

VOLKSWAGEN

GROUP

MSIN0043: DELIVERING RESULTS THROUGH PEOPLE

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1. People Analytics Briefing Note (997 words)

Executive Summary

This briefing note provides an analysis of Volkswagen Group's current people issues, drawing upon recent events, history and strategies. Concerning its challenges, this report will recommend solutions along with potential implementation challenges.

1.1. KEY PEOPLE ISSUES

1.1.1 Current Strategy and Values

In 2021, Volkswagen introduced the 2030 NEW AUTO Strategy- looking to realign its products from internal combustion engines to battery-electric vehicles (1). To achieve this transformative goal, Volkswagen introduced the following seven values:



Figure 1 - Volkswagen's seven values, similar to McKinsey's(2) individual life purposes can contribute to employee experience, leading to higher levels of employee engagement, stronger organizational commitment, and increased feelings of well-being, if incorporated successfully

1.1.2 Emissions Scandal

Volkswagen, however, over the years has failed to align itself to its values, most evidently in the 2015 Emissions Cheating Scandal (3). To achieve the 2030 Strategy, the root causes of this scandal must be addressed such that similar incidents do not ensue.

Caused by poor leadership, Volkswagen produced software that cheated authorities- lowering their cars' emissions during regulatory testing, only to emit up to 40 times more NOx in real-world driving. This not only cost the company \$35 billion in compensation and a value loss of \$42.5 billion, beyond financial ramifications - with a tarnished reputation, customers also lost trust in the brand (3).

However, this is nothing new to Volkswagen, which was found to fit faulty devices as far back as 2009(4). In 2021, the company was again fined with a similar violation of a smaller scale (5). With a long history of violations, the success of the strategy requires an urgent shift in leadership behaviours.

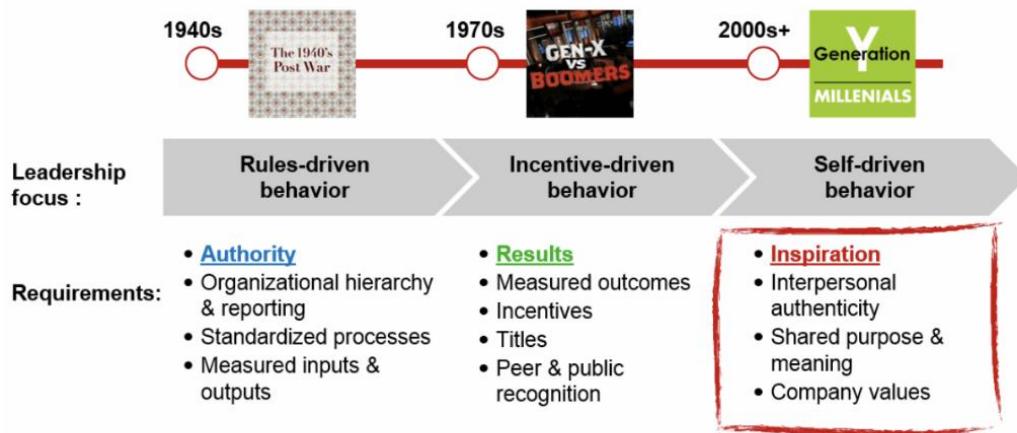


Figure 2 - Bain's Inspirational Leadership Framework.(6) Bain identifies Inspirational Leadership as a critical step to ensuring a company's values and culture are fostered with self-driven behavior. This is something Volkswagen desperately needs to succeed.

1.1.3 People Problems

Looking at the violations, the pressing issues within Volkswagen are identified to revolve around Responsibility, Honesty and Reliability values.

Lack of Transparency

Cause: Former Volkswagen executives describe the management style under former CEO, Martin Winterkorn as authoritarian which fostered a climate of fear (7).

Impact: Besides the costs of preventable fines, lack of information-sharing and open debates limit the company's competitiveness and internal talent's growth.

Lack of Empathy

Cause: Former Volkswagen employees described the treatment as "quite disrespectful" (8) and managers imposed unachievable targets.

Impact: Employees' motivation and problems are not understood and prioritised. Lack of guidance hinders employees' growth and performance.

Lack of Accountability

Cause: The company's hierarchical-command and obedience model caused employees to report a blame culture (9) when faults occur.

Impact: Employees lack initiatives to practice ethics, becoming irresponsible for their actions.

Lack of Training

Cause: Employees reported a lack of knowledge of regulations and consequences.

Impact: Employees proceed with what was told by superiors without questioning.

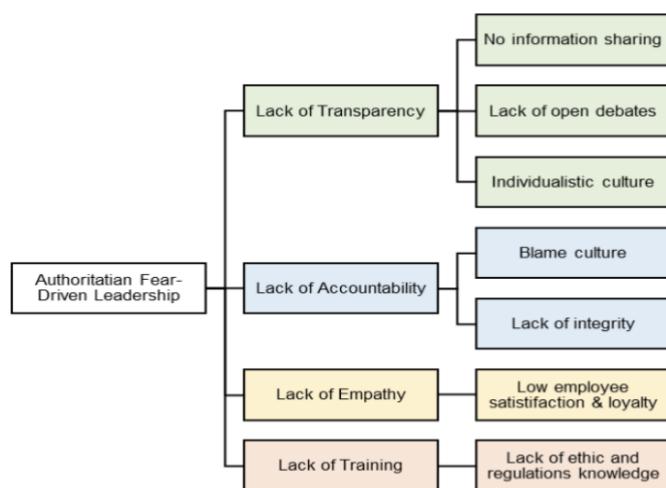


Figure 3 - Volkswagen People Problem Map

1.2 APPLICATIONS

The potential applications relevant to Volkswagen Group found are broken down as follows:

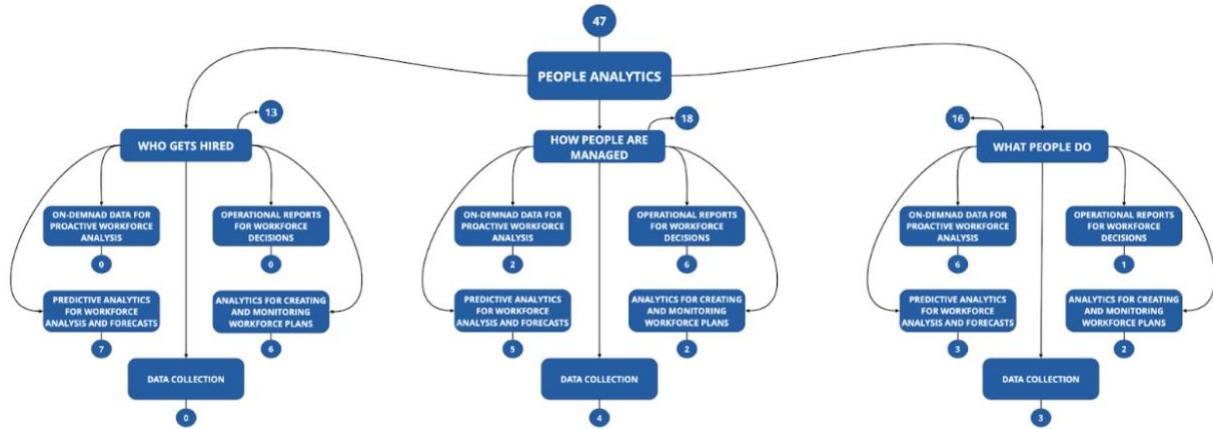


Figure 4 - Applications grouped by McKinsey's(10) key categories and Visier's subcategories of People Analytics

From the applications explored (47 applications), and the people's problems, we recommend implementing:

INTERCONNECTED EMPLOYEE FEELINGS PLATFORM (ADDRESSING LACK OF EMPATHY AND ACCOUNTABILITY)

This application is from *how people are managed* and *predictive analytics* categories which allow Volkswagen to address issues at early stages. It combines three applications found into a data dashboard for managers- offering insights into which variables (and how) are affecting people's feelings, including empathy and accountability.

It uses an online platform inspired by Microsoft's applications identified to collect employees' feelings, then McKinsey's strategy to collect workplace data using sensors(10), then Alexsofts' methods to collect employee data(11).

The user interface will summarize correlated variables through visualisations, allowing Volkswagen managers to adapt their practices- improving employees' accountability by personalizing interactions and rebuilding teams. If the UI is public, employees can see the manager's empathy ratings, holding them accountable for subordinates' treatment.

