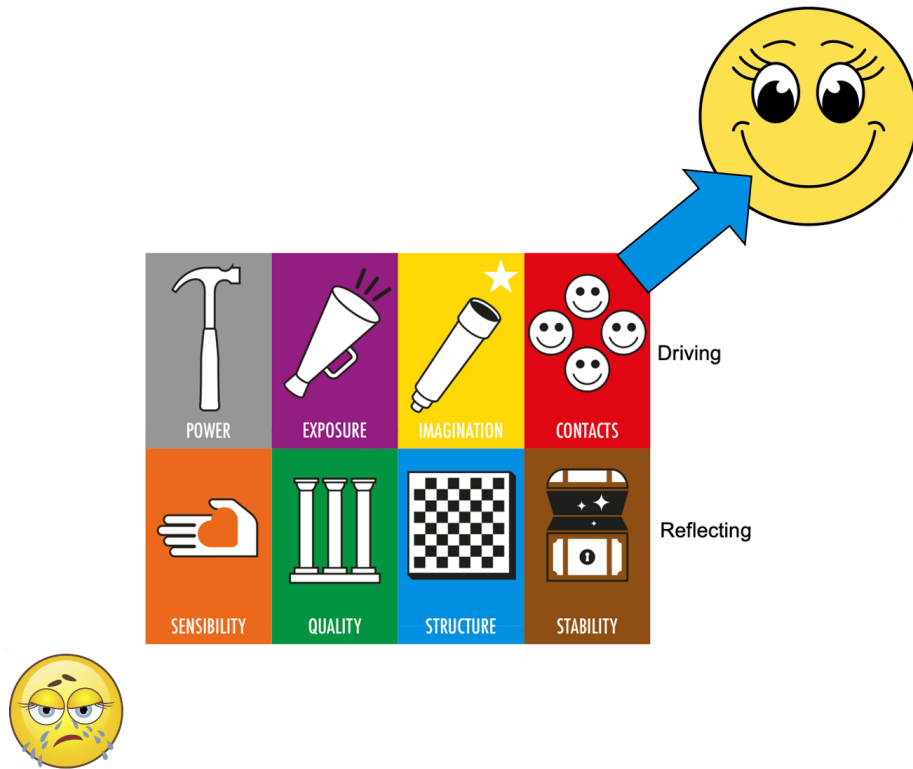




HumanGuide®



**Most advice is given in vain!**

How to avoid?

*Rolf Kenmo ...*

XX...



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## Most advice is given in vain – How to avoid?

### Why this problem?

There are many causes. The most common is that people think that everyone is a clone to them... This means that they give advice that suit themselves. Hmm. However, if you ask people, if they have the opinion that human beings differ, then most people agree. Of course there are behaviours, etc that people have in common, but there are no “copies”. Every single person is unique in some way.

One area where there are crucial differences is regarding the personality – the drives or factors as we call it below, where we bring up the support you can get by learning the personality theory Eight boxes, which is the core of the HumanGuide concepts.

Another cause is that people give advice in vain is that the receiving person isn't aware of the problem with his/her behaviour or the potential to develop. Or doesn't like to accept it – so, why bother? This means that you need at first to get an accept that there is a problem AND that X like to handle that in some way. Otherwise, if you like to help, then you only lose energy and can be disappointed by no improvement. How to handle this? You need to help the other person to understand the problem/possibility and its consequences. And accept it!

After you have got accept from X that there is a need for change/development and that X wants to do something to make a successful change, then you have new obstacles for accomplishing the objective. Basically it is a matter of fully understanding what you can gain and what you must do, i.e. what is the “price” you must pay?

Attitudes matters too! Professor Carol Dweck has written the book **Mindset** based on her research. She divides people in these categories

- *Fixed mindset*, i.e. I am like this. Dot! Then it is difficult to create motivation for change and development. Moreover, they are afraid of doing something, where they are close to their maximum capacity in an area. The threat is – could I fail?
- *Growth mindset*, i.e. these people are interested in personal development, if they found it interesting. They are also aware that no one can be very good, when they do something for the first time, so they aren't afraid to fail

The consultant Graham Williams, who has written the book **Crossing Your Rubicon**, has instead divided people in three categories, when it comes to changing/developing their behaviour in some way

- *Can't do it*, i.e. they have a lack of self-confidence, so they need to get support to increase it. Remember to give praise when X improves. Don't compare with your capacity – instead notice the progress!
- *Won't do it*, i.e. these people have a big need of control, so they are sceptical, when someone else comes with proposals. How to handle? Normally the best strategy is to tell that you will stop giving X advice, because they don't apply any of them
- *Can do it*, i.e. these people are openminded as the people with Growth mindset



There are of course more obstacles. One crucial is values and beliefs. If the change/development is against X' values or beliefs, then you need to handle that at first.

