

Are You Making These Costly Communication Mistakes?

By Mary Miscisin, M.S.



The True Colors model is based on discovering the strengths, values, and needs of individuals and appreciating these differences. In an ideal world, we would all understand each other and accept everyone's unique approach to life – recognizing the positive intent behind behaviors. But let's face it - when it comes to communication, we all get triggered by *something*. Of course it is not so much **what** they said as... well you guessed it... **how** they said it.

This report contains information about the 5 most costly communication mistakes that each color style makes **AND THEY ARE DIFFERENT FOR EACH STYLE**. These mistakes can cost you major time, energy and money. If you fail to recognize and adjust these bad habits, you can jeopardize your job, your relationships, and your reputation. Continuing to communicate in this manner puts a strain on teamwork, cooperation and problem-solving.

Having said all of that, I want you to know that these habits are actually not “bad” (in and of themselves) and can be highly effective when used in appropriate situations - with others that appreciate this way of communicating. The trouble begins when we use them all the time without paying attention to how they are affecting others. If you know you are going to be communicating with an individual whose color style is different from yours – or wondering “what the heck went wrong?” with your last interaction, this report pulls the veil from the habits even your best friend won't mention to you.

As you read through this report, notice how it applies to you and the way you communicate. (Helpful hint: just because you happen to be Blue, does not mean your mistakes are the common Blue mistakes.) You may have developed a communication pattern that is more frequently associated with a different color style. Listen closely to the tips for overcoming any unproductive habits you may recognize in yourself. Carefully consider the consequences of not changing – refusing to evolve and grow, staying stuck in your patterns. And weigh the benefits of choosing to access a greater range of more resourceful, productive behavior that affords you higher quality communication and positive responses from others.

BLUE Communication

Generally kind and considerate in communication, Blues like to warm up to the topic instead of plunging to the point. They prefer to connect personally and check in with their emotional compass to assess how they feel about the topic, the goal of the conversation... and you! Often, feelings are the focus and they speak from the heart. They care about how they come across and want to make sure they are grasping the full message you are sending. They are also hoping you will pick up on the nuances they are communicating.

5 MOST COMMON COMMUNICATION MISTAKES BLUES MAKE

(when communicating with other styles)

Beating around the bush

Over apologizing

Taking things personally

Mistaking intensity for anger or hostility

Using emotional appeals

● BEATING AROUND THE BUSH

It would be tough to find someone that doesn't understand the importance of warming up to a subject, but when others are on a timeline and ask a question that demands a quick response, filling them in on the events leading up to your answer can add to the frustration of the situation. For example, your co-worker needs a project from you by noon and approaches you at 11:30AM asking if it is complete. They tell you if it is not finished, they will figure out something else. You have not finished the project yet, but instead of telling them that immediately so they can go to plan B, you feel compelled

to let them know that your son was late for the bus this morning so you had to drive him, making you late for work. Your computer wouldn't boot up this morning so you had a hard time accessing the file... **STOP RIGHT THERE!** A simple "It's not quite done yet." will do. If they want to know "why" it wasn't done, they'll ask. If you go on and on about your personal traumas in trying to complete it, they are likely to interrupt you with "is that a yes or a no?" leaving you feeling invalidated for your efforts. Don't place yourself in a situation that leaves you feeling unheard and incomplete. Don't set them up to feel forced to cut you off in your conversation. Recognize when the time is right to fill them in on the details, like in the break room when the urgency of the situation has passed.

● OVER APOLOGIZING

Owning up to a blunder is admirable and apologizing is appropriate. However, to repeatedly tell the other person how bad you feel about it keeps it on their radar screen over and over and over. Okay, you feel bad, guilty... horrible – you may even want their forgiveness, but the redundancy of continuing to apologize does not allow them to be complete. It is like picking a scab. Let it heal. If you want to feel like a doormat, this is a good way to do it. It is as if you are telling them, "PLEASE WALK ALL OVER ME! I deserve it! I am not worthy. Please continue to punish me until I can't stand it any longer and now am mad at you for abusing me and my kindness."



