

What's your communication style under stress?

In advance of learning day 2: *Leadership Principles for Collaboration*, please complete the following self-assessment. This assessment will accompany discussions during the 'Mastering Difficult Conversations' workshop.

Answer the following statements with a true or false response:

1. At times I avoid situations that might bring me into contact with people I'm having problems with.	True or False
2. I have put off returning phone calls or e-mails because I simply didn't want to deal with the person who sent them.	True or False
3. In order to get my point across, I sometimes exaggerate my side of the argument.	True or False
4. If I seem to be losing control of a conversation, I might cut people off or change the subject in order to bring it back to where I think it should be.	True or False
5. Sometimes when people bring up a touchy or awkward issue I try to change the subject.	True or False
6. When it comes to dealing with awkward or stressful subjects, sometimes I hold back rather than give my full and candid opinion.	True or False
7. Rather than tell people exactly what I think, sometimes I rely on jokes, sarcasm, or snide remarks to let them know I'm frustrated.	True or False
8. When others make points that seem stupid to me, I sometimes let them know it without holding back at all.	True or False
9. When I'm stunned by a comment, sometimes I say things that others might take as forceful or attacking—terms such as "Give me a break!" or "That's ridiculous!"	True or False
10. When I've got something tough to bring up, sometimes I offer weak or insincere compliments to soften the blow.	True or False
11. Sometimes when things get a bit heated I move from arguing against others' points to saying things that might hurt them personally.	True or False
12. If I really get into a heated discussion, I've been known to be tough on the other person. In fact, they might even feel a bit insulted or hurt.	True or False

Scoring

Place a check next to the corresponding numbers where you provided 'true' as the answer. Then add the number of checks in each row to determine your total score

1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 5. <input type="checkbox"/> 6. <input type="checkbox"/> 7. <input type="checkbox"/> 10. <input type="checkbox"/>	Silence Total= _____
3. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. <input type="checkbox"/> 8. <input type="checkbox"/> 9. <input type="checkbox"/> 11. <input type="checkbox"/> 12. <input type="checkbox"/>	Violence Total= _____

Your silence and violence scores give you a measure of how frequently you fall into these less-than-perfect strategies. It's actually possible to score high in both. A high score (3+ checked boxes) means you use this technique fairly often. It also means you're human. Most people toggle between holding back and becoming too forceful.