

How Your Personality Influences the Way You Communicate Change

Better understand your natural tendencies so you can communicate more effectively with your team.

CARLY FROM 16PERSONALITIES

AUG 30



Communicating Change for Leaders of Every Personality Type

Every leader has a distinct way of communicating change, shaped in part by their personality. Let's explore how each of the 16 personality types approaches change communication, highlighting their natural strengths and potential pitfalls. This will help you better recognize your own tendencies and adapt your approach to lead your team more effectively through transitions.

Analysts (INTJ | INTP | ENTJ | ENTP)

These sharply intellectual leaders prize innovation and logic in the change process.

INTJ (Architect) Leaders

INTJs tend to process information and develop solutions internally, often working through change scenarios in their own minds without much external input. Their natural approach is to say little, preferring to present only the final, polished solution. But this internal processing can leave their team feeling out of the loop and unprepared when they have fully-formed solutions dropped on them with little context or explanation. INTJ leaders need to remember that while they're comfortable with rapid, internal problem-solving, their team needs to be brought along on the change journey. By sharing their thought process and involving others in the development of solutions, they'll improve understanding and build trust and buy-in for their innovative change strategies.

Your communication mantra: "Verbalize the journey."

INTP (Logician) Leaders

INTPs generally prefer to process new information and scenarios internally, holding back on communicating their thoughts until they fully understand the change themselves. When they do present ideas, INTPs favor a thought-provoking approach that encourages critical thinking.

Rather than providing direct instructions, they pose questions and present multiple angles, inviting their team to explore the change intellectually. This style can spark innovation and deep understanding. However, it may also leave their team feeling directionless or overwhelmed. Some team members may crave more concrete guidance or struggle with the open-ended nature of INTP communication. INTP leaders should strive to balance intellectual exploration with clear direction, first providing a framework before encouraging analytical thinking.

Your communication mantra: “Clarify, then explore.”

ENTJ (Commander) Leaders

ENTJs are wonderful at coming up against a murky situation – like workplace change – and charting a clear course forward. They’ll then communicate that course of action to their team in a direct, no-nonsense way. But not everyone can keep up with ENTJs’ quick thinking and decision making, and they aren’t likely to slow down or explain their reasoning, either. This can potentially alienate team members who need more time to understand and adapt. ENTJ leaders can work on balancing their natural commanding style with patience and inclusivity, remembering to slow down and consciously articulate their thought process. This will ensure their entire team is on board for the change journey.

Your communication mantra: “Pace and explain.”

ENTP (Debater) Leaders

ENTPs naturally communicate their thoughts in a way that invites others into their thinking process, creating an inclusive brainstorming environment during times of workplace change. They want to work with their team to find solutions to the challenges associated with change, and welcome opposing ideas – as long as those ideas are accompanied by logical, well-reasoned arguments. As a result, they might dismiss valuable input from team members who struggle to articulate their thoughts with the same quick logic. ENTP leaders should remember that not everyone processes information or expresses ideas in the same way they do. By consciously pausing to truly hear and consider others’ perspectives, ENTPs can foster a more inclusive change process that benefits from diverse viewpoints.

Your communication mantra: “Listen, then debate.”

Diplomats (INFJ | INFP | ENFJ | ENFP)

These empathetic and idealistic leaders focus on people and values when navigating change.

INFJ (Advocate) Leaders

Highly attuned to the feelings of others, INFJs tend to prioritize the human element when talking about change. They value collaboration and welcome diverse perspectives and experiences from team members, wanting to co-create the way the team adapts to change. Although they *want* input from the team, they may struggle if that input starts to feel like criticism. They tend to take pushback or questioning of their vision personally, and may become defensive or withdraw from the conversation. INFJ leaders should remember that critique of their plans isn't an attack on their values or leadership. By reframing criticism as a tool for improving their ideas, INFJs can lead change that is both inspiring and robust.

Your communication mantra: “Feedback fuels vision.”

