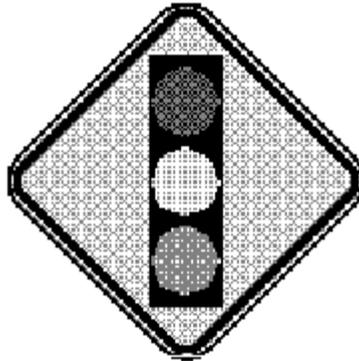


Improve your Skills in Working with Others

Adapted from Chapter 4 of *Colors of Supervision 2nd edition* published by Jane Durant, October 2001, originally published by Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company, 1995. All text and graphics are the property of Jane Durant and may not be used without the express written permission of the copyright holder. *Colors of Supervision* can be [ordered directly from Jane](#) and soon from Amazon.com



Types of Drivers

There are all types of drivers out there—we have learners, good, poor, dangerous, experienced, defensive and people who we feel should never be allowed out on the road.

Working with people also provides us with different types. It is common for us to choose to work with people who are like us, who to some extent mirror our good qualities. Now, this can lead to a nasty condition: we may all end up with not only the same *strengths* but also the same *weaknesses*.

If you have the opportunity to select the people who work with you (and I hope you will insist that you do—after all you have to work with them), you need to pay attention to building a group of people with complementary skills, not clones of yourself.

What types of people do you work best with?

Let's take a look at some differences between people.

- Gorilla?
- Heart?
- Spider?
- Clown?

Why the headings?



Gorilla types "live" in the jungle, have very strong body language, are in control of their environment and get things done.



Spiders are great networkers work.

, keep in the background, build webs of detail that



People strong in

Heart care, bleed for others and love to look after us.



Clowns—well, they are the entertainers, love being the life and soul of the party, and have a short attention span. (1)

Traffic flow

To get the traffic flowing well and avoid gridlock, we all need to be able to understand ourselves better so we can begin to understand others better.

Everyone is not the same as us—thank goodness! The symbol you like least usually needs the most development ... yuk! As a person working with others this can cause traffic snarl-ups and detours. So if you least like being a Spider, then that is the area to work on, **especially when you are under stress.**

What is more likely is a tendency to overemphasize your strongest "suits, so you may become more of a Gorilla. If you drive that way, you may even wave your hands in unfriendly ways...

Some scenarios for each of you might be like this:

Gorilla types measure personal value by achievement, Spiders by activity, Hearts take time to be agreeable, while Clowns take time to be the life and soul of the party.

Spiders ask, "How does it work?" while Clowns want to know "Who else is doing it?" (i.e. can I be first or is someone I find really interesting involved?), Gorillas like to save time while the feelings of Hearts need to be taken care of.

Spiders fear being incompetent while Gorillas fear failure. For personal growth, Spiders need to speak up, Hearts to start things, Clowns to check first, and Gorillas to learn to listen. (2)



Road hazard

Think of someone you know, and with whom you feel you are stuck in a "traffic jam" and no one is moving.

1. What do *they* do that drives you crazy?
2. What do you do that drives *them* crazy?
3. How might you change your behavior to have better communications with them? (I didn't say change your car, only the way you drive and/or deal with traffic jams.(3)

So to improve our skills in working with others we need to first understand ourselves, then work out ways to understand what is important for the other person. We must make the first move across the intersection.

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|  | <p><i>The article above is based on chapter 4 from Jane's second publication "The Colors of Supervision" . She spoke about "The Colors of Supervision" at the IFTDO Conference in Kuala Lumpur in October 1997. Jane works with a wide variety of supervisors using "Colors" and also offers "Are you a Gorilla, Spider, Heart or Clown?" as an interactive Keynote address. In addition, Jane's first book "Don't You Have Anything Better to Do" speaks to some of the areas covered above.</i></p> <p><i>Jane Durant is a workshop leader, consultant and coach and to a wide variety of organizations in North America, the United Kingdom and South-East Asia. A supervisor herself for many years, since 1985 she has worked with hundreds of supervisors in customized programs.</i></p> <p>To get a copy of "The Colors of Supervision" for yourself, please use the Order Form on the website</p> |
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Notes

1. That's why I left them for last ...
2. For those Spiders among you who would like more detail, you can complete a variety of instruments that build on the concepts of style. Email Jane at jdurant@direct.ca for more information.
3. Don't know the answer? You could ask them.

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