

BELBIN®

How to...

Use Belbin reports
to raise self-awareness
and increase personal
effectiveness

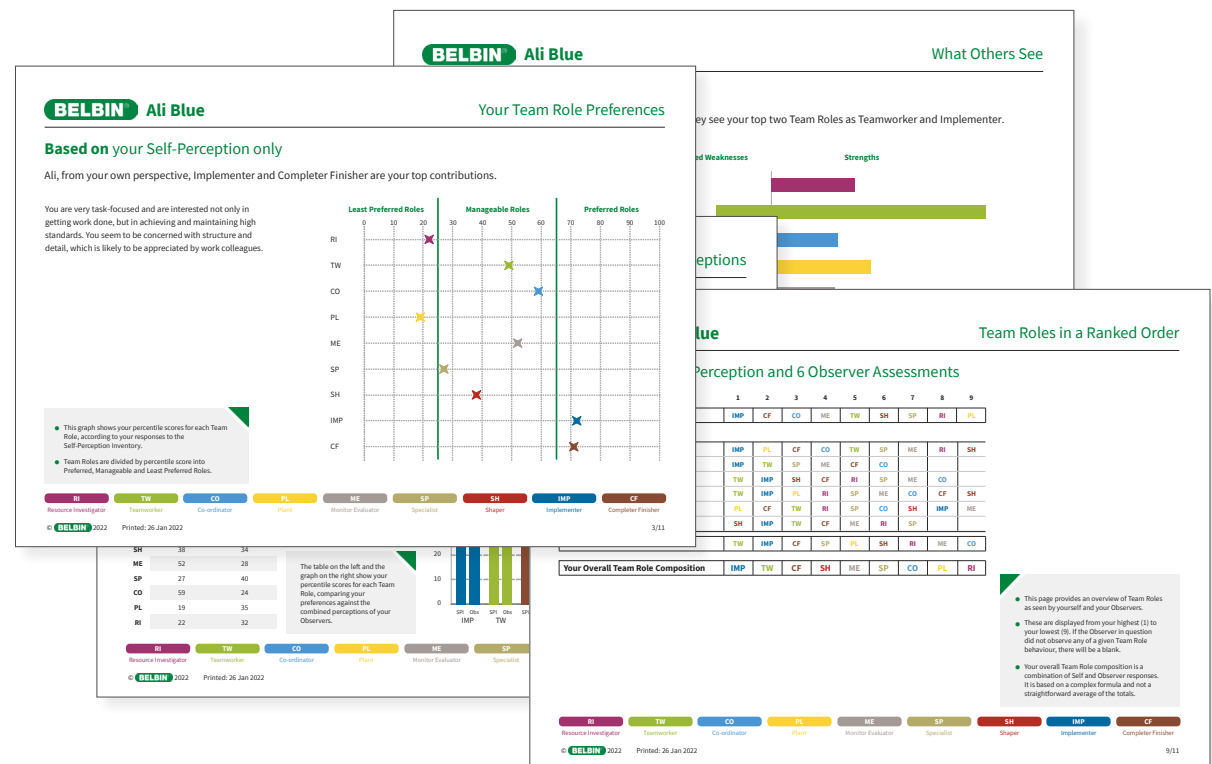


How to... Use Belbin reports to raise self-awareness and increase personal effectiveness

Everyone has something to contribute to a team, but it can be difficult to establish and articulate exactly what that contribution might be.

Some people have a greater awareness than others of how they work best and how their contributions are perceived by their colleagues. Those who have been in work – and perhaps in a particular team – for a long time are likely to have a greater understanding of where they fit. Newcomers to the team, or to work in general, less so.

Whatever someone's experience or level of understanding, this guide demonstrates how to feed back Belbin reports to increase self-awareness and help them work more effectively.