In order to smooth scars and promote healing of wounds, definitely apologize as soon as possible, even twice if you feel like it. Then **let it be**. If the other person brings it up *days* later it's okay to apologize again, but don't you be the one to mention it! *Not bringing it up* allows the other person to forgive you and FORGET so they can heal and move on.

● TAKING THINGS PERSONALLY

Blues have a phenomenal ability to read body language and have a radar for congruency. But sometimes this inkling can get out of whack. Let's say you are heading to a conference out of town and you know a friend that is attending too, so you ask her if she wants to carpool with you. She tells you she prefers to drive alone. Instead of taking this at face value, you begin to wonder, "Why doesn't she want to ride with me? Does she find me boring? Do I have body odor? Did I say something that offended her?" But you don't stop there; you begin to act as if something is actually wrong. You feel

rejected, shunned, unwanted... so your communication reflects this feeling of rejection; you ask her, "What's going on?" Your friend explains that she is independent and likes to have the flexibility to do what she wants, when she wants and not have to worry about the needs of another person. So of course you think she means YOU and ask what makes her think you are so needy. Now you are beginning to appear needy to her. You have in essence, created a situation that did not exist prior to you stirring it up. It is perfectly okay to ask questions for clarification, but when you add an undercurrent of disbelief of the person's communication, you plant the seeds to cultivate the situation you fear.

How do you know the difference between intuition and paranoia? Are you feeling threatened, hanging on to old grudges, making connections to situations that don't actually exist and projecting that upon the other person? Unless you KNOW otherwise for sure, give the benefit of the doubt and gather some hard facts. It will save you tons of emotional investment and maybe even embarrassment when the truth turns out to be something else other than what you suspected. Whew!

MISTAKING INTENSITY FOR ANGER OR HOSTILITY

This communication mishap is related to the prior one. Some folks are just intense. Yes, at times downright rude and you do not have to put up with that at all.



Others are very extroverted and passionate. They can get quite loud, use BIG body gestures, and even colorful vocabulary. This behavior can send a Blue ducking for cover. I was contracted by a company to conduct a survey of their customer base to find out how to improve their product line. I was invited by the President of that company to go to lunch with him and one of their biggest customers. This client eagerly shared various ideas for introducing new products, using animated facial expressions and making gestures with his hands so we could get an idea of the size and shape of the products he was describing. His voice got louder as his excitement increased. At one point he slapped the table briskly saying, "We should get these products out as soon as possible. I think they will sell like hot cakes!" Startled, the president lurched backwards from the table, blurting out defensively, "You don't have to get mad about it!" The client and I looked at each other, then at the President. In exact unison the client said "I'm not mad, I'm..." (As I said, "He's not mad, he's...") **PASSIONATE!** The President's Blue

communication style found the intensity overwhelming and asked the client to calm down a bit if he wanted to get his message across. In this case, however, it is the customer who trumps the President. It is the President who needs to understand and adapt to the excitement of the customer, otherwise he risks breaking rapport and sending that client to a company that embraces his enthusiasm.

We have a tendency to be most comfortable around those that think like us, move like us, and communicate like us. Have you ever been excited or passionate? How do you express it? Use your finely tuned empathy radar to understand and relate to what is happening for them, not how *you* would react in *their* situation, but how they are experiencing it.

● EMOTIONAL APPEALS

Not too long ago a colleague of mine had to take a pay cut. He begged his director not to reduce his pay because he had 2 kids in college. Okay, so what does that have to do with how much he contributes to the organization? What does that have to do with the financial situation of the organization? Using that logic, if his co-worker had 3 kids in college, then they should pay her even more money, because she needed it more? If you are talking to a fellow Blue then this appeal could possibly make a difference. When communicating with other colors, especially Greens, it will get you nowhere fast. Particularly in work situations, it is important that you state objective facts first.



GOLD Communication

Chronological and specific in communication, Golds like to get to the point by describing the step-by-step details necessary for you to make a decision, follow an instruction, or complete a task. They often mention procedures, rules and what has been done in the past. They are concerned with status, hierarchy and the chain of command. Golds pepper their conversations with “should”, “must” and “have to” as well as “right” and “wrong”. They seek confirmation and closure – a firm “yes” or “no” so they can make plans accordingly. Golds like to finish one topic before moving to another and although they do not like to be interrupted, they may interrupt you to bring you back on target if they feel you are straying from the topic.

