**Six attitudes / Drives**

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**Drives**

(Eduard Spranger)

**Introduction**

What is it that motivates you to take action? What is the source of your desire to become involved in certain activities - or to avoid them? Why do you behave in the manner you do? The answers lie deep within your unique set of personal values and drives. These powerful motivating forces within you largely affect how you behave and how others perceive you. Identifying them is important to understanding what makes you effective and personally successful.

Once you are aware of the dominant drives contributing passion and purpose to your life, you will be able to clarify what drives your actions, as well as what causes conflict. For example, if you are currently question whether you are in the right career, knowing your drives will help you decide. In addition, applying an understanding of drives to your relationships with others will deepen your appreciation of them and clarify the why of your interactions.

**Six attitudes or drives**

In 1928 the Swiss psychologist Edward Spranger wrote a book entitled "Types of Men”. He identified six major attitudes or drives. These drives are a type of window through which we view the world and seek fulfilment in our lives. If we are participating in a discussion, activity or career that is in alignment with our drives, we will value the experience. Conversely, if we are in a conversation, activity or career that is in conflict with our dominant drives, we will be indifferent or even negative toward the experience, possibly causing stress. Based on the work of Eduard Spranger, there are six types of attitudes / drives to people:

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| --- | --- |
| **Theoretical** | A passion to discover truth. The chief aim in life is to order and systematize knowledge for the sake of knowledge itself. |
| **Economic / Utilitarian** | Practical interest in money and a passion for what is useful. Time and resources are meted out with an eye to future economic gain. |
| **Aesthetic** | Interest in form and harmony. Life is a series of episodic events, each enjoyed for its own sake. Has a heightened sense of beauty and inner vision. |
| **Social / Altruistic** | Inherent love of people. Seeks to eliminate hate and conflict. Other persons are ends to themselves (not means). Altruistic, kind, empathetic, generous. |
| **Individualistic / Political** | The primary interest for this value is influence, not necessarily politics in the traditional sense. Leaders in most fields have a high individualistic value. |
| **Traditional / Regulatory** | The need to be regulated or structured from an outside source. Seeks to comprehend the cosmos and to relate themselves to a global totality. |

Basically we possess all of these drives, but have them sorted in different order of importance.

Drives interact with one another. Research shows that two or three drives will be dominant and impel action. The very lack of importance of particular drives can be significant in itself, since it shows the relative priority of the dominant motivators.

Drives can and do change over a period of time. Some drives eclipse others as needs and wants are satisfied. Drives are also affected by interactions with family, friends, teachers, traditional issues, geographic location, the media, leaders and so on.

The drive patterns of men and women are more similar than dissimilar. Women and men with similar drive clusters will make similar decisions even if they live in different countries.

**The theoretical drive**

The dominant interest of the theoretical drive is the discovery of knowledge and appetite for learning. In the pursuit of this goal he characteristically takes a 'cognitive' attitude, one that looks for identities and differences; one that divests itself of judgments regarding the beauty or utility of objects, and seeks only to observe and to reason. Since the interests of the theoretical drive are empirical, critical, and rational, he is necessarily an intellectualist, frequently a scientist or philosopher. His chief aim in life is to order and systematize his knowledge: knowledge for the sake of knowledge.

**High theoretical**

People whose primary drive is theoretical have a tremendous need to know, to learn, to understand. The bottom line is the accumulation of knowledge, and the logical pursuit of this knowledge is where it's at for them. High theoretical people are not always interested in using this knowledge, however, and we do find some absent-minded professors here. As far as the theoretical inclined person is concerned, he or she will learn well but not always do. One of the tools for helping abstract thinkers perform is a strong standard of performance system which can be monitored. Again, there is no interest in changing people but rather in improving performance.