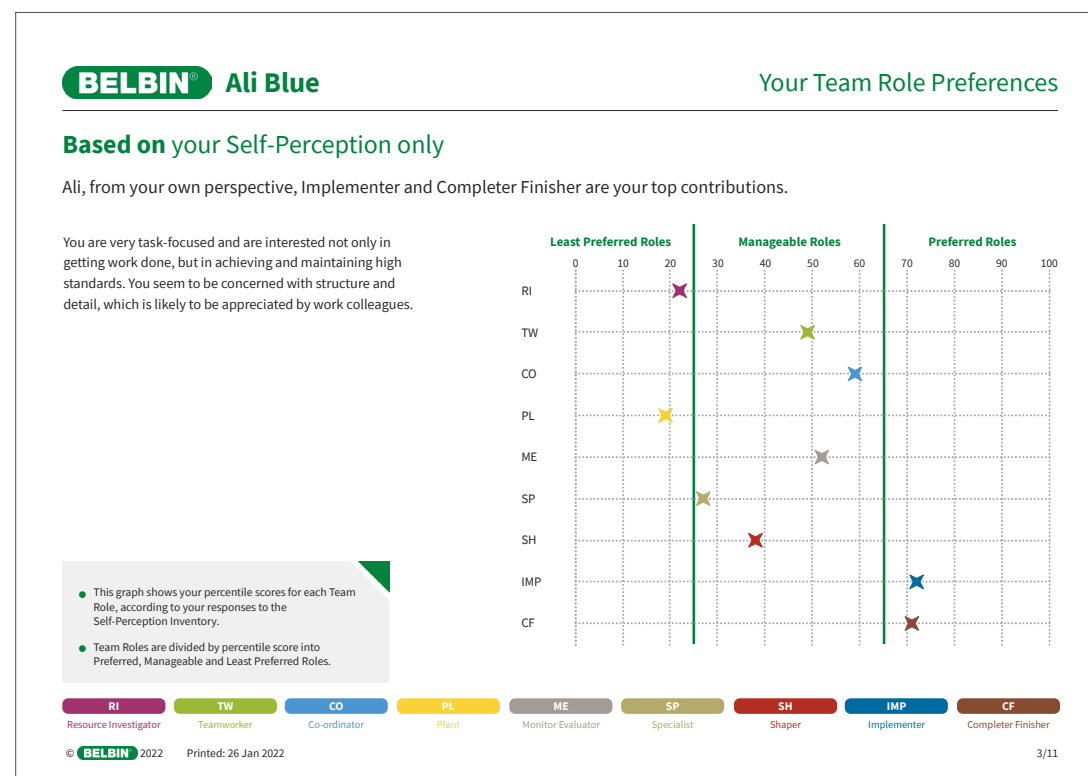


Self-portrait: a starting-point

Belbin reports are derived from two sources: the individual's Self-Perception and the views of those they work with – called Observer Assessments. **Your Team Role Preferences** uses only Self-Perception data, splitting the roles into three categories: Preferred Roles (which usually can and should be played as often as possible); Manageable Roles (which may be cultivated if required) and Least Preferred Roles (which should be covered by others in the team, if possible).

When feeding back, it's important to begin by finding out whether or not Ali agrees with the contents of this report.

In most cases, people will agree broadly with what they see here, because it's self-reported. But if not, are there particular reasons for it? Did Ali want to be seen in a particular light, or be seen to fulfil particular roles? This page of the report can open up these avenues of discussion and investigation.



What we do, not who we are

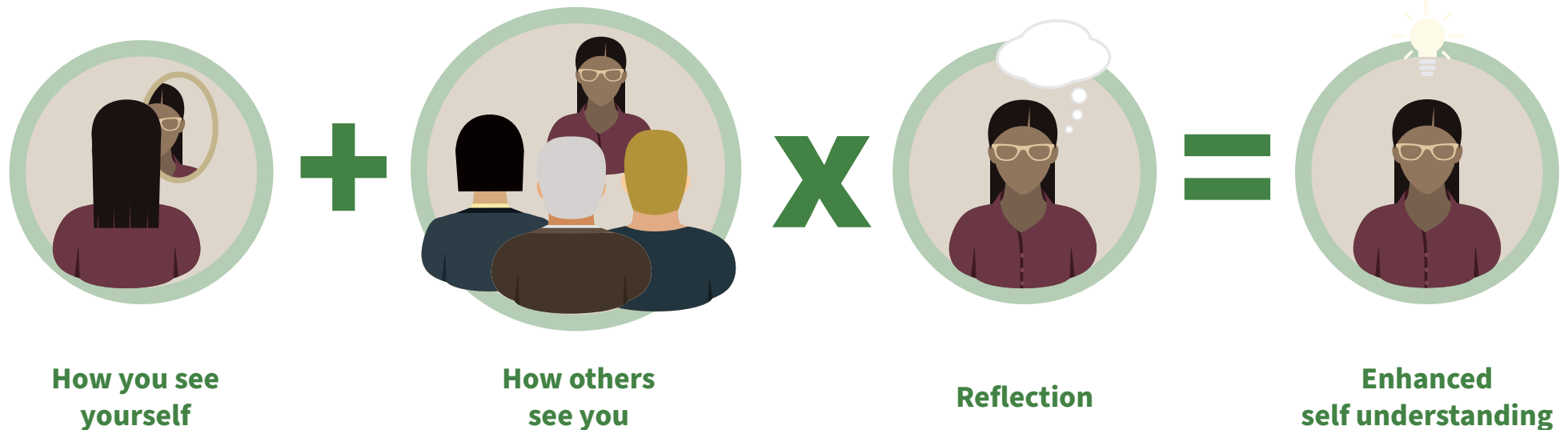
Psychometric tests measure personality – who we are. Belbin measures behaviour – what we do.

