work as hard as a Producer, with as much detail as a Stabilizer, or with as much creativity as an Innovator. If you share about your personal life, ask about their own, take them out to coffee or lunch, and give them praise and support, you'll have a loyal employee.

The best way to get a Big U to take action is to allow them to help you. Big U's love to help people who are important to them because they want those people to be happy and feel good about their relationship with the Big U! If you have a loyal Big U working for you, they can move mountains simply by opening doors and working their personal relationships.

## Managing Up

If your boss is a Big U, expect to have a fun-loving, gregarious, lax work environment when things are good. And expect to have a poisonous, back-stabbing, politically rife environment when things are not. Either way, who you know and who you're connected with are more important than what you accomplish. The Big U makes decisions based on personal likes and dislikes and on the prevailing political winds. When making a request, you can expect to hear "yes" and "no" a lot, but you can't take either one to the bank. This is because Unifiers tend to change their mind based on what others are thinking and feeling and who's in power at a given time. Therefore, a "no" from a Big U is more like a "maybe...could be...we'll have to see how it all plays out." And so is a "yes."

## Summary

To recap, the Unifier qualities are what allow us to be excellent connectors, communicators, and bonding agents for a group. They love to be with people, keep conflict low, and have a harmonious environment. When taken to an extreme, the Unifier morphs into a Big U and becomes a political animal, saying one thing and doing another to ensure their survival and advancement.

| Preferred Work Habits      | Unifier Role   |
|----------------------------|--|
| Enjoys                     | Listening to and empathizing with others                           |
| Personal work space        | Warm/welcoming   |
| Normal communication style | Appropriate/connecting/affirming                                   |
| Primary work focus         | Building consensus/meeting people's needs/<br>teamwork             |
| Typical complaint          | People aren't being team players                                   |
| Decision-making behavior   | Astute. Decides once everyone's viewpoint is known                 |
| Addresses problems by      | Communicating/bringing people together                             |
| Like to be praised for     | Understanding others. Emotional intelligence.<br>Inspiring others. |
| Excels at                  | Empathizing and unifying a group                                   |
| Most satisfied when        | Developing strong relationships                                    |

## Three Guidelines for Better Management

Here are three practical guidelines on how to use your PSIU results and theory to become a better manager of yourself and others:

### 1) Know the forces at play

The best management advice ever given was engraved three thousand years ago in ancient Greece on the entrance to the Oracle of Delphi: “Gnothi Seauton” or “Know Thyself.” What are the driving forces at work in your personality? How do these forces ebb and flow when you’re under duress and compared to when you’re feeling confidence and ease? Understanding your own style will help you to gain insight on the styles of others and how they interact with you. It will help you understand what generates conflict as well as harmony and success. It will also give you the tools to create powerful teams in which all four forces are represented. Whatever your individual style, you’ll want to align with others who complement you. For example, if your primary style is Pslu (high Producer, low Stabilizer, high Innovator, low Unifier), this indicates that you tend to be able to see the big picture and take action quickly. This also means that you will overlook some essential details of what needs to take place, as well as how these will impact others in your organization. A good complement to you would be a person whom you trust and respect and whose primary mode is pSiU (high Stabilizer and high Unifier). Deciding and acting alone, neither one of you is complete. Deciding and acting together, you are a powerful, cohesive whole.

### 2) Give others what they need

When managing others, always try to give them what they need. For example, if a person with a high Innovator style approaches you with a new idea, they’re likely going to be very excited. Allow them to be excited and get excited with them! Then, after the excitement subsides, start to talk through the details and implementation issues. If you thwart the excitement first, you’ll frustrate the creative impulse of the high Innovator and create additional friction. Similarly, if a person with a high Stabilizer style approaches you with a concern, they’re likely going to be more thoughtful and concerned and they’ll want to analyze the data. Let them! Sit down and look at the data together. Give them time to ask questions and answer them thoughtfully. Then, after the analysis has occurred (which will take much longer than with a Producer or Innovator), begin to shift the conversation to why the decision is important and why it is good for the overall organization. Always try to give people what they need first and your life will be much easier.

### 3) Judge the force, not the person

Human beings are complex creatures and no behavioral indicator is going to fully capture our uniqueness. Individual styles change with working conditions and time. Therefore, avoid labeling someone as wrong or bad. Judgment like this rarely leads to breakthroughs and more often leads to a vicious downward cycle. Instead, judge the force. For example: “Judy is demonstrating a high Innovator style. She has been very creative.” Assessing the force instead of the person allows you to see through the pattern and better understand the underlying needs of those involved. When you judge the force and not the person, this makes you a better leader who sees things without personal judgment and for what they really are.