5 MOST COMMON COMMUNICATION MISTAKES GOLDS MAKE

(when communicating with other styles)

Close-minded to change

Finger wagging

Check it off blinders

Stuck on specifics

Martyrdom and complaining (no one else does it “right”)

● CLOSE-MINDED TO CHANGE

“We’ve always done it this way!” is the battle cry of Golds resisting change. They will dig in their heels and defend their position over and over and over.

“If customers want to place an order they have to talk to a sales person first. The sales person will take the order by filling out form S-1; getting the name, address, and credit card information. Once the call has ended, the sales person enters the information from form S-1 into a customer database and notes the date.

When it is complete, a checkmark is put in the upper right hand corner of the form and it is walked over to the bookkeeper's office and placed into her "in" basket. The bookkeeper then inputs the data into our accounting system and processes the credit card at that time."

"What if a customer just wants to place an order online at midnight?" a team member asks.

"They'll need to call during our business hours 8-5 Monday through Friday and talk to a sales person. We've always done it this way. Why change a perfectly good system when it isn't broken?"

Maybe because it will save time, energy and opens a new option for customers to purchase conveniently? We understand the importance of a "personalized touch" and we get the up-sell opportunity. Repeatedly telling us what you've always done 100 more times (refusing to listen to anyone else's input that suggests an inkling of change) will not suddenly open our eyes to the correctness of your ways. We heard you the first time.

If you are wondering why people are ceasing to ask for your input, it's because it doesn't change. In fact, when you are doing your best to stop or circumvent change it will make YOU obsolete. Yes, there are some traditions, protocols and customs worth keeping - but when you block progress, it will start to go around you. If you want to keep the respect of others, open your mind and your conversations to new possibilities and listen to the ideas of others once in a while.

● FINGER WAGGING

Golds may LOVE communication that spells out the requirements for compliance, and thrive on clear commands, but for non-Golds this approach may resonate with a different tone. You know the one...the voice quality that suggests that they know you have done something wrong and you are not going to get away with it. The scolding tone that condemns you... says "you are guilty- shame on you!" even before you've even had a chance to do *anything*... let alone something out of line. Then to add insult to injury, they insist, "you must, you should, you have to..." It's the "That's for nothing... now try something!" pitch. "Do this or else... have I made myself clear?"



You betcha... crystal clear as a matter of fact. We get it. We would have gotten it even better *without* the tone. Hoodlums and hooligans aside, for the most part, people

respond more positively when you “ask” them to do something graciously rather than *telling* them to do it forcefully.

If this is a habit you have picked up over the years, you may want to record yourself and listen how you are coming across. Already too used to your own voice patterns to discern the difference in a recording? To clear communication channels, ask a truthful friend and adjust accordingly – it’s the right thing to do.

● CHECK IT OFF BLINDERS



Having a Gold on your team can be a “dream come true” when you want to accomplish a goal. Feeling lost? No worries, a Gold will direct the way. They are resourceful planners that can take in the details of a big project, dissect it into parts, and chart a step-by-step plan for completion. They’ll take the helm (or support the captain) in getting the ship to harbor. However, these navigators can turn to nightmares when the destination disappears. Once a decision has been made, Golds don’t want to waste time going back and forth - this way and that- they want to forge forward.

I was asked to work with a department on a new project. Even with the limited information available, the team leader (a Gold) was able to chart what seemed like a realistic plan to accomplish the goal set forth. She scheduled several meetings for the team and gave out specific assignments. She designated a researcher who got started right away investigating the plausibility of the project and at the very next meeting reported findings that indicated we were heading in a dead end direction. The researcher suggested modifications to the original plan, citing several resources to support her conclusions. As the team members began to discuss implications for this new direction, the team leader stopped them and directed them back “on course”... the *original* course. We were dumfounded. She seemed to be totally ignoring the new information. She was adamant that we “had work to do” and was very concerned that we were getting distracted. She reminded the team of the next steps in the plan and confirmed the next meeting time. It was as if she was wearing blinders... and ear plugs for that matter. No matter the protests from the team, nor the information presented, she pressed everyone to continue with the original plan. It was as if she just wanted to get to the end so she could check it off her list: “DONE”.