Observer Assessments are a key part of the Belbin process, because they can provide evidence to corroborate – or contrast with – the self-reported element.

Without the addition of Observers, the Belbin profile relies on self-reporting. In other words, it may be influenced by mood, limited self-awareness, aspirations or even a desire to influence the results.

Whilst the individual may agree wholeheartedly with the self-reported outcome, this may not help to develop performance in relation to others.

Observer Assessments provide greater accuracy and validity – a behavioural “reality check”. They offer a real learning opportunity, help to identify discrepancies or conflicts, and can provide a useful discussion starter for personal development.



Understanding how behaviour is received by others

The next pages of the report focus on the results from the Observer Assessments.

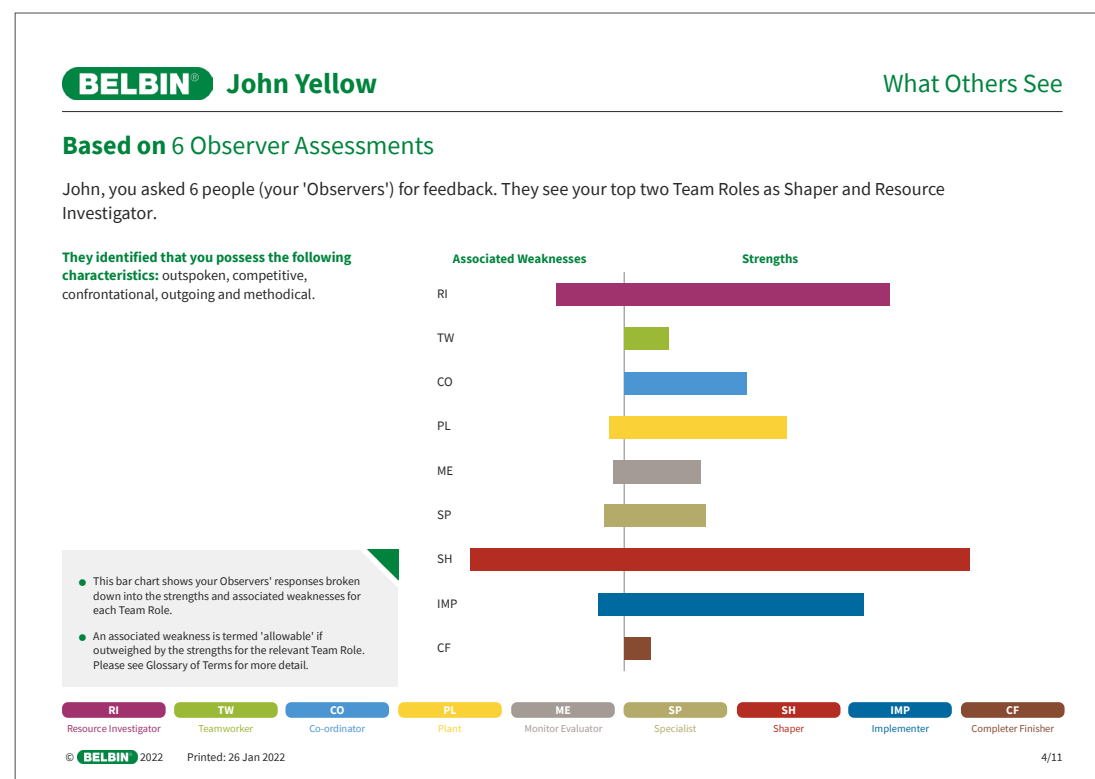
What Others See provides an overview of the top two Team Roles (according to Observers) and a summary of key characteristics that they identified as John's contributions. The graph breaks the feedback down into strengths and associated weaknesses for each role.

