

## Styles 01: The Fundamentals Lesson 01

### The Role Learning Styles Will Play in Your Success

#### Video 01: Building Better Relationships Through Styles

Welcome to the Market Force course on Styles Fundamentals. The intention of all of our training programs is to help you become more prosperous in life and to reduce the unnecessary suffering that so many people experience in business.

In this course, you will learn how to use Styles as a powerful tool for improving your relationships and becoming more successful in business. We will illuminate a series of simple distinctions, the awareness of which will greatly impact the quality of your life and your career.

As a starting point, please consider that all advanced species use some form of language for communication; however, humans have clearly developed the most sophisticated uses of language. And, we use our language in two distinct ways:

1. **Externally**, as in conversations we have with others, and
2. **Internally**, as in the dialog we keep contained within our own minds.

Our lives are constantly being shaped by all the conversations we have, but make no mistake it is the internal, unspoken ones that have the greatest impact on how we view the world and other people. Or, maybe more accurately phrased, how we *think* the world should be and how we think others *ought to behave*.

If we were to investigate these internal conversations a bit deeper, we would find that there are actually four different categories of conversations that people have that ultimately form their points of view – and we call these Styles. And, our Styles system will help you categorize and identify them, and more importantly, relate quickly to each.

As you gain greater insight into other peoples' unspoken conversations, you will be able to illuminate their concerns, which allows you to work more effectively and build better relationships with them. We call this following ***the Platinum Rule***. Haven't heard of it? Most people haven't.

Most people are more familiar with the Golden Rule -- treating other people how *you* want to be treated. This is a good rule in terms of *making you feel good*, but it doesn't help you much when you are dealing with others. That is why we invite you to *upgrade to the Platinum Rule* -- treating other people how *they* want to be treated. This, as you've probably guessed, gets a lot easier once you learn to use the Styles framework to distinguish what others *actually* want.

Ultimately, understanding Styles will teach you that we all react differently to pressure. Pressure is the key anchor then we want you to have as you learn about our system. You see, without pressure, we are all free to behave in whatever manner we feel is the most appropriate; however, when pressure hits, as it does often in business, we tend to fall into very predictable patterns of behavior. This course will help you will become a skillful observer of these patterns and improve two primary skills for you in the game of business:

- **Your own behavior under pressure.** Before you will ever be able to relate better with others, it important to look in the mirror and be able to manage your own reactions to pressure.
- **Other people's concerns.** When you learn what causes other people to feel stress, you can help reduce their pressure, and instantly improve your identity along the way.

Improving and combining these two skills will do more to improve your reputation, advance your career and create success than almost anything else you can do in this game of business.

Ready to get started? Here we go...

## **Video 02: The Good & The Bad News About People**

One of our foundational claims is that business is a people problem...meaning that business itself is *really is* simple, *but it's the people* who complicate things. So, in order to become *really* successful at business, you need to become *really* good at solving people problems.

Think for a moment about how many of the challenges at work every day are related to the human breakdowns you experience, as opposed to a lack of skills or clear business threats. Human breakdowns like errors, miscommunications, misunderstandings,

misinterpretations, motivation problems and actual *feelings* are more likely to get in the way of your productivity than everything else you face...combined.

When you learn to minimize these challenges and move through them more quickly when they do arise, you and your team can create lots more satisfaction and earning potential. So, since people are the problem, let's take a look at what you're up against.

Human beings are incredibly complex. The human brain is the most powerful processor on the planet, responsible for incredible advances in things like art, culture, exploration and technology. Even so, at times it can actually cause us to act just like animals!

This is because pressure creates a particular dynamic in our brains, and in our bodies, that we have almost no control over, and most people aren't even aware of.

But before we get there, and to begin your journey to becoming an expert in the domain of human dynamics, we need to share two critical things about understanding people.

