

Gracewriting® Writing Proposals with Your Whole Brain

Conducted by Judy Straalsund

SMPS Charlotte

February 15, 2023

graceworks®



Proposals with Punch

We've all read the proposal blah-blah, haven't we? "This is who we are, and this is what we do." It's self-centered, it's boring, and it's just plain blah-blah!

So, how do we write a winning proposal? We can start by making a human connection, and part of that process is about getting to know your potential clients. What are their preferences? How do they like to communicate? How do they think?

What if the content in your proposal spoke to those different preferences and thinking styles? Wouldn't that be helpful to your reader? Welcome to the power of writing with your whole brain! The Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI®) is the world's leading thinking-styles assessment tool. HBDI's Whole Brain® theory helps us understand how people prefer to think, process information and communicate.

You can use Whole Brain® Thinking to craft a proposal that will help your readers get your message and help them make the decisions that are right for them. Honestly, helping others — putting them ahead of yourself and going out of your way to serve them — is the right thing to do. It builds relationships, which helps you win more work.



Help Your Reader!

When you're writing, you have a single task: to help your readers get your message. You must put their needs ahead of your own and do whatever it takes to give them what they need.

Often when we write proposals, it's all about feature, feature, feature. We don't focus on the readers' pain points and some compelling solutions or on their goal and how to help them achieve it.

When we focus on their issues, they'll think, "Oh, they get it. They understand!" It makes a huge difference.



Your Decision Sieve

Now, it's time to take the Help Your Reader task to a more strategic level. If you funnel every decision you make as you write through the sieve of "Will it help the reader?" you'll always get the right answer! For instance:

- Should I include that resume?
- Should I use technical jargon?
- Do I need more pictures?
- Does this section need a data chart?
- Should I organize this chronologically or functionally?
- Should I tell a story?
- Do I need more white space? (Hint: The answer is almost always "Yes!")

Keep asking yourself, "What will help my reader?" and you'll be on the right track to create great client-focused communication.



Pointed Proposals

Know your audience

No more, no less!

There are no universal standards for proposal content and layout. The point of a proposal is to persuade. To do that, you have to do your research, know your audience, and **STUDY** the RFP!

- If your audience wants details, give them details. If they aren't interested in a lot of reading, keep it short and simple.
- If your audience wants references, provide them with references. Otherwise, don't.
- If your audience wants to know who will do the work, tell them. If they don't care, don't tell them.
- If your audience wants their information organized chronologically, bullet points are your friends.
- If your audience wants their information organized functionally, organize your proposal that way.

If you don't know the answers, find them!

If the audience doesn't know what they need, give them the tools to help them figure it out.

Give the audience what they want. No more, no less!

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Your Personal Thinking Preference or... How You Like to Roll!

<p>A</p> <p>Authoritative Problem Solver</p> <p>Logical Technical</p> <p>Analytical Methodical</p> <p>Objective Critical</p> <p>Qualitative Factual</p>	<p>D</p> <p>Innovative Flexible</p> <p>Synthesizing Holistic</p> <p>Risk taker Imaginative</p> <p>Simultaneous Idealistic</p> <p>Spontaneous Conceptual</p>
<p>Conservative Detailed</p> <p>Organized Practical</p> <p>Sequential Reliable</p> <p>Disciplined Structured</p> <p>Controlled Planner</p> <p>B</p>	<p>Interpersonal Supportive</p> <p>Trusting Emotional</p> <p>Relational Passionate</p> <p>Empathetic Musical</p> <p>Cooperative Expressive</p> <p>C</p>