I know, trying to redirect your plan can be like stopping a train in its tracks, but if it is going to save all aboard, it’s got to be done. Consider new information, it really is okay to make new decisions, and some things don’t ever need to be completed (GASP!). Sometimes the accomplishment is learning something in the process.

● STUCK ON SPECIFICS

There is a “right” way and a “wrong” way of doing things, if you are confused about this, ask a Gold, they’ll tell you. “We have a protocol for that... they were not following procedure so I sent them to the back of the line... there is supposed to be a # sign at the beginning of the Purchase Order number. It wasn’t there so I denied the invoice...”

A fellow speaker told me that one time he had arrived at the airport and forgot to print his flight itinerary. In a rush, he asked the woman behind the counter if the 9AM flight was on time. She checked the computer and informed him there was no 9AM flight. Horrified that perhaps his flight had been cancelled, he asked her to check to see what happened to the 9AM flight. He waited as she clicked away on her keyboard searching for the answer. After several minutes she looked up, shook her head and said, “I am sorry, Sir, there never was a 9AM flight scheduled for this morning. Perhaps you are flying on a different airline or a different day? Sorry I can’t help you. Next in line please.” **Wait!** He went on to plead, “Can you look me up by name?” She asked for the specific spelling of his name. He rattled it off in a panic as he watched the minutes tick. “One letter at a time, Sir,” she said methodically. He took a deep breath and gave her each letter of his name. Again her fingers clicked away at her keyboard. Finally she looked up. “Here you are, Sir, you are scheduled on flight number 1868. Departure is at 9:02 AM, gate 11.

Oh come on! Really? I thought for sure this guy was making this up. Surely she would have interpreted his question and been a little more creative in helping the man. If you review the above exchange, the woman answered his questions accurately, but not very resourcefully. Yes, indeed, there are times that one needs to be specific with their questions to get the correct answers, but there are other times when it is not absolutely necessary.

We know there is a “right” way and a “wrong” way in your world and if we were all put together with the propensity for protocol that would be great – but not everyone is. There is a difference between caring, coaching, and making us jump through hoops. If you are trying to demean others and have them bow to you, congratulations – you win! What you have lost is our respect. We see you as the grouch we need to tiptoe around. There are ways to teach us your protocol without demeaning us in the process. One of them is to politely give us the “right” questions to ask (without the tone) so next time we can practice getting it correct – a win-win for all.

● MARTYRDOM & COMPLAINING

We can all get overwhelmed when the responsibilities are immense and time is limited. Golds (and at times Greens) are prone to complaining loudly when others aren’t doing their job. The thing is, they don’t usually complain to the slacker that needs an attitude adjustment, nor the boss or supervisor that could likely do something about it. Nope! Instead, they’ll pull up their boot straps, take up the slack, then complain to their

spouse, co-worker or best friend about it. On and on and on about how they are a victim of this irresponsible behavior. It is okay to vent, to get it out of your system and move on. But that's not usually what happens. They don't move on. New things arise each day to complain about, a new system, broken piece of equipment, no cost of living raise. YIKES! Now it's become a habit. The day doesn't seem complete if there isn't something to grumble about. This is a slippery slope and can be contagious. Don't contribute to the demise of your organization, family or friendship by eroding its foundation. If you need to, wear a rubber band around your wrist to snap yourself back to a positive frame of mind. Negate the complaint by finding two positive aspects about the person or event you just complained about. Establish a new habit, or find a way to communicate honestly to improve your situation.



GREEN Communication

Unless purposely strategized ahead of time for maximum return on their verbal effort, Greens like to skip the small talk and go straight for the information. They can seem like investigative journalists in pursuit of the facts: who, what, where, when, how... and the biggie - **WHY?** Intrigued by innovation and probability they like “think time” to ponder before responding to questions. Avid problem-solvers, Greens rely on logic over sympathy, head over heart and evidence over empathy. When interacting with others, Greens want you to maintain your composure, offer objective feedback, and consider the big picture.

