FourSight®
Thinking Profile
Interpretive Guide
Based on theory by Gerard Puccio, PhD
Introduction
FourSight® Thinking Profile

Innovation calls for breakthrough thinking—a blend of insight, imagination, analysis and action. Which of these four thinking modes do you prefer? Which do you avoid? Tap all four, and take innovation and team performance to the next level. All it takes is FourSight!

Congratulations on discovering the FourSight Thinking Profile. You’re about to pick up speed on the road to innovation. With more than ten years of field testing and research, this simple, powerful tool measures your preferences for different parts of the breakthrough thinking process. Specifically, it reveals what type of thinking you—or your group or organization—are naturally drawn to and what you might be shortchanging.

FourSight is designed to foster innovation. Use it to leverage your own strengths and those of others. Take it as an invitation to...

• build more innovative teams
• anticipate road blocks
• get better results

Let FourSight reveal how your thinking preferences may be influencing your effectiveness, relationships and bottom-line results.

Meet the facets of innovation...

Clarify Ideate Develop Implement
Graph your scores

If you took the paper version of the assessment, follow the instructions below to graph your score.

Discover your profile
Your FourSight profile is determined by your peak preferences. Find out what they are:

Directions
1. Enter your scores for Clarifier, Ideator, Developer and Implementer.
2. Plot each score in the corresponding column. Draw a line to connect your four dots.
3. Add up your four sub-scores and divide by four to get an average. Round your average down to the nearest integer (i.e. 25.76 goes to 25).
4. From your rounded average, first count up 2.5 and draw a high contrast line, then count down 2.5 and draw a low contrast line.
5. Anything above the top line is a high preference for you. Anything below the bottom line is a low preference.

If all your scores fall within the contrast lines, you have an “Integrator” profile. (See page 13.) If your scores fall only in neutral and low zones, count down one from each contrast line and redraw.
Discover your profile

The graph on the opposite page represents your level of preference for each of the four mental processes necessary for innovation. As you reflect on your scores, keep the following thoughts in mind.

There are no “good” or “bad” scores
Each of these four preferences has its own strengths and potential weaknesses. Ideators may leave a meeting invigorated while Clarifiers may walk away from the same meeting feeling frustrated. The goal is not to change your preferences, but to understand how your preferences are affecting your decision making, your perceptions, your stress levels and your interactions with others.

Watch for peaks and valleys
The high points on your graph reflect the types of thinking you most prefer. These are probably the parts of the breakthrough thinking process that energize you. The low points on your graph describe activities you may avoid, skip over or shortchange. The more extreme the peaks and valleys of your graph, the stronger your preferences. A relatively flat line graph indicates no strong bias for or against any aspect of the breakthrough thinking process.

Preference is not ability
Preference does not guarantee ability, nor does lack of preference suggest lack of ability. Developers can come up with brilliant ideas. Implementers can refine and develop ideas. Ideators can pinpoint the right problem to solve. Clarifiers can jump into action. We all engage in all aspects of the breakthrough thinking process. A high preference simply suggests that this is a part of the innovation process where you feel most comfortable and energized.

People learn and grow
Innovation skills can be learned. The brain, like a muscle, can be developed. Growing more aware of your own preferences may help you anticipate where you’ll need additional tools or more practice and where you might be of assistance to others. Learning a deliberate process such as the 4-Power Innovation Model (detailed in this booklet) is one way to improve your innovative output.
The four preferences

Clarifiers

Clarifiers like to spend time getting a clear understanding of a challenge or issue before leaping into ideas, solutions or action. They prefer to move forward cautiously, making sure the right challenge is being addressed. Clarifiers enjoy looking at the details: researching, investigating and digging for information that will help them better understand the crux of the issue. At times, Clarifiers may suffer from “analysis paralysis.”

Clarifier-at-a-glance

- Enjoys exploring challenges and opportunities
- Likes to examine the details
- Wants a clear understanding of the issue
- Prefers a methodical approach to solving problems
- May suffer from “analysis paralysis”

"Let’s not make any assumptions."

Ideators

Ideators like to generate broad concepts and ideas. Visionaries by nature, they are most comfortable understanding the big picture and stretching their imaginations. Ideators are drawn to abstract and global issues and less concerned with details. They are flexible thinkers and can see many possible solutions to the same situation. They enjoy proliferating ideas but may jump from one idea to the next, without following through.