The key to this page of the report is to look at the overall shape and balance of roles.

With any Team Role, we would expect to see Associated Weaknesses as the flipside of the Team Role strength – the necessary cost for having that strength in the team.

However, if the “Associated Weaknesses” bar is significantly larger than the corresponding strengths for a particular Team Role, we might conclude that John should perhaps avoid playing that role, since the costs appear to outweigh the benefits, and it has a negative impact on the team overall.

If one of John's preferred roles (from **Your Team Role Preferences**) does not feature prominently on this graph, it could be that John needs to devise strategies to demonstrate this behaviour more obviously to others.



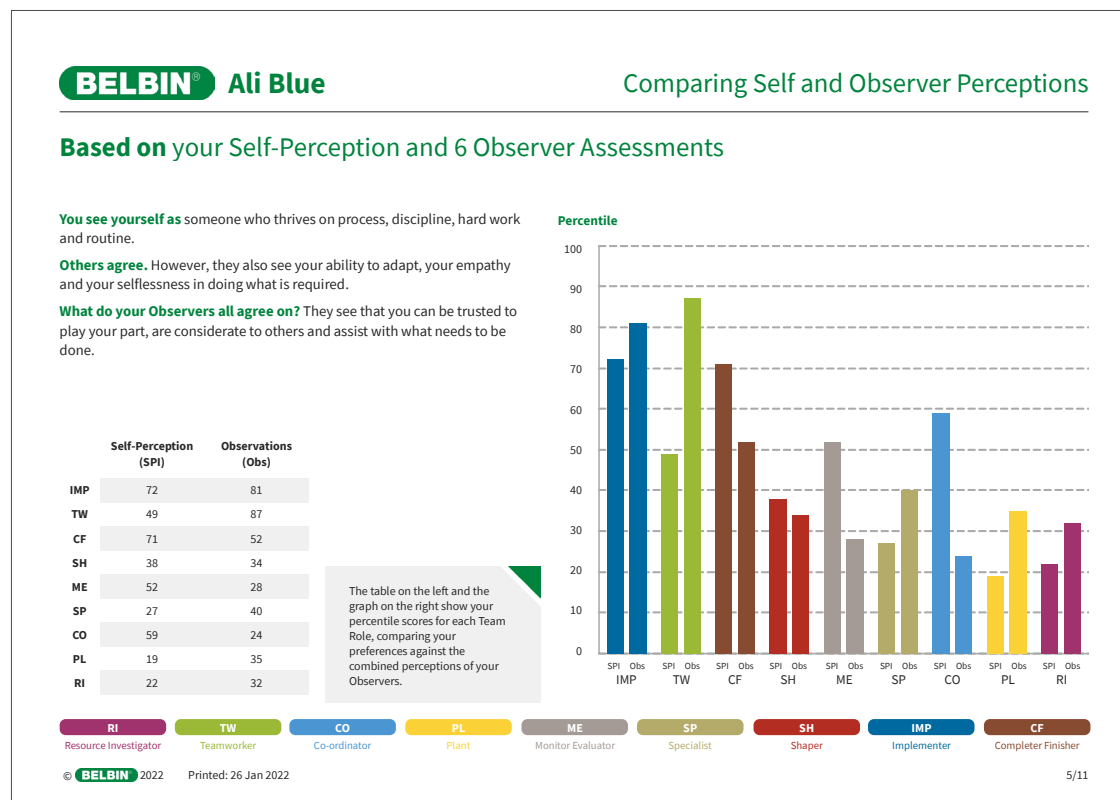
Comparing Self and Observer Perceptions examines the similarities and differences between Self and Observer perceptions, with some discussion about the level of agreement between the two.

You might wish to discuss which Team Roles show the greatest difference between Self and Observers and possible reasons for this. For example, does Ali aspire to play a certain role, or vary roles according to what the situation demands?