The questions one might ask regarding a person with a high theoretical drive are: How will the high theoretical inclined person plan, organize, direct, control and even sell? How will such a person recruit, select, train, motivate and communicate? How will they get along with others? In private life how will he or she handle social situations, play games, manage money and perform as a spouse, parent, etc.? And more importantly, what does he or she need from a manager, spouse or friend to be more effective? These same questions can and should be asked for each of the other drives.

**General characteristics**

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|  | Feeling for the purity of the cognitive process. |
|  | Intertwines past and present. |
|  | High interest level in solving problems, asking questions or formulating theory. |
|  | Enjoys people with convictions (knowledge) held in common. |

**Possible limitations**

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|  | May have trouble dealing with practical problems. |
|  | Little time for people who see things differently - especially emotional ones with few facts. |
|  | Single mindedness at the expense of everything else. |
|  | May get bogged / slowed down in the quest for details - can lead to procrastination. |

**Explanation of the scores**

* Very low (12 - 23 points): Practical application for the use of knowledge.
* Low (24 - 35 points): Knowledge to gain results, or an advantage. Could be an eager reader regarding their needs or hobby.
* Average (36 - 48 points): Need for knowledge-for-knowledge's sake is based on individual situations. If interested in a specific area, or if required for success, they will want to know everything there is to know. If not, intuition or practical information will be relied on.
* High (49 - 60 points): Wants knowledge-for-knowledge's sake. Wants to become an expert. Quest for knowledge-need to know.
* Very high (61 - 72 points): Seeking knowledge only for the sake of knowledge.

**The economic drive**

The economic drive is characteristically interested in money, return on investment and what is useful. Based originally upon the satisfaction of bodily needs (self-preservation), the economic drive wants to have security that money brings not only for themselves, but for the present and future family. The interest in utilities develops to embrace the practical affairs of the business world - the production, marketing, and consumption of goods, the elaboration of credit, and the accumulation of tangible wealth. This type is thoroughly 'practical' and conforms well to the prevailing stereotype of businessman.

**High economic**

As impractical as some high theoretical people are, that is just how practical and tangible -results oriented those with a high economic drive are. Their goal is utility and what is useful. People driven by this drive are achievers and want rewards and results now. Their basic interest in knowledge (theoretical) is restricted not to how much they can accumulate, but rather how they can use it. Money and possessions are the measuring tools or yardstick by which the high materialistically motivated keep track of their accomplishments. These people respond mostly to on-the-job training and a compensation system based on monetary incentives. The economic motivated person should not be seen as selfish but rather as practical and goal-oriented.

The economic drive frequently comes into conflict with other drives. The economic drive wants education to be practical, and regards unapplied knowledge as waste. Great feats of engineering and application result from the demands economic people make upon science. The value of utility likewise conflicts with the aesthetic drive, except when art serves commercial ends. In his personal life the economic drive is likely to confuse luxury with beauty. In his relations with people he is more likely to be interested in surpassing them in wealth than in dominating them (individualistic drive) or in serving them (social drive).

**General characteristics**

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|  | Very practical, can be a spender or saver. |
|  | Future oriented. |
|  | Motivated by the satisfying of needs. |
|  | Continually motivated by wants and needs, and a high focus on efficiency. |

**Possible limitations**

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|  | May be a workaholic. |
|  | Egoistic. |
|  | May have a visible greed factor. |
|  | Rationalizes giving of time or resources will result in some future economic gain. |

**Explanation of the scores**

* Very low (12 - 23 points): Not overly concerned with material things or money. Wants to make sure they can keep body and soul together. Motivated toward achievement relating to their internal beliefs. Money is not a score to impress others.
* Low (24 - 35 points): Not driven by a tremendous need to have great sums of money. Wants to be able to achieve the survival needs at an acceptable level as perceived by their perception of social standing. Independence is a long-term project. Will profit from economic goal-setting. Needs to meet with a mentor regularly.
* Average (36 - 48 points): In specific situations they feel compelled to make the acquisition of money a very important aspect of decision-making.
* High (49 - 60 points): Internally motivated by the need to have economic rewards in terms of money for security or freedom. Money in and of itself is not the end but a means to achieve that end.
* Very high (61 – 72 points): Money in terms of what it can do is extremely important. Very practical. At times will be overwhelmed by the advantage that money or materialistic things can bring.

