

Analytics Personality Types

In football, there are many different “systems” that coaches run. On offense, you might find coaches who run a “west coast offense”, one predicated on short passes where the receiver runs after a catch. In college football, it is trendy to run a “spread offense”, where the field is “spread out” with fast players, making it hard for the defense to keep up. Other teams run an “option offense”, one where the defense is confused by who is going to get the ball and the direction the player is going to run.

Analytics staffers also employ “systems”, largely based on their personality type. The personality type of an analyst has a direct correlation with the type of project that the analyst is gifted to solve.

It is my belief that there are at least five types of analysts.

1. **The “Organizer”.** This individual is motivated by organizing data into a manageable framework that other individuals can use the data to make business decisions. This person cares deeply about data accuracy and date integrity. This person loves KPI’s and dashboards, and loves providing others with the data that is needed to make decisions.
2. **The “Miner”.** This individual is highly motivated by new technologies, seeking to understand and act upon customer behavior through sophisticated techniques or complex queries. This person may be a Statistician, this person may be a talented SQL analyst, or this person might be a Coremetrics guru. Regardless, this person likes to “drill down” into the data, and is highly motivated by personally finding the answer to a question.
3. **The “Targeter”.** This individual is motivated by using data to decide the marketing treatment that a customer should receive. This person thrives on using different marketing strategies to make a difference. This person may use sophisticated tools to accomplish work, or may be motivated by the marketing tactics and strategies (promotions, free shipping, gift with purchase, cross-sell algorithms, e-mail marketing strategies, personalized banner ads) that cause a customer to act a certain way.
4. **The “Futurist”.** This individual wants to use data to understand how customers will behave in the future. Think about folks who want to measure Social Media customer behavior or Mobile Marketing customer behavior as being “futurists”. The futurist gladly performs other tasks, but is primarily motivated by how future technologies interact with existing customers, using any available data to map the past to the future. This person loves dealing with uncertain and incomplete data.
5. **The “Strategist”.** This individual wants to use data to decide the future direction of a brand. The data serves as the foundation for an analyst to recommend the strategic direction a brand should take. Expect this person to go well beyond the specific questions asked by Management, outlining strategies that tie to the data the strategist analyzes.

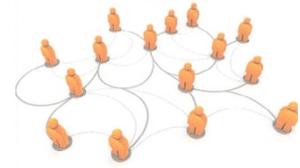
Which type of analyst are you? Let’s find out! Please take the following quiz. Answer each question, score your results, and find out what kind of analyst you are. Many analysts exhibit each type of behavior, but often skew toward one personality type.

It is important to understand what kind of analyst you are. Executives have pre-conceived notions about the type of analytics individual they want to work for them. Often, problems between Executives and Analysts happen because expectations are not matched properly ... the Executive is looking for a “Miner” while the Analyst is as “Futurist”, or the Executive is looking for a “Strategist” but the Analyst is a “Targeter”. When skills and expectations are not matched properly, there can be work challenges.

Analytics Personality Quiz:

Quiz Question #1: There are three open positions at a company. All three positions pay the same annual salary. Which position are you likely to apply for?

- a) Database Query Analyst (1 point)
- b) E-Mail Targeting Analyst (3 points)
- c) Sales Forecasting Analyst (5 points).



Quiz Question #2: A web analytics vendor is pitching their service to your company. Which of the following three sessions are you most likely to attend?

- a) Online and offline data integration and strategy (1 point)
- b) Using real-time scoring to determine optimal cross-sell opportunities (3 points)
- c) Applying best practices to Social Media measurement (5 points)

Quiz Question #3: One of your co-workers designs a multivariate test to determine which version of creative treatment yields the best conversion rates, and is presenting results of the test to the department. Which question do you want to ask, at the end of the presentation?

- a) Do your results include sales from the call center and retail stores (1 point)
- b) Can we personalize the website, based on the results of the test? (3 points)
- c) Which version of the website is most aligned with our target customer? (5 points)

Quiz Question #4: Which software tool are you most likely to use?