INFP (Mediator) Leaders

INFPs process change deeply and internally, taking time to reflect on how transitions align with their values and those of their team. They are genuinely concerned for each team member's well-being during change, and will communicate about change in a gentle, supportive, and understanding manner. However, they can become so focused on maintaining harmony that they avoid necessary conflicts or difficult conversations that come with change – like delivering hard truths or pushing for accountability from their team. INFP leaders should remember that effective change sometimes requires addressing uncomfortable realities. By coupling their supportive nature with gentle but consistent encouragement toward change goals, INFPs can lead transitions that are both compassionate and effective.

Your communication mantra: “Nurture, then nudge.”

ENFJ (Protagonist) Leaders

ENFJs naturally think out loud, processing information through discussion and interaction with others. They tend to communicate about change early and often, involving their team in the thought process from the get-go. ENFJs are quite good at painting a compelling vision of the future, then rallying their team around that. However, in their excitement, they might overlook alternative perspectives and inadvertently pressure team members to conform to their vision or expectations. ENFJ leaders should remember that not everyone will

immediately share their enthusiasm or see the change in the same light. By coupling their motivational approach with genuine curiosity about their team's thoughts and feelings, ENFJs can lead change that is both exciting and inclusive.

Your communication mantra: “Inspire, then inquire.”

ENFP (Campaigner) Leaders

ENFPs tend to communicate about change in a vibrant, energetic way that gets others excited. They often jump from one possibility to another, generating numerous ideas and potential scenarios and sharing them rapidly with their team in a brainstorm-like fashion. But this tendency can also overwhelm the team and leave them feeling confused about the actual direction of change, if all they hear is a constant stream of new ideas and possibilities and no clarity on which ones to pursue. ENFP leaders should remember that while sharing ideas is inspiring, clarity about the chosen path is equally important. By coupling their enthusiastic idea-sharing with clear statements about which path they're committing to, ENFPs can lead change that is both exciting and sustainable.

Your communication mantra: “Focus the hype”

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Sentinels (ISTJ | ISFJ | ESTJ | ESFJ)

These practical and dutiful leaders focus on maintaining order during uncertainty.

ISTJ (Logistician) Leaders

ISTJs convey information about change in a clear, concise, and factual manner. They're very good at breaking down complex change processes into step-by-step instructions, providing their team with a detailed roadmap. But they tend to focus solely on the practical aspects of change. They might assume that presenting the facts and logical reasons for change is sufficient, not realizing that some team members need more emotional engagement or a broader, inspirational vision. ISTJ leaders should remember that effective change communication often requires both practical details and motivational elements. By coupling their clear, detailed instructions with brief explanations of the bigger picture and potential

positive outcomes, ISTJs can lead change that is both well-organized and meaningful to their team.

Your communication mantra: “Inform, then inspire.”

ISFJ (Defender) Leaders

ISFJs approach change communication with careful preparation and a focus on supporting their team – they may even script out what they’ll say in advance. They tend to anticipate potential questions and concerns, and might hold back on sharing information until they feel confident they can address all possible inquiries. This approach ensures clarity, but it also means ISFJs can become flustered when faced with unexpected questions or scenarios they haven’t prepared for. Also, when circumstances force them to alter previously communicated plans, they may feel like they are cracking the careful trust they’ve built with their team. ISFJ leaders should strive to balance their meticulous planning with an openness to improvise when necessary – leaning on their team to do so, when appropriate. This way, they can lead change with both reliability and agility.

Your communication mantra: “Prepare, then adapt.”

ESTJ (Executive) Leaders

ESTJs have a take-charge attitude, communicating decisions around change quickly and decisively to their team. Their communication style is direct, clear, and action-oriented, leaving little room for ambiguity. This makes them very good at delivering concise, practical instructions about how to implement changes, but it also means they may overlook the value of collaborative input. ESTJs may struggle to create space for team members to voice concerns or contribute ideas, potentially missing out on valuable insights – and reducing buy-in. ESTJ leaders should strive to balance their decisive communication style with more inclusive messaging that encourages team participation. By coupling their clear directives with active solicitation of feedback and ideas, ESTJs can lead change that is both efficient and enriched by their team’s diverse perspectives.

Your communication mantra: “Direct, then invite.”