**The aesthetic drive**

The aesthetic drive sees his highest value in form and harmony with the environment, between his internal and the external world. Each single experience is judged from the standpoint of grace, symmetry, or fitness. He regards life as a procession of events; each single impression is enjoyed for its own sake. He need not be a creative artist, nor need he be effete; he is aesthetic if he but finds his chief interest in the artistic episodes of life.

**High aesthetic**

The high aesthetically motivated are, most of all, very sensitive persons with an artistic flair for things harmonious and beautiful. While not necessarily performers or artists, per se, they do personalize beauty (as perceived by them) in the world around them. They would rather see something more charming than useful and more beautiful than practical. Finding it difficult to gain aesthetic value satisfaction in a rough and tough business climate, the high aesthetic person will usually gravitate to a nicer environment. They will also perform best in a pleasant, harmonious setting. Their goal is to experience their inner vision.

The aesthetic drive is, in a sense, diametrically opposed to the theoretical; the former is concerned with the diversity, and the latter with the identities of experience. The aesthetic person either chooses to consider truth as equivalent to beauty, or finds 'to make a thing charming is a million times more important than to make it true'. In the economic sphere the aesthetic drive sees the process of manufacturing, advertising and trade as a wholesale destruction of the values most important to him. In social affairs he may be said to be interested in persons but not in the wel-fare of persons; he tends toward individualism and self-sufficiency. Aesthetic people often like the beautiful signs of wealth, but oppose political activity when it makes for the repression of individuality.

**General characteristics**

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|  | Seek self-realization, self-fulfilment and self-enjoyment. |
|  | Sensitive to inner feelings, harmony and balance. |
|  | Humourist if view of life is positive. Sarcastic if view of life is negative. |
|  | Builds relationships from his own / subjective point of view. |

**Possible limitations**

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| --- | --- |
|  | Attempts to influence others by aesthetic beauty. |
|  | Stressed by / fleeing from disharmony and unbalance. |
|  | Perceives the world only from their inner reality. |
|  | No feeling for the practical. Minimum use of logical reflections. |

**Explanation of the scores**

* Very low (12 - 23 points): Not worried about form, nor sensitive to the pleasing aspects of the environment. Very practical people. They know the sun has gone down mainly because it's dark.
* Low (24 - 35 points): Does not require harmony of nature to feel fulfilled. Practicality overrides sensitivity. The awareness of fine things and fine relationships is secondary. Creative problem solving vs. Creative sensory pleasure. World is black and white vs. world is a colourful rainbow.
* Average (36 - 48 points): Need for aesthetics (appreciation of beauty) determined on an individual basis. Specific areas could be of great interest (i.e., desiring fine things for family members, but not concerned with the depth of relationships with others).
* High (49 - 60 points): Needs fine things and fine relationships. Wants a harmony that relates to enjoyment and appreciation of things that have intrinsic beauty. Internalized creative feelings. Creative designs to problem solving as they relate to the sensitivity of the relationship.
* Very high (61 – 72 points): Tremendous need for a sense of balance and harmony within their environment. Desires fine things and fine relationships. More concerned with the part than the whole. Can be very creative.

**The social drive**

The highest value for the social drive is the inherent love of people and mankind. In the study of drives it is the altruistic or philanthropic aspect of love that is measured. The social person prizes other people and is therefore kind, sympathetic and unselfish. He is likely to find the theoretical, economic and aesthetic drives cold and inhuman. Compared to the individualistic drive, the social drive regards helping others as the only suitable form of human relationship.

