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How to...

Use Belbin Team Role Reports To Integrate a New Team Member

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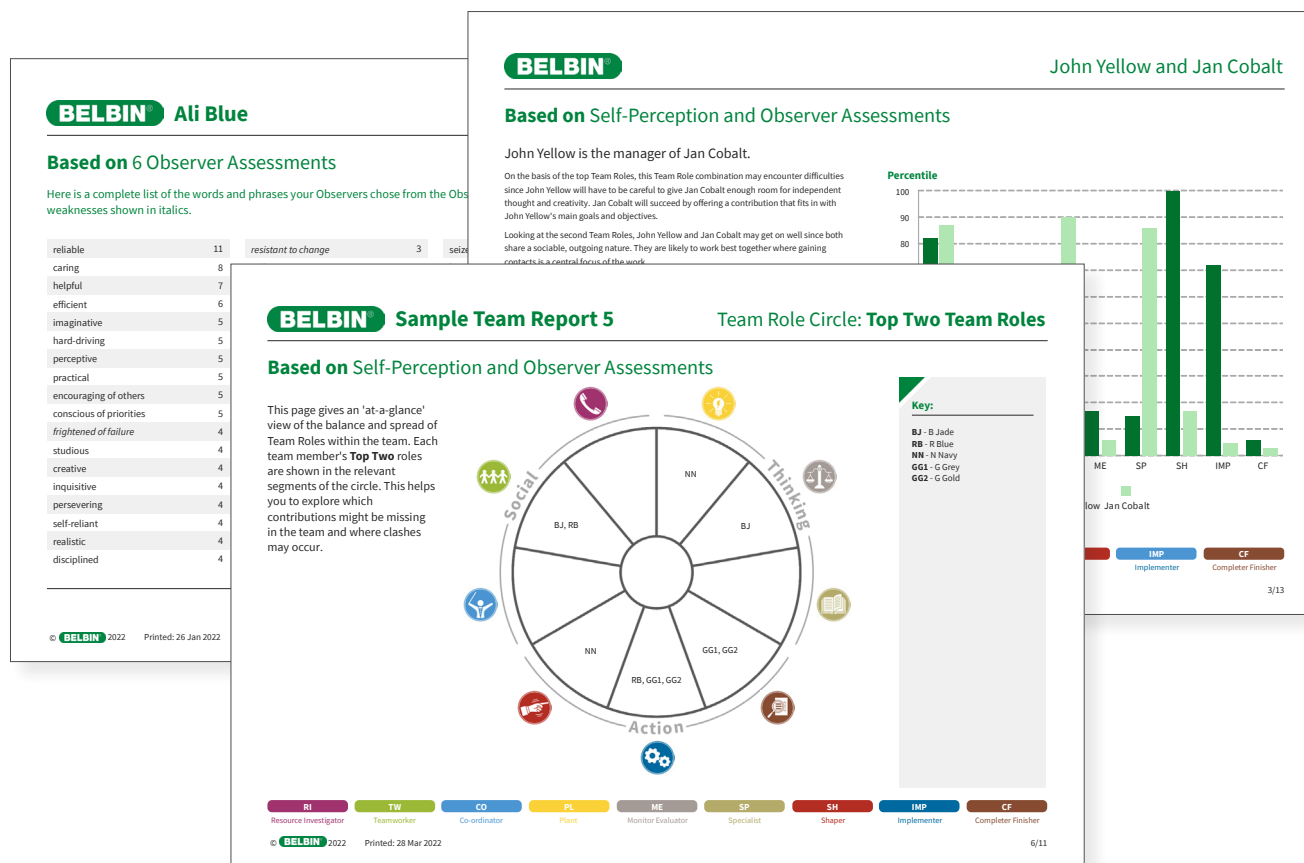
How to... Use Belbin Team Role Reports To Integrate a New Team Member

The objective of recruitment is clear: to ensure that the right person is given the job – someone who can work well with the existing team and add value to the company.

But the work doesn't end there. The signed contract is only the beginning. To become an effective member of the new team, effort is needed to integrate new starters and ensure that they understand – and can fulfil – their new role within a team setting.

According to Gallup's 2019 study, only 12% of employees strongly agree that their organisation does a great job of onboarding new employees. An effective onboarding program is crucial for boosting employee engagement and retention and increasing profitability.

Here are our suggestions to help your new starter.