Similar with values and beliefs is culture differences. Of course if you do something uncommon in a culture, then it could create objections. That could be a big challenge.

Anyhow in the rest of this paper we only focus on the personality theory Eight boxes, which contains eight basic dimensions – the drives/factors . This means that there will be a description and advices per factor. What is a typical reaction on a change need/proposal and what is a good strategy for supporting this change/development?

## **The personality theory Eight boxes and change**

### **The Eight boxes theory**









We all know that people are different. Unfortunately, we often forget it, when we give advice, for example. We often give advice that suit ourselves. A similar mistake we make, when we recruit, that we often recruit candidates, who act as ourselves - no matter what kind of job... It gives security. People with low self-esteem are often tempted to do so. On the other hand, those with a good self-esteem see it as more enriching with diversity. One should of course recruit according to the requirements of the job - not that diversity is good in itself.

The driving force for how people act depends on their personality and values as well as self-esteem. Therefore, it may be practical to use a personality theory to give better advice, because they can be more relevant and successful. There are many such theories. I will use the underlying personality theory for the HumanGuide test. The personality theory is called Eight boxes and is a simplification of L Szondi's (1893-1986) personality theory. The purpose of simplification is that a layman should be able to quickly learn it, as a distinct language to describe the personality. Then you can benefit from it in many ways. Not only to select a suitable candidate in recruiting, also for personal development, team development, conflict management, etc. The theory also has a strong advantage compared to many other theories. It consists of eight basic dimensions (factors), so the test result is more nuanced compared to, for example, DISC (four dimensions) and similar, as well as tests based on the Five Factor model (five dimensions) .



Below are explanations of the eight dimensions of the theory. All this information and more can be found in the web app [your.humanguide.se](http://your.humanguide.se), when you have done a test and have got a login. The purpose of the symbols and colours is to learn more quickly to use the theory, i.e. that personality theory should also be easier to use for lay people...

Further information on the website [humanguide.com](http://humanguide.com).

Factor	Symbol	Characteristics
Sensibility		Perceptive, considerate, careful, accommodating, complaisant, sensual, diplomatic, obliging, likes closeness
Power		Energetic, speedy, driving, eager, competitive, strong, active, result-orientated, straightforward, fearless
Quality		Reliable, quality-conscious, conscientious, supportive, persevering, comprehensive, thorough, unselfish, caring, dutiful
Exposure		Spontaneous, charming, witty, proud, likes attention, trendy, charismatic, colourful, dramatic, ready-witted
Structure		Orderly, methodical, likes planning, neutral, distinct, correct, realistic, objective, disciplined, forethoughtful
Imagination		Imaginative, inventive, improvises easily, clever, likes to experiment, ingenious, development-orientated, freedom-orientated, visionary, artistic
Stability		Stable, economical, wary, creature of habit, thrifty, down-to-earth, tradition-bound, conservative, cautious
Contacts		Outgoing, sociable, open-hearted, easy-going, playful, humorous, food-loving, contact-orientated, optimistic, cheerful

## Driving and reflecting factors

Personality theory consists of two kinds of factors: Driving and reflecting.



The driving ones are more active and take more initiative. The reflecting ones are more thoughtful before doing anything. The result is that if someone has many driving factors with a high value, then that person will of course be very driving. And in a similar way, it will be for the reflecting ones.

When it comes to changes, then people with most driving factors will act, if they have the motivation. To increase the motivation you can be rather “pushy”, but of course in a smart way – adopt to the personality. Reflecting people can be slower to act, so there you need to be consistent and push in a nice way...

When something drastic, such as a pandemic, occurs, the driving ones become very frustrated and tend to somehow come up with an attack on the obstacles. On the other hand, those with reflective factors can become very obstacle-fixed and thus passive.

In the following for each factor there will be a description of the reaction on a behaviour problem/challenge and need to change. There will also be presented normally good strategies for a successful change regarding a certain factor. However, remember what is said above regarding change obstacles. Remember also that no one consists only of one factor. To simplify this paper the factors are handled separately, but when you give advice, then you need to consider all the eight factors in a person’s personality. However, the strongest factor (the corefactor) and the second strongest factor (the co-factor) influence most a person’s behaviour and – of course – also the factor with the lowest value.



