

# HOW HIGH IS YOUR PERSONAL DIPLOMACY FACTOR?

## International Business Placement Test: Score Yourself!

Find out how much of an inborn diplomat lies within you by completing this test. In stressful business situations, how "compatible" is your personal communication style with your international counterpart?

Depending on the circumstances, most of us utilize all of the communication techniques presented below. As you read each statement think about how you, as a rule, deal with difficult or ambiguous topics which come up in your business life. Award yourself points according to the frequency of occurrence in your normal behavior.

Please answer these 15 questions as spontaneously as possible without thinking about them for too long. This is to ensure that you will get an accurate result.

At the end of the test have fun evaluating your points to see how diplomatic you are. You might be surprised by the result!

1

For me, small talk is important for a business relationship.

To which degree does this statement apply to you? Please score yourself:

0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100

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rarely

almost always

2

When I have to conduct an important discussion, I don't blurt things out; rather I begin the discussion with something positive or neutral. Most times I end the discussion by talking about a pleasant subject.

To which degree does this statement apply to you?

0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100

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rarely

almost always

3

I almost always express things in "clear, plain English" for reasons of clarity.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

almost always

4

When talking with international partners I generally express myself in a direct manner. In my opinion, this is extremely appreciated by others because we in the business world are all subject to behavioral norms which are universally valid and thus can be taken for granted.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

almost always

5

If what I want to express could be taken as a snub by my counterpart, I make a point to be careful about my tone of voice. "It's not what you say but how you say it," I believe.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

almost always

6

In delicate discussions, I observe my counterpart's body language in order to react to her/him appropriately.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

almost always

7

I apologize when I have to report bad news (see example 1) or use conjunctive sentences in order to convey negative answers as gently as possible (see example 2):

Ex. 1: I'm terribly sorry but...

Ex. 2: At the moment that would not be an option because...

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

almost always

8

I prefer to "package" any objections I have in question form:

Ex.: Is our budget large enough for this investment?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

almost always

9. So that an awkward situation doesn't sound too awful I prefer to use verbal qualifiers, such as "We have a slight problem":

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

nearly always

10. When I have a difference of opinion or a conflict of interest with a business partner or a colleague I most times discuss this directly in order to find a solution quickly.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

nearly always

11

Before I send an e-mail with a distributor list ("cc") I check the contents thoroughly. Sometimes I remove a delicate piece of information and clarify this in an e-mail addressed individually.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

nearly always

12

To prevent any misunderstandings I often use stories or examples that reflect my desires or opinions in the hope that the other person understands what I want to say.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

nearly always

13

Whenever I have a serious problem with a colleague I prefer to bring in a neutral third person, who knows us both well, to discuss the situation with us, to mediate and to help us find a solution.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

nearly always

14

I quickly become impatient when people beat around the bush and assume that I will simply accept this style of communicating. *Karin -- is this OK?*

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

nearly always

15

Before I raise a complaint or a difference of opinion I think about how important any clarification is and if it is worth the risk of damaging the relationship. If necessary, I may decide to not bring up the subject at all.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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rarely

nearly always

*End of test.*

Now please calculate your score for all questions and divide this number by 15.

My Result

My Personal Diplomacy Score is:

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

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undiplomatic

highly diplomatic

In international communication categories such as "right" or "wrong" have to be qualified. That which in one situation is extremely helpful and makes things easier to understand could lead to misunderstanding in another.

That which for one person leads to success could be pure poison to another. That which is normally accepted without question could lead to difficulties if the discussion is strained by negative emotions.