Ideator-at-a-glance

- Likes to look at the big picture
- Enjoys toying with ideas and possibilities
- Likes to stretch his or her imagination
- Enjoys thinking in more global and abstract terms
- Takes an intuitive approach to innovation
- May overlook details

"I’ve got an idea."
Developers

Developers like to spend time analyzing potential solutions, breaking them apart and examining their strengths and weaknesses. They delight in transforming a rough idea into a finely crafted solution and thinking through the steps necessary to implement an idea. In their eagerness to analyze, compare and weigh competing solutions, Developers may get stuck trying to come up with the “perfect” solution.

Developer-at-a-glance

• Enjoy putting together workable solutions
• Likes to examine the pluses and minuses of an idea
• Likes to compare competing solutions
• Enjoys analyzing potential solutions
• Enjoys planning the steps to implement an idea
• May get stuck in developing the perfect solution

“Let’s weigh our options.”

Implementers

Implementers strive constantly to take action on ideas. They derive the most energy from bringing ideas to fruition and seeing tangible outcomes. Implementers like to get things accomplished and are constantly concerned about getting the next idea to the implementation stage. In their urgency to get the job done, Implementers may get impatient and leap to action too quickly.

Implementer-at-a-glance

• Likes to see things happen
• Enjoys giving structure to ideas so they become a reality
• Enjoys seeing ideas come to fruition
• Likes to focus on “workable” ideas and solutions
• Takes the Nike approach to innovation (i.e., “Just Do It!”)
• May leap to action too quickly

“Come on! Let’s go!”
Clarifier

The wise person doesn’t give the right answers, but poses the right questions.

*Claude Levi-Strauss*

**Making the Most of Your Thinking Preferences**

Clarifiers have a desire to know all the facts, figures, history and details of a situation. This thirst for information is essential for innovation, but it can sometimes impede forward movement. Try to recognize that it is not always possible to have all the facts, and that the effort to secure all of the facts is sometimes not worth the investment of time. Strive to become more comfortable with ambiguity.

Try not to get too caught up in historical approaches to challenges. The future is not always a direct line extension of the past. Learn to recognize when the tried-and-true must be abandoned for the new-and-improved.

Clarifiers take a straightforward and methodical approach. Recognize that breakthrough thinking does not always progress in a predictable step-by-step manner. Be open to those who are less methodical than you.

Avoid being overly cautious. Recognize that in some cases any action is better than no action. Work on your tolerance for taking risks.

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**Clarifiers are:**
- Focused
- Methodical
- Orderly
- Deliberate
- Serious
- Organized

**Give Clarifiers:**
- Order
- The facts
- An understanding of history
- Access to information
- Permission to ask questions

**Clarifiers annoy others by:**
- Asking too many questions
- Pointing out obstacles
- Identifying areas that haven’t been well thought out
- Overloading people with information
- Being too realistic

**Clarifier in action:**

Albert Einstein was once asked, if some imminent disaster threatened the world and he had one hour to address the crisis, how would he spend his time. Einstein thought for a minute and then replied, “I would spend the first 55 minutes identifying the problem and the last five minutes solving it. For the formulation of a problem is often far more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skill.”
Making the Most of Your Thinking Preferences

Some will marvel at how you use your imagination to generate so many ideas—ideas that are often out-of-the-box. But while coming up with ideas is critical to innovation, be aware that others may judge you as overly impractical and outlandish. Find people who will listen and not judge your thinking. When you are being judged, don’t allow your creative spirit to be squashed.

You think in very broad, conceptual terms. When communicating your ideas to others, recognize that you may need to offer more concrete descriptions of your ideas (i.e., how they will work, what the benefits are, what they would look like in action, etc.). If this is a challenge for you, partner with others who think in more concrete terms.

You are a highly fluent idea generator; however, the flood of your ideas can sometimes overwhelm others. Avoid the tendency to share every idea. Learn to prioritize and communicate only those ideas you believe have solid promise.

Balance your bent for new ideas with an ability to focus. Realize that you can’t chase every idea. Learn to be more selective and find strategies that help you to stick with one idea long enough to make it a reality.

The best way to have good ideas is to have lots of ideas.