Make your expectations known

You may have a job description which outlines the functional role, but what about the behaviours or Team Role contributions you require? If you have completed a Belbin job report, you can share the **Job Expectations** page with the newcomer and use it as a discussion-starter and point of reference.

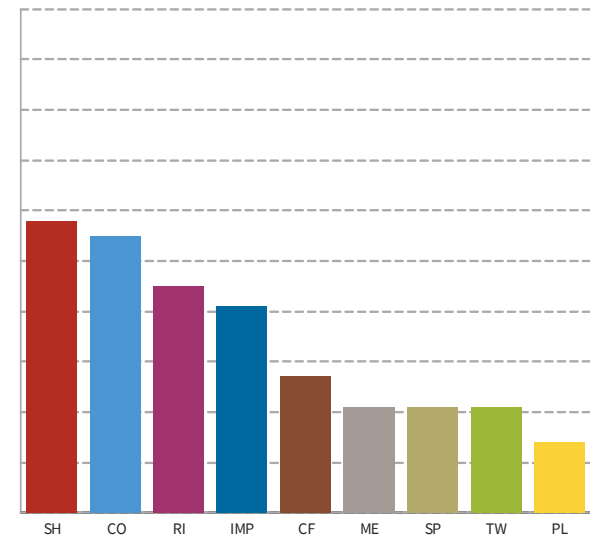
The report describes the behaviours required for the job: in this case, Shaper and Co-ordinator. It places emphasis on the importance of responsibility and leading from the front, and explains the importance of adapting managerial style according to the situation.

Whilst an outline of the functional aspects of the role may explain what has to be done, this report can help the individual to understand how to fulfil the role.

Sales Manager as specified by Ali Blue

The job specifier expects the overall responsibility to be yours, so this is a job in which you will be expected to lead from the front. The people you work with may need to be directed or they may need to feel they are collaborating with you as part of a team. So it is important that you are able to adapt your managerial style accordingly.

The job as specified requires above all that you are able to manage others and cope with opposition. It is important never to lose control or back away from responsibility.



• This report should be given to the applicant or jobholder. It highlights the behaviours required to perform well in the job.