5 MOST COMMON COMMUNICATION MISTAKES GREENS MAKE

(when communicating with other styles)

Pointing out mistakes first

Data dumping

Data diving - Humor at others' expense

Unreasonable expectations

Living in your head

● POINTING OUT MISTAKES FIRST

Greens have a phenomenal gift for recognizing flaws or inconsistencies. From the simple use of a word in a sentence to the implementation of a system, Greens can spot a discrepancy. As valuable of a gift as this may be, in communication with other styles, it can come across as harsh criticism, instead of objective feedback if not prefaced properly.

Alex had just finished designing a new website for his carpet cleaning business. He was excited to share it with his best friend Jake because it turned out so great! Before sharing it with Jake, Alex gave a disclaimer up front that it was a first draft and still needed some tweaking, but he wanted Jake's overall impression of the site. The graphics were fabulous, the layout was user-friendly and easy to navigate, the text was motivating and the contact information readily accessible – it was very impressive. But upon first glance, do you think Jake mentioned any of these to his friend? Nope! First words out of his mouth were, "There are two "s"s in essential... I think the picture in the corner can come over towards the text by 1/8 inch and if you increased the font size on the phone number, it would line up better with the address below it."



Alex felt like he was punched in the stomach. Knowing that Jake was unaware that the timing for his critique was out of order, he said, "Okay dude, can we start over? You are supposed to tell me how impressed you are with it first, then point out corrections." **Sage advice.** Many Greens may expect this type of straightforward critique and find it refreshing, but other styles can feel very put off and degraded by it – feeling as though they can never measure up. If you know you have the habit of only letting people know when they make a mistake, practice pausing and finding something to genuinely appreciate first.

● DATA DUMPING – HUMOR AT OTHERS' EXPENSE

Greens can be a fountain of knowledge, providing intriguing information and fascinating facts to inquiring minds. Get Greens started on a subject they have researched or experienced with a captivated audience and you'll find bliss all around. But things can start to go haywire if you start spewing specifics when others aren't actually enthralled. It's okay to occasionally miss cues that others aren't interested; we've all mistaken politeness for interest at some point, but it is important to pay attention to the times you go WAY PAST politeness and tolerance and have entered the "irritation zone." The time this happens is *not* an opportune time to demonstrate your intellectual prowess. Or maybe you find it entertaining to irritate others. Not everyone appreciates this kind of humor (but you already know that, don't you?).

Marie was at a party and mentioned it was a bit warm in the room, suggesting they open a window. A woman on the couch next to her, Diane (a Green) says, "Maybe you're having a hot flash."

Marie smiled, not knowing whether that was supposed to be a joke or not and said, “No, I am not having a hot flash, I just finished a 2 hour workout, I am always a bit warm afterwards.”

Diane insisted, “You’re menopausal, it’s a hot flash and you don’t realize it.”



Seeing the offense on Marie’s face by that comment, a friend tried to come to the rescue saying, “Actually it is warm in here, there is a pizza in the oven, let’s get a window open.”

Diane stopped her, “No! The temperature is fine. Marie is just having a hot flash.”

All eyes were now on Marie. “I know my body,” said Marie, feeling put on the spot, “I am just warm.”

“If you are not menopausal you are definitely peri-menopausal,” Diane insisted. “I have been

reading a book that says women can start the process of menopause 10 years before they realize it.” Diane continued, much to the dismay of Marie and everyone else at the gathering, to cite information she had read, backing up her research by referencing websites, giving case studies...

Feeling bombarded by information that Marie felt had *nothing* to do with her, she tried to change the subject several times, but Diane kept right on track as if she had to empty her entire file cabinet before she would stop.

Finally, finding no polite way to escape the flood (and feeling warmer than ever now), Marie stood up and walked over to a window, cracking it open just an inch or so.

“Definitely a hot flash”, quipped. Diane.

That’s it. Marie had had enough. She closed the window, grabbed her purse from beside the couch and left.

If you are a Green, quit your snickering- that wasn’t funny. (Okay maybe a little). With Greens it can be hard to tell if they are joking or not. If it wasn’t a joke and Diane thought she was actually providing valuable information, she missed the mark. If you haven’t caught on by now, it was time for her to get out of her head and into the present moment. Marie was too warm – open a window (ESPECIALLY if it was a hot flash for heaven’s sake)!