ESFJ (Consul) Leaders

ESFJs navigate change through collaborative communication, constantly seeking team alignment. They might even think aloud and encourage team discussion to work through transitions. Their approach is twofold: they provide structured, step-by-step plans for change implementation while simultaneously working to build consensus. But it's this strong desire for harmony that becomes their main communication pitfall. When faced with disagreement or challenges from team members, ESFJs tend to shy away from conflict, potentially leaving crucial concerns unaddressed. This avoidance can lead to superficial agreement that masks underlying resistance to change. By first building team unity and then gently but firmly addressing areas of disagreement, ESFJ leaders can drive change that is both harmonious and genuinely embraced by their team.

Your communication mantra: “Unite, then resolve.”

Explorers (ISTP | ISFP | ESTP | ESFP)

These adaptable and action-oriented leaders quickly adjust their approach as situations evolve.

ISTP (Virtuoso) Leaders

ISTPs prefer action over words, often working through change challenges internally before sharing with their team. When ISTPs do communicate, it's direct and straightforward, free from elaboration or emotional context. They excel at providing clear, no-nonsense instructions once they've solved a problem. However, they have a tendency to under-communicate throughout the change process, which can leave team members feeling uninformed or disconnected. ISTPs' matter-of-fact approach may also come across as emotionally detached, potentially alienating team members who need more empathetic engagement or reassurance. ISTP leaders should strive to balance their natural inclination for private problem-solving with the team's need for regular, informative communication. By demonstrating solutions in action then explaining their thought process, ISTPs can keep their team informed and engaged.

Your communication mantra: “Show, then tell.”

ISFP (Adventurer) Leaders

ISFPs are very good at conveying empathy and understanding during transitions, making team members feel heard and valued. But this gentle approach, coupled with their desire to

maintain harmony, means ISFPs may end up outsourcing important decision-making and being overpowered by more forceful personalities within their team. This can result in confusion and potential power struggles among team members. ISFP leaders should strive to balance their inclusive approach with decisive leadership during times of change. That means stepping up and taking charge with a clear plan, then communicating their decisions confidently before delegating tasks. By first establishing a firm direction and then involving others in the implementation, ISFPs can lead change in a way that's both compassionate and effective.

Your communication mantra: “Decide, then delegate.”

ESTP (Entrepreneur) Leaders

ESTPs communicate change with blunt enthusiasm, speaking about daunting transitions as if they were exciting sales pitches. Their action-oriented style makes change sound thrilling and immediately actionable. However, in their zeal to “sell” the change, ESTPs may gloss over potential drawbacks, which may create “buyer’s remorse” down the line when challenges arise. While ESTPs are more than ready to handle obstacles on the fly, their team might not be equally prepared. ESTP leaders should strive to balance their dynamic salesmanship with realistic, comprehensive communication. By addressing both exciting possibilities and potential hurdles – and delivering on their promises throughout the change process – ESTPs can lead change that's invigorating yet sustainable.

Your communication mantra: “Sell, then deliver.”

ESFP (Entertainer) Leaders

ESFPs have a friendly, approachable, and highly interactive communication style, preferring frequent face-to-face conversations with team members. When discussing change, ESFPs focus on exciting possibilities and potential benefits, and they have a way of making the change sound appealing and achievable. They also won't shy away from spending extra time engaging with their team to ensure everyone feels heard and supported. But their consistently upbeat messaging can be a double-edged sword, as they run the risk of appearing naive or unrealistic to more critical team members. ESFP leaders can strive to balance their natural optimism with acknowledgment of change-related challenges. By coupling their motivational messages with thoughtful discussion of potential obstacles, ESFPs can be inspiring while staying grounded in reality.

Your communication mantra: “Cheer, then address.”

Final Takeaway

As we’ve explored the unique communication styles of each personality type during change, one thing becomes clear: there’s no one-size-fits-all approach to leading through transitions. Each personality type brings its own strengths and faces its own challenges when communicating change. By becoming aware of your natural tendencies – and adapting to meet the diverse needs of your team as needed – you can create a more inclusive and effective change process for all.

Takes a deep breath and tries not to get emotional

Well, there you have it. This concludes our [change leadership series](#). We hope it made navigating the (many) changes we are seeing across various industries feel a little less scary, and a little more manageable. Remember that your [Change Leadership Challenge](#) is there for you to reference again and again as needed, and adapt to your specific circumstances.