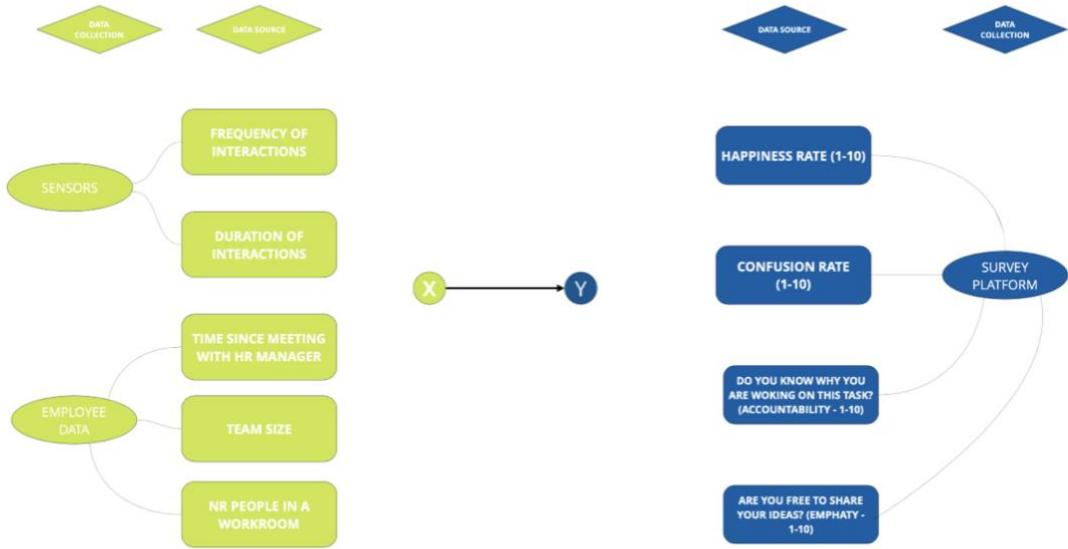


Figure 5 - Data sources and their relationship. The data sources are used for testing the hypothesis “**how is x affecting y**”. Through Microsoft’s platform, y is collected (e.g., employee happiness scaled 1-10), and through McKinsey and Alexsoft’s platform, x is collected (e.g., duration of interaction), which is then analyzed to produce insights (e.g., how duration of interactions impact happiness)

THRIVE, MICROSOFT POWER PLATFORM (1) (ADDRESSING LACK OF TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY)

This application is from *what people do* and *analytics to create and monitor workforce plans* categories.

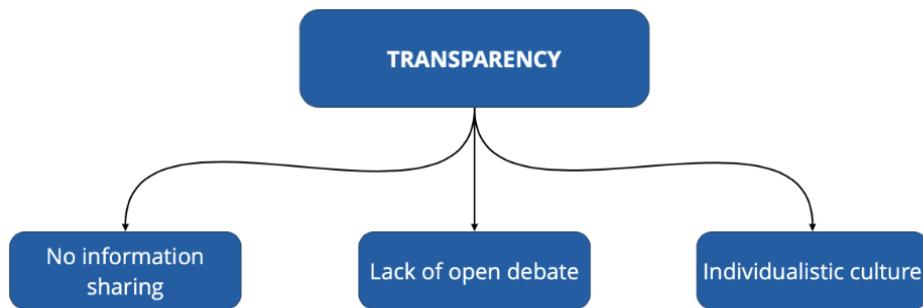


Figure 6 - Transparency issues over the years at Volkswagen stemmed from different areas

Microsoft's Thrive is a suite of seven employee engagement apps deployed worldwide to 100,000+ employees. We recommend implementing a similar version- with three interconnected apps:

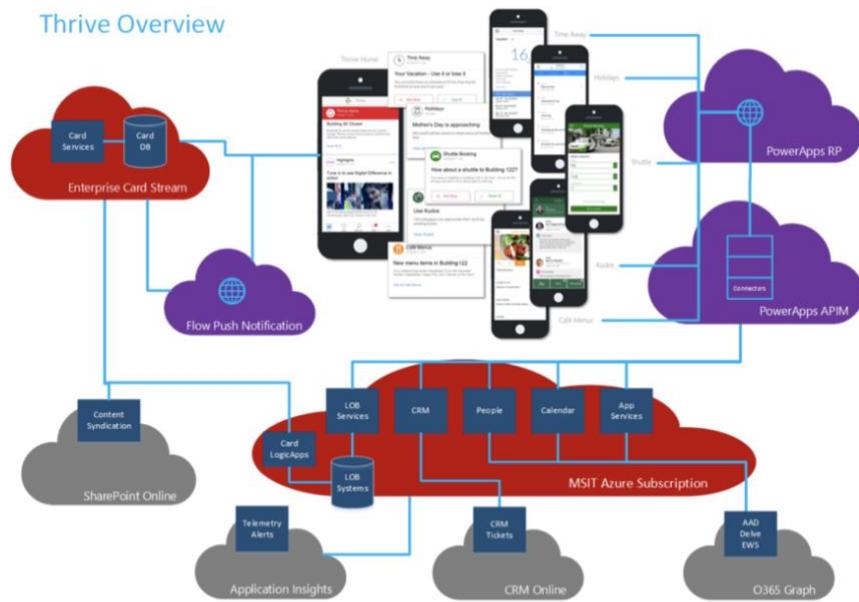


Figure 7 - Thrive has a clean and modern UI and connects to a variety of backend services, including cloud-based APIs and legacy on-premise systems(12) - offering Volkswagen a future proof solution.

THRIVE HOME- Information Sharing

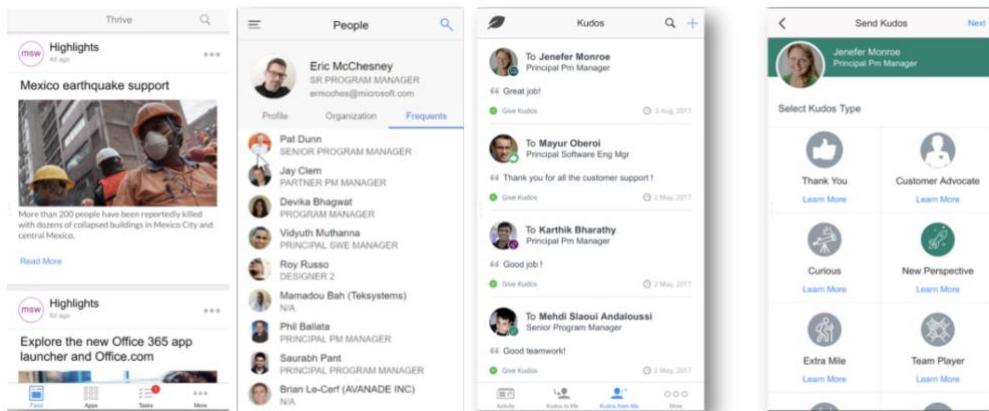
Thrive Home is the main app- enabling formal information sharing between Volkswagen and its employees. Volkswagen employees benefit by being informed, increasing their knowledge of the company's values, ethics, and regulations.

THRIVE PEOPLE- Unlocking Open Debate Capabilities

Thrive People allows Volkswagen employees to view each other's profiles and contact them via their native mobile features (phone, text, email) to have discussions. Employees are therefore encouraged to have open debates.

THRIVE KUDOS- Encouraging Collaborative Culture

Through Delve Analytics, which produces statistics on employee interactions (e.g., meeting frequency and duration, response times (13), the app identifies who you frequently work with and allows access to the company directory. Appreciations can then be given and received between colleagues, where each appreciation has one badge reflecting Volkswagen Group's values. Kudos encourage workplace positivity, reduce unaccountability and blaming culture, and foster a collaborative environment from an individualistic one.



