



How understanding personality can help you teach others

USING PERSONALITY AI TO TEACH

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Intro

Adapt your teaching style

ADAPT YOUR TEACHING STYLE

Earlier in my career when I made the shift from individual contributor to manager, I have been surprised at how much of my time is spent teaching others. With little past experience in this area, I struggled at first, quickly realizing that knowing how to do something is very different from knowing how to explain something in a way another person can understand. One-on-one coaching can be challenging, but it is the only way to expand your influence and productivity beyond yourself.

This is why it's important for leaders, and those who aspire to be leaders, to teach others well. It takes knowledge, practice, and empathy. *If we get it right, we can create unlimited opportunities to help one another improve and grow.*

No matter how knowledgeable or experienced you are, the most important part of teaching is effective communication. Without it, you'll be difficult to understand and it will be harder for others to learn. Not surprisingly, it's critical that people actually understand what they're being taught. Otherwise, everyone's time and energy may be wasted.

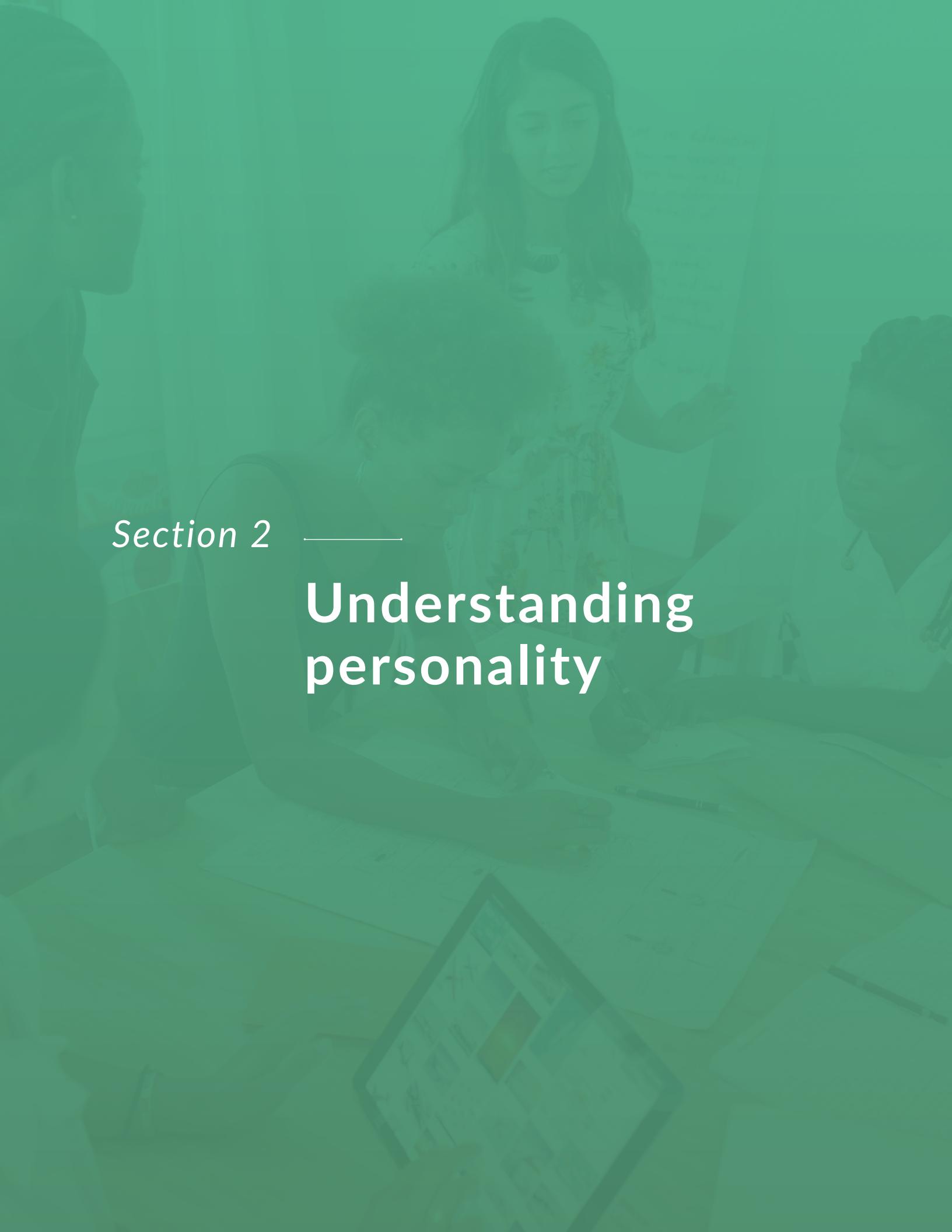
In order to be understood by everyone, you need to learn to adapt your communication and teaching style to fit other people's personalities. While it can feel like extra work to adapt your style to individual personalities, the difference it can make is unparalleled. Whether teaching in groups or in one-on-one meetings, using personality insights will help you leave a meaningful impact on others.