**High social**

Those with a high humanitarian value system are more concerned with the welfare of others than they are for themselves. The social drive places helping others very high on the list of personal priorities. Research into this drive indicates that in its purest form the social drive is selfless. Many times this drive rises to the top of an individual's set of drives after the economic drive is satisfied. The goal of very high social driven people is to eliminate hate and conflict in the world. Spranger adds that the very high social drive tends to approach very closely to the traditional drive.

**General characteristics**

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|  | See their own value in helping others. |
|  | Real concern for others. |
|  | Ability to be empathetic. |
|  | Generous with time, talent and resources. |

**Possible limitations**

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|  | Self-sacrifice at times and may override self-preservation. |
|  | Have difficulty saying no. |
|  | Help others even to their own disadvantage. Take over responsibility of others. |
|  | Will avoid confrontation if there is an unbearable truth that will harm a relationship. |

**Explanation of the scores**

* Very low (12 - 23 points): Concerned about the needs of others. Will help others to better themselves, but out of pity. Compassionate only for those who have either physical or mental disability. Winning is the most important necessity. Does not appreciate weakness. Strangers are strangers.
* Low (24 - 35 points): Willing to help others if they are working as hard as possible to achieve their goals. Won't help others if it would be detrimental to themselves. Does not promote a welfare state. Hard work and example can motivate others.
* Average (36 - 48 points): Desire to help others or not is reviewed on an individual basis. If an internal chord has been touched they would definitely attempt to help.
* High (49 - 60 points): Very concerned about the welfare of others, even to their own detriment. Wants others to have the opportunity to succeed. Sometimes people become projects for saving. More evident when money needs are met.
* Very high (61 – 72 points): May neglect own family and friends. Interested in humankind in general. Truly unselfish. Good team player. Gives others many chances for success and then still gives more. Efforts are sufficient proof of worth. Social concerns are of the highest value. Will be a leader of social reform.

**The individualistic drive**

The individualistic drive is interested primarily in influence and power. His activities are not necessarily within the narrow field of politics; but whatever his vocation, he betrays himself as a influence driven person. Leaders in any field generally have a high individualistic drive. Since competition and struggle play a large part in all life, many philosophers have seen power as the most universal and most fundamental of motives. There are, however, certain personalities in whom the desire for a direct expression of this motive is uppermost, who wish above all else for personal power, influence, and renown.

**High individualistic**

Persons with a high influence-seeking drive are very easily spotted and understood. What they want is influence and control and an arena in which to play where there is ample opportunity for public satisfaction. The climb up the so-called corporate ladder in terms of title, recognition and influence is quite symptomatic of the need for individualistic-seeking drive satisfaction. The attitude here tends to be ‘move me up or watch me move on’. The goal of this drive is to enforce them self and have their causes prevail. A person motivated by the individualistic drive will primarily be interested in independence. The individualistic drive seeks personal expression and demonstrates contempt for rules and authority per se.  
  
**General characteristics**

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|  | The effect of influence and power upon others appears in the form of determination. |
|  | Control their own destiny and the destiny of others. |
|  | Influence and control will usually be expressed in some other form or drive -- Theoretical (superiority), Economic (wealth) or Regulatory (traditional). This other drive gives direction. |

**Possible limitations**

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|  | The end justifies the means. |
|  | May break rules in order to rule or control. |
|  | May be Machiavellian in their approach to others. |
|  | Need for self-maintenance. Can come across as feeling superior. |