Linus Pauling

Ideators are:

• Playful
• Imaginative
• Social
• Adaptable
• Flexible
• Adventurous
• Independent

Give Ideators:

• Room to be playful
• Constant stimulation
• Variety and change
• The big picture

Ideators annoy others by:

• Drawing attention to themselves
• Being impatient when others don’t get their ideas
• Offering ideas that are too off-the-wall
• Being too abstract
• Not sticking to one idea

Ideator in action:

Edwin Land was an ideator. Like all ideators, he had the big picture. In fact, he made a fortune off the big picture, because Edwin Land was the inventor of the Polaroid camera. The story goes that after taking photographs for a full day in 1943, Land’s three-year-old daughter asked why she had to wait for the film to be processed. Land considered her question, and, after much experimentation, he came up with the Polaroid camera, which made photographs that developed almost instantly.
Developers like to refine ideas and hone their thinking. This tendency to strive for perfection can move an idea from half-baked to brilliant. But it can also get in the way of moving ideas into action. Learn to live with imperfection.

Recognize that others may grow impatient with the time you invest in tweaking your ideas and plans. Be conscious of the diminishing returns of continued elaboration and analysis. Carefully watch your time management skills so that projects do not linger.

Your objective approach may strike others as impersonal and overly analytical. Be sensitive to those who take a more subjective approach. Remember that some decisions defy logic, and intuition can have a role in choosing the best course of action.

You can get so wrapped up in developing one approach that you lose sight of other worthy alternatives. Learn to create and entertain diverse options before committing to one pathway forward.

**Developer in action:**

Thomas Edison was not actually the first to invent the light bulb, but he routinely gets the credit. That’s because Edison did all the testing and retesting necessary to discover the materials for making the optimal light bulb. Then he purchased all the patents related to its development. Edison and his team tested literally thousands of different materials to find the ones that would burn brightest and longest. In fact one story goes that after 1,000 attempts to discover the perfect light bulb, Edison was asked, “What does it feel like to be a failure so late in your career?” And Edison replied, “Young man, you know little of how the world works. Where you see failure after 1,000 trials, I see that we’re that much closer to a solution.”

*Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well.*

Lord Chesterfield
Making the Most of Your Thinking Preferences

Innovation cannot happen without implementation, however, when you’ve got an idea on the brink of action (i.e., just where you want it), resist the impulse to chase off those who question the idea’s premise or point out its potential drawbacks. Their feedback may actually improve your results.

As you drive for progress, be careful not to leave others behind. Keep communication open throughout your thought process. Don’t spring ideas on people at the last moment. Implementation will be smoother if you gain early buy-in and support.

Don’t be too hasty. Remember the carpenter’s motto: “Measure twice, cut once.” Make sure that your strong desire to get things done doesn’t get in the way of getting things done right.

Be careful not to rush the innovation process. Some of the most innovative ideas require “incubation” — time for simply thinking and playing with possibilities. Committing too soon to one idea may leave other more powerful ideas undiscovered.

Implementers are:
- Persistent
- Decisive
- Determined
- Assertive
- Action-oriented

Give Implementers:
- The sense that others are moving just as quickly
- Control
- Timely responses to their ideas

Implementers annoy others by:
- Being too pushy
- Overselling their ideas
- Readily expressing their frustration when others do not move as quickly

Implementer in action:
Alexander the Great, who brought nearly the entire known world under his rule before he died at age 32, may have been among history’s greatest implementers. Like every other global aspirant in the 4th century BC, he knew the prophecy of the Gordion knot—that the person who could untangle it was fated to conquer the world. When one of his conquests actually brought him face to face with the cryptic knot, Alexander simply hefted his sword and cut it in two. You can almost imagine him looking up and saying, “Can we get on with the business of conquering the world now?”

The 3 keys to business success:
Test Fast, Fail Fast, Adjust Fast.

Tom Peters

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Your four scores in combination create your FourSight profile. The peaks and valleys of your profile reveal how you work through the breakthrough thinking process—where you get energized and where you run out of steam. If your profile has only one peak, reread the description of that preference on the previous pages. If your profile has two or more peaks, read below to learn about your tendencies as you engage in breakthrough thinking.

