

Love Is The Answer: The People - Task Continuum

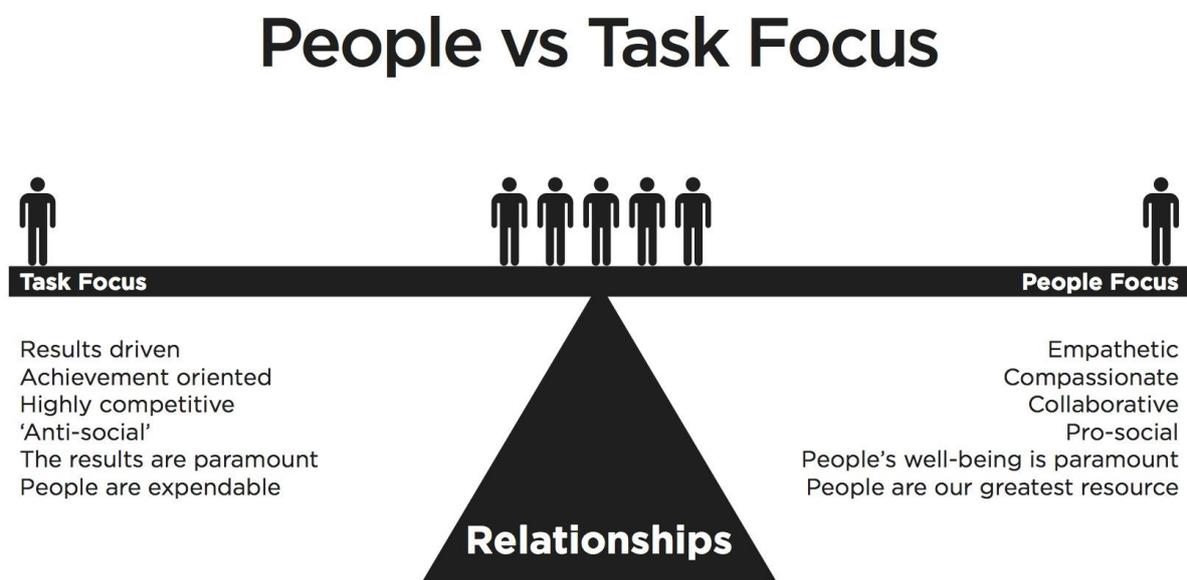
The following passages and the image of The Corporate Love Model are taken from the 2017 book, *Love Is The Answer: How Understanding the 10 Different Types of Love Will Change Your Life Forever*, by Dr Fiona Beddoes-Jones, available from Amazon.

The People – Task Continuum

You may already be familiar with this model. Whether you are aware of it or not, it forms the basis of a number of modern theories around leadership and leadership approaches. It has been recognized that there are significant differences in the way that leaders, (and in fact everybody, not just leaders), consider these two things as far back as the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is the focus that people put on either current and future tasks or on people.

In essence, from a management and leadership perspective, a People focus can be thought of as a Female Brain orientation versus the Male, task focused orientation (see Simon Baron-Cohen's theory of the Extreme Male Brain*, a summary of which is available from www.cognitivefitness.co.uk). As the diagram suggests, most people will sit somewhere in the middle and, even though they may have a natural preference, will have the cognitive and behavioural flexibility to operate at both ends of the scale. Only those people who have a very definite preference for one end of the continuum will struggle to work at the other end.

*Moreover, generally speaking, those who are People Focused will be more flexible than those people who are Task Focused.



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Love Is The Answer: The People - Task Continuum

***Understanding your Leadership and Management Style**

Your natural preference points on the scales and your levels of flexibility to move along each of the two axes, forms part of your personal *underpinning philosophy of leadership*. Understanding our own personal philosophy of leadership, i.e. being self-aware around our beliefs and values regarding other people and how best to lead and manage them, is critical to becoming a good leader and manager. It links to the ideas of being self and others-aware and is a necessary part of our own Authentic Leadership journey.

***It's NOT a Sex Thing!**

People's leadership style preference is NOT a function of their gender. It's true that gendered leadership stereotypes do hold true, i.e. most men will have a Masculine leadership Style preference and most women will have a Feminine one. However, we all know men who are particularly nurturing, caring and supportive, and we all know women who are unusually dominant, competitive, task-oriented and driven.

The People / Task Continuum is effectively a model of *opposites* and I've put these opposite beliefs and behaviours at each end of the scale. The people on the continuum represent the distribution curve. As with all *normal* distribution curves, where the sample size is large enough, there will be more people whose preference is in the middle of the scale than there will be at each end of it. The triangle contains the word *relationships*. This is because relationships underpin the model; where you sit on the scale will effect and affect the relationships that you have with your colleagues.

People with a Task Focus are very achievement oriented, they are highly competitive, often believing that the end justifies the means and they will cut corners, even being unethical in their decisions and behaviours, so strong is their desire to win. For them, the results they want to achieve are paramount above everything else and for them, people are expendable. At the extreme end of the Task Focused scale we are likely to see a small percentage of people exhibiting *leadership detailers*. In contrast, those leaders and managers with a People Focus are very others oriented, and are highly pro-social, being focused on developing long-term, positive, sustainable relationships. For them, people are the most important consideration, above the task and the results. They are kind, caring, very supportive of colleagues and highly collaborative. They strongly believe that all tasks, objectives, outcomes and results are ultimately for the benefit of people, and they are much more interested in, and driven by, compassion and empathy than they are by either winning or achieving set objectives and corporate results.

Do you know where your preference is on the scale? Do you have one set point on the scale or do you have the behavioural and cognitive flexibility to move up and down it?

If you want to learn more, the two books detailed below will assist you. As will attending one of our workshops. Please see www.cognitivefitness.co.uk for more details or contact us directly on info@cognitivefitness.co.uk

A Note from the Author

Please be aware that the excerpts included here are purely a synopsis taken from the book, ***Love Is The Answer: How Understanding the 10 Different Types of Love Will Change Your Life Forever***. There is considerably more information within the chapters of the book which you will find beneficial.

*Leadership Temperament Types: more information on 'Masculine' and 'Feminine' Leadership styles, driven by the two organic hormones of testosterone and oestrogen, can be found at www.unitedbychocolate.com and in the book, ***Divided by Gender, United by Chocolate: Differences in the Boardroom***, also by Dr Fiona Beddoes-Jones and available from Amazon.