

Discover your writing personality

Whether you realize it not, aspects of your personality show through in your writing. Some writers adore facts and figures, and excel at gathering and reporting the smallest details; others prefer to focus on the bigger picture, drawing conclusions and making recommendations.

To assess your writer's personality, read the 20 statements below. If a statement appeals to you as accurate, or even partially accurate, circle the number 5 in the box to the right. If the statement does not apply to you, simply move on.

1	I polish as I draft, imagining how my writing is going to affect the end client.				5
2	I love words and would like to spend more time reading dictionaries.			5	
3	I have to get to know something in depth before I am comfortable writing about it.	5			
4	I get bored if I have to use the same format over and over again.			5	
5	I'm happiest when I know I've been really thorough and complete.	5			
6	I'm happiest when I know I've been really accurate and precise.		5		
7	I love writing strong recommendations.				5
8	I like to get everything down first so I can refine without having to fret about content.		5		
9	I'm strongest in a support role. I tend to be more quiet and watchful than others.	5			
10	I believe strongly that shorter is usually better, because convincing the client to make much needed improvements is what it's all about.				5
11	I enjoy writing, but can lose interest quickly when a report goes into multiple revisions.			5	
12	I am not comfortable using metaphors, analogies and similes in my writing as they tend to obscure the facts.		5		
13	I sometimes play word games in my writing, such as never repeating a word, using alliteration, or trying phrases I've never used before.			5	
14	When I research, I often spot relationships between facts and figures that others don't.	5			
15	I believe that people are persuaded by original thought... not just facts and figures.				5
16	I find briefing notes and executive summaries difficult because they are so short, and can therefore become superficial.		5		
17	Others often say that they find me creative.			5	
18	It's only the outcome that matters. Frankly, I'd be as happy making a strong oral presentation as writing a long report.				5
19	I enjoy staying unbiased, using my powers of observation to collect important information that I can present to my clients.	5			
20	I'm proud when I get all the facts right. Sometimes I wish I didn't have to make recommendations at all.		5		

Add up the circled 5s in each column, then turn the page.

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A	B	C	D
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What is your writing personality?

The four writing personalities described below are integral to corporate communications. Observers and refiners collect and refine details at the early stages of a project; creators and persuaders provide analysis and recommendations to make a solid case for action.

A	B	C	D

Read through the four descriptions below and compare them with your personality scores.



A. The observer

You see connections between elements that others don't. You put more value on listening than on speaking, because when others talk they reveal important facts and insights. You enjoy working with different personality types, and perform well on a team. You admire creativity in others, but don't see yourself as the creative type.



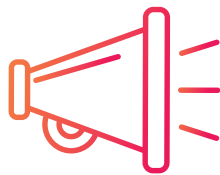
B. The refiner

You're a details person, someone who needs to make certain that all the facts are 100 percent accurate. You don't like exaggeration. You want to see a project through to the finish, and the quality of that product is a matter of personal and professional responsibility.



C. The creator

You're always up for something new, and have an uncommon ability to solve problems. You believe that originality is critical—and most valuable to your clients. While you appreciate the need for routine, it gets boring quickly. To satisfy yourself, you always put something uniquely yours in everything you write.



D. The persuader

You yearn to make a difference. You look at recommending improvements to others as a duty. You believe that change is healthy, and know that any bad decision can always be reversed. To you, writing should be more than accurate. It should be convincing, compelling, even inspiring.

Bring your personality to life.

No writer who strives to improve is ever locked into one personality. As you gain experience and hone your talent, you'll find that your writing personality will evolve. Some writers move from one personality to another. More often, writers are able to bring to life other personalities.

Observers and Refiners, for instance, can acquire the strengths of Creators and Persuaders by spending more time speculating in their writing. Observers and Refiners tend to be overly cautious, so your mantra should be "Think bold, write controlled." If you're an Observer or a Refiner, you also can improve by having a Creator or Persuader review the conclusion and recommendation aspects of your writing to assess the level of vision.

On the flip side, if you're a Creator or Persuader, you can correct wobbles in precision and logic by having an Observer or Refiner review your document. Creators and Persuaders tend to be a little reckless, so you can nurture your inner Observer or Refiner by thinking more about what is the case, rather than what might be.

Here's an overview to keep on hand.

1 The observer

Strength

- ▶ Research, fact-checking

Works well with

- ▶ Refiner

Improves with

- ▶ Persuader

2 The refiner

Strength

- ▶ Structure, outline, concision

Works well with

- ▶ Observer

Improves with

- ▶ Creator

3 The creator

Strength

- ▶ Diction, style, tone

Works well with

- ▶ Persuader

Improves with

- ▶ Observer

4 The persuader

Strength

- ▶ Rhetoric, public speaking, conviction

Works well with

- ▶ Creator

Improves with

- ▶ Refiner