First, the bad news:

**There is no cure for the human condition!** No matter how frustrated you get or how hard you try, you will never get people to stop acting like people. There just is no cure. Humans are part of a biological imperative, programmed for survival. That's just the human condition and there's nothing you can do about it.

And that leads to the good news:

**This actually makes people predictable.** When you become aware of another person's underlying concerns, you gain greater insight into what drives their behavior. Styles will simplify this complicated system for you, so that when there is pressure in the environment, it will allow you to better predict how people are going to act all around you, so you can be ready.

Keeping these two things in mind, the bad and the good news about people, is your first stepping stone into working better with others.

### **Video 03: Your Brain Under Pressure**

Your brain is the most powerful processor on the planet. Understanding how it works under pressure is critical to learning how to deal better with other people. So, let's look at the three primary areas and functions of the brain:

- The first part of the brain to develop is referred to as the "reptilian brain" and is actually called your **amygdala**. Your amygdala is the most primitive part of your brain. It's about the size of an almond and it sits at the base of your brain stem. It constantly scans your environment for potential threats, and you can of it as your personal risk highlighter. It does not language to describe what it is detecting, so its warnings sound just like an alarm going off to your biology.
- Your amygdala resides inside of your **limbic system**, which is the second part of your brain to develop. Your limbic system runs your life, 24/7. Its vast set of responsibilities include things like drive for hunger, sex, protection, and the care of offspring. It controls bodily functions like heart rate, blood pressure and sweat glands. It, too, has no language, but interestingly, it is the storage area for your long-term memories, which explains why most memories tend to be more emotionally-based than factual in nature.
- Finally, the outermost layer of your brain is the last part of your brain to develop, and it's called the **neocortex**. The neocortex is the largest and most complex part of the brain. It is involved with all higher functions such as sensory perception, spatial reasoning, language and complex thought. It's where things like art and science and culture live within you and it could be argued that the neocortex is the thing that makes you uniquely human.

That is, until you experience pressure.

When you, and all of us, are exposed to a *high enough* level of pressure – for instance when you realize you have two more hours of work to complete on a project that is due in 30 minutes – your amygdala kicks into high gear.

Within milliseconds, certain neurochemicals flood your brain in order to deal with the pressure, creating a potent cocktail:

- Your neocortex gets a shot of a drug called serotonin, subduing and pacifying your higher-level mental processing, essentially taking it offline.
- Then, your limbic system, including your amygdala, receives doses of dopamine, which reduces inhibitions, and adrenaline, which gets you all revved up.

In this moment of pressure, the most primitive part of your brain is being encouraged to do *whatever it wants as fast as it can*, which is to respond to the pressure *as if your life depends on it*. Think of one of these stressful situations right now and you can probably feel it happening real time in your body. Pay attention going forward now, and you will

begin to notice that your heart begins to race, you break out in a sweat, your breath shallows, and you quite literally “lose your mind”. This is your biology running your time-tested, hard-wired, survival strategy.

It is important here to note that this response to pressure is automatic and just part of your nature, so it is neither psychological nor does it have anything to do with your personality. In other words, the networks are up and running, it’s the human beings that need the upgrade. And, understanding that your biology under pressure is your Style is the first step, we claim, to upgrading your humanware.

### **Video 04: Aren’t We Always Under Pressure?**

Now that you have seen the brain science and biology behind pressure, the question becomes, “why does it affect us in business?”

To answer this question, let’s look more deeply in pressure for us as human beings. In prehistoric times, the only type of pressure that we faced were life-threatening situations, referred to as “actual” pressure. This was true life and death pressure, and to live through the risk of death required a Survival response from the human biology.

But then our ancestors started becoming civilized, cultivating our society and developing shelter, clothing and food, and survival suddenly became much less of a concern, leaving our amygdala’s with a whole lot less to do.

However, as it turns out, the amygdala had no intention of lying down on the job. Given its primitive nature and single-focused, survival imperative, all it knows how to do is keep patrolling its environment, on the lookout for potential threats...even if there aren’t any!

