

Together Growing

The Root Values and
The PACT-L Model
of Relationships

by Kevin A. Phillips

The Root Values and The PACT-L Model of Relationships

The Empowered Community

You lead an organization – perhaps a business, a church, a school, or a community service agency. You keep many balls in the air as you move through your day.

- You must generate a profit (or increase your contributor base) at the same time you fund the costs of your operations.
- You must focus on your mission and at the same time scan the horizon to adapt your mission to the needs of a changing world.
- You must motivate your team and at the same time hold them accountable for productive work.
- You must recruit new clients (customers, or constituents) and at the same time serve the needs of those you already have.

You have so many balls in the air that you may neglect the one goal that would empower your organization to achieve all the rest.

How do you release the power of community?

An empowered community enlists the creativity and resourcefulness of individuals without the need for coercion or control. It consists of common people in uncommon relationship. It takes off when people take responsibility for the quality of their common life. By the degree to which people are limited in their ability to relate to others, it is diminished.

We often hear “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” Experienced leaders know how challenging this is. We remember fondly moments in our lives when we have participated in a truly empowered community and have experienced the momentum of individual contributions that are genuinely shared.

An empowered community enlists the creativity and resourcefulness of individuals.



The power of community pumps vitality into activity. It brings people alive. It inspires creativity. It invites ownership of mission. It fires people’s passion and unites them in a common vision. People say, “I love what *we* do!”

Extraordinary people do not build an empowered community. Common people in extraordinary relationship do. What matters is the quality of our relationships. People with higher degrees of relational competence are more likely to release the power of community. Those who are more limited in their ability to relate well with others, undermine it. To turn up the power of your community, address people’s capacity for relationship.

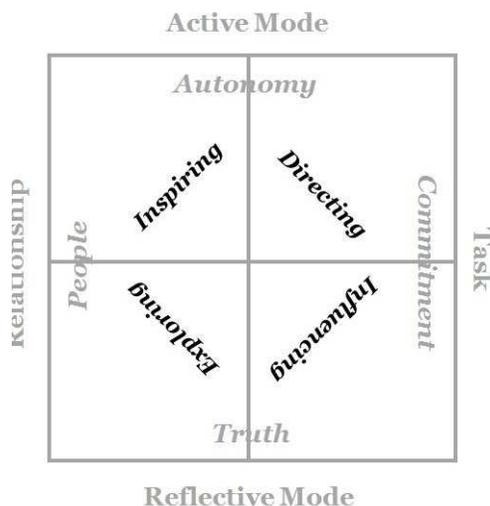
Release the power of community, and the community takes over. You stop being the juggler. You become a ringmaster. You no longer stress about keeping so many balls in the air. Your people take care of the balls. You have learned to take care of your people.

Relational Style and the PACT-L Model

Relational style expresses your most comfortable behavior in relationship. The PACT-L Model applies Root Values to create a map of dynamics in relationships. How you prioritize four Root Values – People, Autonomy, Commitment, and Truth – informs your choices and behavior. Your consistent preference becomes a relational habit, what you experience as “normal.” (To learn more about Root Values, see: *The Root Values: Releasing the Power of Community*, available at www.together-growing.com/resources.)

A relational style, then, consists of specific habits of emotion, perception, thought, and behavior. It may feel hard-wired into your personality. After all, you have practiced these habits over a lifetime. It feels natural due to continual reinforcement.

The truth is that a relational style is learned. It is not a character trait anchored in your genetic profile. What has been learned can be enriched. You can expand your relational competence.



Four styles: Directing,
Exploring, Influencing,
and Inspiring.

The four relational styles are Directing, Exploring, Influencing and Inspiring.

People habituated to the Directing style value Autonomy and Commitment over People and Truth. Autonomy linked with Commitment generates a strong sense of self. If you are more comfortable Directing, you have a strong sense of personal boundaries. You take responsibility for yourself. You know what you think and readily take action. You make choices and stand by them. You accept the consequences of your actions. You know the power of commitment to surmount obstacles and succeed. This style characterizes the traditional leader of hierarchical organizations. This style becomes problematic in more collaborative environments.

A more collaborative environment requires the Exploring style that prioritizes the Root Values People and Truth over Autonomy and Commitment. If this describes you, you take a genuine interest in the lives of others and want to hear their point of view. The picture is never quite complete. Another perspective enriches your own understanding.