## General principles for coaching that works

Today coaching is very popular, but it isn't always so successful as it could be. Graham Williams, who is mentioned above, has participated in a study of the result. Successful results means that there are clear changes to the better e.g. someone can do something well, which they couldn't before. In the study, where Graham was involved, they found that there was a big difference between coaching of athletes compared with coaching of managers in business. The athletes had a clear objective for their coaching. For the manager, especially at big companies, the HR department often handled the coaching programs, and they were involved in the decision-making on who should participate. This meant that the individual wasn't always motivated, but it wasn't so smart to reject a participation proposal, because it could damage the manager's personal image.

This means that it is crucial to start with getting a clear commitment from the person, who should get coaching, that X wants it. That the objective is clear, and that X has accepted to do the "homework".

In the start of the coaching it is important to know the status for X, so the coach knows from where X should develop. Another good principle is that you figure out relevant steps for X' development. So step by step it will be successful. Of course in general, give praise often, but be also straight-forward when something must be approved.

A good strategy for a hard change in behaviours is to use the corefactor or the co-factor as a support for the change. E.g. I must do some tasks, which are typically *Stability*, tasks, which is my lowest factor, i.e. I don't like to do these tasks. However, my corefactor is *Imagination*, so therefore I use *Imagination* to figure out creative ways to do these tasks. I can do them in a funny way, supported by music, measuring the time, because some don't take so long time to do, etc.

It is also good to write some type of log for X development. As the doctor has a journal. The log is very useful for follow-up.

Of course here it could be a lot of good principles, but here we focus only these ones. Hmm. One at last. It is better that X summarizes the result of the meetings instead of the coach! Think of it and you understand why...

## Sensibility – change & advice

If X has a high value for this factor, then X is highly sensitive. This means that X takes in much more through all X' senses compared to others. Therefore, it is easy for the highly sensitive person to become overstimulated. I've read about someone of them, who uses headphones at times to find peace - peace of mind. Meditation and relaxation are also good methods. Exercise and physical activity provide well-being and relaxation, as a result.

A typical problem area for *Sensibility* people is that they can care too much about other people. They forget themselves. They need to think about themselves too. Is my behaviour sustainable?



When X has a strong need for *Sensibility*, then X can be very aware of the need to make a behavioural change.

When the change only influences X, then it is easier for them to act, because when X has a high value on *Sensibility*, then X doesn't like to trouble others, and especially not to create conflicts. This makes it more difficult for X to take initiatives, but if someone else wants help, X are happy to stand up. By the way X can get support from a Chinese proverb to leaders: In glorious times, you should preferably wear silk gloves. In a crisis, it is possible to use hard gloves... In addition, you can never be loved by everyone. If X, has it as an ambition, it will be easy to lose himself/herself. It is wise to protect the ego...

**Coaching principles:** Use many questions. Avoid statements and your opinion. Give advice in a nice and caring way, because *Sensibility* can be afraid by the obstacles, if they need to do a "big" step - especially if someone will not like the change. Check what *Sensibility* likes to do. Any plan?

**Remarks:** Help *Sensibility* with focus via an agenda and the need of results. Avoid being directive - better to be non-directive by using questions. Follow-up.

*Sensibility* doesn't like when you use a tuff or very result-oriented style. Be nice;-)

## Power – change & advice

When it comes to *Power*, they actually like to have obstacles, because it is such a great reward to get past them;-) The biggest risk is probably that *Power* does something ill-considered. Then it can be good to also have *Structure*, who likes to think before they act;-)

The biggest problem for *Power* is probably a problem, which they are not always aware of. They can be speeded up. Because they want to accomplish so much, it becomes easy for them to get a large workload. It comes gradually, so the environment usually notices it faster than the *Power*-person. Therefore, it can be smart to "program" X' breaks, because during the break it is easier to realise that you are speeded. Others may notice it when *Power* falls asleep in front of the TV.

*Power* can be motivated when the change supports them to reach better performance.

**Coaching principles:** Use many questions. Avoid statements and your opinion. *Power* likes to figure out things of their own. Check what *Power* likes to do. Any plan?

**Remarks:** Be clear, firm, and brave, if relevant.

*Power* doesn't like when you act long-winded or avoid talking about delicate issues.

## Quality – change & advice

*Quality* likes to improve. However, sometimes or often they can act better than “good enough”. They must consider – what is a relevant ambition level in just this case?



They have a similar problem as *Power*, i.e. they easily get too much workload. In addition, they have difficulty giving up, possibly easiest if they become ill... They must learn to make reasonable demands on themselves and realize that it is a human right to rest. They can't help anyone if they run out of themselves. Then they also oppose their ideal that people should help each other. If they have run out of themselves, they will be a burden for others ...

