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Introduction

Charisma is the ability to influence through relationships.

There are many degrees of charisma. Most of us don't really want to lounge on a Tahitian beach and paint.¹ We want to have enough influence to insure that our work is meaningful and to come home to family and friends. Others of us hold positions where we directly influence the atmosphere in which others toil. All of us are affected by relationships and by our own and others' style of leadership.



I-1

Why are some people easy to form relationships with and to work with while others are not? Often, the difficult person to work with is the “power” person who is the linchpin to the much-needed team collaboration and cooperation. Charisma is most evidenced when strong people willingly follow. *Charisma—The Art of Relationships* offers a non-judgmental way to understand these power people (they are usually cats) and it provides strategies to bring them aboard. The vehicle to these strategies is the analogy of cats and dogs.

Anyone who has ever owned a cat and a dog instinctively knows the differences between their personalities. By examining people as if they are cats and dogs, we transfer our intuitive knowledge of animals to people. Even Dilbert, in his capturing the cubical life, has the evil director labeled “Catbert” and the gentle consultant named “Dogbert.”



I-2

One way to think about the differences between relationships with cats and dogs is to consider their *degree of accommodation*. When you call a dog it comes; when you call a cat, its machine takes a message and the cat gets back to you later—maybe.

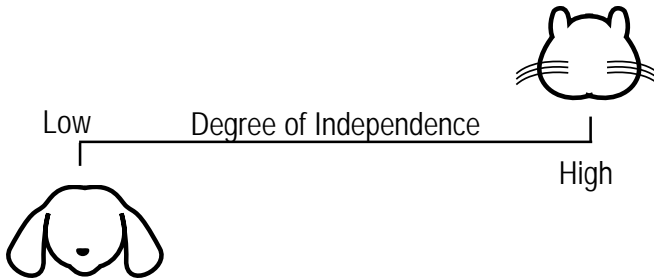


Exercise: Think of people who are high accommodators... the people who always help, support and assist. In our personal world these are the friends and relatives that want to bring a dish to the party and want to stay after to wash the dishes. And of course, they send you a “thank you” note.

At work, these people nod their heads when we offer an idea or suggestion. They are the ones that send us congratulatory emails when we have an accomplishment, even a small one. They offer to join committees such as the “sunshine committee.”

*When a person feeds a dog,
the dog looks around and says to himself,
“Wow! You provide me shelter and care for
my every need. You must be a god.”²*

Another way of describing cats and dogs is to use a different continuum—degree of independence.

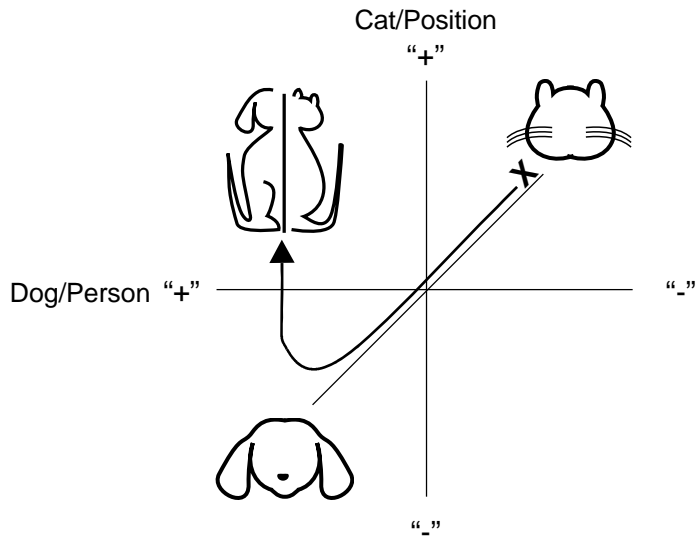


Exercise: Think of people who are high on the independence scale... the people who always dare, push the envelope and risk. In our personal world these are the friends and relatives that feel insulted if they are not invited to the party but don't want to commit to attend. And it wouldn't occur to them to phone if they are going to be late. Late? What's late? I can still grace them with my presence!"



At work these people are not known as good listeners—unless they are learning something that they can massage into their own idea five minutes after someone else initiated the idea. They are unaware of protocol and hierarchical structure. They fully embody the concept of, “It is easier to do something and see if anyone in power notices than to falsely humble oneself by asking permission.”

When a pet owner feeds a cat, the animal looks around and says, “Wow! You provide me shelter and care for my every need. I must be a god!”³



Cats become charismatic by increasing their dog-ability.

Dog-ability

Dogs want rapport and trust—such traits are often byproducts of the dog feeling known and appreciated. Dogs seek leaders who are genuine, real and authentic. The dogs feel cared for when you do these things:

- Increase personal relationships; know what is important in people's private lives.
 - Listen a lot—be fully present when listening and maintain eye contact.
 - Write down people's birthdays and acknowledge those dates.
 - Learn what is important in their worlds and ask about the latest developments.