If you neglect to adapt, you're more likely to be ignored or misunderstood and you're less likely to make a difference.

Rather than falling short, make an effort to reach people where they are by understanding their personalities.



A blurred background image showing a group of diverse individuals in what appears to be a classroom or workshop environment. They are gathered around a table, looking down at a tablet device which displays a grid of small images or icons. Some people are holding pens, suggesting they might be taking notes or participating in a discussion. The overall atmosphere is focused and collaborative.

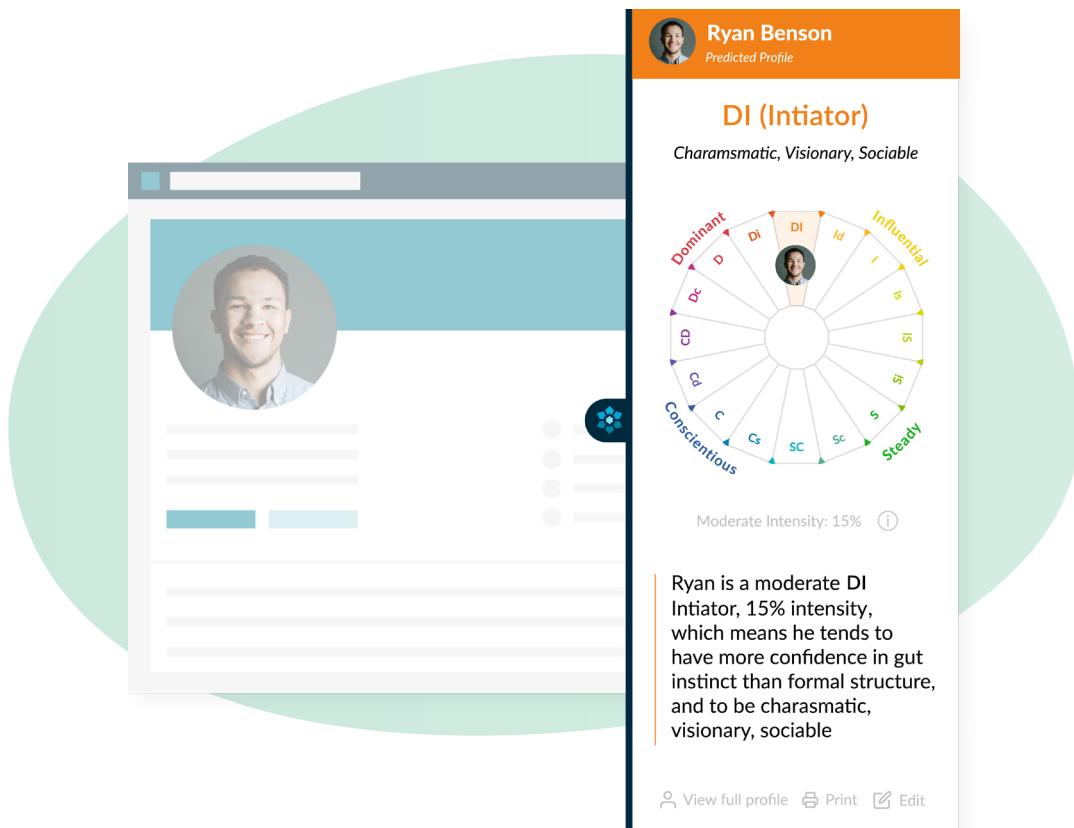
Section 2

Understanding personality

UNDERSTANDING PERSONALITY

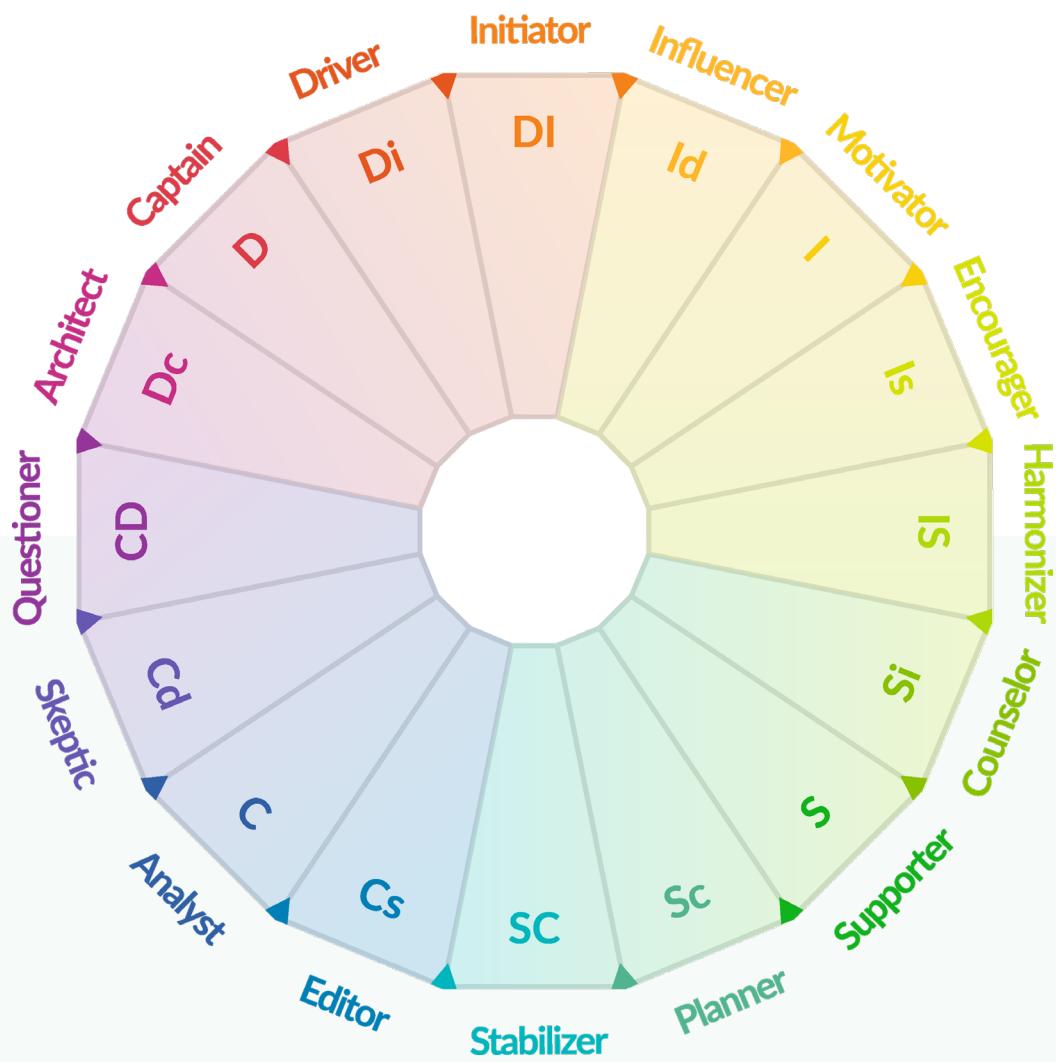
Historically, the only way you would be able to fully understand someone's personality is to know them really well, which takes lots of time and emotional intelligence, or to have them take a personality test. Both of these approaches require you have an established relationship with the person, which doesn't tend to work in the world of outreach communication, since we are often trying to connect with new people who we have never spoken with before.

Thankfully, there is a new technology that unlocks another way to learn about someone's personality without an assessment - Personality AI. We wrote about this in detail in another ebook titled, very cleverly, Personality AI (which you can download free on Crystal's website). This new technology analyzes publicly available information on websites like LinkedIn to predict someone's personality, using artificial intelligence and machine learning. We built our product, Crystal, to harness Personality AI and enable anyone to identify personalities online to improve their communication and build stronger relationships, all based on the core principle of empathy.



