



# What Color Are You?

by GAIL CARROLL

*So don't be afraid to let them show your true colors. True colors are beautiful like a rainbow.*

~ Cyndi Lauper

Just like the rainbow our many personalities shine in the workplace and because, thankfully we are all different, together we can make an amazing difference to our colleagues, students, parents and the school communities we serve.

Do you ever wonder why you get along so famously with some people and not with others? Or why some people just seem so different that you struggle to understand them? Some people zig while other people zag? What we all really crave though is to be understood.

Over the years many people have written about personality types and temperaments. From Isabel Myers and Dr. David Keirsey to True Colors with Don Lowry and Color Types with Mary Miscisin, there have been letter types, name types and with True Colors, color types. I have completed many of these certifications in my career. I love to talk about True Colors because it simplifies personality in a quick way that everyone can understand. Personality type and temperament give us a language to build understanding of our own behaviours and motivators and helps us to understand others. It can be used to build stronger teams and to manage conflict.

## What do the colors mean?

**Gold** personalities are Guardians and they represent structure and responsible behaviour. Golds are often referred to as the rule makers. Some of the other attributes and values of gold are: punctual; predictable; practical; loyal; responsible; rule and policy makers; formal; list makers; prefer detail; precise; strong work ethic; strong sense of security; love history and tradition; traditional family values.

Golds perform best when work is structured and clearly defined. Rules and directions help keep them on the right track. Golds like to work as part of a team and share the work load. It is easy to see why so many teachers test as Gold. Other professions that attract Golds are law, policy makers, government,

politicians, banks and finance, to name a few.

**Orange** personalities are Artisan types who represent adventure and entertainment. Oranges are often the life of the party. They love a challenge and are gifted in crisis management. Some of the other attributes and values of oranges are: risk-takers; high energy; quick wit; creative; entertainers; hands on learner; playful and fun; charismatic; competitive; impulsive; natural negotiator; likes tangible rewards; prefers informal environments; live in the present.

Oranges perform best in competitive situations and atmospheres because they enjoy the fun and excitement. Oranges love hands on activities and prefer a looser structure. They learn by doing and really need to see immediate results which sometimes can make them seem a little impatient. They love to act. Oranges tend to be attracted to work in the arts, health and safety, sales, fitness, politics and different trades.

**Blue** personalities are Idealists who represent authenticity, harmony and love. Blues love people and are passionate about making a difference in the world. Some of the other attributes of blues are: skilled mediators; full of positivity; peacemakers; cultivates the potential in others; more cooperative than competitive; authentic; spiritual; strongly desire to make a difference in the world; compassionate; empathetic; gifted writers and speakers; sensitive.

Blues perform best in open interactive atmospheres with lots of personal touches. They like to feel that others really care about them. They also appreciate feedback and thrive in people-oriented environments. They tend to turn off when conflict arises and flourish in atmospheres of cooperation. They are very intuitive and imaginative and all of this makes for great counsellors. Check the color of your Guidance Counsellor at school. Other professions attractive to Blues tend to be theatre and the arts, writers, artists, human resources and entrepreneurs, to name a few.

**Green** personalities are Rational and represent problem solvers who are global and visionary. Green people view work as play and play as work. They are strong intellectuals. Some other attributes of greens

are: innovative; question everything – key word is “why?”; often misunderstood by others; solution oriented; dislike redundancy and repetition; philosophical; perfectionistic; independent; abstract, analytical and logical thinkers; curious; competence is a high priority; many interests; curious by nature.

Greens perform best when exposed to the overall theory behind their role with the organization. They prefer to work independently. They are curious by nature and love to explore new ideas and new concepts. You will find very few Greens in education at the K-12 level. They are most often found in post-secondary, especially in the areas of research, medicine, engineering and the sciences. Greens are true intellectuals. I have seen Greens so caught up in their work that they have totally lost track of time and have forgotten to eat and/or the work place has been empty for hours when they leave.

What color do you think you are? If you want to know for sure you can go to [www.positivelymary.com](http://www.positivelymary.com) or [www.truecolorsintl.com](http://www.truecolorsintl.com).

The reality is that we are all of the colors, but one shines brighter than the others. We have shades of all of the colors. Some professions attract certain colors more than others. For instance, the teaching profession attracts more golds and oranges than the other colors. Golds make up about 40% of the general population while oranges make up about 35%. I have seen more gold and orange types as teachers than any other type. Blue personalities make up about 20% while Greens make up only 5% and are certainly rare. When all of the colors come together, if they can build an understanding of one another, they can build a formidable team as all of the skill sets and strengths balance well. In teaching, because the balance is more gold and orange, when a green is thrown into the mix conflict often arises. Part of the reason for that is the difference in information processing and values.

When you look at the color types above you can see variations in what each of these colors value or may value. It is a good base guide to getting along with each type. Our values provide guidance and direction in our lives. It often helps pave the road to harmony, but when one of our values has been crossed, it can create turmoil. The turmoil can be with other people and inner turmoil (emotional) within you. Think about the last time you had a disagreement or a conflict with someone...anyone. It could be a family member, colleague, student or other person. What was the conflict about? Now think about your own core values. Make a list of your values if it helps. Look at your top five values. Chances are that this conflict has crossed with one of

your top values. This is then what fuels our emotions and many times we become so attached to our position that the conflict festers and goes on for a longer period or sometimes it goes unresolved. If you can gain an understanding of what is fuelling the conflict though, you may be able to resolve it through an open dialogue with the individual(s) involved. Try to gain an understanding of which of your values has been crossed and discuss and share this with the other party(ies).

Go to your **DESC**. Clearly **D**escribe the conflict. Explain how this has impacted you and your emotions and how it has crossed a core value. Then **S**uggest a way or ways that you could resolve it. The situation should then **C**orrect or **C**onsequences will be experienced.

Take the time to understand yourself and others. Understand your color and your values. Take the time to understand the colors and values of others. Commit to using DESC when dealing with the resolution of a conflict. To learn more about color values and what happens when a color is stressed or conflict is happening, read *Showing our True Colors* by Mary Miscisin or plan an education session to learn more and to gain a valuable understanding of your working relationships.

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