It was under these conditions that a whole new type of pressure emerged, which we call “perceived” risk. These are situations that we face every day that feel very, very threatening, but no matter how bad they get, there is no chance of you dying. Typically at worst there is humiliation and a hit to your identity or reputation if there is failure, but with perceived risk, survival is not at stake.

The irony here is that the safer our lives have gotten, the greater number of threats our amygdalas have been able to detect. As the threshold for *what constitute a threat* got lower and lower, humans massively expanded their ability to experience pressure. And humans are the only species on the planet that experience two different types of pressure.

It is this confusion between actual and perceived risk that is the source of so much stress in our lives. You see, business is just a game we invented after we became a civilized species. It is an entertaining and useful game, but when we treat it like it's life-or-death, we suffer.

Now referring to business as “a game” isn't meant to downplay its importance or significance, just to put it in perspective. The game of business comes with real consequences of success and failure. Making mistakes is frustrating, failing to win a project can really sting and getting fired could be devastating, but regardless of how those things make you feel, none of them will actually kill you. This is what we mean by calling it a game.

However, the mere fact that we are able to feel this type of pressure so deeply makes it really hard to distinguish between actual and perceived threats. And, once your amygdala gets triggered and your biology takes over, there literally is no difference between the two since the drugs in your brain respond in the exact same way.

And since we experience pressure all the time, without awareness, we tend to act in the same ways regardless of the situation. The first key then, is awareness – recognizing that all pressure is not created equal.

## Video 05: Change the Game in Your Favor

The most successful people in business have figured out that *business is just a game*. These same people have figured out what the purpose of the game of business actually is. Understanding this key fundamental will change the game in your favor moving forward. So, let's examine.

First, we know that game of business is not a life or death game – even if we fail in business, we don't die! So, we know the game cannot be for our lives. Second, and this surprises many people, the game is not for money. Nope. It turns out the game of business is for “identity.” Think about his claim for a minute, and think about the most successful people you know who create, establish, grow and manage their identity over time. Those are the ones who win more often in the game.

Think of your identity as a publicly traded stock. At any point, its share price is based on the collective perception of others of how much it's worth. So, just as a stock price can go up or down over time, your identity does as well. In the case of business, the *measurement* of your identity is the assessment people have about how much value *you create for them* **combined with** how much they trust you. That's the formula.

When people make the mistake of playing the game of business as if it is life-or-death, they lose the ability to differentiate between “actual pressure” (a threat to their life) and “business pressure” (a threat to their identity). The result of this oversight is that our biology gets involved. Once that happens, habits begin to kick in to save our lives, *even though nobody is trying to kill us!* Think about that for a minute – it’s quite important. And, just as important now is to know that habits two observable characteristics:

1. **They are repetitive.** Meaning, you do them over and over.
2. **They are unconscious.** Meaning, you’re not even aware you are doing them.

Before we go further, it is crucial that we acknowledge that you, and everyone else in the game of business, engage in both “good” habits and “bad” habits. Simply stated:

- **A good habit** is something you do that helps you achieve your desired identity and your intended future.
- **A bad habit**, well that’s the opposite. A bad habit works against your desired future and damages your identity.

Obviously then, the bad habits are the ones we want to eliminate from your game.

The best way to change a habit is to become aware (or conscious) that you are doing it. The moment this happens, you shift the second condition of what constitutes a habit, thereby transforming what you are doing under pressure from being a habit into being a choice.

And being now aware of what you are doing, you can activate your neocortex, begin to change your game, and consider the following three questions:

- Is this how *I want to behave?*
- Is this how *I want to be seen by others?*
- Is this getting me *what I want?*

If the answer to these three questions is “yes”, then keep up the good work. But, if you answer “no” to even one, then you now have the power to stop acting in that manner.

Becoming more aware of your habits - acknowledging and managing your habits in the face of pressure – will begin to change the game in your favor!