Because you value Truth, you look for patterns and themes. When Truth is linked to People, you remain open to additional insight and new ideas. You also subordinate Autonomy to Truth. You hold your own perspective lightly. You do not push information. You pull. If challenged to commit, you politely demur. You are in no hurry.

People most comfortable Influencing value Truth and Commitment over Autonomy and People. They appreciate the power of Commitment, but their Commitment is to ideas. Unlike the Directing style, the Influencing style prefers to develop the plan and improve the process, but leave execution to others.

It manages risk in the Reflective Mode and prioritizes tasks over relationships. But its tasks tend to be conceptual rather than practical. It understands obstacles to goals in depth and builds models, spins theories, and articulates principles quite clearly.



The Inspiring style values Autonomy and People over Truth and Commitment. If this describes you, you see others with great clarity. You are a good judge of character. You see others in fine definition. You manage risk in the Active Mode, but unlike the Directing style, you prioritize relationships over tasks. You see individuals in their wonderful uniqueness.

You see both strengths and weaknesses, but you are not a critic. You have a great capacity for empathy and are truly affirming. People hunger for what you provide. They deeply appreciate your friendship.

Each relational style provides specific skills for negotiating certain relational moments.

- The Directing style serves the community well in a crisis that calls for immediate action.
- The Exploring style is best when competing goals and limited resources require a movement toward partnership rather than competition.
- The Influencing style is great at solving deep, complex problems.
- The Inspiring style keeps everyone motivated.

Each style serves us well when matched with the appropriate situation.

Each style serves us well when matched with the appropriate situation. The problem comes when the Directing style shows up telling people what to do before they have had a chance to buy into the plan or even to know there is a problem. A team can be undermined by an Exploring style that hesitates to commit in a moment that demands decisive action. Discouragement comes when the Influencing style remains silent when the team is feeling anxious or demoralized. Disengagement may result when the Inspiring style spouts platitudes when what is needed is a meaningful action plan.

In short, each style has its strengths and weaknesses. Relational competence is a matter of expanding one's range of options. When

people are limited to one relational style, they become prisoners of circumstance.

Diagnose, Raise Awareness, Practice New Behaviors

To release the power of community follow three steps. First, diagnose the relational styles of individuals and the dynamics of their relationships. Second, raise awareness of personal Root Value prioritizes and how they inform choices in relationship. Finally, adopt additional skills that increase relational competence.

Diagnosis of a relational style is rather simple once you master the behaviors of each style. One can actually learn to feel a particular style expressed by a relational partner.

To facilitate learning we have created the PACT-L Relational Styles Profile. This instrument invites the user to respond to a series of 40 questions. After scoring, the user plots his or her most comfortable relational style on a simple matrix.

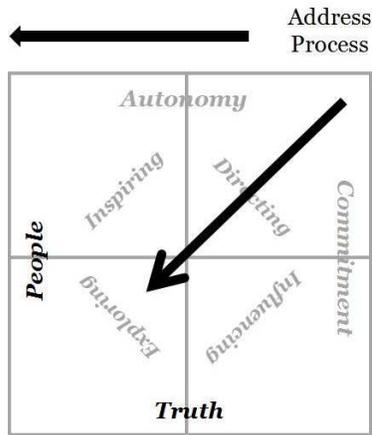
The most effective way of raising awareness of the Root Values and mastering relational styles learning is through dialogue with active partners. We see in others consistent patterns of behavior we sometimes fail to recognize in ourselves.

Best practice:

- Affirm
- Celebrate
- Challenge

The best practice is to affirm the strengths of each style. Celebrate the importance of the contribution of each individual coupled with scenarios in which his or her particular style has been most effective. This enables one to be open to moments when a particular style is less effective. Challenge partners to strive for greater relational agility.

To increase relational capacity, raise your awareness of how you prioritize each of the Root Values. Resist certain habits and practice new intentions associated with Pacing – your rate of exchange, Organizing for Action – how you address goals and process, and Communication. Your home on the PACT-L Model informs what you can do to best address your personal Diagonal Challenge.