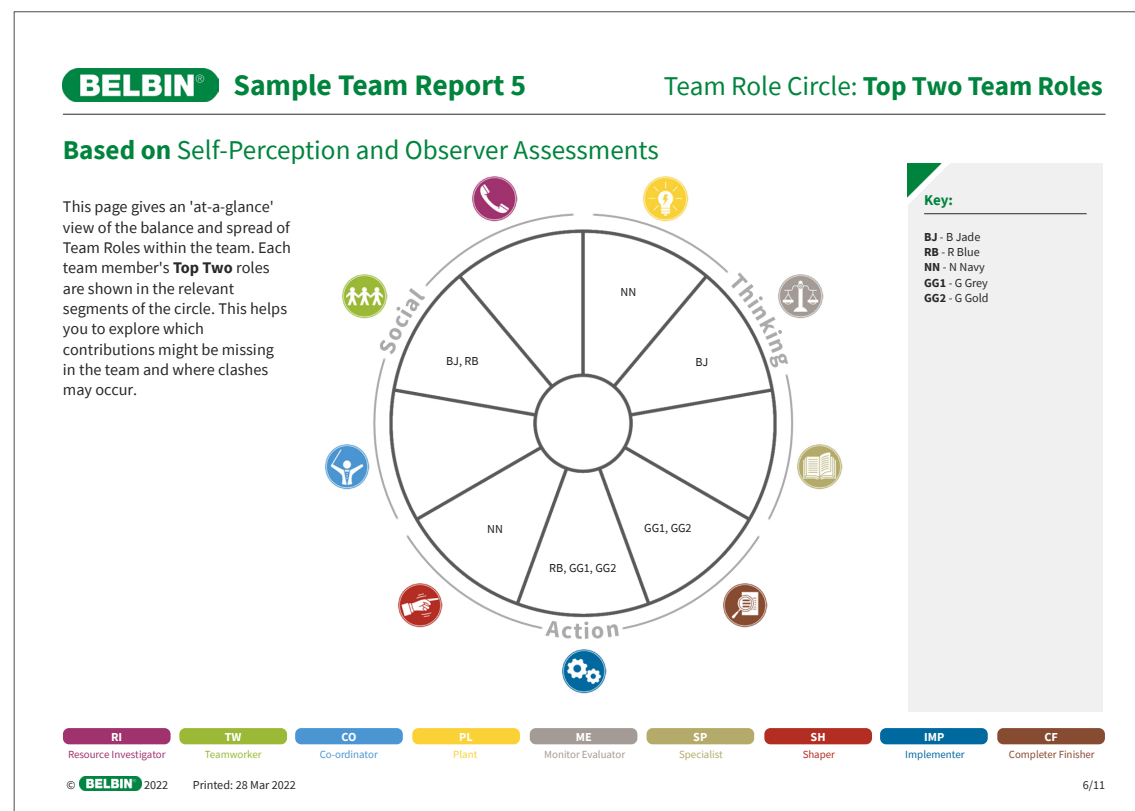
Finding the right fit

It can be daunting for a newcomer to enter an existing team, especially if it is a close-knit unit.

Whilst it may seem obvious to ensure that the newcomer spends time getting to know what work each member of the team does, it is also important for a new colleague to become familiar with the Team Roles present in the team and what each person can bring to the party, in order to feel involved in the team's success as soon as possible. The language of Team Roles can come in really useful here.

This page of the Belbin team report – the **Team Role Circle** – shows each team member's Team Role contributions, indicated by initials. Imagine that a newcomer has been recruited to play Resource Investigator and Specialist roles in the team. Let them know this and how they can play the roles to best effect.

For example, you might explain that Resource Investigator-Specialists enjoy exploring new fields of interest, taking their expertise outside the team and sharing it with others. You might want to talk about how they can share their knowledge with colleagues and foster a more outward-looking approach within the team. This identifies something that the newcomer can do to add value and gives them a distinctive part to play in team or project meetings and when interacting with others.



Who does what around here?

Whilst the line manager might be the first port of call to resolve practical issues surrounding the job, what happens if the individual needs to know who is best suited to which kind of work? The **Potential Contributions** page of the team report gives a little more detail.

In this example, the newcomer could be added so that they can see their own contribution and how it fits within the team. For example, suppose that our new recruit has a least preferred role of Monitor Evaluator. When exploring new opportunities, you might encourage them to run these past B Jade, who can help to analyse whether the ideas are workable and identify any potential pitfalls.

It is also useful to identify where any conflicts might arise. If you are adding a new Specialist to the team, are there others who are likely to feel protective of their subject area and resist intrusion? How will G Grey and G Gold cope with a new Resource Investigator whose approach may be seen as expedient? If adding another Shaper to the team, would they be best working separately from N Navy, so that arguments do not arise?

Sample Team Report 5

Potential Contributions

Based on Self-Perception and Observer Assessments

For a team to be effective, the right people need to be brought in at the right time. This page offers suggestions as to who has the potential to take on different kinds of work within the team, according to their Team Roles. Some roles are shared, but everyone has a part to play.

<p>There is no-one in the team showing the strengths of this Team Role in abundance.</p>	<p>When arguments break out and team atmosphere needs to be improved, try to involve: R Blue, B Jade and G Grey.</p>	<p>There is no-one in the team showing the strengths of this Team Role in abundance.</p>
<p>When some new line of thought is desired, ask: N Navy.</p>	<p>When the team needs someone to choose between competing options, seek advice from: B Jade.</p>	<p>There is no-one in the team showing the strengths of this Team Role in abundance.</p>
<p>When there is a need to increase the pace and arrive at decisions, you can count on: N Navy and R Blue.</p>	<p>When decisions need to be turned into workable procedures, turn to: R Blue, G Grey and G Gold.</p>	<p>When it is imperative that plans are completed to the highest standards, a key part can be played by: G Grey.</p>