Figures 8,9,10 - Thrive App Illustrations(12)

1.3 CHALLENGES

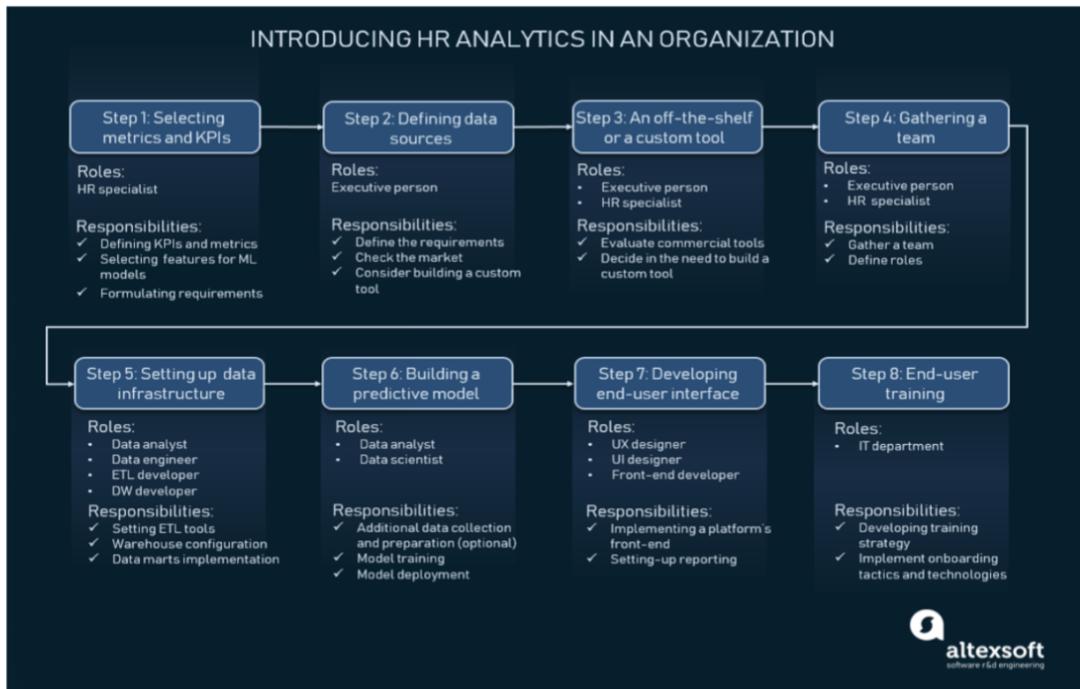


Figure 11 - An Altexsoft roadmap of HR analytics strategy implementation(11), highlighting the steps of an applications' implementation.

INTERCONNECTED EMPLOYEE FEELINGS PLATFORM

Data Collection

Employees tend to lie about their feelings which affect the accuracy of trends (14). Tracking people's interactions through sensors is generally considered unethical(15), potentially rendering the platform moot if employee consent is not obtained. From that, some employees may not consensually participate at all, giving biased insights that do not reflect the whole workforce.

Employee training

Training managers that do not have a mathematical background to interpret the numerical graphs may be challenging. Another challenge relates to how the managers might find difficulties in changing their behaviour from the insights produced (e.g., data concludes longer interactions are favourable for higher empathy, but managers might not have time for that in their tight schedules.)

THRIVE APP

Cultural Differences (Microsoft vs. Volkswagen)

Microsoft's culture revolves around accountability- employees understand their actions in relation to the company (16). Volkswagen employees historically lack this characteristic and require time for this culture to develop. Hence, employees may not be incentivised to use the platform honestly, if at all.

Discrepancy Between Corporate vs. Factory Employee Technology Accessibility

With over 10 brands with independent production divisions, and 668,000 people employed (17), there is a considerable amount of blue-collar employees within Volkswagen (Refer to BMC). Unlike white-collar employees, whose work revolves around their computers, blue-collar workers have less accessibility to these devices. As white-collars have more opportunities to use Thrive, blue-collars participate less in the platform, hence benefiting from personal growth and development would be much more challenging. This could lead to a Diversity & Inclusion problem- limiting the growth and development of some divisions.

2. DRTP Project Post-Mortem (960 words)

2.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE TEAM AND ITS DIVERSITY

The team is extremely diverse, with members from different ethnicity, gender, national origin and experiences. This is illustrated below through the 4 diversity dimensions matrix introduced by BCG. (18)

Figure 1 - The 4 Diversity Dimensions that Bolster Innovation

Member	Industry background	Country of Origin	Career Path	Gender
Giulia	Banking and Hospitality	Italy	Consulting Business Analyst	Female
Marco	Banking and Technology	Italy	Technology: Product Management	Male
Tania	Technology and Data	Romania	Technology: Data Scientist	Female
Gigi	Banking, Technology and Entertainment	Brunei	Financial Analyst	Female
Mihnea	Finance and Diplomacy	Romania	Consulting: Business Consultant	Male

A description for each member has been identified and reported below. This was done by analyzing the team's EI quiz scores (19), cultural profile (20) and page user's manual. (See Appendix for additional information)

Giulia



With her ability to communicate effectively and build trustworthy relationships, Giulia is the team's communicator. She is best at expressing her emotions and ideas, making her the perfect intermediary between members who are less good at it. She forges an inclusive and transparent working environment, consequently boosting creative thinking and strengthening work relationships.

Strengths: Outgoing with excellent social skills.

Allowable weaknesses: Lose interest when initial enthusiasm is gone and tends to be negligent of details.

Don't be surprised to find that: She can be pretty pessimistic.

Marco



He is the team leader and the most emotionally intelligent and self-aware. Marco is highly empathetic, offering both technical and emotional support when needed. He encourages freedom and autonomy while reminding the team about their ultimate unified goals, thus increasing productivity and loyalty. His leading style perfectly matches the team's flexible and independent working style.

Strengths: Mature and diplomatic. He identifies talents and clarifies goals.

Allowable weaknesses: He tends to have a negative outlook. However, this doesn't stop him from motivating others.

Don't be surprised to find that: Although he has high self-regulation skills, he is not comfortable with ambiguity.

Tania



She is empathetic and has excellent emotional self-control, making working with her very enjoyable. She is also dedicated and data-oriented with superb technical ability. Consequently, she needs a lot of analysis and background information before reaching a decision.

Tania's in-depth knowledge of advanced analytical tools and terminology assists the team in dwelling on the technicalities, consequently making her the group's specialist.

Strengths: Cooperative and perceptive. She also listens and advertises friction.

Allowable weaknesses: Because of her lack of communication skills, she finds it difficult to inspire others and needs team members' encouragement to talk about her feelings although being very self-aware.

Don't be surprised to find that: She is an introvert, but she enjoys social environments and needs motivation to be productive.

Gigi



Her ability to polish and scrutinize the work for errors, subjecting it to the highest quality control standards, makes her the team's perfectionist. Gigi is very hard-working, reliable and always ready to support others in need. What drives her to do better is others' expectations.

Strengths: Strong attention to detail skills and has a positive outlook,

Allowable weaknesses: Inclined to worry unduly and reluctant to delegate.

Don't be surprised to find that: Empathetic but can also be quite direct when confronting others.

Mihnea



Mihnea thrives in highly pressured and challenging environments, guiding the team when facing complex obstacles. He is confident, hardworking, and provides the necessary drive to ensure that the team does not lose focus, making him the motivator of the group. He is the only one preferring high context communication (less is put in writing, more is left to interpretation). Because of his confidence, he is quick in making decisions.

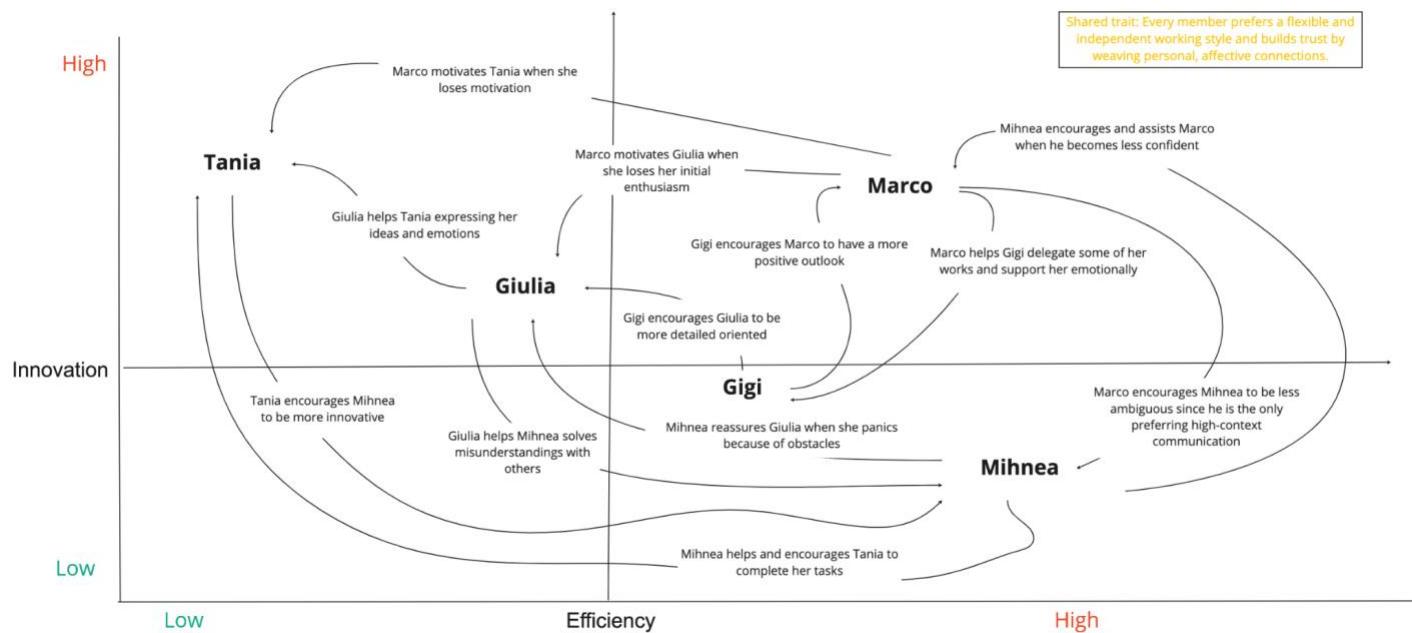
Strengths: Thrives under pressure and has the confidence and courage to overcome obstacles.