Some people will have a good degree of consistency between Self and Observers, whilst for others, the picture may not be so clear cut.

Since the individual's level of self-awareness may have a bearing on the consistency of the overall behavioural picture, it is important to tread carefully, adapting your approach so that the individual is given points for improvement, without being overwhelmed or put off by the process.

If further investigation is needed, the report page **Team Roles in a Ranked Order** can provide some more detail on who observes which qualities.



The **Team Roles in a Ranked Order** report page provides a useful overview.

It helps you to determine whether there is difference between Self-Perception and Observers (we call this a discordant profile) and whether there is disagreement between Observers as well (a confused profile).

Encourage the person to talk about specific working relationships with others and explore why differences might occur.

In this example, most Observers see Ali's Implementer behaviours, but there is some confusion as to Ali's other contributions – amongst Observers, six of the nine Team Roles are represented in the top three.

In cases like these, begin by exploring why people may have observed such different behaviours. Is the individual new to the job or in transition to a new functional role? Is there a problem with establishing and promoting a Team Role "identity" or a desire to try and be "all things to all people"?

Ali Blue
Team Roles in a Ranked Order

Based on your Self-Perception and 6 Observer Assessments

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Self-Perception	IMP	CF	CO	ME	TW	SH	SP	RI	PL
Observers:									
Antonio Lime	IMP	PL	CF	CO	TW	SP	ME	RI	SH
Pamela Olive	IMP	TW	SP	ME	CF	CO			
Robbie Yellow	TW	IMP	SH	CF	RI	SP	ME	CO	
Nisha Navy	TW	IMP	PL	RI	SP	ME	CO	CF	SH
Erin Blue	PL	CF	TW	RI	SP	CO	SH	IMP	ME
Ravi Teal	SH	IMP	TW	CF	ME	RI	SP		
Observers' Overall Views	TW	IMP	CF	SP	PL	SH	RI	ME	CO
Your Overall Team Role Composition	IMP	TW	CF	SH	ME	SP	CO	PL	RI

- This page provides an overview of Team Roles as seen by yourself and your Observers.
- These are displayed from your highest (1) to your lowest (9). If the Observer in question did not observe any of a given Team Role behaviour, there will be a blank.
- Your overall Team Role composition is a combination of Self and Observer responses. It is based on a complex formula and not a straightforward average of the totals.

RI

TW

CO

PL

ME

SP

SH

IMP

CF

Resource Investigator

Teamworker

Co-ordinator

Plant

Monitor Evaluator

Specialist

Shaper

Implementer

Completer Finisher

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Next, drill down into Ali's relationship with each Observer. Does Ali work in different teams or contexts and adapt behaviours accordingly? Does Ali take a more creative approach when working with Antonio and Erin, because there is no one else to play the Plant role? Given that Ali has Plant as a least preferred role, does this create strain?

You might also wish to refer to the **List of Observer Responses** page to identify which characteristics in particular account for the Observers' views. You could begin by looking at the top ten observer words, exploring why Observers might have ticked these words and what overall picture they paint of the individual's behaviour.

Words shown in *italics* denote a possible weakness. If these feature prominently in the top ten words (as in the example of John Yellow), it might be worth exploring how these weaknesses could be managed to improve John's performance.

Ali Blue

List of Observer Responses

Based on 6 Observer Assessments

Here is a complete list of the words and phrases your Observers chose from the Observer Assessment in descending order. Words for associated weaknesses shown in *italics*.

reliable	11	<i>resistant to change</i>	3	seizes opportunities	2	<i>unenthusiastic</i>	0
caring	8	<i>indecisive</i>	3	keen to impart expertise	2	<i>oblivious</i>	0
helpful	7	<i>reluctant to allocate work</i>	3	<i>diplomatic</i>	2	<i>over-delegating</i>	0
efficient	6	<i>fearful of conflict</i>	3	outgoing	2	<i>manipulative</i>	0
						<i>inconsistent</i>	0
						<i>restricted in outlook</i>	0
						<i>eccentric</i>	0
						<i>uninvolved with specifics</i>	0
						<i>inflexible</i>	0
						<i>absent-minded</i>	0
						<i>procrastinating</i>	0
						<i>over-talkative</i>	0
						<i>confrontational</i>	0
						<i>pushy</i>	0
						<i>impulsive</i>	0
						<i>engrossed in own area</i>	0
						<i>original</i>	0
						<i>broad in outlook</i>	0

