

WORKING Better Than Before

When it comes to work habits, there's no single right approach for creativity or productivity, just what works for each individual. In many ways, we are all alike—but our differences are very important. The better you understand yourself, and your colleagues, the easier it will be to start working better than before. Consider these distinctions:

Marathoner or Sprinter—or Procrastinator?

Marathoners prefer to work at a slow and steady clip, and they usually finish well before a deadline.

Sprinters prefer to work in quick bursts of intense effort, and they deliberately wait for the pressure of a deadline to sharpen their thinking.

Procrastinators may resemble Sprinters, but in fact, they hate last-minute pressure and wish they could force themselves to work before the deadline looms.

Finisher or Opener?

Finishers love to bring a project to completion, and they're determined to use every last staple in the stapler. Because Finishers focus on their ability to complete, they may be overly cautious about starting something new.

Openers love to launch a new project, and find pleasure in opening a new pack of sticky-notes. They may have trouble finishing what they've started.

Simplicity Lover or Abundance Lover?

Simplicity lovers are attracted by the idea of less: emptiness, bare surfaces and shelves, and few choices. A simplicity lover may work better in an office that's quiet, with minimal decoration.

Abundance lovers are attracted by the idea of more: overflow, addition, ampleness, and choice. An abundance lover may work better in an office that's lively and crammed with visual details.

Upholder, Questioner, Obliger, or Rebel?

Upholders respond readily to both outer expectations and inner expectations. They don't need deadlines or supervision; they keep themselves on track.

Questioners question all expectations, and will meet an expectation only if it's justified, so that it becomes an inner expectation.

Questioners want to know why a task should be done this way—and whether it should be done at all.

Obligiers respond readily to outer expectations but struggle to meet inner expectations. They need deadlines, late fees, supervision, and accountability partners.

Rebels resist all expectations, outer and inner alike. They want to do a task their own way.



For more insight, tips, and practical advice on work-related habits, read

Better Than Before: Mastering the Habits of Our Everyday Lives by Gretchen Rubin,
#1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Happiness Project*