2-Way Combinations

High Clarifier & High Ideator = “Early Bird”

Early Birds take on a challenge with lots of energy. They enjoy finding problems and opportunities to tackle. They are quick to think up ideas and possible solutions. Early Birds at their best have a sixth sense for which problems to focus on and effortlessly come up with clever ideas and original solutions. Their potential watch out is the half-finished initiative—those really great ideas that never get off the ground. That’s because, after bringing the problem into focus and coming up with brilliant ideas, they tend to grind to a halt. Their energies fade rapidly as their brilliant idea goes through necessary stages of refinement and gets put into action. Early Birds can benefit from strategies that help them see an idea through to the end. They may do well to collaborate with Developers and Implementers. They can improve their innovative output by learning to pace themselves and save enough energy for the final stages of refining solutions and bringing them to action. Quite simply, Early Birds would be wise to keep their eye on one task before getting distracted by the next interesting opportunity.

High Clarifier & High Developer = “Analyst”

Analysts enjoy exploring problems. They have a knack for thinking critically, scrutinizing situations, evaluating information and working with details. Without a moment’s hesitation, the effective Analyst can cherry-pick a promising idea and develop it into a workable solution. Overall, their approach is very calculated and scientific. They want to be sure the right problems are being addressed. They can’t rest until raw ideas are weighed, refined and carefully worked into realistic, elegant solutions. Analysts are “serious” thinkers. They don’t care much for playing with lots of ideas or pushing their solutions into action. Not surprisingly, their potential watch out is being too dismissive of playfulness—and too scornful of the messy business of putting theory into practice. They need to remember that imagination can grease the wheels of a “stuck” problem; playfulness can improve working relations; and enacting solutions is the only way to fulfill their promise. Analysts may do well to collaborate with Ideators and Implementers. They can benefit from flexing their imaginations and developing strategies for moving ideas off the drawing board into reality.
High Clarifier & High Implementer = “Accelerator”

Accelerators enjoy identifying problems and eliminating them. The Accelerator’s approach is direct and straightforward: find a problem or opportunity, and do something about it. They just plow straight through a challenge, showing little patience for considering a wide variety of ideas or for taking the time to refine and develop those ideas. Accelerators get stuff done. At their best, they seize opportunities and eliminate problems quickly and efficiently. The watch out here is impatience. The Accelerators’ urgency to reach the finish line makes them uncomfortable with the ambiguity of generating lots of options and considering a wide range of ideas. They’d also just as soon skip over crafting ideas into elegant solutions. They just want the job done. Left to their own devices, Accelerators suffer from a tendency to run with the first idea that addresses the issue at hand. Accelerators may do well to collaborate with Ideators and Developers. They can benefit from putting the brakes on their forward momentum and opening up the challenge to new thinking and refined solutions.

High Ideator & High Developer = “Theorist”

Theorists are great at the drawing board: that is, they have great energy for playing with lots of ideas and unbound enthusiasm for weighing, refining and elaborating on the most promising of those ideas. Theorists are highly conceptual and theoretical thinkers. It could be said that they’ve never met a challenge they couldn’t resolve—at least on paper. The Theorist has a tendency to believe anything and everything is possible. If thinking could only make it so... But Theorists have trouble grounding their thinking in reality. Don’t bother them with the facts. They have little patience for examining the problem and its history. And don’t expect them to get their hands dirty with putting their plans into action. They’d rather toy with ideas and work them to perfection. The watch out for Theorists is the risk of focusing on the wrong problem and running out of gas before getting the solution on the road. Theorists may do well to collaborate with Clarifiers and Implementers. They can improve their innovative output by taking more time to explore the challenge or opportunity and by putting greater effort into carrying their ideas through to completion.

High Ideator & High Implementer = “Driver”

Drivers play with lots of possibilities, and when the spirit moves, they leap to action. They have no shortage of ideas, and when they get excited about a particular idea, they put great energy into implementing it. In the Driver’s mind, there is little time to take a breath between the birth of an exciting concept and its implementation. Around Drivers at their best, ideas seem to burst into fruition. Of course, this can happen at the expense of a more deliberate approach to assessing the challenge at hand. Drivers don’t tend to dawdle over researching and defining the problem. Nor are they very patient with analyzing and refining their ideas. The Driver’s strength is the ability to generate lots of possibilities and the confidence to march those ideas right into reality, half-baked or not. Drivers may do well to collaborate with Clarifiers and Developers who can help them to focus on the right problem and be more selective about what ideas they push forward. They can benefit from spending a little more time checking the facts and refining ideas.
High Developer & High Implementer = “Finisher”