Allowable weaknesses: He can sometimes be stubborn and too direct. Although he has high compassion and emotional empathy, he lacks cognitive empathy.

Don't be surprised to find that: Although he can appear a bit cold, he is highly supportive and helpful. He could risk becoming bad humored in his attempts to get things done.

The map below summarizes the relationships between the members.

Figure 2 The relationships between the weakness and strengths of the team



2.2. THE DYNAMICS OF THE TEAM AND ANALYSIS OF ROOT CAUSES

Before and after each meeting, the members described and rated their emotions. This was done to evaluate and monitor the team's dynamics.

Meeting 1	Emotions before meeting	Emotions after meeting
Giulia	Excited 8/10, Trusting 6/10	Excited 8/10, Trusting 8/10
Marco	Content 7/10, Relaxed 7/10	Content 7/10, Relaxed 7/10
Tania	Trusting 6/10, Comfortable 8/10	Trusting 8/10, Comfortable 8/10
Gigi	Tired 4/10, Confident 8/10	Tired 4/10, Confident 8/10
Mihnea	Confident 9/10, Relaxed 8/10	Confident 9/10, Relaxed 8/10
Meeting 2	Emotions before meeting	Emotions after meeting
Gigi	Content 7/10, Trusting 8/10	Content 7/10, Trusting 8/10
Marco	Comfortable 7/10, Trusting 8/10	Comfortable 8/10, Trusting 8/10
Meeting 3	Emotions before meeting	Emotions after meeting
Tania	Confusion 2/10, Comfortable 7/10	Confusion 6/10, Comfortable 4/10
Mihnea	Vulnerable 1/10, Confident 8/10	Vulnerable 6/10, Confident 8/10
Meeting 4	Emotions before meeting	Emotions after meeting
Tania	Trusting 4/10, Confident 6/10	Trusting 8/10, Confident 8/10
Mihnea	Comfortable 6/10, Tired 5/10	Comfortable 7/10, Tired 3/10
Giulia	Content 7/10, Relaxed 8/10	Content 7/10, Relaxed 8/10
Meeting 5	Emotions before meeting	Emotions after meeting
Giulia	Energetic 6/10, Relaxed 6/10	Energetic 7/10, Relaxed 6/10
Marco	Worried 4/10, Trusting 8/10	Worried 1/10, Trusting 8/10
Tania	Motivated 5/10, Confident 6/10	Motivated 8/10, Confident 8/10
Gigi	Anxious 6/10, Stressed 4/10	Anxious 2/10, Stressed 2/10
Mihnea	Tired 2/10, Confident 7/10	Tired 4/10, Confident 7/10
Meeting 6	Emotions before meeting	Emotions after meeting
Giulia	Excited 7/10, Confident 6/10	Excited 8/10, Confident 8/10
Marco	Content 8/10, Tired 2/10	Content 8/10, Tired 3/10
Tania	Trusting 8/10, Comfortable 7/10	Trusting 8/10, Comfortable 7/10
Gigi	Content 6/10, Trusting 5/10	Content 9/10, Trusting 8/10
Mihnea	Confident 8/10, Calm 7/10	Confident 8/10, Calm 9/10

Note: Each member was also working individually.

While working on the briefing note, the team had encountered two obstacles that have caused disagreements.

Problem 1: When working as a subgroup, Tania and Mihnea had two debates: one about the way they should approach the analysis of potential applications of People Analytics and a second one about the explanation of this analysis.

This happened in meeting 3.

Problem 2: Gigi was overworking independently. Thus, when she met the other group members to work on the brief, she felt anxious and exhausted.

This happened in meeting 5.

Impact of the issue: After the first debate, they were a bit confused but it didn't affect their enthusiasm and motivation.

After the second debate, both members started feeling a bit agitated. Tania felt overwhelmed as she couldn't clearly convey her ideas into words, whereas Mihnea felt stressed because he was worried that the task was taking too much time to complete.

Furthermore, Tania tends to avoid confrontation whereas, Mihnea does not. This aggravated Tania's anxiety.

Impact of the issue: Gigi felt a bit overwhelmed and it made her less motivated to complete her tasks. This was also affecting others' performances.

Why these issues might have occurred:

Problem 1:

- Tania and Mihnea had two different ideas approaching the analysis due to different working styles and knowledge bases. Mihnea wanted to do something similar to what he had done in his past consultancy projects, whereas Tania wanted to take a more technical and challenging approach.
- The root cause of this conflict can be found in one of HBR's papers: barriers of managing multicultural teams - conflicting decision-making norms. (21)(Lecture 4). As seen from their profiles, Mihnea makes some decisions based on intuition, while Tania is more analytical. This made Mihnea grow frustrated with Tania's level of detail required.
- Furthermore, since they both prefer making top-down decisions, this has caused them to be unable to agree.

Problem 2:

- Her lack of communication skills and ability to ask for help made her overwork when she spotted that there was missing information that needed to be added. Gigi, being highly empathetic, didn't want to bother others to help her.
- Furthermore, just like Mihnea and Tania, Gigi also prefers making top-down decisions. This was also why she decided to complete the job independently, without seeking others' opinions. To her, this was the quickest and easiest way.

The actions that were taken to resolve the issues:

Problem 1: To solve the first disagreement they decided to talk to the professor and ask for his opinion. To solve the second agreement, Tania and Mihnea talked to Giulia and asked for her opinion. When giving feedback, Giulia took a different approach. To Tania who prefers direct negative feedback, Giulia pointed out directly what could be improved. To Mihnea who prefers indirect negative feedback, Giulia made sure that she wrapped positive feedback around the negative ones, giving more context and suggestions. This happened in meeting 4. Therefore, two interventions mentioned in HBR's paper were taken: managerial intervention and structural intervention. Giulia also helped Tania express her ideas to Mihnea.

Problem 2: Marco is very aware of others' emotions, so he helped Gigi delegate some of her work to Giulia (structural intervention). This happened in meeting 5.

The outcomes of these actions:

Problem 1:

- Giulia made the team more united and mitigated the conflicts. From meeting 4 you can see that Tania becomes more confident and trusting.

Problem 2:

- Giulia learnt from Gigi to have better attention to detail skills. She spotted something wrong and was able to improve it.
- While supporting Gigi emotionally, Marco reminded the team that we were all working towards achieving the same goal, boosting productivity and performance. This happened in meeting 5, as you can see from the emotions table.

Additional actions that could have been taken

Problem 1: To solve the Mihnea-Tania conflict, one other HBR intervention might have been possible: adaptation. They could have accepted their differences and learned how to work with them.

Problem 2: The other team members could have been more empathetic and asked each other (including Gigi) how they are coping with their tasks. Our team was writing how they were feeling before and after each meeting and how the meeting went. We could have implemented a better "platform" - where we also said how we are coping with the work. Moreover, the members could have been reading others' feelings as well.

APPENDIX

1.1. KEY PEOPLE ISSUES

Current HR solutions employed by Volkswagen

Volkswagen Group Whistleblower System:

Allows employees to report misconduct anonymously. (22)

Volkswagen Self Service HR App:

Allows employees to easily access employee information and communicate to other members of staff informally. (23)

Business Model Canvas

Key Partners - Twelve brands from seven countries: Volkswagen, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, ŠKODA, SEAT, CUPRA, Audi, Lamborghini, Bentley, Porsche and Ducati. - More than 340 subsidiary companies - Volkswagen Financial Services	Key Activities - Wide range of further brands and business units including financial services. - Production - Manufacturing - Fleet management - Design - Technological advancements (autonomous vehicles, e-mobility)	Value Propositions - Mobility for Generations to Come" Group strategy and future program, the Volkswagen Group is paving the way for the biggest change process in its history: the realignment of one of the best carmakers to become a globally leading provider of sustainable mobility. - To achieve that, the Group will be transforming its automotive core business, and will among other things be launching a further 30-plus fully electric cars by 2025, as well as expanding battery technology and autonomous driving as new core competences.	Customer Relationships - Leasing options - Loyalty programmes - Customer service/assistance - Personalized options - Dedicated sales team for important customers	Customer Segments - B2C: End-users (Regular customers, mass market) - B2B: Fleet management, cargo and freight market
	Key Resources - 125 production plants - More than 670,000 employees worldwide - More than 340 vehicle models - R&D - Budget - Distribution Networks		Channels - VW Dealerships - Partners - Website - Showrooms - Social Media - Events - Advertisements	
Cost Structure - Capital Investment, Investing in New Ventures - Manufacturing costs - Research & Development - Assets, Facilities, Employees - Legal - Distribution - Marketing		Revenue Streams - B2C and B2B Sales - Sale of vehicles - Financial services - In 2021, it handed over 9,305,400 vehicles to customers worldwide - 223 billion euros in revenue and an operating profit of 9.7 billion euros.		