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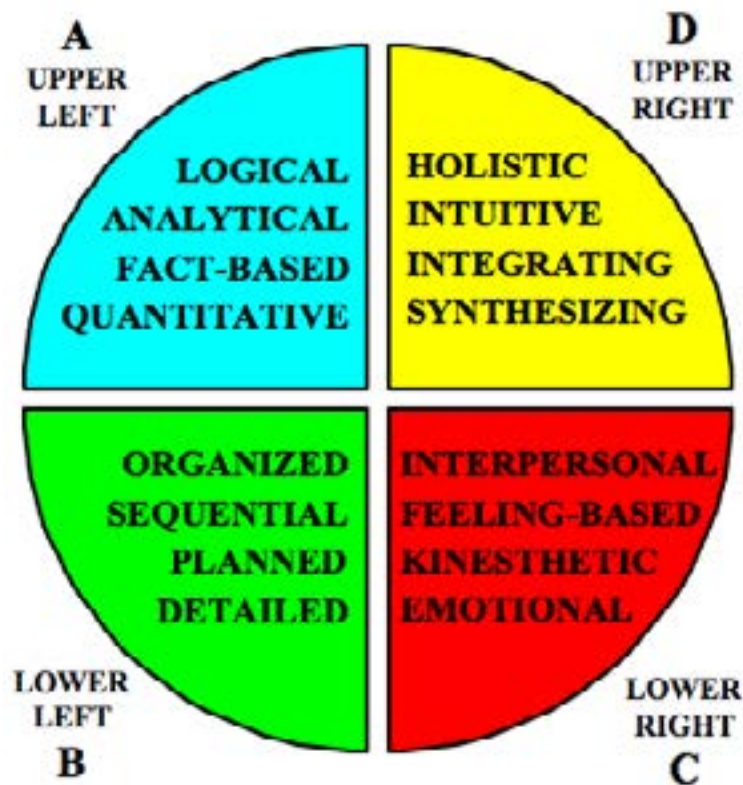
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How Does Your Client See the World?

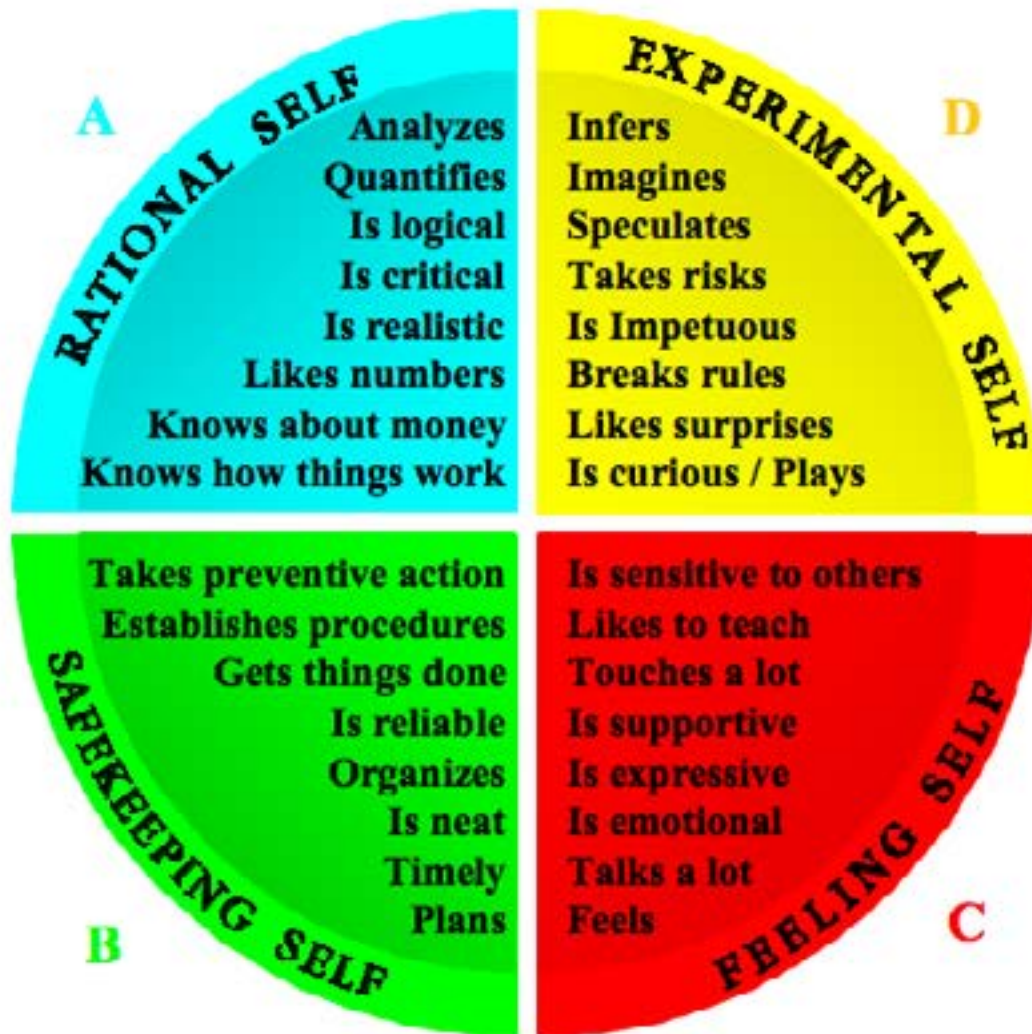
You can use the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI®) to assess your clients' and teammates' thinking preferences — how they prefer to process information. Your clients' thinking preferences have an enormous effect on how they see the world, and hence, how they solve problems, make decisions, and work with others.

