



2nd Quarter 2018

Quarterly

How Well Do You Understand Yourself?

By Bennett Taylor

It is a commonly accepted that the first step in improving personal and professional effectiveness begins with self-understanding. While most entrepreneurial and executive leaders have a pretty good grasp of their strengths and short comings, they often don't clearly understand how they are perceived by the people they depend upon to get results.

Self-understanding provides valuable insight into what motivates each of us to travel our chosen path. Once you've clarified what motivates you, you will be better prepared to understand what motivates the people you interact with professionally and personally. Everybody has their own individual set of motivations. When you discover what motivates you, you will be more capable of effectively leading others.



A lack of behavioral understanding can lead to conflict. Conflict is inevitable. Feelings of conflict are a sign that something important to you is not right. When managed effectively, conflict can lead to phenomenal growth and progress.

I had the good fortune early last year to discover the *TotalSDI*, a battery of excellent assessment tools for identifying motivational factors that underlie our personal strengths. The *TotalSDI* is comprised of the following: Strengths Portrait, Strengths Deployment Inventory and Overdone Strengths.

Strengths Portrait

The *Strengths Portrait* tells a story of 28 strengths or behaviors that people value and commonly use when they interact with others. The assessment provides an opportunity to rank these strengths to produce a picture of a person's most and least important ways of relating to other people.

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How Satisfied Are You?

Bennett Taylor will lead a 90-minute personal and professional effectiveness briefing on Thursday, May 17th, from 8:45am to 10:15am at Think Track's office, 6060 N. Central Expressway - Suite 500. You will leave the briefing with the ability to calculate your current employment satisfaction score and a framework for taking positive and progressive action. There will be a drawing for a free online strengths deployment inventory assessment battery plus one hour of coaching valued at \$310. The registration fee, payable at the briefing, is \$39. Registration is limited. Please call 214.693.1716 to register for this event.

Helping You Realize Your Goals

Executive and Leadership Coach Bennett Taylor founded Think Track in 1997 to help entrepreneurs and executives who want to improve personal and professional effectiveness.

Strengths Deployment Inventory

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Your *Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI)* provides a vivid way of seeing yourself and others from the perspective of motives under two conditions – when things are going well and in conflict. A key function of the SDI is to identify your motivational value system (MVS). Your MVS shows how you assess your concern for people (helping others), performance (achieving results) and process (establishing order).

The *SDI* was created by psychologist Elias Porter, the father of the Relationship Awareness Theory. Relationship Awareness Theory states that:

- Behavior is driven by motives
- Motives change in conflict
- Strengths can be overdone
- Filters influence perception

Overdone Strengths Portrait

Your *Overdone Strengths Portrait (OSP)* produces a picture of the way you may overdo your strength. It shows how you may appear to others when your strengths are overdone or misapplied. The effort you invest with the *OSP* will help you turn perceived weaknesses back into strengths and prevent interpersonal conflict.

Competing the TotalSDI battery of assessments will empower you to make better choices and use your strengths to greatly improve your interaction with others.

Five very important things you will learn from completing the TotalSDI are:

- Why you do what you do?
- How can you better manage conflict situations?
- What motivates others?
- What are your strengths and how to deploy?

Behavioral Assessments

"Behavioral assessments are revealing, powerful, and relevant to making better hiring decisions. However, once those employees are on board, having a solid grasp – built on actual data, not observation – of how each employee can be expected to behave in a given role or work situation, how to interface with them, and understand what motivates them, will allow you to anticipate, manage and resolve issues long before problems crop up."

- Mark Waschek, partner in Ag1Source (largest agricultural recruiting and personnel solutions organization in North America)

ATTITUDE

"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a school...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our ATTITUDES."

CHARLES SWINNICKI

"THE ABC'S ARE ATTITUDE, BEHAVIOR AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS."

- Gerald Chertavian, American Business Executive