For *Quality*, there is a paradox. They can get advice from others that they should not have been given a duty on the brain. It is unreasonable that they strive to help everything and everyone. The paradox, however, is that they get energy from helping others. Therefore, they must learn to recognize the symptoms – *now* there is a risk of crossing the line to exhaustion, for example that they forget things. If they care about their dreams, then they can think about how they can be interpreted. For example, if they often dream that they are having a hard time, then they often have it – for real!

At the same time, of course, people with *Quality* can be pillars in society. Many of them apply for careers in care and rescue. Others should be grateful for that, but it is important that *Quality* people also take care of their recovery.

**Coaching principles:** Use many questions. Avoid statements and to give your opinion. However, *Quality* has - as said - no problem with getting advice, because they like to improve. Check what *Quality* likes to do. Any plan?

**Remarks:** Help *Quality* with focus via an agenda and the need of results. Avoid being directive - better to be non-directive by using questions. Follow-up.

*Quality* doesn't like when the environment isn't fair and have no good ethics. They can accept bad environment for a long time and be loyal, BUT when they don't accept longer, then they are fed up. If possible, then they will quit. Therefore, it is important to be aware of their opinions all the time, so you can handle in time. When it is too late, then they have very difficult to forgive.

## Exposure – change & advice

*Exposure* isn't so keen of change, because *Exposure* doesn't like to fail in front of their audience. Note many actors before they enter the stage... They have to increase their self-esteem, so the "audience" opinion isn't so crucial, and they can act more independent.

People with *Exposure* like to be in the centre. Therefore, they are very aware of what applies in society – also just now! For safety's sake, they can follow what is the common opinion today. Sometimes too obvious because they want to give a good impression. The opposite version also exists - those that they are more rebellious. Often those who have low on *Structure* (difficult to be disciplined) and high on *Imagination* (want to be free). Note e.g. Mr Trump, who is an extreme example...

One problem with *Exposure* is that they can be very spontaneous. X need to think before they act when you are surrounded by other people... But this isn't so easy for *Exposure*



**Coaching principles:** Use many questions. Avoid statements and to give your opinion. Investigate what *Exposure* likes to do. Any plan?

**Remarks:** Help *Exposure* with focus via an agenda. Avoid being directive - better to be non-directive by using questions. Follow-up.

*Exposure* doesn't like when they get too little attention. It is important that the environment is professional. Give them praise.

## Structure – change & advice

*Structure* can be afraid of change because they lose control... To decrease their control needs they can ask themselves the question: What is the worst, which can happen?

*Structure* has a very big advantage compared to most people, because they are good at self-discipline, so if they have decided to do something, then they do! They can even be of great help to others. Both in situations to monitor the action and to plan how one should act in different situations. In the latter case, they can be seen as good risk analysts. If X also has *Imagination*, then the *Structure* factor will come up with suggestions for solutions for different risks. The solutions should then – of course – be reviewed by *Structure* ;-)

**Coaching principles:** Use many questions. Avoid statements and your opinion. Here is the "question style" very important, i.e. put the questions, so you help *Structure* to easier accept the consequences. Check what *Structure* likes to do. Any plan?

**Remarks:** Help *Structure* with the need of results and action. Avoid being directive - better to be non-directive by using questions. Follow-up.

*Structure* doesn't like, when the environment isn't in order and isn't well-structured and neither have a good planning

## Imagination – change & advice

*Imagination* is rather stimulated by problems and change. No...yes, not changes who restrict their freedom or mean that they must do something banal on repetition, such as washing their hands, etc. For example, they benefit from electric toothbrush, which marks the brushing time by 4 x 30 seconds, it increases the chance that the user brushes long enough, but also that it does not become too much;-)

Another problem for *Imagination* is that they easily get into the things they like, and then there is the risk that they forget the restrictions... Their attitude meant that they could be interested in too many things at the same time. Then they need to improve their objectives, so it is easier to say No. They go for the best things for them.

*Imagination* likes to experiment, which makes it good, if they themselves also have the strength *Structure* or that someone in the close circle can supplement with it. This increases the chance that it works and that it doesn't fail.



