

Organizational Zoo: Attribute Ice Breaker



1. Select from the list below the most appropriate five words which:

- ++ MOST describe your strongest traits
- + Describe your next 5 strongest traits
- Is not like your normal behaviour
- = LEAST describe your normal behaviour

Do this quickly without thinking too deeply about it, your initial feeling will be quite accurate.

It is advisable to scan through quickly marking + and - and then go back and adjust for ++ and =. Remember to prioritise, these are your key characteristics, the ones that most define you. In the end you should have a total to 20 words marked in the empty columns (left of words). (5 marked with each of ++, +, -, =). **You have 5 minutes to compile the 20 words.**

2. Fold the top of the page over to meet with the top of the table and transfer the 20 words into the appropriate row of the table, sorting them into order of importance as you proceed (left to right). Now read the 4 lines out your loud to partner or group.

3. Think about or discuss with your partner or group:

- How closely does this describe the normal you?
- If you know your partner well, does it match your perspective of them?
- Discuss how your perspective differs from your partners or how you differ from them.

Accountable	Cunning	Intellectual	Reflective
Action-orientated	Dangerous	Jealous	Reliable
Adaptable	Decisive	Knowledgeable	Respected
Aggressive	Dedicated	Logical	Scheming
Agile	Defensive	Loyal	Self-interested
Ambitious	Divisive	Manipulative	Shy
Approachable	Emotional	Mature	Sincere
Arrogant	Enthusiastic	Motivated	Social
Assertive	Experienced	Naive	Sophisticated
Astute	Extroverted	Negative	Stimulating
Balanced	Focused	Nostalgic	Strategic
Battle-scarred	Forward-thinking	Open	Streetwise
Benevolent	Friendly	Opportunistic	Strong
Boisterous	Frustrating	Organised	Submissive
Brave	Fun-loving	Patronising	Tactical
Caring	Gullible	Patient	Territorial
Challenging	Happy	Pessimistic	Thinking
Change averse	Hardworking	Philanthropic	Tolerant
Collaborative	Honest	Pleasant	Tough
Communicative	Humble	Political	Trusting
Confident	Inclusive	Positive	Trustworthy
Considerate	Individualistic	Powerful	Vain
Consistent	Insecure	Present-focused	Verbose
Controlling	Inspiring	Procrastinating	Visionary
Cool	Intuitive	Productive	Worldly

Helpful hints for running this exercise and some background:

The exercise works best if you print the handouts double sided and with short side (Top) binding. This enables participants to easily transfer their 20 words to the summary analysis sheet by folding over the top of the sheet.

Although the exercise is based on the attributes of the creatures in the book "The Organizational Zoo", by Arthur Shelley, it is not designed to diagnose your "creature type", as described in the book. However, it does provide for a very good look at your preferred behavioural style. It generates a comprehensive statement about you, which can be prepared very quickly and shared with others to build relationships. It is much more effective than most people can create if put on the spot to describe yourself without the prompting words.

The main purpose of the exercise is to get some interaction happening in a newly formed group and to highlight both similarities and difference between team members whilst having some fun. The exercise should assist the team to come together, find ways to take advantage of differences (diversity of thought and method, suitability for team roles and matching with stakeholders) and provide comfort by identifying similarities where these exist. People do quickly identify with a creature type by browsing through the book without the need for any questioning, but they can find it difficult to explain why, because identity is more about recognising patterns of behaviour than about specific attributes.

The exercise is self-explanatory and should be able to run it without any assistance from the author. However, if you want to discuss please contact through "feedback" on:

www.organizationalzoo.com

NOTE: The exercise is open for public use PROVIDED it is not changed AND the source acknowledged and remains on the handouts. Permission of the author is required for commercial use.

Sort the words in most appropriate order in each row (Strongest on left to least strong on right)
Then read out loud from top left to bottom right.

++ I am mostly					
+ I am usually					
- I am not usually					
= I am not at all					