Figure 12 - Business Model Canvas

1.2. APPLICATIONS

Grouped in McKinsey's categories of People analytics, the three main categories identified are:

1. Who gets hired (13 applications)
2. How people are managed (15 applications)
3. What people do (12 applications)

The subcategories were determined following Visier's report and personal analysis, describing the technology used:(appendix)

1. On-demand data for proactive workforce analysis (8 applications)
2. Operational reports for workforce-decisions (7 applications)
3. Analytics is used to create and monitor workforce plans (15 applications)
4. Predictive analytics for workforce-analysis and forecast (10 applications)
5. Data Collection (7 applications)

The graph below showcases a categorisation of the applications found by the type of data used. There are 4 categories that we identified following an analysis of the reports gathered:

1. Study
2. Employee Data
3. External Data
4. Sensors

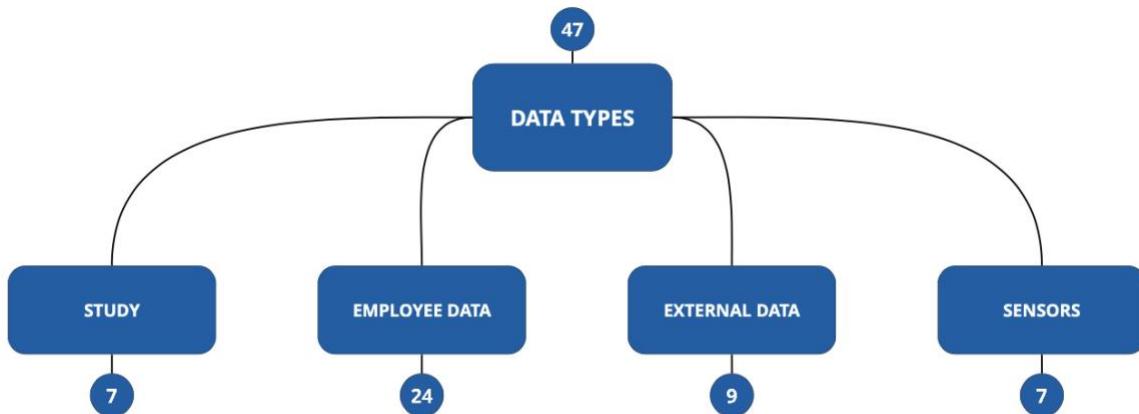


Figure 13 - Data Types of Applications Examples

The applications have been collected in an Excel spreadsheet. The data was gathered from different industries (hospitality, retail, and overall). All applications have their own hypothesis (already proven or not) and for each application, either the algorithms (logistic regression, unsupervised learning), the tools (RolePoint). or the technology (apps) used were identified.

The figure below shows our applications examples spreadsheet. Different colors are used for the categories and subcategories.

Figure 14 - Excel Spreadsheet that illustrate our 47 examples of applications

2.1 POST-MORTEM TEAM DESCRIPTION

To write the profile's description, each member completed the EI quiz, Cultural quiz and the User page manual. Then all information was put together to identify the similarities and differences.



Figure 15 - Brainstorming

Giulia:

How I view myself

EMOTIONAL SELF-AWARENESS: YOU SCORED 16 OUT OF 25



How Tania views me

EMOTIONAL SELF-AWARENESS: YOU SCORED 20 OUT OF 25



POSITIVE OUTLOOK: YOU SCORED 9 OUT OF 25



POSITIVE OUTLOOK: YOU SCORED 12 OUT OF 25



EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL: YOU SCORED 9 OUT OF 25



EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL: YOU SCORED 16 OUT OF 25



ADAPTABILITY: YOU SCORED 13 OUT OF 25



ADAPTABILITY: YOU SCORED 6 OUT OF 25



EMPATHY: YOU SCORED 10 OUT OF 25



EMPATHY: YOU SCORED 7 OUT OF 25



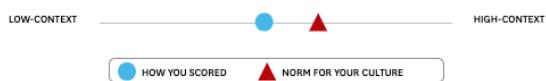
Figure 16 - EI test Giulia

Key takeaways from the discussion with a friend:

- you find it easy to talk about your emotions
 - I rely more on calculated plans than impulsive changes
 - difficult to put me in other people's shoes when people have different past experiences.
- how to leverage your strengths:
- it's easy for me to make a user manual for others - I can communicate my emotions and others can understand me
 - it's very easy for me to talk to new people - I can express my emotions regardless of how well I know someone
 - because of my communication skills and how well I express my ideas - I can be very good as an intermediate between teams

You selected Italy as your nationality. Observe where you fall on each of the eight scales:

Communicating. This scale measures the degree to which a culture prefers **low- or high-context** communication, a metric developed by anthropologist [Edward Hall](#). In low-context cultures (such as the U.S., Germany, and the Netherlands), good communication is precise, simple, and explicit. Messages are expressed and understood at face value. Repetition and written confirmation are appreciated, for clarity's sake. In high-context cultures (such as China, India, and France), communication is sophisticated, nuanced, and layered. Reading between the lines is expected. Less is put in writing, and more is left to interpretation.



Evaluating. Often confused with the Communicating scale, Evaluating measures something distinct: the relative preference for **direct** versus **indirect** criticism. The French, for example, are high-context communicators relative to Americans yet are much more direct with negative feedback. Spaniards and Mexicans are equally high-context communicators, but the Spanish are much more direct than Mexicans when it comes to giving negative feedback.



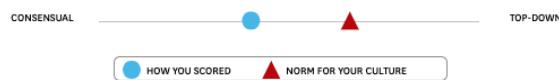
Persuading. This scale measures preference for **principles-first** versus **applications-first** arguments (sometimes described as deductive versus inductive reasoning). People from Germanic and southern European cultures usually find it more persuasive to lay out generally accepted principles before presenting an opinion or making a statement; American and British managers typically lead with opinions or factual observations, adding concepts later to explain as necessary.



Leading. This scale gauges the degree of respect and deference shown to authority figures, on a spectrum between the **egalitarian** and the **hierarchical**. The former camp includes Scandinavia and Israel, whereas China, Russia, Nigeria, and Japan are more hierarchical. The metric builds on the concept of power distance, first researched by [Geert Hofstede](#), who conducted 100,000 management surveys at IBM in the 1970s, and later researched by Robert House and Mansour Javidan in their [GLOBE Study of 62 Societies](#).



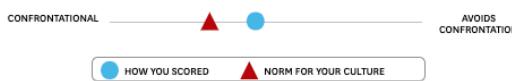
Deciding. We often assume that the most egalitarian cultures in the world are also the most **consensual**, and that the most hierarchical ones are those where the boss makes **top-down** decisions. That's not always the case. The Japanese are strongly hierarchical but have one of the most consensual cultures in the world. Germans are more hierarchical than Americans but also more likely to make decisions through group consensus. This scale explores differences between building group agreement and relying on one person (usually the boss) to make decisions.



Trusting. This scale balances **task-based** trust (from the head) with **relationship-based** trust (from the heart). In a task-based culture, such as the United States, the UK, or Germany, trust is built through work: *We collaborate well, we like each other's work, and we are fond of each other—so I trust you.* In a relationship-based society, such as Brazil, China, or India, trust is built by weaving personal, affective connections: *We have laughed together, have shared time relaxing together, and have come to know each other at a deep, personal level—so I trust you.* Many scholars, such as [Roy Chua](#) and [Michael Morris](#), have researched this topic.



Disagreeing. Everyone knows that a little confrontation is healthy, right? The recent U.S. business literature certainly confirms that viewpoint, but different cultures have varying ideas about how productive it is. People in Indonesia, Japan, and Thailand view the public airing of disagreement very dimly, whereas those in Germany, France, and the Netherlands are quite comfortable with it. This scale measures **how you view confrontation**—whether you feel it is likely to improve group dynamics or to harm relationships within a team.



Scheduling. All businesses follow timetables, but in India, Brazil, and Italy, people treat a schedule as a suggestion. In Switzerland, Germany, and the U.S., people typically stick to the plan. This scale measures whether you view time as **linear or flexible**, depending on how much value you place on structure or adaptability. It is based on the monochronic/polychronic distinction formalized by Edward Hall.