Without getting too technical, when Crystal determines someone's personality, it uses a framework called DISC to classify their personality into a few categories which we refer to as D (dominance), I (influence), S (steadiness), and C (conscientiousness). Each of us has a primary DISC type in one of these categories and sometimes a secondary DISC type in another. To keep things simple, we separate these into easy-to-remember labels called Archetypes.

You can see them all on this graphic called the Personality Map:



Below is a breakdown of common personality traits within each of the categories in DISC.

D Personality Types: Captains, Drivers, Initiators, Architects



- Motivated by control over the future and personal authority
- Tend to prefer instant, concrete results and having an advantage over competition
- Communicate clearly and succinctly

I Personality Types: Influencer, Motivator, Encourager, Harmonizer



- Motivated by innovative, unique, creative ideas and excited by the future
- Tend to prefer building new relationships and experiences
- Communicate in a casual, expressive way

S Personality Types: Counselor, Supporter, Planner, Stabilizer



- Motivated by peace, safety, and others' wellbeing
- Tend to prefer security, reliability and trust
- Communicate in a friendly and genuine way

C Personality Types: Editor, Analyst, Skeptic, Questioner



- Motivated by logic, information, and problem solving
- Tend to prefer accurate information and quality solutions (quality over quantity)
- Communicate in a business-like, fact-based way

These differences are extremely important for your approach in every conversation. For example, someone who is a warm, people-oriented Supporter (S) is less likely to engage in a discussion about facts and data. They'd usually prefer to engage in more personal, get-to-know-you conversation. An Analyst (C), on the other hand, tends to enjoy learning more about specific, concrete information.

By identifying someone's personality type, we can learn how to best communicate with them.



How does personality affect teaching?

Personality affects the ways in which we interpret and communicate with the world, which is often highlighted in learning. Whether you're teaching your coworkers, students, or even a friend, it's important to do so in a way that helps the other person to learn most effectively.

Teaching can come in different shapes and forms. You might be teaching your two co-workers how to change the toner in the copier or you could be teaching your friend how to play the guitar. No matter what the situation, you need to make an effort to communicate in a way they can easily understand.



Teaching in Groups

Teaching is often done in larger groups, especially in a school or work context. The difficulty with groups is that they are composed of unique people with different personalities. Each person has their own communication style, motivations, and personal experiences. This melting pot of people and preferences often makes group communication far more difficult and stress-inducing than one-on-one communication. But by working hard to adapt to others, you can help prevent unnecessary confusion, frustration, or boredom.

The best way to communicate in larger settings is to take the time to learn more about the individual personalities within the group. If you find there are some issues with one person, or a few people, you're more likely to identify the problem when you understand how their learning style may conflict with the way you're teaching. While instructing, make an effort to include something for everyone in the group. If you have a more hands-on, talkative learner, give the group a chance to discuss a concept. If you have a more reserved, logical learner, make sure they have time to work independently.

When you have a solid grasp on others' strengths, weaknesses and communication style, you can teach them in a more natural, effective way.

To be a better teacher and leader, you need to take the time to learn more about the personalities within the entire group — including your own.



Understand your own personality and teaching style

In order to effectively teach others, you must first understand your own personality and teaching style. You can easily find your personality type by first taking a [**quick personality assessment here**](#).



D-type teachers are likely to be more results-oriented and assertive; they tend to like leading other people. D-types have high expectations of themselves and others, and will likely push others to consistently improve. When teaching, they tend to focus on clearly and directly communicating the expectations and give others space to work on their own.



I-type teachers tend to be more creative and outgoing. They are usually fans of trying a new way of doing something or coming up with impressive ideas. I-types are more likely to use visual aids and compelling stories to teach. They can be friendly and spontaneous, which can lead to a very fun, energetic learning environment.



S-type teachers are likely very supportive and encouraging. They tend to be very hands-on and helpful, expecting others to simply do their best and maintain a steady pace. S-types enjoy routine, predictable environments and prefer to keep things calm and peaceful. They will likely spend as much time and effort as it takes to help everyone fully grasp a concept.



C-type teachers tend to be very analytical and focused. They like to share all relevant information, but may give others plenty of time to learn more on their own. C-types like to follow schedules closely and give step-by-step overviews of how something should be done. They may be particularly effective at teaching the intricacies of complex topics.

Once you understand yourself, you can improve your teaching style by adapting to your students' unique personalities.



