



COMMUNICATING IN COLOR: THE FOUR COLOR ENERGIES

The Four Temperaments

In ancient Greece, Hippocrates, the founder of an influential school of medicine, observed that many people shared similar characteristics. While one group displayed certain consistent behavior patterns, other groups had completely different types of consistent behaviors.

Based on his research, Hippocrates identified four different personality types, and he discovered that once he and his colleagues had identified the group to which a person belonged, they could then predict that person's responses.

Hippocrates thought that you could determine a person's personality type based on the proportions of different bodily fluids. While we know today that this part of his theory was incorrect, his behavioral observations were so accurate that they are the foundation for many personality theories today.

Carl Jung and the Four Color Energies

Swiss psychologist Carl Jung built on the work of Hippocrates and defined the four temperaments in terms of colors: Cool Blue, Earth Green, Sunshine Yellow and Fiery Red.

Everyone has all of the color energies in their personality, to differing degrees. Depending on the situation, our different color energies and the qualities associated with them will be present at various times.

COOL BLUE: showing no bias, objective, detached, analytical

EARTH GREEN: still, tranquil, calming, soothing

SUNSHINE YELLOW: cheerful, uplifting, spirited, enthusiastic

FIERY RED: positive, decisive, bold, assertive

While everyone has all of the color energies, we have them in varying amounts, with one of the colors as our dominant color energy.

What Color Are You?

To determine your dominant color energy, locate where you would fall along the following two axes of behavior or preference.

Introversion \leftrightarrow Extraversion

Thinking \leftrightarrow Feeling (Decision-making)

You can use information about the color energies to develop strategies to help you succeed in both your personal life and your work. The key to success is first to understand yourself, then to understand others and finally to use this knowledge to manage interactions in your relationships with your family, friends, colleagues and clients.

Color Energy Characteristics

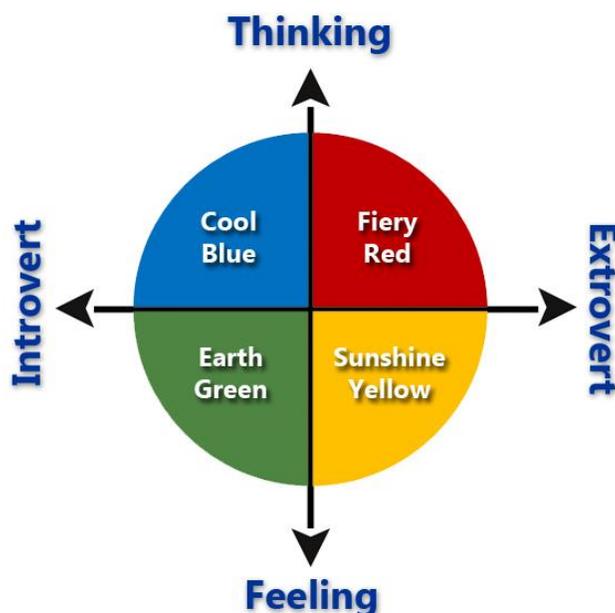
Here are some characteristics of each of the four color energies:

COOL BLUE: cautious, precise, deliberate, questioning, formal

EARTH GREEN: caring, encouraging, sharing, patient, relaxed

SUNSHINE YELLOW: sociable, dynamic, demonstrative, enthusiastic, persuasive

FIERY RED: competitive, demanding, determined, strong-willed, purposeful



A Closer Look at Dominant Color Energies

Remembering that we are each a unique combination of all of the color energies, let's look at some characteristics that people with various dominant color energies tend to share.

COOL BLUE: People with a high level of Cool Blue energy live their lives according to the principles, facts and logic they find in reality. They like to analyze all of the possibilities to make sure that they don't make an uninformed decision. They are planners and organizers, with the ability to work out tasks systematically from start to finish.

As a result of their thoroughness, they are often reluctant to make or express decisions quickly. Facts, logic and principles *can appear* more important than friendships or personal gratification. They *may be seen as* detached or even distant at times.