Figure 17 - Cultural Profile Giulia

I am motivated by:

- equality and justice: I always try to forge an inclusive and transparent team environment because I believe that everyone's opinion should be respected and listened
- enjoyment: I enjoy exploring and trying out new ways and methods of doing things.
- caring: Being able to help others is what motivates me to do better. It gives me a sense of achievement.

Page user manual:

1. What gives you ENERGY and what DEPLETES you?

A positive working environment gives me energy, I like to be able to joke around my members. If my team members are not productive, I become less motivated.

2. What's the best way for others to COMMUNICATE with you?

Directly, face to face, I don't like reading it through a message or email because I don't get the tone of it and it could create misunderstandings for me.

3. What do other people MISUNDERSTAND about you?

I think nothing, I am pretty much like an open book.

4. It drives me nuts when:

People don't complete their tasks without previous notice. I don't like when people don't do the jobs assigned. If they have a problem, they should talk to the members and ask for help. I don't like when people are late without notice.

5. My quirks are:

I am clumsy

6. I am more of an introvert/extrovert (circle one)

I am an extroverted introvert. I don't find it difficult to talk or build relationships with others but at the same time, I enjoy spending time by myself. I think my energy comes from being alone in my room rather than going out with friends.

7. I particularly value these qualities in the people I work with:

Attention to detail, good communication, confidence and being able to listen to others.

8. I prefer to give and receive feedback (e.g. over email, in person, one-on-one, in a group):

In-person, one-on-one.

9. Something else I'd like my team to discuss is:

What are the goals we want to reach?

Tania

How i view myself

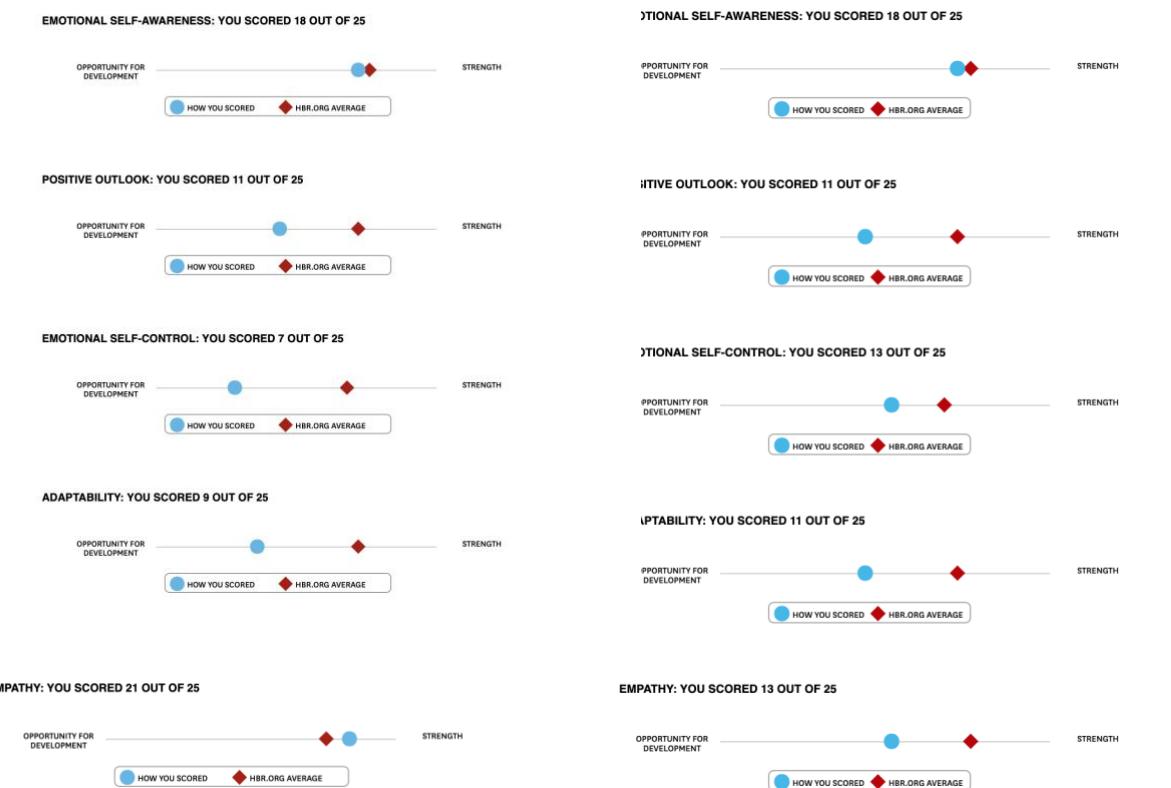


Figure 18 - EI Test Tania

Key takeaways from the discussion with a friend:

- you know your emotions, that's why you don't feel the need to talk about them and ask others' opinions so much as me (Giulia)
- in a way, I feel you are more reserved with your emotions (giulia)
- for empathy: you know how to put yourself in other's shoes, you understand, but you don;t communicate enough - you should validate your assumption by asking others more about their feelings (giulia and tania)

how to leverage your strengths:

- if you are emotional self-aware, it's quicker for you to make a decision and avoid further complications.
- help others understand their emotions and advise people when they are facing a problem, help them solve it - because i am very sober and clear with emotions, and i just need to communicate

- your ability to think from other's perspectives can help work well within a group setting, and encourage others to do the same

cultural test

You selected Romania as your nationality. Observe where you fall on each of the eight scales:

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Evaluating. Often confused with the Communicating scale, Evaluating measures something distinct: the relative preference for direct versus indirect criticism. The French, for example, are high-context communicators relative to Americans yet are much more direct with negative feedback. Spaniards and Mexicans are equally high-context communicators, but the Spanish are much more direct than Mexicans when it comes to giving negative feedback.



Persuading. This scale measures preference for principles-first versus applications-first arguments (sometimes described as deductive versus inductive reasoning). People from Germanic and southern European cultures usually find it more persuasive to lay out generally accepted principles before presenting an opinion or making a statement; American and British managers typically lead with opinions or factual observations, adding concepts later to explain as necessary.



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Figure 19 - Cultural Profile Tania

what motivates you and why?

Enjoyment - Enjoyment gives me a rush of adrenaline that motivates me to complete tasks even in stressful situations

Achievement - Being influential means having a lot of responsibility - knowing that others are depending on me motivates me to not let the team down

Stability - attending the meetings, respecting the deadlines - motivates me to continue working - if I see someone is not respecting deadlines I will be demotivated

user manual

1. What gives you ENERGY and what DEPLETES you?

Social environments give me energy - working with others in an office or at the library or working on the same task in a team - rather than working alone at home which will demotivate me. In social environments, you can be productive for 2 hours and then take 30 minutes breaks with the team. In contrast, at home, I will be less efficient even though I won't take breaks.

2. What's the best way for others to COMMUNICATE with you?

I think the best way to communicate with me is in person rather than emails or phone calls - in-person communication gives more room for communication, both for listening and for expressing feelings. On phone calls, when the meeting ends you hang up the phone. If the meeting is in person and there is an extra point you want to make, you can just say, hang on, I missed this point...

3. What do other people MISUNDERSTAND about you?

I've been told that people think I am cold when they meet me first because I am an introvert. However, I am caring for others after we established a relationship.

4. It drives me nuts when:

There is no stability in teamwork - when people don't attend meetings without announcing or when people do not finish their tasks in time for a deadline that was set up. This might affect other's parts of the project and their deadlines.

5. My quirks are:

I can be spontaneous/irresponsible

6. I am more of an introvert/extrovert (circle one): introvert

7. I particularly value these qualities in the people I work with:

Being organized in splitting the work

Respecting deadlines

Agreeing to work in a sociable environment such as the library or someone's house

Being optimistic because I tend to get stressed and need people to motivate me

8. I prefer to give and receive feedback (e.g. over email, in person, one-on-one, in a group):

in-person, one-to-one

Receiving feedback in-person - same reasons as question 2.

Receiving feedback one-to-one - Because receiving negative feedback in a group might feel like disrespecting someone in front of others and there is no need for the rest of the team to hear it for me to improve

9. Something else I'd like my team to discuss is:

I am finding it hard to get things done sometimes because I tend to overthink. I like to get creative and spend a lot of time thinking of the “best” way or ways to complete a task.