Understanding thinking preferences opens the door to improved communication, leadership, creativity and teamwork. It also can help us write better proposals!

Thinking preferences are based on the Whole Brain® Model:



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Real Stories About Real People

1. Michael bought a car without checking if his golf clubs would fit in the back. When he got home, he discovered they wouldn't.

2. Betty kept everything in her pantry in alphabetical order, and Therese took her vacuum cleaner on camping trips to keep the tent clean.

3. Alison traveled everywhere with her three teddy bears. When asked why, she explained, "One hotel room looks the same as any other. At least when I go back at night, I have my friends to keep me company."

4. George bought a house for the family on price alone. He didn't consider its location, convenience, layout or design. It was a good financial investment and would show a good capital gain in five years, which was all that mattered.

Their Preferences are Showing!

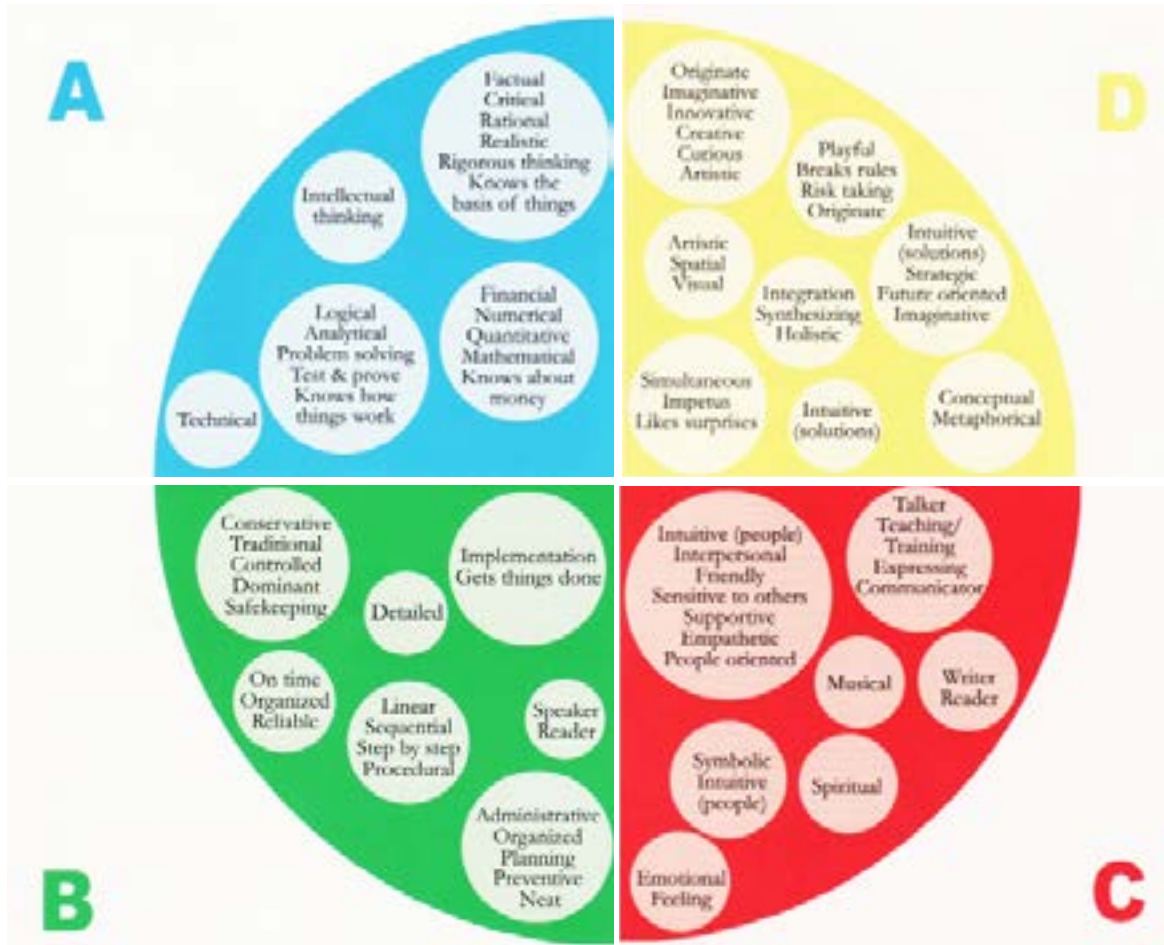
A

D

B

C

Clusters



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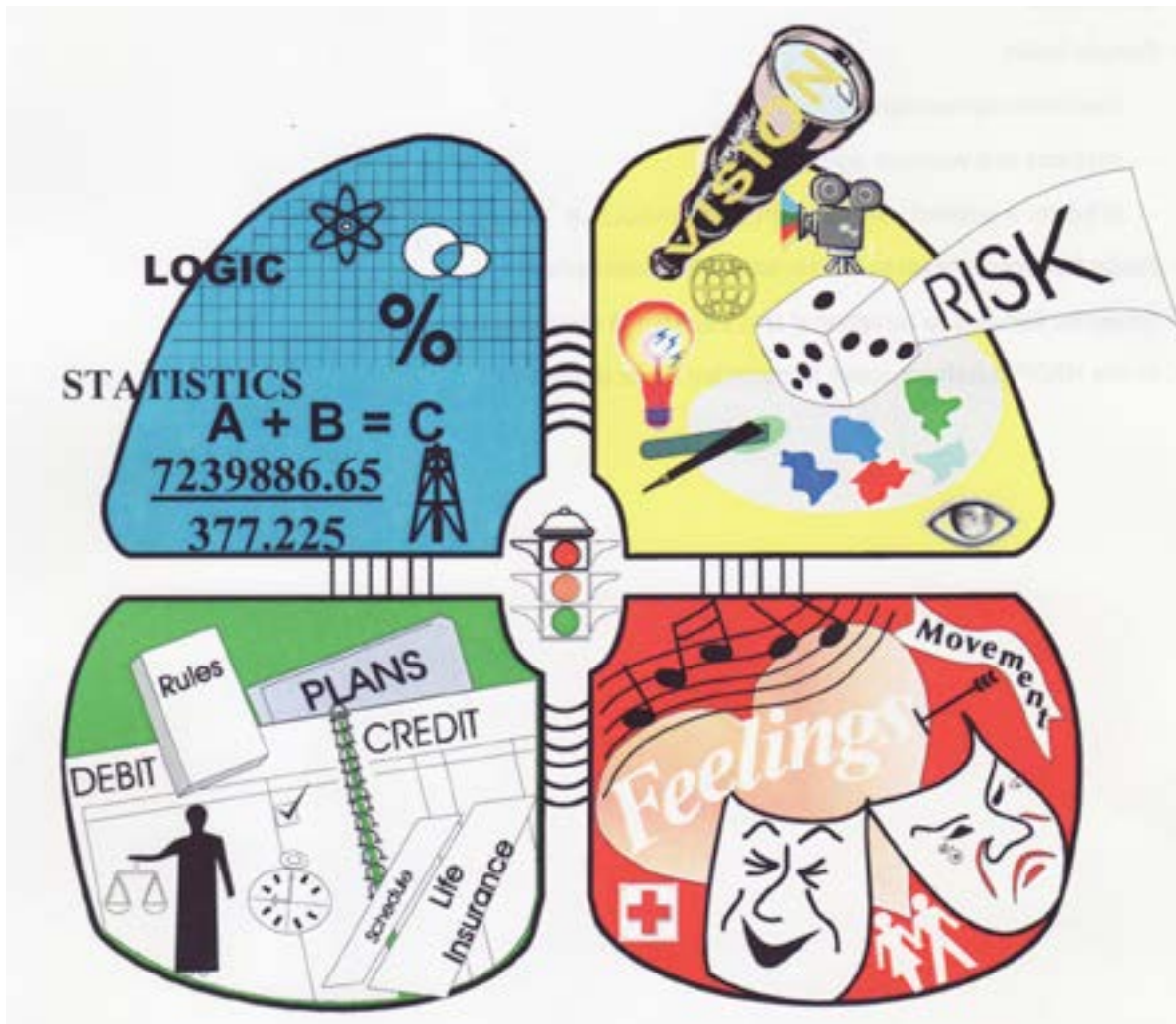
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Think About Communicating