Dictating

Decelerate
Ask
Questions



A move from North to South down the PACT-L Matrix requires being open to other people demonstrated through a willingness to slow down and ask questions. A move from South to North requires self-disclosure demonstrated through a willingness to speed up and make statements. A move from East to West requires tending to the personal processes of other people. A move from West to East requires commitment to goals.

The Dictator is limited to a Directing relational style. If you are a Dictator slow down and ask questions that address process. Asking questions honors other people. It opens you up to other points of view.

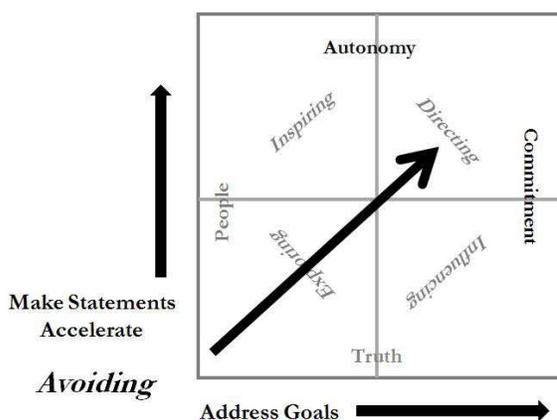
Your turn toward People helps you to hear alternatives. This enriches your understanding of the Truth as you listen to others. If you slow down and ask questions that address process you will enlist others rather than bully them. You give them time to work through their own issues so that they can truly appreciate your sense of urgency. Collaboration brings your goals into even greater focus.

Questions that address process include:

- How do you feel about our challenge?
- What do you perceive to be the issue involved?
- How would you go about addressing the problem?
- How would you define the goal?
- What additional information do you need before you are ready to commit?

An Avoider is limited to an Exploring relational style. If you are an Avoider, you increase your relational capacity when you speed up and make statements that address goals. Your Diagonal Challenge is to take a stand.

In this way, you elevate Commitment and Autonomy. It sets you apart from the crowd. Commit and you will experience yourself as someone unique and significant. Unlike the Dictator,





you need not worry about being overbearing. Your primary values are People and Truth. Your stand will be gracious and is likely to feel provisional to others. Your challenge is to be clear.

Make statements that address goals:

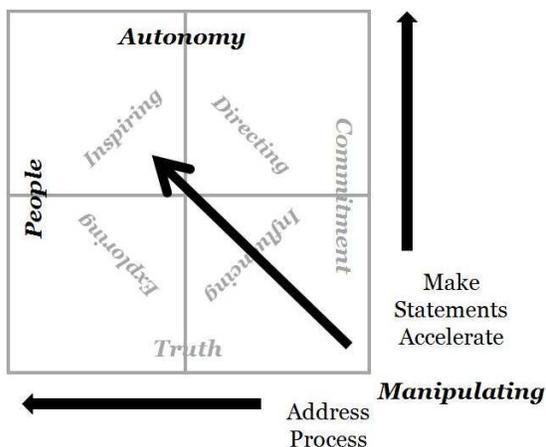
- I believe the outcome should be _____.
- I think we have these resources available.
- I propose we include these action items.

A Manipulator is limited to the Influencing style. If you are a Manipulator, you increase your relational capacity when you speed up and self-disclose, making statements about process. This elevates the values of Autonomy and People. Can you welcome others as genuine partners?

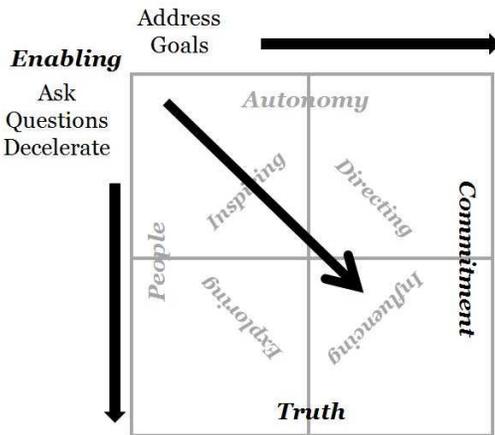
You may feel that you are being quite open, but your habit of deep reflection leads others to perceive you lurking in the shadows. They will not receive your ideas until they trust you. Trust comes with transparency. Make statements that address your own personal process. Let others know what you feel. These statements are best framed as “I” statements. Others will feel appropriately challenged when they can see how much you care.