EARTH GREEN: People with a high level of Earth Green energy are especially concerned with feelings and relationships. Their concern for other people's well-being can often bring warmth to a situation. They are sensitive to the values behind people's actions and are often able to remain calm and patient even in very stressful circumstances.

They can be slow or reluctant to shift their personal values despite the apparent logic of an argument or situation. They tend to avoid decisions that could involve violation of their values or risking the unknown.

SUNSHINE YELLOW: People with a high level of Sunshine Yellow energy spend their efforts racing toward their dreams of the future. They move from one idea or activity to another, building the possibilities of tomorrow. Their behavior can be fun, and others can get caught up in it. Because they focus their attention on futures and often intuitive visions, they *may be perceived* by others as more imaginative and creative than the other colors.

They may become completely committed to an idea and then discard it soon if it loses its excitement. They may therefore appear to others as shallow, impractical and unrealistic in difficult times. Their optimism can mean that they will be prone to denial at times.

FIERY RED: People with a high level of Fiery Red energy know what they want and have little difficulty in stating their conclusions. Concerned primarily with action, they deal quickly with the present situation and *appear to have* little concern for the past. Their responses are efficient and focused. They know what they want and tend to be impatient with delays.

They may show less concern for the feelings of others or for personal relationships. Others can see their actions as hard or critical because they limit the attention they pay to their relationships. They often seek power and control over situations.

When Strengths Become Weaknesses

When we are playing to our strengths, we are generally at our most comfortable and are likely to be most effective and efficient. However, if we overplay our strengths, they can become weaknesses.

Potential Weaknesses of Cool Blue Energy

- People with a lot of Cool Blue energy have a strong need to understand and question. This can lead to a tendency to overanalyze and become overloaded with information.
- Avoidance of confrontation can lead to feelings and resentments being bottled up.
- They may read too much between the lines and foresee the worst possible outcome of situations.

For development

They can increase their effectiveness by:

- Learning not to expect perfection from themselves and others
- Expressing themselves more freely

Potential Weakness of Earth Green Energy

- People who use a lot of Earth Green energy like to be cooperative and enjoy facilitating other people's contributions. As a result, their own contributions can be overlooked and undervalued.

- They tend to judge their own and others' actions against their personal values. They can become defiant and stubborn if these values are violated.
- They focus on the positive in others and prefer to praise rather than critique. Because of this, they may avoid confrontation or giving necessary negative feedback.

For development

They can increase their effectiveness by:

- Developing greater assertiveness and making their contributions more visible
- Being more open to other people's values, even if at first they appear in conflict with their own

Potential Weakness of Sunshine Yellow Energy

- People who use a lot of Sunshine Yellow energy are responsive to others, but because of this they may make promises they cannot keep.
- They are motivated by relationships and can tend to lose track of time.
- Their willingness to help others and be part of a team may lead to over-commitment and failure to see things through
- They may become overly emotional when under stress or in conflict and may fail to keep the continuing support of the group

For development

They can increase their effectiveness by:

- Realizing they cannot please everyone
- Learning to say "no" more often. Saying "no" encourages them to stay focused on their own objectives.

Potential Weakness of Fiery Red Energy

- Authoritative and independent, the effectiveness of people who use a lot of Fiery Red energy can suffer as a result of their failure to win the commitment of others on their team.
- Their ability to focus single-mindedly on their objectives and their reliance on their own personal experience only may lead to their having a narrow field of vision. This may lead to a difficulty in anticipating problems and studying alternative approaches.
- Their desire for closure and to save time by doing things themselves can lead to an inability to develop the potential input of others.

For development

They can increase their effectiveness by:

- Acknowledging that the accomplishment of organizational objectives requires teamwork and cooperation and by becoming more receptive to both.
- Realizing that by taking the time to develop, inform and gain the support of others, they can greatly increase commitment, leading to improved overall performance. Creating "buy-in" can be easy, and is vital to the success of a team.