John Yellow

List of Observer Responses

Based on 6 Observer Assessments

Here is a complete list of the words and phrases your Observers chose from the Observer Assessment in descending order. Words for associated weaknesses shown in *italics*.

outspoken	11	creative	2	analytical	1	<i>territorial</i>	0
competitive	7	persevering	2	reliable	1	shrewd	0
<i>confrontational</i>	6	keen to impart expertise	2	helpful	1	<i>frightened of failure</i>	0
outgoing	6	realistic	2	<i>unenthusiastic</i>	0	<i>fearful of conflict</i>	0
<i>methodical</i>	6	confident and relaxed	2	<i>oblivious</i>	0	inventive	0
<i>impatient</i>	4	conscious of priorities	2	<i>over-delegating</i>	0	persuasive	0
challenging	4	<i>inflexible</i>	1	<i>manipulative</i>	0	perfectionist	0
inquisitive	4	<i>absent-minded</i>	1	<i>inconsistent</i>	0	impartial	0
imaginative	3	<i>procrastinating</i>	1	<i>restricted in outlook</i>	0	studious	0
tough	3	<i>engrossed in own area</i>	1	<i>eccentric</i>	0	meticulous	0
free-thinking	3	original	1	<i>uninvolved with specifics</i>	0	diplomatic	0
broad in outlook	3	seizes opportunities	1	<i>unadventurous</i>	0	motivated by learning	0
consultative	3	hard-driving	1	<i>resistant to change</i>	0	corrects errors	0
practical	3	perceptive	1	<i>indecisive</i>	0	willing to adapt	0
<i>over-talkative</i>	2	self-reliant	1	<i>reluctant to allocate work</i>	0	disciplined	0
<i>pushy</i>	2	logical	1	<i>over-sensitive</i>	0	encouraging of others	0
<i>impulsive</i>	2	dedicated to subject	1	<i>fussy</i>	0	accurate	0
enterprising	2	efficient	1	<i>sceptical</i>	0	caring	0

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Promoting strengths and managing weaknesses

The **Placement Suggestions** report page uses specific Team Role information to provide more detailed feedback on an individual's strengths and possible weaknesses, most suitable working environment and how best to present themselves.


To explore this report page further, you might ask:

How does your current work environment compare with the one described? How often are you able to work in the way described? What are the tensions between the way you work best and the way you are working at the moment? Is there anything that can be done to resolve these tensions, to help you work more effectively?

Do you agree with the kinds of work others have identified as areas of strength? If so, can you think of any further opportunities to take on this kind of work?

Do your list of strengths ring true to you? What do they suggest about how you work best with others? Can you give any real-life examples which illustrate these strengths?

What sort of problems might you encounter when working with others, and what impact may this have on others you work with? Can you think of times when you have encountered these sorts of difficulties and identify strategies you have developed (or are developing) to deal with them?


Ali Blue

Placement Suggestions

Based on your Self-Perception and 6 Observer Assessments

Work Environment

As a dependable person who takes a systematic approach to work, you're likely to fare best in a job which is already structured. You'll feel most comfortable with taking on additional responsibility if you're in a positive team environment which offers continued encouragement and support.

Others see that you would be suited to:

- jobs where there is need for dependability.
- a job where looking after others is highly valued.
- providing support for clients or colleagues as required.

Presenting Yourself

- Point out to others that you are not afraid of hard work and actually find it rewarding.
- Show that you are someone who likes planning, organisation and running a system.
- However, do point out that you are able to adapt when needed and can be flexible.
- Let people know that you are happy to fit in and be versatile. Ask, "How can I help?" when appropriate.
- You're naturally attuned to others' wants and needs. You'll be appreciated for your ability to listen and can empathise.
- However, whilst your willingness to compromise is hugely appreciated, ensure you don't shy away from difficult topics.

Announce your strengths. You are likely to:

- work best in a well-structured environment which is not subject to frequent change.
- be able to adapt to others and relied upon to do what needs to be done.
- be accomplished at planning and organizing your work.
- use your intuition when working with colleagues and help to defuse friction in the team.

