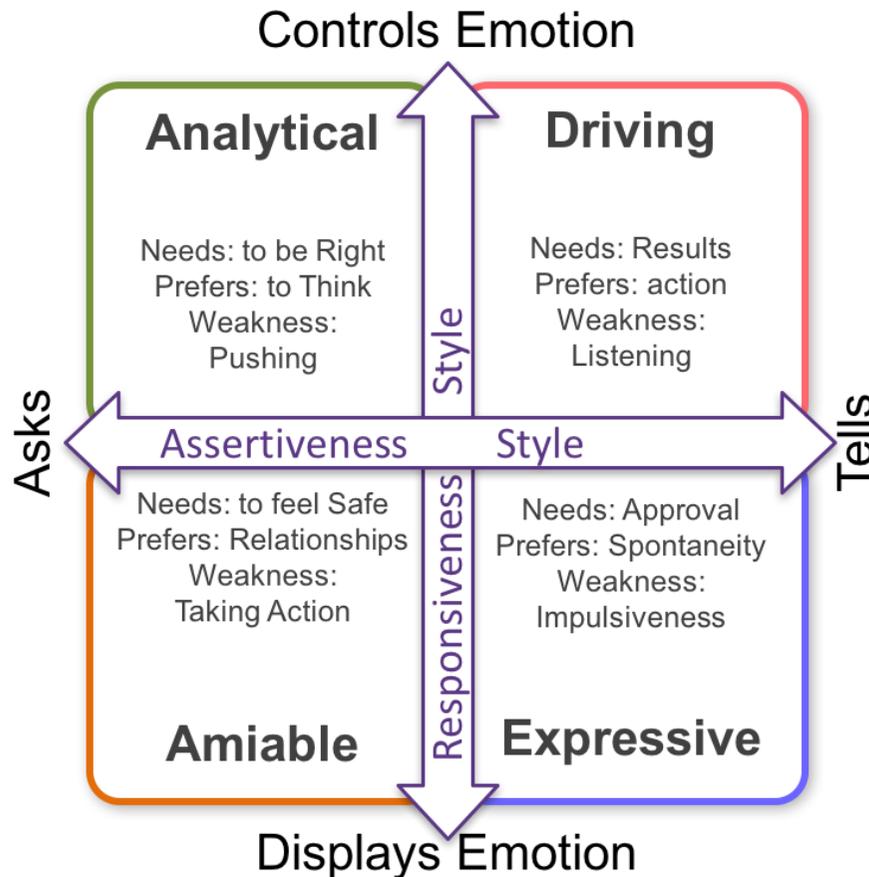


# Coaching and Social Styles

## Social Styles

David Merrill & Roger Reid



The four quadrants that the two dimensions of assertiveness and responsiveness create, give the four social styles.

### Analytical

The analytical style of interaction asserts itself by asking, rather than telling. It is also characterised by a high level of emotional control. It values facts, logic and accuracy, presenting a disciplined and unemotional – some would say cold – face to the world. This manifests in a deep need to be right about things, and therefore a highly deliberative, data-driven approach to decisions. As with all styles, there is a weakness, which is a lack of willingness to state a position until the analytical person is certain of their ground.

### Driving

The driving style is the typical task-oriented behaviour that prefers to tell rather than ask and shows little concern for feelings. It cares more about results. This is a fast-paced style, keen to make decisions, take power, and exert control. Often unco-operative, this is an efficient, results-driven behaviour, the inevitable compromise of which is to sacrifice personal relationships in the short term and, in extremis, in the long term too. The weakness of this style is evident: a frequent unwillingness to listen and accommodate the needs of others.

### Expressive

The expressive style is also assertive, but uses feelings to achieve its objectives. The behaviour is highly spontaneous and demands recognition and approval, and favours gut instinct in decision-making. At its best, this style comes across as charismatic, enthusiastic and idealistic. At its worst, however, the expressive style can be seen as impulsive, shallow and even manipulative.

### Amiable

The amiable style expresses concern for people above all else. Keen to share emotion and not to assert itself over others, building and maintaining relationships dominate behaviour. These concerns manifest a slow, deliberate pace, coming across as sensitive, supportive and dependable. The corollary is a certain nervousness about, and even a resistance to, change. This arises from a deep need for personal security. The weaknesses of this style are the reverse of the strengths of the opposite quadrant: a low willingness to initiate change, and take action.