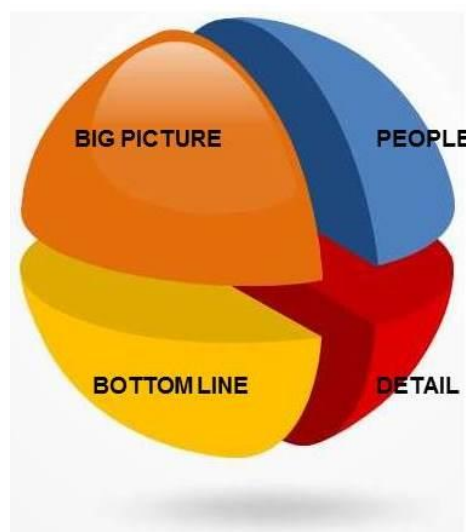


Client Styles

Different clients may like to focus on different aspects of a solution. Recognise those differences and then adapt accordingly. This approach will make for a more compelling proposition. At the very least, you have a better chance of avoiding the risk of turning the client off your solution through a failure to adapt to the way they like to receive and consider information.



Big picture focus

Traits:

- Focuses on the strategy, vision, ideas or the overview.
- May be frustrated with detail.
- Likes to take the indirect route to a conclusion.
- Likes the idea of pushing boundaries, creativity, innovation and cutting-edge ideas.
- May prefer to visualise how things work rather than rely just on the data.

Strategies to adapt:

- Focus on the big picture, the vision or the strategy.
- Don't bore them with the detail.
- Use visual aids to explain.
- Don't be surprised by questions and comments that take you on tangents.

Bottom line focus

Traits:

- Focuses on specifics, results and outcomes.
- Gets irritated by ramblers and may attempt to take control of the discussion.
- Wants to get to the point quickly.
- Will readily challenge what you say.

Strategies to adapt:

- Focus on the bottom line, the results or the specific outcome.
- Don't irritate them with the detail or the process unless they call for it.
- You can challenge them and be direct with them – it won't necessarily mean that the discussion is going badly.
- Get to the point.
- Expect discussions to be brief.
- Be organised and focused.
- Be prepared to back up your claims when challenged.

Detail focus

Traits:

- Focuses on process, analysis and structure.
- Wants to take the long way to a conclusion.
- Asks more questions to understand the detail.
- Looks for full justification, explanations and evidence.

Strategies to adapt:

- Focus on the detail, the process and the evidence.
- Don't make propositions or assertions without supporting evidence.
- Work through the issues logically and carefully.

People focus

Traits:

- Focuses on feelings, personal impacts, consensus, what other people think and risks.
- Asks more questions and listens to try and understand the person they are dealing with. They tend to use emotive language – “I feel ...” – and passive language – “I guess ...”, “Hopefully ...”
- Uses justification and explanation before questions and proposals to pre-empt challenge or conflict.

Strategies to adapt:

- Focus on areas of agreement and consensus.
- Focus on people, trust and relationships.
- Avoid being too direct.

- Work through the process gently.

The key take-away's for you from this lesson should be:

1. Find the client's "zone" and operate in there when you are talking about a solution.