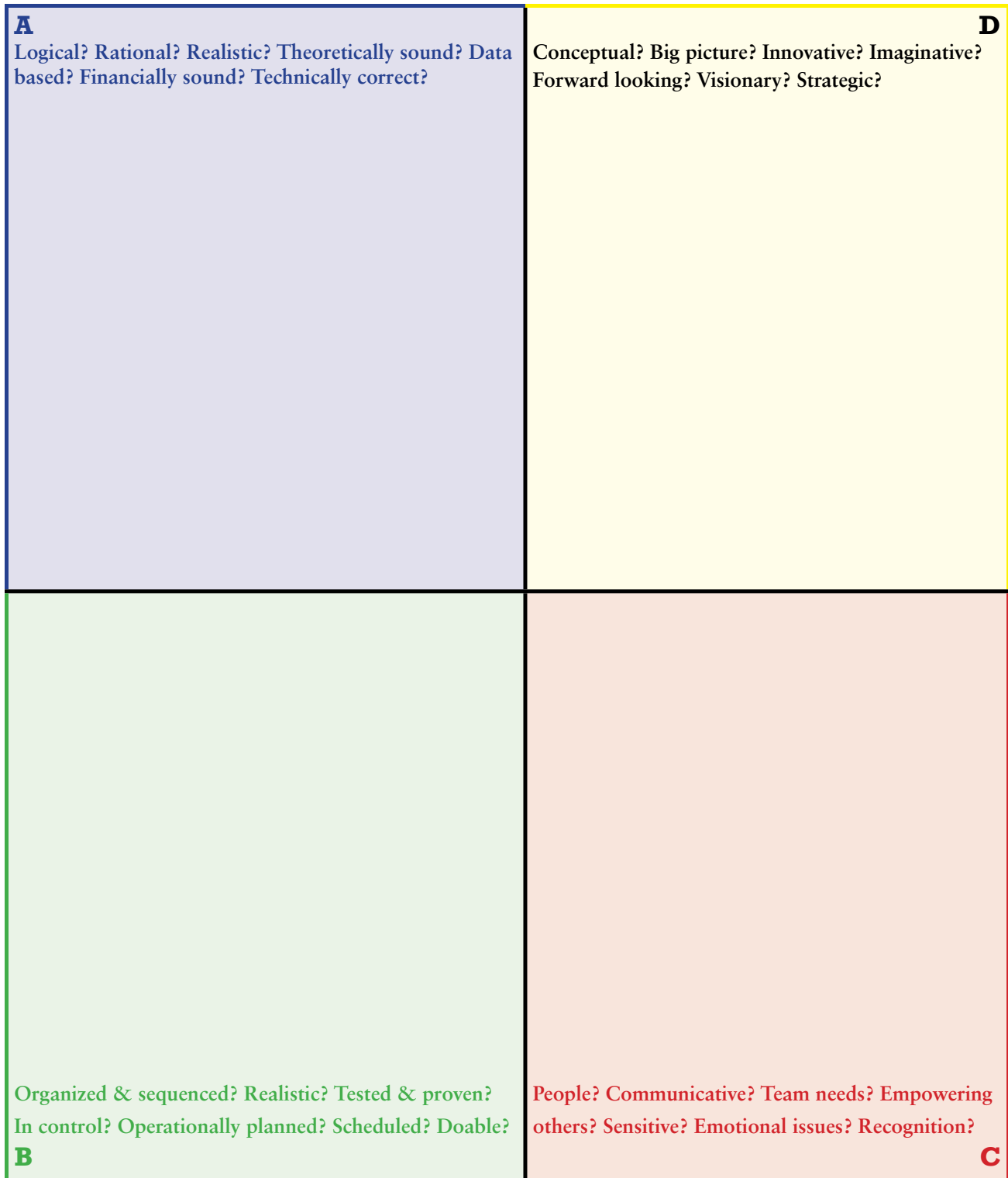
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The Metaphoric Whole Brain® Model



