

Working with Others

1. Reading:

Type A and Type B personalities

Back in the 1950s, psychologists came up with a way to classify people into two broad groups: those with Type A personality traits and those who have Type B personality traits.

Typically, a Type A person is what we might call a 'go-getter'. These are the employees who are ambitious and proactive. They are multi-taskers, but they may also be impatient and highly-strung. A person who is Type A may be a workaholic and take on more than they can handle.



A Type B person, on the other hand, is thought to be more relaxed about things. They work at a steadier pace to achieve the same goal. They are more creative but they dislike working to a tight schedule.

Problems occur when a Type A boss staffs his or her department exclusively with other Type A employees. This leads to a highly competitive environment where high pressure and tight deadlines are the order of the day. A Type A boss might view a Type B employee as 'lazy' - just because he goes home on time.

But issues can also arise when a Type B boss is in charge of all Type B employees. Scheduling could be a problem in particular - deadlines will be missed and clients may get upset. The department could be unfocused and lack a clear direction.

Perhaps this is why companies value diversity so much. A company that employs a diverse group of personalities has a more balanced outlook. Type A and Type B personalities can and should work together.

2. Task:

- a) - Do you see yourself as a Type A or Type B person? Justify your answer.
- b) - Would you like to work in a company full of Type As? How about a company full of Type Bs?
- c) - Have you ever worked in a 'high-pressure' environment? If so, what was it like?
- d) - Have you ever worked in a 'laid-back' environment? If so, what was it like?
- e) - The last paragraph mentions diversity. What is diversity and why do you think companies see it as a good thing?

3. Vocabulary

Which of the words below could be used to describe you or your co-workers?

Attentive

Approachable

Independent

Overworked

Sociable

Humble

Hardworking

Proactive

Communicative

Up-to-date

Indispensable

Underpaid

Eager

Firm

Frank

Loyal

1▪ “a workaholic ” The word ‘workaholic’ is derived from the word ‘alcoholic’.

Are there any other types of ‘holics’ that you know?

