



# ADAPTING YOUR WORK STYLE: INDEPENDENT - INTERDEPENDENT

Explore inclusion strategies when working with people who are either more independent (individualistic) or interdependent (group-oriented) in the workplace.



VS



**Independent**

**Interdependent**

## DEFINING YOUR WORK STYLE

- Independent work styles place great importance on individual identity
- Derive identity from personal choices and achievements
- Prefer taking action on their own

- Interdependent work styles place great importance on group harmony and cooperation
- Derive identity from group affiliation
- Feel a sense of duty, obligation, and loyalty to assigned groups

## ADAPTATION SKILLS

Here are things to keep in mind when working with people who are Independent or Interdependent.

Communicate your track record, referring to your experience and expertise in appropriate contexts.



Arrange a formal introduction by someone who is trusted by the people with whom you will be working.

Give feedback privately one-on-one. Individual recognition may be an essential motivator, so do not hesitate to praise a colleague if they are doing good work.



Carefully consider the impact of your words. A feedback session intended to be "constructive" can lead to disappointment, loss of confidence, and withdrawal.

Expect to have some debate during meeting, and ensure that everyone who wants to provide input can do so.



Keep in mind that meetings are often not where actual decisions are made; focus on building consensus both inside and outside the meeting.

## INCLUSIVE ACTIONS AS A MANAGER

To be inclusive when you have a team with members who may be on different sides of this continuum, consider:



**Decision Making**

Be explicit about the decision-making process you are using, while acknowledging the value of different decision-making approaches.



**Team Operations**

Communicate to the team what "initiative" and "collaboration" mean to you.



**Managing Expectations**

Clarify expectations about when consultation and input from other colleagues is appropriate.

Interested to see what *your* preferred working style is and how you can be inclusive of other work styles?

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