Section 3

Teaching any personality

TEACHING D-TYPES

Direct, confident D-types tend to be independent and will likely want space to work on their own. It's important to clearly communicate what the end result should be so they can easily identify if something is wrong. They may assert dominance or want to move on as soon as they grasp a concept. If they're eager to move on from a concept in a group setting, try to give them something else to work on while others finish.

*If you're teaching a D-type,
try using phrases like:*

- The end result should be...
- This will be the tough part...
- These are the most important steps...
- You can try this part on your own...



D Personality Types *Captains, Drivers, Initiators, Architects*

Do

- Be clear about the end result
- Give them a time to ask questions
- Order the steps from most important to least
- Give them space to work and learn independently

Don't

- Insist they complete a task in a specific way
- Require them to wait on other people to move forward
- Be vague about the expectations
- Ask them to work at a steady pace



TEACHING I-TYPES

Imaginative, creative I-types tend to enjoy interesting discussions and visual aids. They often learn best when they have a chance to actively engage with the material. Avoid lecture-based teaching or pushing them too hard to figure things out on their own. Help the material seem more exciting by incorporating it into an interesting story. In group settings, if they're distracting others, try giving them an opportunity to share their thoughts or questions about the concept so they have a chance to actively engage with others about what they're learning.

**If you're teaching an I-type,
try using phrases like:**

- Watch me as I do this...
- Let's start with the easy part...
- You can be creative with this part...
- I'm ready to walk through this when you are...



I Personality Types *Influencer, Motivator, Encourager, Harmonizer*

Do

- Use visual examples to show how to do something
- Ask them to complete the quickest, clearest step first
- Focus on the ways they can be creative
- Project a friendly, positive demeanor

Don't

- Expect them to take all instructions literally
- Allow them to go too long without checking-in
- Ask them to complete repetitive, routine tasks
- Be overly intense or demanding



TEACHING S-TYPES

Routine-oriented, peaceful S-types will likely do well in a consistent, calm environment. Don't push them to learn a concept as quickly as possible. Make an effort to ask them if they need any clarification on a topic. Avoid putting them on the spot, whether in a group setting or in private. Help them maintain a sense of comfort and safety as they learn; don't do anything to make them feel insecure or self-conscious.

**If you're teaching a S-type,
try using phrases like:**

- Let me know if you have any questions...
- Follow the steps and this will go smoothly...
- You can work at your own pace...
- The way other people have done it is...



S Personality Types

Counselor, Supporter, Planner, Stabilizer

Do

- Maintain open communication while they're learning
- Project a calm, methodical demeanor
- Allow them to work at a steady pace
- Show them how other people do it

Don't

- Assume they will always ask for clarification
- Push them too far outside their typical routine
- Ask them to work at an intense or chaotic pace
- Ask them to improvise



TEACHING C-TYPES

Focused, thorough, knowledge-seeking C-types love to learn. They tend to prefer following a strict schedule and figuring out some aspect of a lesson on their own. Try to focus on being as thorough and comprehensive as possible; the more organized details, the better. Avoid being vague or broad when describing a concept. In a group setting, give them an opportunity to work and learn independently.

**If you're teaching a C-type,
try using phrases like:**

- Here's all the relevant information...
- If you need to find answers as you go, here's how...
- I'll let you figure that one out...
- From start to finish, this should take...



C Personality Types Editor, Analyst, Skeptic, Questioner

Do

- Share all the relevant information
- Provide a way to research their own answers as they go
- Leave some room for them to figure things out
- Tell them how long it will take to learn

Don't

- Withhold any information
- Make the goal vague
- Describe steps in an overly broad way
- Expect them to bounce between steps



Be easily understood

Effective teaching is important and beneficial for everyone. Without it, we'd likely fail to progress in our personal and professional lives. By understanding a few simple personality insights, you can make lessons easier to understand for everyone, no matter if you're teaching in a group or one-on-one. By making use of personality insights and teaching others in a way that helps them learn, you will help make the best use of your time and theirs.



Create lasting value for your clients

Thousands of coaches and consultants use Crystal to share easy-to-use personality insights with their clients, enhance their workshops, and improve retention.



TAKES TIME TO DECIDE



MAY BE OVERLY IDEALISTIC



JOIN 90% OF THE FORTUNE
500 USING CRYSTAL

START FOR FREE