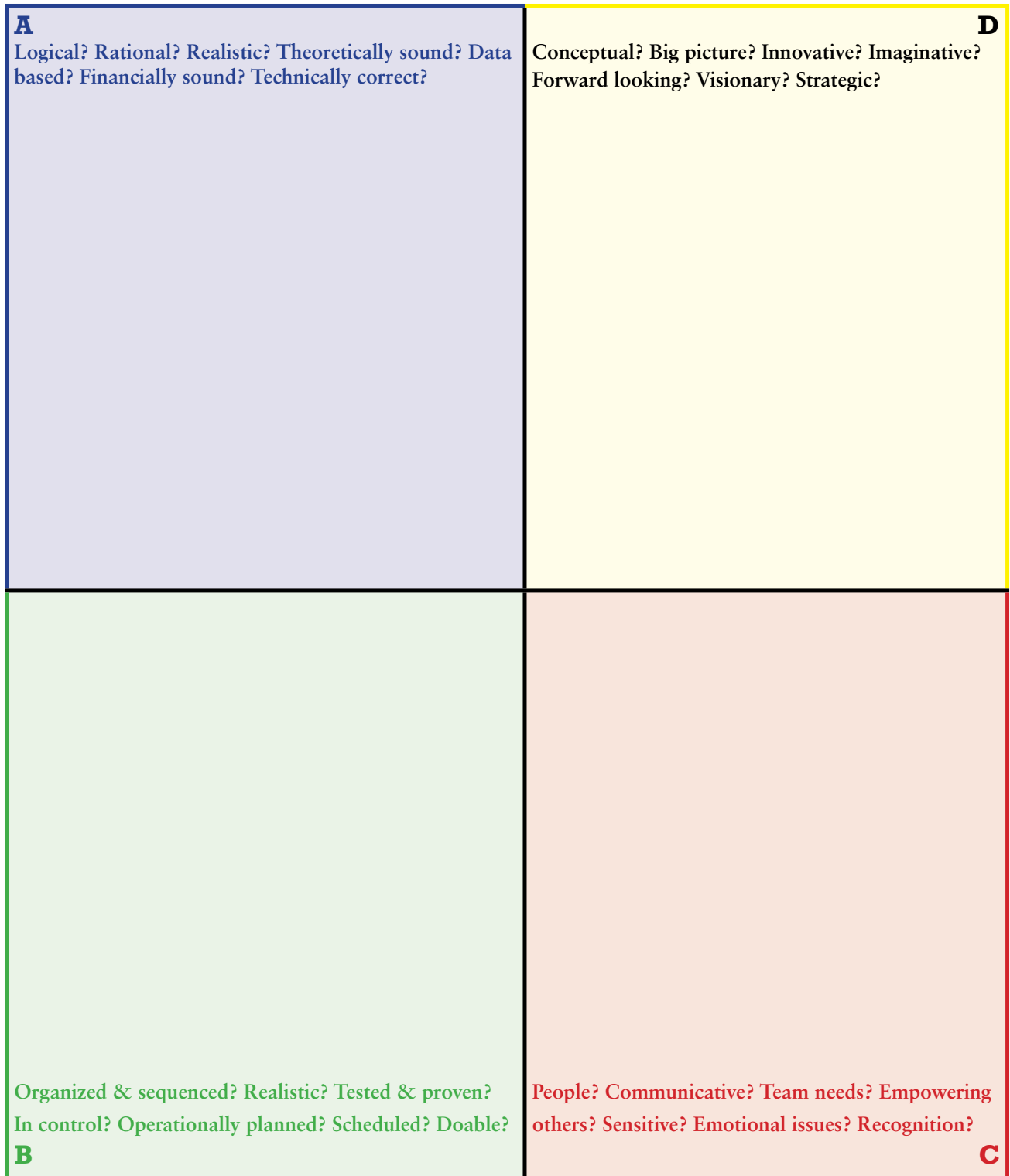
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The Whole Brain® Walk-Around!



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You Try It!