You might have just read this and thought, “yeah, so what?” The “so what” is - you may win your point, (or get a grin at another person’s expense) but lose that relationship. If proving your point is more important, go for it. Just don’t wonder why everyone avoids you. Recognize when to set aside a topic and change gears. You can discuss the topic at another time, with people who are actually interested. Your vast knowledge IS appreciated in suitable situations.

● DATA DIVING

Closely related to its cousin Data Dumping, Data Diving is when someone starts to ask questions in order to “fix the problem” before the person telling the story has finished.

A spouse comes home after work and starts to talk about a particularly stressful incident that happened. Focused on facts and problem-solving the Green mate begins inquiring, “Did you try this? How about that? You could do this...” (After all, they would not be telling you all of this unless they are seeking solutions, right?)

Not always... before you automatically click into “fix it” mode, check to make sure you have connected with their emotional reasons for sharing. Are they simply venting? Looking for empathy? Expressing their frustrations?



Questions are great - it's the timing that needs perfecting. Find out the purpose for the conversation before you forge forward with solutions. Connect with them personally by allowing them to express their emotions. Try recapping their emotional experience first, “How frustrating!” Practice patience, especially if you start to realize they are not asking you to solve anything, just listen. Once you can communicate to them that you understand their circumstance, you'll likely get the green light to offer answers. Or, you may actually have satisfied everything they were seeking by simply listening.

● UNREASONABLE EXPECTATIONS

Greens have a tendency to operate on a different wavelength than other styles. They have acquired different information and experiences throughout their lives (as we all have). The challenge rears when Greens assume others are in alignment with their EXACT logic and background or are restless and impatient with others' “incompetence.” I was involved in a conversation with a group of friends at lunch the other day. A man had just finished watching the movie, “The Secret” and was inspired by its message. He shared that for a great deal of his life he had been focusing on what he had been missing out on instead of appreciating the things he did have. This was a profound shift for him. Another guy at the table seemed to dismiss the first man's experience altogether. “That was a ridiculously stupid movie! That movie reduced concepts down to such a simplified system. The theories are much more complex, multifaceted and rich. It didn't do them any justice.”

I remember thinking, DUH! That was the point of the movie – to distill the ideas to understandable pieces that were easy to digest by any lay person who had never

been exposed to the material before. It was a movie produced for the mass public, not a select group that has devoted their life's work to studying it (as the man refuting it had done). This man continued with his intensely derogatory comments regarding the movie until anyone with a contradictory opinion was totally silenced.

Good for you guy that you are so enlightened. How about noticing that others are at a different stage than you are? You are resourceful in all your wisdom, are you not? How about allowing others to catch up with you or better yet, follow their own path? When someone shares they learned something helpful, how can you acknowledge and support their growth AND express your own opinion? Can you figure out a way that they can co-exist? Could it be that both of you have valid views? News flash – it can.

● LIVING IN YOUR HEAD

As thinkers, Greens like to work things out in their head before trying them out in the “real” world. They can observe events, examine them from an objective, detached point of view and generate several workable solutions - without so much as showing a single discernable facial expression, uttering a word or giving a clue to others what they have decided. They may disappear from the scene altogether to follow through on their decision, leaving others to wonder where they went. I have worked with couples where the Green thinks he/she shared what was going on, but the other half swears nothing was ever said “out loud”.

I have worked with businesses in which the Greens complete entire projects independently (seemingly secretly) without ever touching bases with anyone, not realizing this was an important part in the process (to other team-members, that is).

This habit can cause huge rifts in relationships. But one tiny technique that takes only seconds to implement can yield massive results. It's called the “check in”... a simple, yet HIGHLY EFFECTIVE technique for communication success with other styles. One sentence, “I am heading out to the garage” can save hours of searching, wondering, and worrying on the part of a spouse. Practice saying things out loud. Enlist others to help, set the alarm on your watch – whatever it takes- to remind you to “come out, come out, where ever you are!



ORANGE Communication

Oranges like to “tell it like it is” or even better. Spontaneous in nature, they have a tendency to skip from subject to subject unless trying to bring home a point. In that case, they like to get right to it (the point), no holds barred. Their communication style can range from casual to forceful in intensity, depending upon the situation at hand. Not ones to be pinned down to a plan, they like to keep options open and may converse while multi-tasking. Oranges speak from the gut and can be very physical in their interactions, hitting a “high five, punching, or pushing (“get outta here!”) for extra emphasis.