Statements about personal process include:

- I feel _____.
- I think _____.
- I recommend _____.
- I am ready to commit because _____.



An Enabler is limited to an Inspiring style. If you are an Enabler you increase your relational capacity when you slow down and ask questions that address goals. Others must take responsibility for their own goals. Call them to commitment.



Because you value People, you may feel negligent. As you watch someone struggle you will experience a sense of urgency. You will quickly see what needs to be done and feel an irresistible need to step in and take over. But by rescuing other people you only reinforce their lack of confidence. Instead, ask questions that focus them on what they hope to accomplish. It may feel harsh to you, but it will sound most gentle in their ears.

Asks questions that address goals such as:

- What do you hope to achieve?
- What resources will help you achieve your goal?
- What actions do you think are required?
- What actions are you prepared to take?

Get Started Now

The power of community is its diversity of perspectives and the energy released when people care about one another. Our longing to be in relationship is such that once we connect we express new ideas and translate them into concrete actions that move organizations forward.

To release the power of community is itself such a satisfying process that the outcome becomes secondary. People who have experienced this quality of community talk about their achievements with pride. But they talk about the friends they have made, and the support they have felt, and the challenges they have overcome with tears.

The PACT-L Model provides a map to help you navigate the *terra incognita* of relationships. Relationships are too precious; the potential power of community is too great, to rely on habit alone to see you through. The Root Values are common ground we all share. Pay close attention to what we all care so much about -- People, Autonomy, Commitment, Truth, and Legacy – and use the PACT-L Model



to navigate into the richest resource the world has ever known – relationship with a friend.

- When Directing, make statements about goals. To include everyone, ask questions about process.
- When Exploring, ask questions about process. To guard against avoidance, make statements about goals.
- When Influencing, ask questions about goals. To remain transparent, self-disclose, making statements about process.
- When Inspiring, make statements about process. Instead of enabling, ask questions about goals.

The map is relatively simple. Identifying your personal habits and embracing the discomfort of practicing a new skill is not.

Start with a journey of discovery. The PACT-L Relational Styles Profile identifies personal preferences. Your score plots a position on the PACT-L Model. It helps you identify your most comfortable relational style. It also identifies which discipline associated with Pacing, Organizing For Action, and Communication will increase your capacity in relationship.

It does not define who you are. Nor is it authoritative in any way. After you complete the profile ask people who know you best how they experience you. If their feedback is consistent with the outcome of the Relational Styles Profile, have confidence that you have identified your most comfortable relational style.

If their feedback is not consistent with the result of the profile, do some more digging. Review the questions on the profile and see where you might be gaming the instrument. Receive the feedback of your colleagues and friends. Challenge yourself to consider the possibility that habits of perception may prevent you from seeing yourself as others see you.

The power of community is its diversity of perspectives and the energy released when people care.



Once you have identified your most comfortable relational style, find a partner you trust and ask him or her to help you address your Diagonal Challenge. The Diagonal Challenge is a movement across the matrix that requires the re-prioritizing of your Root Value system. Schedule a time to meet regularly to practice your new intention.

If your most comfortable relational style is Directing, commit to a conversation of 45 minutes in which you only ask questions about process. If your most comfortable relational style is Influencing, challenge yourself to self-disclose. Make statements about personal process.

You may be surprised how difficult such a simple exercise can be. You will feel uncomfortable. You will feel foolish. You will experience frustration. You will lapse back into the familiar habits that undermine development of greater relational competence. Know this will happen. Also know that you need not be limited by your habits.

Grant your partner permission to give you feedback. Resist the urge to fight back through argument (Directing and Inspiring styles) or to recede into avoidance by inauthentic engagement of the process, (Exploring and Influencing styles). If you stay with the process, together you will generate the new growth you are looking for.

You will become comfortable working with your friend. Your next step is to invite others into the process. Use the Root Values as a basis for dialogue. Meet regularly to practice your new skills. Over time they will become more comfortable secondary relational styles.

As you continue to expand your relational competency, you will find that community begins to gather around you. People may express appreciation for how well you listen, how you help them focus on significant goals, how you influence their choices and inspire them to be more and become more than they ever imagined possible. You are releasing the power of community.

You are releasing the power
of community.