Finally, there is a very important aspect for creative people. Paranoia. Hmm? Well, the originator of the basic personality theory behind the HumanGuide test, Szondi, was a doctor who was researching in genetics. In his studies, he discovered an unusual mental illness in the family for both the woman and the man in a married couple. He researched further and found several such cases. Finally, this led to a dream, where he saw a pattern of mental illnesses. He also realized that a mental illness can be seen as an extreme position of something that is "normal". So the risk of getting a certain mental illness is highest for the factor that has the highest value for a person, i.e. this human need could be exaggerated. Unfortunately, not many people in the world have paid attention to Szondi's theory, so they only discover parts of his structure for the personality drives... Other research has concluded that geniuses may have mental problems (e.g. *Imagination* ).

Back to the risk of paranoia. If someone has a very high value for *Imagination* in the test, then of course there is the risk that from time-to-time X can get a little light paranoia, i.e. X imagines things that are not true. A clear example is that someone is very hypochondriac. This is especially true for someone, who also has a high value also for *Sensibility* and a low value for *Structure*. I once read about a film producer, who had a hard time collaborating with the director. Why? Well, on Monday he had a blood clot in his leg, on Tuesday kidney cancer, on Wednesday ALS, etc...

What then does the risk of a little paranoia mean? Well, the creative person may have difficulty trusting others. X can therefore consciously test important people in the environment: "Is this person loyal to me?"

**Coaching principles:** Use many questions. Avoid statements and to give your opinion. *Imagination* likes specially to figure out things of their own. Check what *Imagination* likes to do. Any plan?

**Remarks:** Help *Imagination* with focus via an agenda. Avoid being directive - better to be non-directive by using questions. Be open-minded for *Imagination*. With assistance of *Imagination* you can develop something smart and unexpected;-) Follow-up!

*Imagination* doesn't like borders and rules. Be open-minded as a coach.

## Stability – change & advice

*Stability* thinks that change is very unpleasant, because they always strive for security. They protect themselves in many ways. *Stability* likes to have money in the bank just in case... Etc. They can gain as *Structure* to use the question: What is the worst, which can happen?

If a crisis then occurs, despite all the fences, well, then it will be extra unpleasant, but easier to motivate to act in some way.

*Stability* has easy to follow instructions. They can even add their own. If they should receive relief, it is important, for example, to receive information from people they trust. That the information is concrete and clear. That you keep a common thread in communication. That you keep what you promise, e.g. that it is always information at 2 pm on Tuesdays. Obstacles are clearly communicated.



**Coaching principles:** Use many questions. Avoid statements and your opinion. Here is the "question style" very important, because then you help *Stability* to easier accept the consequences. Check what *Stability* likes to do. Any plan?

**Remarks:** Help *Stability* with the need of results and action. Avoid being directive - better to be non-directive by using questions. It can be appreciated with advice, so v knows what you prefer. Follow-up.

*Stability* doesn't like when the environment isn't traditional and secure.

## Contacts – change & advice

*Contacts* is easiest to motivate the change when it is relevant for crucial parts of their network. Changes, which improves cooperation and teamwork get the highest priority, because *Contacts* likes being together with other people. *Contacts* likes talking, but sometimes it could be too much.

Just like *Sensibility* *Contacts* want to be in the company of others. As much as possible. However, *Sensibility* also wants closeness to others and especially to their close relationships.

*Contacts* likes specially to enjoy life. To have a good time with other people, but sometimes it is important to also accept sorrow. To be serious, even if it could be OK joking also when something bad has happen. However, it is important to be sensitive to the situation...

For *Contacts*, it can be a great challenge to have sufficient discipline, so they don't give in to their impulses when they get great abstinence of e.g. food... Compare with e.g. longing after sweets ...

**Coaching principles:** Use many questions. Avoid statements and to give your opinion. Check what *Contacts* likes to do.

**Remarks:** Help *Contacts* with focus via an agenda and the need of results. Avoid being directive - better to be non-directive by using questions. Follow-up.

*Contacts* doesn't like when it is boring. Be easy-going when coaching them;-)

## What can be done in general to support good coaching?

A generally good strategy is to take stock of X strengths (the factors with a high value) and reflect on how they can strengthen each other. For example, if someone has *Sensibility*, as their strongest strength (corefactor) and *Power*, as their second strongest (co-factor). Then you have to "tell" X' *Sensibility* not to be too considerate and take sensible initiatives with the *Power* factor.



NOTE! In the webapp your.humanguide.se there are a lot of supportive personality knowledge for the theory Eight boxes.

### **And now what ...**

Remember to be coaching X, so X be successful as often as possible, because it increases motivation. Success feed success! This means that you have to carefully think of the next step, so it isn't too tuff, but of course not too easy either – even if that could be good in the start of the coaching process.

Good luck!

Rolf