Be aware of your weaknesses. You may:

- worry too much about trying and failing.

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Articulating working styles with confidence

The **Suggested Work Styles** report page offers succinct words and phrases someone can use to talk about the way they work best, derived from their top three or four Team Roles.

When feeding back, explore each of the styles in turn and ask the individual to think about times when they've worked successfully in this way, or areas of work where they might have the opportunity to do so.

(This report page can be used in conjunction with the 'Presenting Yourself' section on the previous page, which supplies a few more details about how to put these styles into practice without the associated pitfalls.)

In this case, John is a high-energy individual who likes pushing for change. But he might note that he needs to deploy this energy with diplomacy so that it is not viewed as aggression. You might check John's score for 'diplomatic' on the **List of Observer Responses** page, to see how he fares in this regard.

In this way, you can begin weaving together data from different parts of the report to build a picture of the individual's behaviour and develop strategies to enable them to improve interactions with others and work more effectively in their role.



Getting it right

Individuals are likely to perform to the best of their ability when they understand (and can articulate) their strengths and when colleagues see and appreciate these contributions too. In other words, when there is agreement between Self and Observers. This may take some time and planning to accomplish but, in the long run, it can enable an individual to become more effective and engaged, and to derive a greater sense of achievement from their work.

Notes:

Accreditation

The Belbin model has numerous other applications. To ensure that you are using the Belbin Team Role reports to their maximum potential, and making the most of your investment, we would recommend attending the Belbin Accreditation Course.

Belbin Individual reports

The Belbin Individual report analyses someone's contributions in terms of the nine Belbin Team Roles. It offers advice and guidance on how they might work best, announce their preferences to others and cultivate latent talents.

The Belbin Individual reports can be purchased directly from belbin.com or via the Belbin office.

Further Reading

Team Roles at Work – offers managers a practical guide to improving their teams within the workplace to deliver significantly better results for their organisations. This reflects well on them as a manager whilst also saving them time and energy, by using each team member to their best advantage to achieve overall team goals.

(R Meredith Belbin, *Team Roles at Work*, (Butterworth Heinemann, 2nd ed., 2010) ISBN: 978-1-85617-8006)

For more information on Belbin products and training, please call +64 (0) 21842 893 or visit www.belbin.co.nz

Belbin Team Role Descriptions



Resource Investigator

Strengths:

Outgoing, enthusiastic, communicative.
Explores opportunities and develops contacts.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Over-optimistic. Loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed.



Plant

Strengths:

Creative, imaginative, free-thinking.
Generates ideas and solves difficult problems.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Ignores incidentals. Too preoccupied to communicate effectively.



Shaper

Strengths:

Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure.
Has the drive and courage to overcome obstacles.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Prone to provocation. Offends people's feelings.



Teamworker

Strengths:

Co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic.
Listens and averts friction.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Indecisive in crunch situations.
Avoids confrontation.



Monitor Evaluator

Strengths:

Sober, strategic and discerning.
Sees all options and judges accurately.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Lacks drive and ability to inspire others.
Can be overly critical.



Implementer

Strengths:

Practical, reliable, efficient. Turns ideas into actions and organises work that needs to be done.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Slow to respond to new possibilities.
Somewhat inflexible.



Co-ordinator

Strengths:

Mature, confident, identifies talent.
Clarifies goals. Delegates effectively.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Can be seen as manipulative.
Offloads own share of the work.



Specialist

Strengths:

Single-minded, self-starting, dedicated.
Provides knowledge and skills in rare supply.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Contributes only on a narrow front.
Dwells on technicalities.



Completer Finisher

Strengths:

Painstaking, conscientious, anxious.
Searches out errors. Polishes and perfects.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Inclined to worry unduly.
Reluctant to delegate.



The only sanctioned way of finding out your Belbin® Team Role strengths and weaknesses is by completing the official Belbin® Self-Perception Inventory online, and receiving a Belbin® Individual Report.

Over 3 million Belbin® Reports have been generated worldwide for individuals, managers, teams and organisations.
We can help you every step of the way.

Contact us at belbin.com to start your Belbin® journey.

[Belbin.co.nz](https://belbin.co.nz) | info@belbin.co.nz | +64 (0)21 842893