Gigi:

Gigi's self-assessment:

EMOTIONAL SELF-AWARENESS: YOU SCORED 20 OUT OF 25



POSITIVE OUTLOOK: YOU SCORED 14 OUT OF 25



EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL: YOU SCORED 18 OUT OF 25



ADAPTABILITY: YOU SCORED 19 OUT OF 25



EMPATHY: YOU SCORED 24 OUT OF 25



Marco's assessment for Gigi:

EMOTIONAL SELF-AWARENESS: YOU SCORED 14 OUT OF 25



POSITIVE OUTLOOK: YOU SCORED 15 OUT OF 25



EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL: YOU SCORED 19 OUT OF 25



ADAPTABILITY: YOU SCORED 18 OUT OF 25



EMPATHY: YOU SCORED 11 OUT OF 25

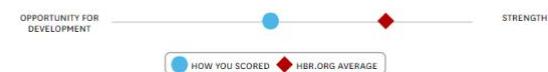


Figure 20 - EI Test Gigi

Key takeaways:

From the discussion, we found that there is a big gap in my level of empathy and how others perceive it. From here, I can see that I may need to improve the way I deliver my intentions to others such that there would be less misunderstandings.

How to leverage strengths:

I found empathy to be one of my biggest strengths, along with my emotional awareness. I believe by being emotionally aware, I am able to understand others. By focusing on these strengths, I will be able to be more understanding to my colleagues throughout the project.

Cultural Profile

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Figure 21 - Cultural Profile Gigi

Motivation

What motivates you and why?

1) Achievement

Most of my motivation stems from being able to contribute meaningfully in a group, such that success is achieved. When placed in an influential and impactful position, I will strive to work better for my team.

2) Freedom

I do not enjoy being micromanaged. I trust my colleagues and expect the same from them. I like to go at my own pace, albeit I acknowledge necessary check-ups are needed to ensure that everyone is on the same page. I value freedom in choices- be it action or speech.

3) Respect

I do not believe humiliation contributes to any genuine long-term productivity. Basic respect should always be present in any work setting.

User Manual

1. What gives you ENERGY and what DEPLETES you?

People's expectations give me energy and people micromanaging me depletes said energy.

2. What's the best way for others to COMMUNICATE with you?

I generally do not mind in-person or virtual. Though, I have found myself with a preference of virtual communication where immediate responses are not needed (i.e., texts and voice notes) as it allows me time to think carefully before responding. Good ideas usually take time.

3. What are your PET PEEVES?

Colleagues submitting work with poor quality.

4. What do other people MISUNDERSTAND about you?

I was told I was intimidating. I think I am alright.

5. It drives me nuts when:

No update or response when prompted.

6. My quirks are:

I work quite independently. When I am focused on the task, I may be quieter.

7. I am more of an introvert/extrovert

8. I particularly value these qualities in the people I work with:

Good sense of logic and flow. Diligent.

9. The best way to communicate with me is:

Text me through Whatsapp. If it is really bad, call me.

10. I prefer to give and receive feedback (e.g. over email, in person, one-on-one, in a group):

Give feedback directly on documents using comments. If elaboration is needed, further comments are preferred to be communicated through Whatsapp texts or voice notes.

11. Something else I'd like my team to discuss is:

What are our goals/ targets?

Marco



Figure 22 - EI Test Marco

Key takeaways from the discussion with a friend:

Empathy and Self-awareness are my best areas. I was surprised to hear this from a friend. On the other hand, both my friend and I believe that I don't have a very positive outlook. It may be worth working on this.

how to leverage your strengths:

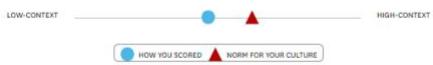
I did not really know that Empathy was one of my strengths. So, one way to leverage this is to actually become more appreciative and aware of it. I would need to understand what are my actions and behaviors that make me empathetic to ensure that these are practiced and improved.

In terms of self-awareness, my friend and I have realized that it is possible that there are some stressful times when I am less self aware. Thus, one way to leverage and improve this strength, is to identify all the barriers to my self-awareness. This could be more stressful events, deadlines. Knowing when I am less self-aware will allow me to ensure that I can regularly practice self-awareness.

Cultural Profile

You selected Italy as your nationality. Observe where you fall on each of the eight scales:

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Figure 23 - Cultural Profile Marco

Motivation

What motivates you and why?

Freedom: To me, a successful person is someone who knows how to master freedom. Therefore, it is a key motivator for my life because working towards freedom allows me to become a better person. It is not just about the fun activities I do as a result of freedom, but it is also about how I decide to plan and act on my goals in a pleasant way.

Caring: One day I would like to be in a position to give back. This is the reason why for me caring is a key motivator to my professional life. To me, being successful is not only about personal growth; it is also about ensuring that even the people who don't have the same opportunities are given a chance to grow and improve.

Enjoyment: enjoyment to me is an important part of growth. I think it is important in life that we grow and improve as humans but in a joyful manner. An exciting journey is the best way to promote personal growth and development. There is no point in working if I don't enjoy it, or if it does not mean a lot to me.

-Do the page user manual

1. What gives you ENERGY and what DEPLETES you?
 - Knowing that I am helping colleagues or clients gives me energy. Multitasking and replying to different people and requests depletes me. I would prefer meaningful deep work rather than constant disruptions.
2. What's the best way for others to COMMUNICATE with you?
 - I like both in-person or virtual but I love talking over long walks.
3. What are your PET PEEVES?
 - Ambiguity - when tasks are deliverables are not well formulated
4. What do other people MISUNDERSTAND about you?
 - I am cold and shy - True, but at the beginning
 - People could be intimidated or find the need to act formal - A less formal environment is the best environment for me
5. It drives me nuts when:
 - People are not sincere or make up excuses. I would prefer vulnerability so that I can help
6. My quirks are:
 - I like to work independently and sometimes having time to myself is a great way to recharge and be more present
7. I am more of an **introvert/extrovert** (circle one)
8. I particularly value these qualities in the people I work with:
 - Independence, confidence, determination
9. The best way to communicate with me is:
 - Text if it is quick, but call if it is quite complex.

10. I prefer to give and receive feedback (e.g. over email, in person, one-on-one, in a group):

- one-on-one are the best I believe because you have a chance to truly understand feedback and ask questions

11. Something else I'd like my team to discuss is:

- timelines, preferred working styles

Mihnea

My view:



Robert's View:

Figure 24 - EI Test Mihnea

I always viewed myself as an empathetic person and try to use this strength whenever I find myself in different scenarios that require my help. My aim is to understand people and help others around me.

CULTURAL PROFILE

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Figure 25 - Cultural Profile Mihnea

Motivation
What motivates you and why?

1) Achievement

Most of my motivation stems from my confidence of being able to deliver (either individually or together with my teammates) an excellent piece of work and achieve our goals.

2) Freedom

I value freedom and believe that people thrive in different scenarios. Thus, letting people choose their own schedule will improve results.

3) Respect

Respect is the most important aspect. Everything starts from respect. If we respect each other, than I am more than confident that we can deliver on our targets.

User Manual

1. What gives you ENERGY and what DEPLETES you?

Stress and the ability to make someone else happy gives me energy. People's lack of effort, pretending they don't understand something or don't want to try to understand.

2. What's the best way for others to COMMUNICATE with you?

Although I appear a bit tough at first (because I am introverted), I don't mind any form of communication and I am open to any comment from others.

3. What are your PET PEEVES?

Colleagues lack of ambition and poor standards.

4. What do other people MISUNDERSTAND about you?

Again, because I am introverted and don't speak much at first, as I try to analyze the others around me and form an opinion about them to see how I can approach them, I may seem unfriendly and uncommunicative.

5. It drives me nuts when:

People don't make an effort to understand what I am trying to explain. In one word, ignorance.

6. My quirks are:

Don't think I have a particular one.

7. I am more of an introvert/extrovert

8. I particularly value these qualities in the people I work with:

Good understanding, not having to explain multiple times the same thing. Fast, reliable, trustworthy.

9. The best way to communicate with me is:

Talk to me directly. If not possible, text me.

10. I prefer to give and receive feedback (e.g. over email, in person, one-on-one, in a group):

Give feedback directly on documents using comments or face to face in a team meeting.

11. Something else I'd like my team to discuss is:

What is the most comfortable environment/schedule you work in/after.

I like to get things done. In a team, I am the one that motivates the other members to complete a task and not overthink.

2.2 DYNAMICS OF THE TEAM

MEETINGS

We designed a work-framework in which, for every meeting, we write how we feel before and after the meeting using the figure below. We also described how the meeting went to support the post-mortem.

A List of Emotions

Go beyond the obvious to identify exactly what you're feeling.