Blah-Blah Paragraph One

Using a Whole Brain® Walk-Around sheet, jot down your ideas on how you could rewrite or redesign the paragraph below to make it more whole-brained. Then, if you have time, use a blank page or document to start creating that newly rewritten and redesigned section.

Remember that each quadrant prefers different types of content and delivery styles. Try communication tools other than what you may be used to using. Experiment and have fun!

Accurate and accountable preconstruction budgeting:

Cost control throughout the design process is accomplished through an approach of establishing benchmark estimates for the design at major design phases. Cost estimates are usually prepared at the end of the programmatic, schematic design, design development and construction document phases, allowing the owner to have a set of design documents defining the project and a corresponding price for the design. However, successful preconstruction efforts involve an ongoing review of the design, not just reviews at major design phases. Cost control is maintained through continual monitoring as part of a “total preconstruction services approach,” involving cost comparisons, design revision tracking, budget validation, design options evaluation, and cost management suggestions.

You Try It!

Blah-Blah Paragraph Two

Using a Whole Brain® Walk-Around sheet, jot down your ideas on how you could rewrite or redesign the paragraph below to make it more whole-brained. Then, if you have time, use a blank page or document to start creating that newly rewritten and redesigned section.

Remember that each quadrant prefers different types of content and delivery styles. Try communication tools other than what you may be used to using. Experiment and have fun!

Value Engineering:

Our VE service is a formal, proactive application of proven value methodologies applied to an assignment, which places project objectives in the context of functionality for the purpose of meeting objectives of performance, cost, time and quality with the minimum required resources. Our VE approach uses tools such as function analysis, cost modeling, comparative analysis life-cycle costing, as well as creativity to provide value from plan development through realization, project conception through final construction, or product idea through production. At project conception, VE helps assure the client they are doing the right project. Later in design, such as at 60% design, VE answers the question, “Are we doing the project right?”

Journal:

About Some of Our Trainers



Judy Straalsund, Freedom Finder with Graceworks, has served firms ranging from HOK and Skanska to Hewlett Packard and the Portable Sanitation Association (i.e., the “Porta-Potty” folks) for more than 20 years. Providing creative solutions for a variety of programs, Judy is a dynamic combination of experienced presentation coach, corporate trainer, artistic director, and mountaineering guide. She’s a born leader who helps people achieve their best.

Based in Portland, Oregon, Judy also heads up our Gracewriting® Division. A published author and playwright, Judy is a master storyteller who also provides copyediting and quality assurance services for firms like Kodak, Nike and Intel. To top it off, she’s a trained practitioner of Whole Brain® Thinking and would love to talk with you about writing proposals with your whole brain!

Judy is geeky about everything from prepositions and punctuation to persuasive writing and corporate presentations. She’d love to help you find your inner geek too!



Carol Doscher, President & CEO (Chief Encouragement Officer), has been captivating audiences since she performed in Broadway’s “Sweeney Todd.” For this former actress turned trainer and coach, it’s not so far from the boards of Broadway to the boardrooms of America.

Since founding Graceworks in 1995, she’s trained thousands of professionals globally to make that vital human connection in sales presentations, client meetings and lectures. Featured in The New York Times and on “Bloomberg Television,” Carol also has published numerous articles on presentation and communication skills. Prior to her current work, she marketed design and construction services for many years.

Responding to the growing need for the human connection in the corporate world, Carol is a certified practitioner of Whole Brain® Thinking — a great tool to help people understand and leverage their own thinking preferences.

Graceworks in a Nutshell

Headquartered in New York with trainers stationed as far south as San Antonio and as far west as Portland, Oregon, the Graceworks team travels globally, helping corporate professionals become more effective presenters, leaders and writers — all around better communicators!

Are you facing presentation, public speaking, writing or classic communication challenges? We can help! Here’s a quick list of our services — click on the links to our website to learn more. Enjoy!

[Presentation / Communication Training](#)

[Shortlist / Project-Specific Coaching Services](#)

[Gracewriting® Workshops](#)

[Whole Brain® Thinking Workshops](#)

[One-on-One Coaching](#)

[Train-the-Coach Workshops](#)

If you have questions, would like additional info, or just want to call and say “hi” (please do!), you can reach us at:

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P.S. Oh yeah — sign up for [Big Bold News](#), our monthly communication tip by using this QR code. Super quick & super helpful!



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