- a) SQL, R, SPSS, or SAS (1 point)
- b) Coremetrics, Omniture, Business Objects, or MicroStrategy (3 points)
- c) Microsoft Excel and/or In-House Reporting (5 points)

Quiz Question #5: Your CEO asks you to present one slide at an Executive meeting. What is the content on that one slide?

- a) A dashboard that outlines many different data points, so that all people in the meeting can get the information they wish from the dashboard (1 point)
- b) A graph that elegantly answers the specific question that the CEO had (3 points)
- c) A strategy that the company can follow to become more profitable (5 points)

Quiz Question #6: Your CEO wants for you to predict what e-mail sales will look like in the next fiscal year. How do you attack this problem?

- a) You query the database for historical answers, and create a trend based on historical results (1 point)
- b) You use a statistical method called "time series analysis" to determine future e-mail sales (3 points)
- c) You develop a spreadsheet model that allows you to evaluate different strategies based on existing data, recommending the best strategy to your CEO (5 points)

Quiz Question #7: You would like to see profit data imported into your web analytics software solution, so that you can do advanced profitability and customer reporting. The data does not appear to be available in an existing table that can be imported into your web analytics solution. What do you do?

- a) You work with different departments to create tables that interact with your web analytics solution (1 point)
- b) You hire somebody else to create the tables for you (3 points)
- c) You make assumptions based on the data you already have, and move on to other issues (5 points)

Quiz Question #8: Your CEO demands that next year, your department increase company profitability by 10%. What is your first instinct for solving this problem?

- a) You begin to organize the data you'll need to answer this question, and then you query the database you created for answers (1 point)
- b) You immediately build targeting models that will either reduce expense or increase sales (3 points)
- c) You leverage existing customer information and begin to build a business case for new strategies that the company might employ (5 points)

Quiz Question #9: If somebody asks you whether Mobile marketing is relevant, which answer most closely aligns with your thoughts?

- a) There isn't enough customer data yet to draw conclusions (1 point)
- b) After controlling for all other factors, Mobile marketing customers are worth 8% more than other customers (3 points)
- c) We need to push forward and experiment with a Mobile marketing strategy, and we'll evaluate performance as we get results (5 points)

Quiz Question #10: What is the best thing about real-time analytics?

- a) Creating dashboards that outline what is actually happening in real-time (1 point)
- b) Developing cross-sell and up-sell programs based on the information gathered from your analytics too (3 points)
- c) Predicting what will happen later today, based on what has happened so far today (5 points)

Ok, now that you have answered each question, let's see what kind of analyst you are.

- 10 points to 18 points = "The Organizer".
- 19 points to 26 points = "The Miner".
- 27 points to 34 points = "The Targeter".
- 35 points to 42 points = "The Futurist".
- 43 points to 50 points = "The Strategist".

Honestly, there is no right or wrong answer in this quiz. The goal is to simply define which type of analytical individual you are. This is important, because the type of projects that Executives assign to individuals can be dependent upon the unique gifts that each analytics personality brings to the table. While each personality type is capable of completing any project, it is often a good idea to align Management and Analysts based on the requirements of Management and the personality type exhibited by the Analyst.

This becomes particularly important in the hiring process. As an Executive, you must thoroughly understand what your expectations are of an individual, so that you hire the right individual. Every Analyst has a passion. Ferreting out that passion early in the hiring process allows you to identify a candidate that will meet or exceed your expectations on a daily basis. You'll be much happier hiring a Futurist to analyze Social Media projects than you will be if you hire a Miner. You'll be much happier hiring a Targeter if you want to improve cross-sell and up-sell programs than you'll be if you hire an Organizer. And you'll be much happier hiring an Organizer for real-time dashboard implementation than you'll be if you ask a Strategist to complete this task.

Ok, time for your thoughts. Which type of Analyst are you, or if you are an Executive, which type of Analyst do you need to hire? What would you do to improve this quiz?

Thanks,
Kevin

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