Angry	Sad	Anxious	Hurt	Embarrassed	Happy
Grumpy	Disappointed	Afraid	Jealous	Isolated	Thankful
Frustrated	Mournful	Stressed	Betrayed	Self-conscious	Trusting
Annoyed	Regretful	Vulnerable	Isolated	Lonely	Comfortable
Defensive	Depressed	Confused	Shocked	Inferior	Content
Spiteful	Paralyzed	Bewildered	Deprived	Guilty	Excited
Impatient	Pessimistic	Skeptical	Victimized	Ashamed	Relaxed
Disgusted	Tearful	Worried	Aggrieved	Repugnant	Relieved
Offended	Dismayed	Cautious	Tormented	Pathetic	Elated
Irritated	Disillusioned	Nervous	Abandoned	Confused	Confident

Figure 26 - List of Emotions

Meeting 1: Gigi & Marco (09/03/2022 14:00)

Gigi: Meeting went well. A rough guide of the report is established and tasks are divided.

Before meeting: Relaxed (8/10), Tiredness (5/10)

After meeting: Relaxed (9/10), Tiredness (7/10)

Marco: Meeting went well - initial conversation on how to structure the work and share the responsibilities. This has helped us with confusion and ambiguity because we devised a plan to tackle uncertainty around deliverables and responsibilities.

Before the meeting: Confused (7/10), Tired (6/10), Relaxed (6/10)

After the meeting: Confused (4/10), Tired (8/10), Relaxed (7/10)

Meeting 1: Tania & Mihnea (14/03/2022 14:30)

Tania: Before the meeting I was feeling stressed because I was working on my dissertation and some of my links got removed. Also, I was stressed because the report did not have a clear structure yet and we did not have a plan.

After the meeting I was feeling less stressed because we created a plan. However, we had 2 different ideas of the approach of the problem so this is why I got a bit more confused. But we decided we would sort the issue by clarifying with the professor and we managed to make progress with the initial research.

Before the meeting: Stressed (7/10), Confused (5/10)

After the meeting: Stressed (3/10), Confused (6/10)

Mihnea: Meeting went well. Initial conversation and debate about the aim of our task. Came up with theories and researched solutions. Awaiting answers on how to proceed from the head teacher.

Before meeting: Tiredness (8/10), Focused (8/10)

After meeting: Tiredness (7/10), Relaxed (8/10)

Supervisor clarifications

- the existing application maps made from consulting firms examples should be included in the appendices
- when we recommend to Volkswagen we choose from those existing ones but we should also brainstorm and be specific about what data sources we use, what data points we test, and what hypothesis we are trying to prove - our recommendations should be related to Volkswagen business model and their people issues (point 1)
- He gave an example: if the company has an issue with people taking too many leaves, the technology and recommendation should be related to solve that problem.

Because the recommendation should be related to point 1, I (Tania) propose we finish the applications maps and categorisation now and we do the specific recommendations only after point 1 is finished or at least we have some bullet points from G and M

GIULIA'S MEETING WITH TANIA'S AND MIHNEA COMPANY

Meeting went well, very productive and energetic. Enjoyed reading's everyone test results.

Before the meeting: excited to start, Tiredness (0/10), excitement (8/10)

after meeting: Tiredness 2/10, excitement (8/10)

Meeting 2: Tania and Mihnea (15/03/2022 22:45)

Tania:

Before the meeting: Tired (8/10), Confused (2/10)

Before the meeting I am feeling tired after 5 hours of working on my dissertation. I have a clear mind (I am not confused about the task anymore) as I had a discussion with the supervisor.

After the meeting: Tired (10/10), Confused (1/10)

The meeting went well as I explained Mihnea the supervisor's instructions. The meeting was really short because we realized we can't complete task 2 until Gigi and Marco complete task 1. We scheduled a meeting with them for updates.

Mihnea:

Before the meeting: Tiredness (0/10), Excitement (7/10)

After the meeting: Tiredness (2/10), Excitement (5/10)

We finalized the research and planned how we are going to write and organize ourselves.

Meeting 1 : Mihnea, Gigi, Marco, Tania, Giulia (16.03.2022)

Tania:

Before the meeting: Confused (4/10), Relaxed (4/10)

After the meeting: Confused (2/10), Relaxed (8/10)

The meeting went well, we set up deadlines for both sub-teams (M&T and G&M). I think the task is more clear now after hearing the others' ideas as well. Marco proposed a more general map of application (other companies involved as well, not only related to Volkswagen.)

Before the meeting, Mihnea and I were planning to wait for the other 2 to finish their task before we do the clear maps. After the meeting and discussing with Marco we realized we could actually do a general map and just the recommendation part we'd do after point 1 is done.

Mihnea:

Meeting went well. We organized ourselves and set deadlines.

Before the meeting: Tired (0/10), Excited(6/10)

After the meeting: Tired (0/10), Excited (5/10)

Gigi:

Before meeting: Clarity (3/10)

After meeting: Clarity (5/10)

I feel like it became clearer what tasks we need to do. Sub-deadlines were also established so that we will be able to stay organized.

Giulia

before meeting: Clarity (6/10)

After meeting: Clarity (8/10)

Much clearer what tasks we need to do. Sub-deadlines were also established so that we will be able to stay organized.

Marco

calm (7/10), surprised (8/10), happy, (8/10), tired (7/10)

calm (9/10), surprised (5/10), happy, (9/10), tired (8/10)

It was good to clarify the tasks and understand how everyone's responsibilities are linked. We discussed next steps and ways to integrate individual analysis in one single report.

Meeting 3: Tania and Mihnea (17/03/2022 15:00)

Tania:

Before the meeting: Tired (2/10), Confused (5/10)

Before the meeting I am feeling tired after 5 hours of working on my dissertation. I have a clear mind (I am not confused about the task anymore) as I had a discussion with the supervisor.

After the meeting: Tired (8/10), Confused (1/10)

During the 2-hour meeting, Mihnea and I researched examples of applications.

Mihnea:

Before the meeting: Tiredness (3/10), Focused (2/10)

After the meeting: Tiredness (4/10), Focused (0/10)

Researched examples of applications and set up an Excel file

Meeting 4: Tania and Mihnea (18/03/2022 13:00)

Tania:

Before the meeting: Tired (5/10), Confused (5/10), Excited (7/10)

After the meeting: Tired (7/10), Confused (1/10)

In this meeting, we shared the example applications each of us found - because we needed to create categories and subcategories (a map) of our examples.

There was a debate at the beginning - Mihnea preferred only to add the conclusions drawn from each example without mentioning the data science method (the data source used, what was analyzed). I realized that he was more business focused and I was more data-focused (methods). We decided to combine the 2 approaches, as a recommendation for Volkswagen should mention the approach (what data source to use, what tool), but also how that approach would benefit the company (what were the conclusions drawn).

I think this is good for post-mortem point 2. (it relates to high-context and low context communication)

Mihnea:

Before the meeting: Tiredness (1/10), Focused (9/10)

After the meeting: Tiredness (2/10), Focused (7/10)

Finalized applications research and created application maps

Meeting 5: Marco, Gigi (18/03/2022 20:30)

Before the meeting: A lot of unclarity over the approach and the details relating to the people issues problems.

Marco: Energetic (8/10), Happy (6/10), Tired (8/10), Stressed (7/10)

Gigi: Trusting (6/10), Comfortable (7/10), Stressed (5/10)

After the meeting: Most of the areas of ambiguity have been covered. Together, we outlined a structure and an approach for the people issues. A map has been developed and we agreed on how these issues are affecting the company. More stress is felt as the workload is more clearly defined.

Marco: Impatient (7/10), Tired (9/10), Comfortable (9/10)

Gigi: Trusting (8/10), Comfortable (8/10), Stressed (7/10)

Meeting: Tania, Mihnea, Gigi, Marco (20/03/2022 11:30)

Tania:

Before the meeting: Tired (8/10), Excited (3/10)

I wasn't feeling that well before the meeting as I only slept for 5 hours that night.

After the meeting: Tired (10/10)

Gigi and Marco presented point 1. Me and Mihnea showed them our application examples and they added a few more, relatable to VW people issues. We selected a few relevant examples together. Gigi and Marco left, and me and Mihnea stayed to finish explaining our final recommendations.

Tania & Mihnea:

For recommendation 1, after deciding on it, me and Mihnea had a debate on how to present it. While I wanted to include information such as data sources used and hypothesis tested, Mihnea only wanted to talk about the user-interface. To solve the conflict, we called Giulia and presented our views.

Mihnea:

Before the meeting: Tiredness (7/10), Focused (4/10)

After the meeting: Tiredness (2/10), Focused (7/10)

Slept for 6 hours, but keen to get on with the work.

Gigi:

Before the meeting: Tiredness (4/10), Comfortable (6/10)

After the meeting: Tiredness (5/10), Comfortable (7/10)

Only had 4 hours of sleep- but I am feeling okay and down to work. I am thinking a lot about the exhibition I passed on my way here so I am a little distracted.

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