5 MOST COMMON COMMUNICATION MISTAKES ORANGES MAKE (when communicating with other styles)

Interrupting

Ready, FIRE, Aim

Bulldozing Intensity

Self Centered

Multi-tasking

● INTERRUPTING

When Oranges get involved in discussions that evoke excitement, enthusiasm, or a sense of urgency, their minds can spin with ideas, stories, and possible results. This is all great stuff and can contribute majorly to accomplishing the outcomes being explored. However, the trouble begins when Oranges blurt out what is on their minds right in the moment, seemingly unaware that someone else happens to be in the middle of a sentence or thought. Although certainly not meant to dismiss what the other person is saying, it can come across that way. If you just can't seem to hold your thoughts and

are afraid you are going to forget what you are thinking if you don't get it out immediately, jot down a quick note so it is out of your head and you can pay attention to the speaker. When they have completed, seize the opportunity to share your thought.

● **READY – FIRE! – AIM**

As quick decision makers, Oranges like to sum up a situation and take action immediately. Thing is, they can leap forward before all the info is in. “Oh look! We can save tons of money if we switch insurance agencies!” Later you find out some “minor details” like major coverage that isn't included, but now it will cost you a small fortune to add in the other coverage with this new company. Or one of the most common, you receive an email from someone and you fire off an intense response immediately, only to regret this rapid reaction when you change your mind and now have to undo the damage. This can earn you a reputation of an over-reacting hot head. Before you hit the “send” button on that email, or sign on the dotted line of that “irresistible offer”, ask yourself if this decision can wait 24 hours (some decisions can wait- others need to be made in the moment – come on, you know the difference!). During that period, gather more info, double check with friends or colleagues; do an ego check. It is amazing how different our thinking can be when the adrenaline rush has passed.

● **BULLDOZING**

We all use communication techniques because they have “worked” for us in the past. When Oranges aren't getting their way, they can pull out the big guns and just talk louder, faster, and MORE INTENSLY than others. You can see others toppling over like bowling pins, shutting down and succumbing to your assertion. This may “work” for you in the moment, but in the long run, it sets up a system where people will agree to your face to avoid your “wrath” but band together behind your back to discuss what they “really” want to see accomplished. Then they devise a “work-around”, a method to avoid you until a decision has been made, apologizing that “somehow” you got left out of the loop. Congratulations on earning yourself this reputation, now it's time to repair it. Practice considering the points of views of others. Have a contest with yourself to see how many minutes you can actually allow them to have the floor. See how many of their points you can recap. Imagine you are in a competition to see how long you can maintain your composure. Whoever gets too intense first - loses. Don't let them get your goat. Hold your ground with steadfast self-control. At the very least, it will freak them out with the unexpected.



● SELF CENTERED

Me, me, me, me, me... what can you do for me? Some Oranges have gotten so used to counting on others and delegating to others that they don't even realize they may be doing it disproportionately. Are you one of them? No really, don't skip this section, chances are I mean YOU!

People for the most part love to pitch in to help others. Oranges can capitalize on this trait of human nature, at first just asking for an inch but ultimately taking a mile. "You are so good at such and such, can you do me a quick favor and do this for me? I'd truly appreciate it." When you get a "yes", you tuck in an extra request, "While you are at it, can you do this too? Thanks sooooo much!" Once that ball is rolling, it picks up momentum, "I know I asked for \$100, but I really need \$200." Or it may show up like, "I know I said yes, but that was hours ago, I changed my mind. You can't expect me to still do this when this other opportunity has come along!"

Okay, yes, others are responsible for their own decisions and they can learn to say "no" and go with the flow when circumstances change. Here is the bottom line, when you keep draining every last drop of benevolence from others, they will hit their limit, and some will hit it hard, finally putting their foot down when they get to the point of no return – that infamous last straw. If you want to keep this connection alive and relationship intact, pause and pay attention. What are they trying to tell you that you haven't heard? Listen before it's too late.



