

## Basic Contents Include . . .

I'm well-acquainted with personality theories and have my favorites, but when it comes to helping people understand each other, I find one the simplest. It's based upon the four temperaments proposed by Hippocrates more than 2500 years ago, and is the basis of several personality theories and profiles, including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®, which continues to be very popular in business settings. It's the foundation of DiSC®. Eminent researchers reference this first theory of the biological underpinnings of personality over and over again.

Brain development research yields the truth that we are born with a temperament, and while scientists disagree on whether there are three or four or five, they certainly don't believe there are twenty or thirty. We tend to view life through one of a few filters. It doesn't mean we're all the same; it means we use our filter in our own particular but recognizable way. If we manage to identify some basic clues, we can adjust to engage people through their filters, temporarily suspending our own. (This is called "courtesy.")

For instance, who in your life is the person forever pointing a finger in your face and announcing, "You know what you need to do?" Who is the bossy intimidator? The one who always has an answer and on whom you can count on to get things done? You are acquainted with a Powerful Choleric personality.

"Choleric" is from a Greek word meaning "yellow," and thousands of years ago it was thought that some people had more yellow bile than others and this somehow made them aggressive and strong-willed. I prefer to use the original Greek names for each temperament but I also use an identifying word, and "powerful" is the identifier you might remember long after you've forgotten this temperament is called "choleric" (pronounced KOLL-err-ick, like the word "cholera" with a "k" on the end).

Powerful Choleric are born leaders with goals and plans. They're on a mission: for the Powerful Choleric, the internal fire never goes out. They like order for efficiency's sake: orderliness is time-saving, and the Choleric personality wants to get as much done in as little time as possible. In fact, Powerful Choleric can work the hardest and the longest of all four personalities, and they don't understand why you can't.

My friends with this inclination are purposeful and focused and will insist that I create goals and plans and it's best to write them down. One friend says, "A good day is when I can check off every task on my To Do List." She keeps a pad and pen by her bed because she wakes up in the middle of the night with an idea that must be pursued and she doesn't want to forget it. Another acquaintance explained the constant drive and energy this way: "I can't turn it off!"

Without Powerful Choleric, we might all stand around waiting for someone to step forward and accept the role of a leader. Choleric people were born giving orders and they can't switch off their natural leadership capabilities. Naturally good decision makers, Choleric are usually right, which can be tremendously irritating. Even when they aren't right they frequently refuse to admit it, often resenting hearing their opinion is incorrect. Keep this thought before you at all times: they do not wake up in the morning thinking of ways to irritate you with their abrasive personalities. They think the way they

continued ▶

### Quick Links

Myers-Briggs

DiSC

What Not to Wear

Adopt-A-Greyhound

POM Wonderful

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*Sue Thompson is a personality trainer, an etiquette expert, and an instructor in life lessons. Her seminars on recognizing and developing talent, identifying personalities and working effectively with the people who possess them, responding appropriately to difficult experiences, treating others with respect, and behaving like a professional have caused listeners at companies and*

*business organizations throughout the country to rate her presentations as "the best seminar of the conference!" She trains those entering the workforce how to present themselves with style and authority; new employees in the importance of respecting one's work and the workplace; managers in the value of understanding employees' talent and temperament; and everyone in the timeless rules of behavior that will always bespeak excellence.*