**Explanation of the scores**

* Very low (12 - 23 points): Does not need to be in the limelight. Does not need to be seen as a leader. Does not need to control others. Keeps conflict and hostility at a minimum. Ego satisfaction and praise are not necessarily success measurements. Needs stability.
* Low (24 - 35 points): Positions of influence and control are not an intrinsic motivating factor. Willing to allow others to set the tone and direction of their destiny. Much more patient and less ego-involved than others may be. Will participate as a team member for the team's sake, not their own sake. Does not attempt to control the destiny of others, but wants to achieve within the framework of their own area of specialty.
* Average (36 - 48 points): Will evaluate each situation individually and determine how much or how little control they want to exercise. If there are strong feelings about issues, control increases.
* High (49 - 60 points): Tremendous need to show that they can take charge and be the leader. Competition and struggle are part of daily routine. Wants to be the person in the forefront and seen as a mover and shaker.
* Very high (61 – 72 points): Wants to control situations, as well as the destiny of them self and the destiny of others. Being in the limelight will have them work extremely hard and for long hours. Extras and ‘fondles’ are important. Titles are important. Being in charge is important. Wants to be seen as a winner and they won't play if there is not a chance to win.

**The traditional drive**

The traditional drive reflects a preference for “unity”, “order”, or “tradition” and is looking for a guideline in life. Those who are motivated by a high traditional drive seek a system for living, a series of principles that we are all part of. This system can be found in such things as conservatism or any authority that has defined rules, regulations and principles for living. Their goal is to search for the highest value of life. When the traditional drive appears low, we are seeing individuality.

**High traditional**

The highest value of the traditional drive may be called unity. He is mystical, spiritual, and seeks to comprehend the cosmos as a whole, to relate himself to its embracing totality. The traditional drive is defined as one 'whose mental structure is permanently directed to the creation of the highest and absolutely satisfying value experience.' Some persons of this type are 'immanent mystics', that is, they find their traditional experience in the affirmation of life and in active participation therein. The 'transcendental mystic', on the other hand, seeks to unite himself with a higher reality by withdrawing from life; he is the ascetic, and, like the holy men of India, finds the experience of unity through self-denial and meditation. In many individuals the negation and affirmation of life alternate to yield the greatest satisfaction.

**General characteristics**

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|  | Mental structure to create the most important or satisfying value experience. |
|  | May view life positive, negative or mixed. Will stick to principles, whether good or wrong. |
|  | Will seek influence on a big scale, if individualistic is very high. |
|  | Will seek the richest revelations of beauty, if aesthetic is very high. |
|  | Belief in their belief is so great they will champion their beliefs. |

**Possible limitations**

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|  | Overly rigid. |
|  | Comes across as always right. |
|  | Rarely changes mind even if logic dictates they are wrong. |

**Explanation of the scores**

* Very low (12 - 23 points): Tradition won't place limits or boundaries. Many things to see and many to try. Will experiment with different belief systems. Hard to manipulate when it comes to setting guidelines, they have very few to begin with. In many cases they want to set their own rules and allow their own intuition to guide and direct them. Can be highly organized in a very unstructured approach to any rules and procedures set by others. Can be very creative. Does not rebel, just ignores.
* Low (24 - 35 points): Not bound by traditions and customs. The way things have been done before are not necessarily dismissed, but they are always exploring new ideas and new methods of doing things.
* Average (36 - 48 points): Need to be able to pick and choose the traditions and set of beliefs to which they will adhere. Strong beliefs within a system that feels comfortable. Will not be so strong in beliefs if there is a lack of interest. Pick and choose whether they follow traditional ideas or deviate. Interest in the subject matter will determine following or breaking with tradition.
* High (49 - 60 points): Driven by need for a traditional approach to their lifestyle. Attempts to find the guideline or the rulebook which will allow for the long-term direction. Internally driven to discover their place in the scheme of things.
* Very high (61 – 72 points): Believes in doing things the traditional way. Wants the rules and regulations of society to be a closed loop. There is only one way to do things, and that is by the rule book they have chosen to follow. Can become quite determined about their beliefs. See themselves as becoming very moralistic, with discipline and conviction. Little need to experiment with other ways of doing things. When they find a leader in whom they can believe, they will follow that leader almost absolutely.

**Drives - exercise**

1. Explore the explanation of your top 2 drives
2. Write down the most important things for you concerning

these drives

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| --- |
| 1. |
| 2. |
| 3. (only if this drive differs less than 10 points from the first drive) |