



ALIGNING ON WORKING STYLES AND WORK APPROACHES

Embracing a “no right way” and “more than one way” Mindset

Have you collaborated with a colleague or received a deliverable from a direct report and thought to yourself:

- “I would’ve approached this differently...”
- “The way I was taught to do this was...”
- “This generation _____”

Or maybe you have a colleague who prefers to work together whereas you prefer to work independently and meet when you have a finished product. Or you prefer to build a relationship first but your colleague skips check-ins and icebreakers and jumps straight into the work.

Sometimes we come from different assumptions about the right OR preferred way to work (eg planful v. agile). When left undiscussed, these differing assumptions can lead to tensions that unfold and grow over time. Uncovering your own preferences can be a helpful reflection before beginning a working relationship or collaborating on a project.

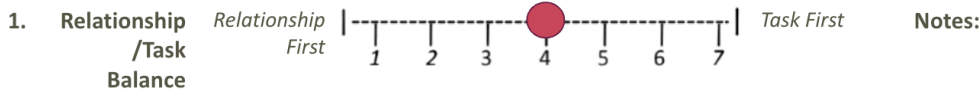
Working Styles Sliders

[Here’s](#) a template that you can use in 1:1 relationships, with your team or in working groups to align on working styles. You will see a description of the multiple dimensions that show up in your working relationships. Skim the categories below. Read the descriptions and use the dot to rate where you fall. Ask your colleague(s) to do the same. See a sample of the slider below.

Categories

Relationship / Task Balance	Approach to Feedback	Information Processing
Collaboration & Coordination	Decision Making Approach	Best time of day for meetings
Communication Style	Defined Expectations	Best time of day for independent work time
Comfort with Open Disagreement	Planning and Calendaring	Decision-making (managers or project leads only)

Sample Slider for Relationship/Task Balance



Meeting Agenda Template

You can use the meeting agenda below to discuss your ratings with your colleague(s). We recommend checking in on working styles and preferences 2-4 times per year after your first conversation.

Discussion Questions

Upon completing the [Working Style Sliders](#) exercise

- Where do we see places of alignment? What context do we want to share on those preferences?
- Where do we see differences? What context do we want to share?
- How might we navigate these differences in the context of our relationship?
- Based on our conversation, what do we want to commit to?

A tracker for your commitments is included below.

	Time Period	Specific Actions	Expected Results/Benefits	Date of check-in to assess progress toward commitments
Commitment #1:				
Commitment #2:				
Commitment #3:				

Connect

Want to talk through a working style difference or role play a conversation? Or maybe you want support leading your team through this exercise. Connect with us [here](#) to chat.

Other Resources You Might Find Helpful

- [Relationship Spirals Tool](#)
- [Practicing Healthy Boundaries Tool](#)

[To Get Your Own Editable Copy of this Template, Click Here**.](#)