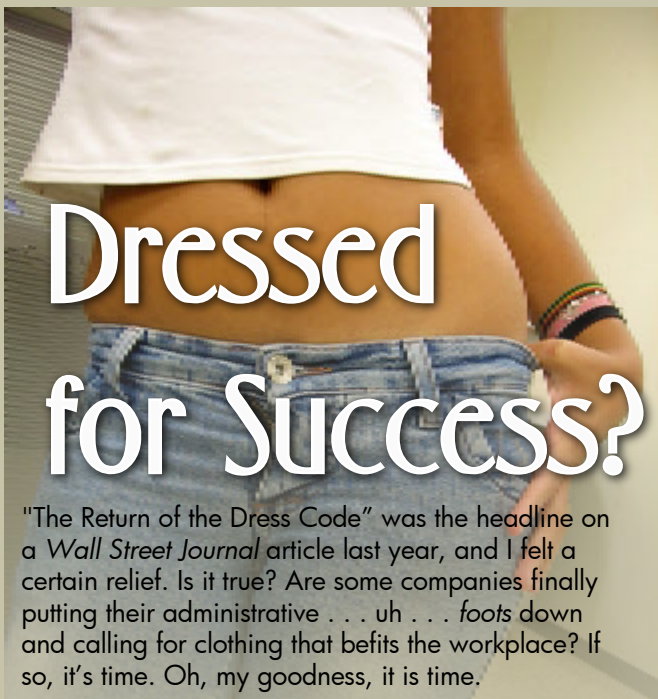
act is how everyone should act and they can't fathom why anyone would have a problem with it!

It is when you need help with focus and determination that a Powerful Choleric in your life becomes vitally helpful. They can assess your situation and give you plans for action. They can push you forward and help you take steps to the next level. They have no time for people who do not want to change and move forward; they want to see results in themselves and in others.

Here's what these powerful people frequently don't get: they can't see how they run over other others with their plans and orders and drive. They find it difficult to step back and view themselves from another's perspective, and even when they do, their first inclination is to dismiss what others see. It is a tough job to face down a Choleric and speak the truth. "It's my way or the highway" is an old tune sung by Powerful Cholerics, and it's woven into the way they communicate. They appreciate people who are straight with them, who will tell it like it is without fear, so you may need to work on your courage factor if you've got to give them news they won't like to hear.

Is this your filter? If not, you surely recognize someone in your life fitting this description!

More to come! ☺



"The Return of the Dress Code" was the headline on a *Wall Street Journal* article last year, and I felt a certain relief. Is it true? Are some companies finally putting their administrative . . . uh . . . *foots* down and calling for clothing that befits the workplace? If so, it's time. Oh, my goodness, it is time.

When did we become so slovenly? When did it become okay to leave the house looking like we could barely manage to pull something on that at least covered our private parts and shod our feet? What has happened to cause us to be so disrespectful of those we work with and for, and of our employment situations, to dress with such careless disregard for anyone who must look at us even in passing?

I really can't blame it entirely on the vague but satisfying "younger generation" excuse. It's my generation that embraced a more relaxed work environment and agreed that as long as we got the job done, it didn't matter what we were wearing. In

many cases, we saw power dressing as pretentious and affected, and we proclaimed our liberation with giddy assertiveness. I championed a casual dress code many years ago at my own place of work.

But here's where freedom has gotten us in today's workplace: we work with people who wear things in which they ought only to be caught doing yard work or changing the oil in their cars. Our companies' brand images project a professional, dedicated workforce but we sit next to folks who look as though actually combing their hair is an optional grooming exercise. We've completely lost the psychological reality that dressing as though we mean business actually has an effect upon us.

Is it too much to ask that people actually put some effort into getting ready in the morning? To take a moment to look into the mirror and consider the messages we are sending by our appearance? In many cases, the message is louder than any work product declares:

You're not important enough for me to dress appropriately for our meeting.

I don't take this job seriously, and you aren't worth my clean clothes.

I don't want to go anywhere in life. I want to live in a dump and barely get by.

I know I'm 45, but I'm sure I can convince you I'm 18.

If you don't like my indifferent, careless, ill-fitting appearance, go work somewhere else where the people are engaged, thoughtful, and looking to move forward.

I hate myself. I hate you, I hate my job, my life is worthless, you're worthless, and I want you to see it written all over my uncared-for body.

Stacy London, who along with Clinton Kelly hosts the TLC television show "What Not To Wear," is often seen on camera with an incredulous look on her face as she asks, "And this is what you wear to work?" In a WSJ column last year, Naomi Schaefer Riley noted that London "is trying to slow what she calls the 'casualization of America.' . . . Ms. London and Mr. Kelly have had to lecture guests on why pajamas are not acceptable attire outside of the house. 'If I have to get dressed to go out in the morning, so do you,' she tries to convince them."