Finishers take great pride in getting the job done. Hand them a good idea and they’ll make it better—and make it happen. They have great zest for analyzing and developing ideas, as well as putting them into action. They are most effective when presented with a problem and a promising idea. They can be very determined when it comes to moving an idea from rough plan to reality. They are quick to refine the solution and implement it. This speed, however, can come at the expense of a more deliberate approach. The Finisher tends to breeze past—and sometimes skip over—the critical early stages of the innovation process (i.e., checking the data and playing with ideas). They may overlook opportunities and novel approaches and find themselves frustrated in the face of people who insist on revisiting an overlooked piece of data or championing an alternative approach. Finishers may do well to collaborate with Clarifiers and Ideators. They can benefit from examining the situation more closely before committing to an approach, and opening the floodgates to a wider range of options before ideas are rushed to completion.

3-Way Combinations

High Clarifier, Ideator & Developer = “Hare”

Hares appear to lead the pack in the race for innovation. They are wonderful planners. They do their homework to find the right problem. They use their imaginations to explore varying approaches to the situation. They deliberately select and develop their best ideas. They know precisely what needs to be done, making them highly effective advisors. With ease and grace, the high-performing Hare brings an opportunity to the brink of action. The problem arises there on the brink. Hares may suddenly lose focus and doze off before their brilliant idea makes the leap to reality. For such a promising candidate, the only element missing from their process is the actual doing. For this reason Hares can sometimes overestimate what they can accomplish. They may do well to collaborate with Implementers who can help make their plans operational. The moral for the Hare: Don’t forget to finish the race.

High Clarifier, Ideator & Implementer = “Idea Broker”

Idea Brokers are innovation activists. They do their homework. They generate and play with lots of ideas. They quickly buy into an idea and move on it. Effective Idea Brokers know which problems and opportunities are worth pursuing. They are quick studies when it comes to thinking up and judging ideas. But the watch out is that Idea Brokers can become so enamored with an idea they have a tendency to jump straight into implementation. That’s because their energy tends to dip noticeably during the step in the breakthrough thinking process when they are called upon to develop rough ideas into workable solutions. Idea Brokers could improve their effectiveness by allowing more time for the idea’s evaluation and development. They may do well to collaborate with Developers. They would be wise to cultivate patience for developing prototypes that could be used to test and refine their best ideas before they race into action.

FourSight® Thinking Profile
High Clarifier, Developer & Implementer = “Realist”

Realists are practical, pragmatic and predictable. They like delving into problems, refining ideas and taking action. Realists, like Analysts, tend to be rational and methodical in their approach to innovation. But unlike Analysts, Realists have energy for transforming their ideas into action. They find a problem, they find a solution, and they throw their energies into making it a reality. Their challenge is to learn to allow their imaginations to take flight and to stretch for out-of-the-box approaches. Collaborating with Ideators and learning to trust their intuition may increase their range of results. Realists become more effective as they learn to stretch their thinking to consider more alternatives and possibilities. Realists may benefit from the deliberate use of innovation tools and techniques to expand their ideas.

High Ideator, Developer & Implementer = “Optimist”

The Optimists’ creative energy really picks up steam when called on to think up new ideas. They remain fully engaged and enthusiastic through subsequent stages of refining those ideas and are even able to maintain momentum into implementation. Optimists are imaginative and playful, while possessing sufficient drive to refine and implement the best ideas. Where the Optimists’ energy wanes is in the earliest stage of bringing a problem or opportunity into focus. Knowing the details may dampen their enthusiasm as they are forced to take a closer look at reality. And while ignorance can sometimes be bliss, Optimists may put a lot of energy into solving the wrong problem or chasing opportunities with low yield. Optimists may do well to collaborate with Clarifiers. Learning to spend more time collecting information and identifying the real problem or the most promising opportunity will do much to enhance their effectiveness. While Optimists are good at reacting to a situation, they can expand their repertoire by being more proactive when it comes to focusing on the right problems to solve.

