

Can the Enneagram Make You a More Effective Leader?



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1



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2



Listen to the podcast episode

[Episode #42](#)



The Nine Types

TYPE ONE - THE PERFECTIONIST

Also called The Reformer, Ones are out to make the world the best it can be. They're often people who put a high value on justice and idealism.

As Ian says, these are the folks who want to be perfect. "They need to perfect the environment usually, and they want to perfect other people which isn't always appreciated."

TYPE TWO - THE HELPER

When I think of a Two, I think of a nurse. These are the people who will just stop by your desk and ask, "Is there anything I can help you with?" Ian told me that "they want to feel appreciated but they really want to come in and create an environment where it's nurturing and people feel cared for."

As a result, Twos can often feel underappreciated. They're attuned to the needs of others and feel hurt when that appreciation isn't reciprocated.

TYPE THREE - THE PERFORMER

Threes want to avoid looking like a loser. Image is everything. Ian describes them as people who "want to work and succeed, accomplish tasks, productivity, efficiencies. They want to avoid failure at all costs."

This is a pretty common type for entrepreneurs and achievers, and they're often very successful in their roles because the alternative is unthinkable. They'll prioritize success at work over a lot of other things, including their health and families.

TYPE FOUR - THE ROMANTIC

Fours are the feelers. “They want to express their deepest emotions and feelings,” Ian says. “In terms of the work world, they really want to bring a unique and special contribution to the company or the people that they’re working with.” Their work is personal and unique -- often with an artistic bent -- and they want their contributions to be recognized as such.

TYPE FIVE - THE INVESTIGATOR

Fives are your researchers, the people who will surround themselves with information, regardless of its relevance or importance. As Ian explains, “Fives have a need to understand and perceive. These are people who want objective information, and they want to aggregate as much of that information as they can get their hands on.”

They’re also the most emotionally detached of the nine types, and they can easily get lost in their own data jungles.

TYPE SIX - THE LOYALIST

Sixes are worried about problems. They’re worst-case scenario thinkers. As Ian puts it, they “want to know what’s happening. They suspect that everybody has a hidden agenda, and they want to know what it is.”

In the office, it’s great to have a Six in the room who can throw a flag when your schemes get unrealistic. Their ability to anticipate problems can help you avoid them. Their need for security also makes them incredibly loyal and committed to your team, once you’ve earned their trust.

TYPE SEVEN - THE ENTHUSIAST

Sevens are the life of the Enneagram party. They are out to find, in Ian's words, "the most exciting, positive, stimulating experiences that life can give them."

And I didn't know this about Sevens, but Ian told me they are also adventurous thinkers who can see overlapping patterns and tap into new hybrid ideas.

They are what Ian calls "rocket boosters" who are an amazing asset at the beginning of a venture because they are relentlessly optimistic about the future. As a result, their attention spans tend to be short. So they will do a top-notch job getting something off the ground. But don't ask them to manage it. Instead, redirect their energy to something new.

TYPE EIGHT - THE CHALLENGER

When Eights walk into a room, you know it. These are the people who are "gigantic presences," in Ian's words. "They are dominating, domineering, overly blunt. They want and need to be in control of the environment."

Eights test you to see where the power is. Understanding the Eights on your team is critical. In Ian's words, "they need to know that you're in charge, that you have the moxie to lead them, that you will make decisions and stick to them and not equivocate."

They're also unafraid to tell the truth and shoot straight with you, which is a wonderful asset to any business. Ian points out that Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mother Theresa were both Eights, saying that "power in the hands of love can change the world."

TYPE NINE - THE PEACEMAKER

We can't forget the Nines, although the Nines often forget themselves. As Ian says, "they have a real need to avoid conflict, but they bring so much harmony and goodness to the world. They have a capacity more than any other number on the Enneagram to see the world through everybody else's eyes."

The danger is that they can also "self-forget." I asked Ian to unpack that, and he said: "They will merge with larger personalities in the interest of not asserting their own preferences and opinions and desires, for fear that it might cause conflict and a rupture in relationship."

Your Team's Strengths

Below, list your team members (or maybe just your leadership team) next to their type. If you don't know their type, listen to this podcast episode together and discuss it as a team. Because every type has its strengths, also consider how each person's uniqueness is adding value to your organization.

Type One

How do they positively contribute to the team as a One?

Type Two

How do they positively contribute to the team as a Two?

Type Three

How do they positively contribute to the team as a Three?

Type Four

How do they positively contribute to the team as a Four?

Type Five

How do they positively contribute to the team as a Five?

Type Six

How do they positively contribute to the team as a Six?

Type Seven

How do they positively contribute to the team as a Seven?

Type Eight

How do they positively contribute to the team as an Eight?

Type Nine

How do they positively contribute to the team as a Nine?

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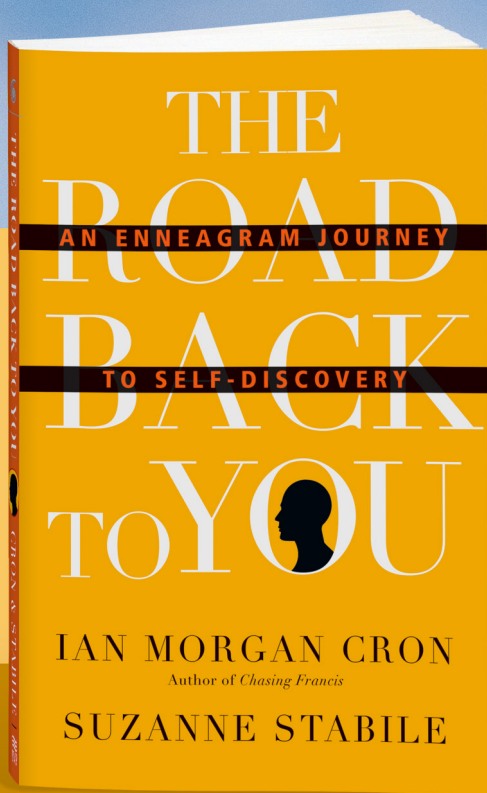
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