The roles people play in groups

There are a number of different roles that people adopt in groups, some of which are listed below. These roles are not always constant - **one person might adopt several of these roles during one project or change roles depending on what is being done or discussed.** Your score for each category should give you some idea of which of these roles you play in groups.

Encourager

**Energises groups when motivation is low through humour or through being enthusiastic.** They are positive individuals who support and praise other group members. They don't like sitting around. They like to move things along by suggesting ideas, by clarifying the ideas of others and by confronting problems. They may use humour to break tensions in the group.

Score

**They may say:**  
"We CAN do this!""That's a great idea!"

Compromiser

**Tries to maintain harmony among the team members.** They are sociable, interested in others and will introduce people, draw them out and make them feel comfortable. They may be willing to change their own views to get a group decision. They work well with different people and can be depended on to promote a positive atmosphere. They pull people and tasks together thereby developing rapport. They are tolerant individuals and good listeners who will listen carefully to the views of other group members. They are good judges of people, diplomatic and sensitive to the feelings of others and not seen as a threat. They are able to recognise and resolve differences of opinion and the development of conflict, they enable "difficult" team-members to contribute positively.  
**They may say:**  
"We haven't heard from Mike yet,

Score

I'd like to hear what you think about this.""I'm not sure I agree, what are your

reasons for saying that?"

Leader

**Good leaders direct the sequence of steps the group takes and keep the group "on-track".** They are good at controlling people and events and coordinating resources. They have the energy, determination and initiative to overcome obstacles and bring competitive drive to the team. They give shape to the team effort. They recognise the skills of each individual and how they can be used. Leaders are outgoing individuals who have to be careful not to be domineering. They can sometimes steamroller the team but get results quickly. They may become impatient with complacency and lack of progress and may sometimes overreact.

**They may say:**

Score

"Let's come back to this later if we have time.""We need to move on to the next step.""Sue, what do you think about this idea?"

Summariser/clarifier

**Calm, reflective individuals who summarise the group's discussion and conclusions. They clarify group objectives and elaborate on the ideas of others.** They may go into detail about how the group's plans would work and tie up loose ends. They are good mediators and seek consensus.  
**They may say:**   
"So here's what we've decided so far""I think you're right, but we could also add ...."

Score

Ideas person

**The** [**ideas person**](http://www.kent.ac.uk/careers/sk/lateral.htm) **suggests new ideas to solve group problems or suggests new ways for the group to organize the task**. They dislike orthodoxy and are not too concerned with practicalities. They provide suggestions and proposals that are often original and radical. They are more concerned with the big picture than with details. They may get bored after the initial impetus wears off.  
**They may say**  
"Why don't we consider doing it this way?"

Score

Evaluator

**Evaluators help the group to avoid coming to agreement too quickly.** They tend to be slow in coming to a decision because of a need to think things over. They are the logical, analytical, objective people in the team and offer measured, dispassionate critical analysis. They contribute at times of crucial decision making because they are capable of evaluating competing proposals. They may suggest alternative ideas.  
**They may say:**   
"What other possibilities are there?"or "Let's try to look at this another way."or "I'm not sure we're on the right track."

Score

Recorder

**The recorder keeps the group focused and organised. They make sure that everyone is helping with the project.** They are usually the first person to offer to take notes to keep a record of ideas and decisions. They also like to act as time-keeper, to allocate times to specific tasks and remind the team to keep to them, or act as a spokesperson, to deliver the ideas and findings of the group. They may check that all members understand and agree on plans and actions and know their roles and responsibilities. They act as the memory of the group.

**They may say:**  
"Do we all understand this chart?"  
"Are we all in agreement on this?"

Score

"We only have five minutes left,

so we need to come to agreement now!"