4-Way Combination

Nearly Equal for All Four Preferences = “Integrator”

Integrators take a very even approach to the breakthrough thinking process with a profile that shows no particular peaks or valleys. Integrators’ energies stay rather steady as they focus on the facts, identify the challenge to address, entertain a plethora of ideas, refine those ideas and finally put them into practice. For this reason they can be very flexible and easily accommodate whatever the task requires. Given their flexibility, they can be very good team players, finding it easy to work with people who have different profiles. Given that same flexibility, Integrators must also be cautious not simply to follow others’ leads, particularly when others have strong preferences. Integrators must remember to diagnose the situation for themselves and pursue the most appropriate response.
Innovating with others

FourSight has given you a glimpse of your own strengths and potential watchouts as a breakthrough thinker. Now consider how you might collaborate more effectively with others. Answer the following questions to devise your individual plan for breakthrough innovation.

1. Who are the people you work with? What are their preferences?
2. Who do you find it easiest to collaborate with? Who do you find it most difficult to collaborate with? What factors are operating there?
3. How can you become a more effective breakthrough thinker?
4. What do you need to keep in mind to make it easier for others to collaborate with you?
5. Who would be good to collaborate with on a project that called on your strengths? Who would be good to collaborate with on a project that leaned on your weak points?
6. With whom do you find it easiest to share your ideas? With whom do you have difficulty communicating? What strategies can you use to overcome that?
7. What do you need to keep in mind when managing others?
8. What are the preferences of the people you admire? What can you learn from them?

4-Power Innovation

In the face of challenge, tap all four thinking modes to maximize your results. Use 4-Power Innovation to help you focus your energies and boost performance. Follow the 4-Power Innovation model. Go where the task requires you to be, not where your preferences would dictate.

Successful group innovation relies on members with a wide range of creative preferences. Using the diagram above and the accompanying process on the following pages, you can see how different types can move an idea along from "birth" to implementation. This process is a good method for effecting creative solutions.
Be conscious to:

• Investigate the situation from all angles by asking the 5W’s and an H (i.e., the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How of the situation).
• Make sure you understand the history and background information.
• Use the key data to pull the issue into focus.
• Pinpoint the best opportunity or challenge to address.
• Phrase the challenge as an open-ended question that invites solutions (for example, “In what ways might we ...”).

Move on when you have pinpointed the key issue to address. Ideate next.
Ideate
Start here when you clearly understand the challenge and need ideas to address it.

Be conscious to:

- Turn off the voice of “the critic” in your mind and let the ideas flow.
- Rather than go for one perfect idea, consider lots of possibilities. (Generating lots of ideas is the best way to get a few great ones.)
- List all the obvious ideas first, then stretch for wild and unusual ones.
- Go for at least 20 ideas.
- Look at the issue from a new angle: what might you substitute, combine, modify, eliminate?
- Pick a random image or object and ask yourself, “When I look at this, what ideas do I get for solving my challenge?”
- Build on other ideas.

Move on when you have a promising idea that you want to transform into a workable solution. Develop next.
Develop

Start here when you need to turn a rough idea into a refined, robust solution.

Be conscious to:

• Articulate what you like about the idea.
• Raise your concerns about the idea, phrased as open-ended questions that invite solutions (i.e., “How might...?”).
• Develop ways to overcome the main concerns.
• Develop criteria for success. Rate competing solutions against them.
• Modify solutions, as necessary, to better meet the criteria for success.
• Identify key sources that will assist and resist implementation.
• With these assisters and resisters in mind, create an action plan that details who does what by when.

Move on when you have developed a fully fleshed out solution. Implement next.
Be conscious to:

• Get into action, realizing that you will learn as you go.
• Apply the Tom Peters motto: “Test fast. Fail fast. Adjust fast.”
• Keep a bias for action.
• Ask: What’s working well? What should we change or do differently? What are we learning?
• Take action on something within 24 hours.

Monitor progress and be prepared to cycle back into other phases of the breakthrough thinking process.
Building better Teams

Breakthrough thinking and innovation happen on high-performing teams. Use FourSight to make them happen more often and more effectively. Read the following tips to take your team to the next level.

**Leverage differences for better results**

Special project teams, work groups, even married couples have to work together to solve problems and meet challenges. High-performing teams get more done than any single person could. But not all teams are high-performing. Some teams find solving problems collectively to be frustrating and unproductive. While one person is ready to move forward with a solution, another may be clamoring for more information. In many cases, the underlying cause of these differences is revealed by FourSight preferences. FourSight has helped teams turn areas of stress into areas of opportunity and high performance.