But the truth is that most who dress with such absence of basic order and positive intent believe they *are* dressed. They're covered up, and they feel this is all that's required. My belief is that we have become a nation of self-loathers. We have no respect for ourselves and thus hold out none for others. If while sitting in the executive team meeting you can see my bra straps, notice that all I managed to wash was my face, and ache with the view of my too-tight, unsuitable clothing, well . . . that's your problem. I didn't want to be considered for a better position at this crappy company anyway. I stay here because I'm a loser, and you're a loser, and so's everyone at this table.

Please, corporate America: let's bring back the dress code. We are long overdue. ☺



## Teddy Bear Says...



Dogs have a few truly precious joys. We love to hang out the car window whenever we're allowed to ride with you. We delight in sleeping in your bed. And if you permit us to lick your plate clean after you've finished eating, we know we're more than just *Canis familiaris* to you; we're family.

I know every pet is not allowed to do these things. Permission depends upon the preferences of our humans. If you allow your

dog to put tongue to plate in your house, however, here is an important rule: *never* when you have guests!

Other things that should not be done at the dining table, especially in public:

Don't eat so fast you're finished sooner than everyone else. Pace yourself by watching others. Avoid winning the Flying Fork Award.

Slurping is expected of dogs, but it's very embarrassing for humans. No blowing on your soup to cool it, either. Skim off the top where it's begun to cool on the trip from the kitchen to the table.

Don't talk with food in your mouth. Swallow before talking, even if you have to take a moment. People like you. They'll wait. (Unless you belch, and then you risk not being liked at all.)

Don't spit anything out. If you've got something in your mouth you don't want, such as a bone or a seed, use the fork or spoon that got it there to take it from your mouth. Deposit it quietly on the side of your plate and continue eating without drawing attention to yourself.

Never reach across the table for something, and certainly never across someone else's plate. Ask politely for things to be passed to you.

Don't touch your nose, hair, or teeth at the table. You may be antiseptically clean, but we don't know that. Don't ever stick your fingers into food in order to taste it.

Never, never, never blow your nose into your napkin. If you must sneeze or cough, turn your head from the table while shielding your mouth with your hand. (The left hand is generally considered the hygiene hand, so turn to your left if possible.) If you need to blow your nose, excuse yourself and attend to things in the restroom.

Ladies, it is inappropriate to apply lipstick or fix your hair at the table or primp in other ways. These are personal

grooming activities. Excuse yourself and go to the restroom to make yourself beautiful. Gentleman, even if a toothpick is available, cleaning one's teeth should be done in the restroom.

Finally, never lick your plate, no matter how tempted you are! That privilege is reserved for animals.



## Truly Wonderful!

I get hooked on products when an experience or research excites me. Now due to an article in *The New Yorker*, I'm once again all agog. In an in-depth profile of businesswoman Lynda Resnick ("Pomegranate Princess," March 31, 2008), I



read of her passion for pomegranate juice. Lynda and her husband are the geniuses behind TeleFlora, which made them ridiculously rich, and they made the Franklin Mint the collector's empire that it is today.

Ten years ago, their family doctor suggested to Lynda that she look into the health benefits of pomegranate juice, and as the Resnicks owned 800 acres of pomegranate groves, she was intrigued. To date, the Resnicks have spent \$23 million on scientific studies proving the efficacy of the juice, one of which yielded the astonishing evidence that its antioxidant properties surpass that of red wine by a mile (and that particular study was done by the Israeli researcher who first documented the antioxidant level of red wine). Lynda began trumpeting the news and practically singlehandedly started a craze.

POM Wonderful is delicious—it tastes like grape juice—and I drink eight ounces a day. I buy it at Costco. (By the way, the research has been done on 100% juice; check labels on products. Most pomegranate juices have other juices as fillers.)

I'll let you know how healthy I feel in a few months! ♪