● MULTI-TASKING

I like to keep busy and take full advantage of every second of the day. If you are like most Oranges, you do too - so you may involve yourself with other tasks or activities during conversation. Others with this same propensity for moving while speaking may not even notice or be doing the same, but if you spot some agitation in the other person or get a request to "pay attention for a second", this usually means the other person wants some eye contact or undivided attention.

Instead of insisting they keep up with you, or stopping reluctantly and grudgingly giving them the "okay now I am paying attention" look (staring directly in their eyes for emphasis), let them know when would be the best time for you to sit still and for how long. If you really don't care about this "pest" and want them to go away, keep doing what you are doing. If you do care, a small investment of your attention can pay off big time.

IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS & YOUR LIFE!

As you read through this report you may have said to yourself, “Oh I HATE it when people do that!” Or, you might have thought, “Wait a minute, I LOVE it when people communicate that way!” Keep in mind these are only “mistakes” if the other person is not receptive to that particular mode of communication. It is your job to become aware of your own habits and how they are influencing your communication effectiveness.



You may have also noticed that although you are a certain dominant Color, your communication “mistakes” were listed as patterns common to another Color Style (for example: you are Orange dominant, but you noticed most of your communication “mistakes” are listed in the Green section). This is normal and quite common. We all have picked up habits along the way and are all unique individuals with different combinations of traits. REMEMBER, we all have a mixture of all four Color Styles within us.

Now that you are more familiar with these patterns you will be better able to recognize a trigger that sets off a negative response in another person. If you notice you are not getting the response you want, the information and tips in this report give you more flexibility to turn around an interaction to a more positive direction. When your communication improves, your relationships improve. When your relationships improve, so does your life.

Author, Mary Miscisin, M.S.



Mary Miscisin is an internationally recognized authority and certified master trainer in the True Colors methodology. Her book, *Showing Our True Colors* – used across the globe for problem-solving and relationship building - set the stage for innovative applications of the True Colors concepts including communication skill-building, corporate wellness and online assessments.

Mary’s background from her Master’s degree—combining psychology, communication and health education—to University instructor, certified practitioner of Neuro-Linguistics, MBTI Qualified Administrator, and over 20 years of facilitating employee wellness programs provides a wealth of experience she brings to participants in her action and information-packed presentations.

As a sought after presenter, Mary has inspired audiences from school districts to Fortune 500 companies. She is best known for her fascinating programs, high energy and positively engaging style that makes learning easy and fun. Mary’s passion is to help others understand, appreciate and share the True Colors personality concepts with the world.

Learn More About Color Style Communication



COLOR LINGO COMMUNICATION QUIZ

Looking for a great, easy-to-use activity for understanding &/or teaching communication? Use this fun quiz to get your participants thinking about how their communication style relates to their personality.

Learn more at:

<http://www.positivelymary.com/ColorLingo/ColorLingoQuiz.htm>



THE COLOR LINGO COMMUNICATION SKILL-BUILDING TRAINER'S KIT...

Color Lingo uses the power of knowing your color personality style to provide a language or lingo for effectively communicating with different styles.

The Training Kit contains Facilitator Guide, Participant Handouts (**with rights to reproduce** - no licensing fees!), and a professional quality PowerPoint Presentation.

Learn more at: <http://www.positivelymary.com/ColorLingo.html>



LEARN COLOR LINGO directly from MARY MISCISIN

Have Mary Miscisin train your organization, staff, or whole company the Color Lingo Communication method. Learn Color Lingo directly from the world's expert in Color Style Communication

Learn more at: <http://www.BudURL.com/GetMary>



Mary Miscisin & True Colors on PBS

True Colors International and Public Television have teamed up to introduce True Colors to the world! Mary Miscisin, author of "Showing Our True Colors" hosts the special pledge program, **Get Curious, Not Furious – Communicating Your True Colors**. If you are certified True Colors facilitator, you'll want to let folks know the concepts you present are being highlighted in this exciting show. Not a facilitator? Then you definitely do not want to miss this opportunity to see Mary Miscisin in action and learn more about your True Colors!

To find out when it airs in your area, go to www.pbs.org/tvschedules and enter your zip code. Don't see it on the schedule? ASK FOR IT! Email or call your local station and request it.