**Two points to remember**

When building a team based on FourSight preferences, keep two caveats in mind. First, your initial selection of team members should be based on ability, not preference. Once you establish skill level, then FourSight preferences can offer a valuable lens. Second, diversity can come hand-in-hand with miscommunication. Therefore, it is absolutely critical for a team which is made up of diverse FourSight preferences to honor and respect differences. Without respect, the team can easily get bogged down in personality clashes.

**Diversify for long-term success**

Some psychological research has shown that diversity in teams enhances performance. As a general rule, when building a team that will endure and face complex challenges, populate it with people who have diverse talents and diverse FourSight preferences. A mix of Clarifiers, Ideators, Developers and Implementers will better manage the full spectrum of the innovation process. Diversity will ensure a balance of perspectives and energy for a variety of team activities.

**Homogeneity for short-term results**

However, when building a team for a specific, straightforward and short-term assignment, you may be wise to match the FourSight preferences of the team to the task at hand. For example, when choosing among a pool of qualified candidates, a team leader charged with generating new product ideas might favor Ideators. A team leader charged with carrying out a specific activity might favor Implementers.

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**True Story: From high stress to high performance**

Partners in a small start-up firm were locking horns. One (a high Implementer) criticized her colleague saying, “You’re always complaining but never doing anything about it.” He (a high Clarifier) retorted, “You run around here like a chicken with its head cut off.” After taking FourSight, the partners began to see things differently. She suddenly heard her colleague’s “complaining” as an ability to notice and isolate problems. She started using his knack for clarifying to help her focus energy on relevant issues. He, in turn, began to appreciate her ability to put his insights into action.

**Moral:**

Because no one preference is intrinsically better or worse, understanding your own and others’ preferences often leads to more generous listening, more patience, less stress, greater appreciation and higher performance.
Creating a Team Profile

Knowing the collective preferences of your team can help you anticipate where, in the breakthrough thinking process, the group may need to be reined in or spurred on. Create a team profile by tallying the total number of high and low preferences for each member of the group. See sample below:

<table>
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<th>Number of team members</th>
<th>15</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of integrators</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Preference</th>
<th>Low Preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarifier</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideator</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementer</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember, when working with other preferences:

**Give Clarifiers...**
- Order
- The facts
- An understanding of history
- Access to information
- Permission to ask questions

**Give Ideators...**
- Room to be playful
- Constant stimulation
- Variety and change
- The big picture

**Give Developers...**
- Time to consider the options
- Time to evaluate
- Time to develop ideas

**Give Implementers...**
- The sense that others are moving just as quickly
- A sense of control
- Timely responses to their ideas

True Story: Detecting blind spots

As part of a big innovation initiative, a division of a large, long-established company got feedback on their overall FourSight preferences. Team leaders were assembled in a workshop to discuss possible implications and actions they could take to advance the organization’s push for highly original, new ideas. When the leaders were asked to group themselves by preference, one fellow looked around the room and said, “Wow! Would you look at that?! Here we are trying to get this division to come up with really novel, out-of-the-box ideas, but none of the people we recognized this year for special commendation were Ideators!” While the division was espousing the need for new ideas, Ideator behaviors were not being rewarded or appreciated.

Moral:
Recognizing a blind spot is an opportunity to put explicit energy into filling the gap. Team strategies can include:
- deliberately recognizing the contributions of all teammates
- getting team training in the innovation process
- finding a process facilitator
- bringing on a new teammate to balance the team,
- using the 4-Power approach to ensure challenges are viewed from different lenses.
In the early 1990s, Gerard J. Puccio, Ph.D., a professor at the International Center for Studies in Creativity, began to investigate the correlation between individual behavior and creative-problem-solving preference. Over the next ten years, Dr. Puccio worked with a team of researchers, putting his theory through rigorous testing and validation studies. The result is the FourSight Profile, an innovative way to measure people’s preferences for the essential components of the innovation process. Now chairman of the Department of Creativity Studies at SUNY College, Buffalo and director of the International Center for Studies in Creativity, Puccio heads up the program, which offers the world’s only Master of Science degree in Creativity and Change Leadership. His ongoing research continues to shed light on the critical interplay of people and the processes they use to achieve breakthrough thinking. To learn more about the Center, visit their website at www.buffalostate.edu/creativity