RI
Resource Investigator

TW
Teamworker

CO
Co-ordinator

PL
Plant

ME
Monitor Evaluator

SP
Specialist

SH
Shaper

IMP
Implementer

CF
Completer Finisher

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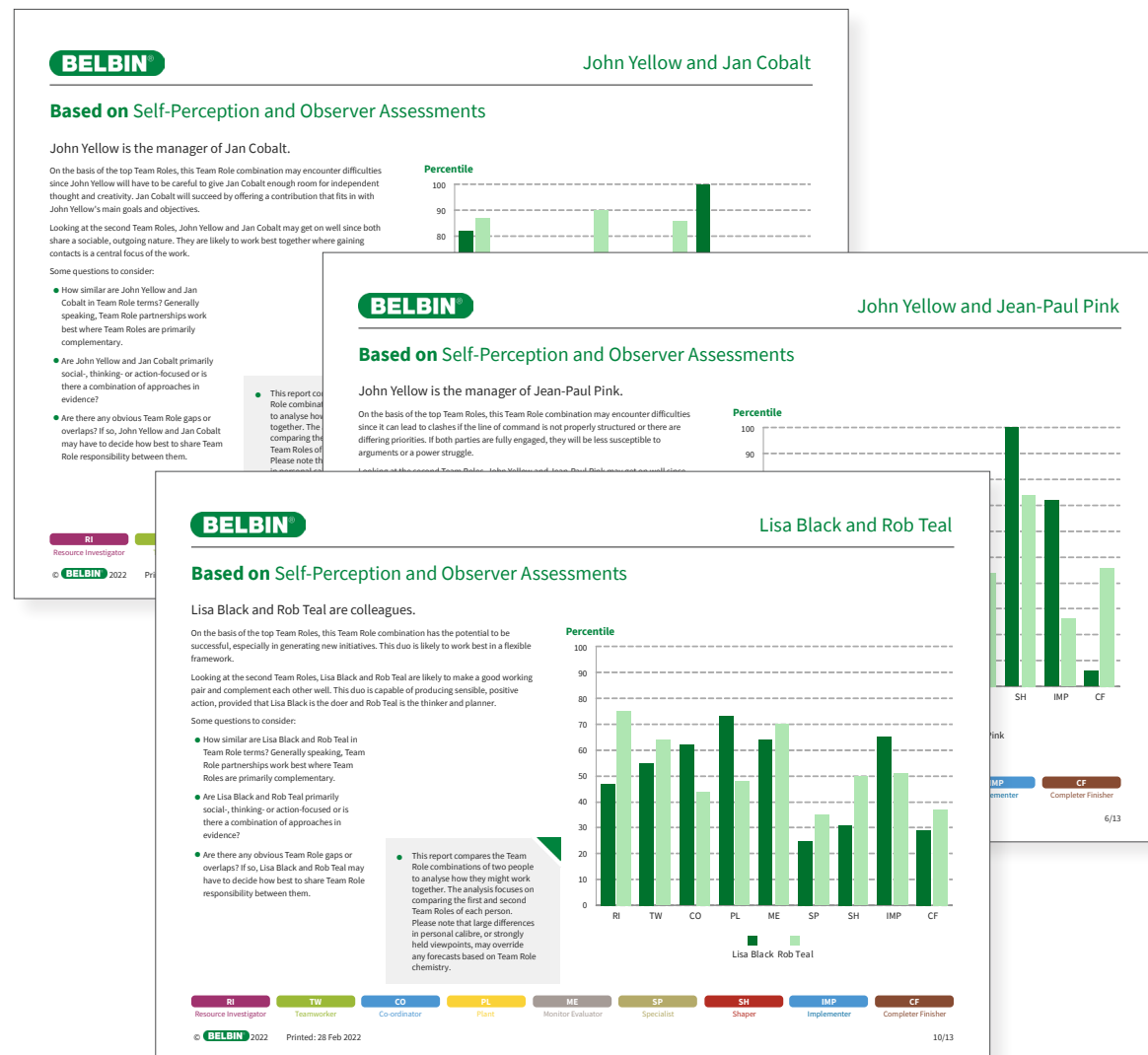
For more detail on how particular pairings are likely to work, it may be useful to compile **Working Relationship reports** for the new joiner and the rest of the team.

These reports allow you to compare individuals as colleagues or manager and report. It provides some guidance on how two people might work together, including any potential difficulties. This can be useful for identifying similarities or differences in working styles.

In general terms, complementary Team Role pairings can make for productive working relationships, especially if the pair have some common ground, in Team Role terms. Very similar pairings (with lower behavioural diversity) are likely to result in more conflict or work that is missing out on a particular perspective.

It may be that the new joiner varies their behaviour according to whether they are working with a manager or colleague. This report set can help a new joiner to cultivate relationships constructively, and to understand who to approach when seeking out a particular Team Role contribution.

By recognising your new recruit's strongest suits, identifying any potential Team Role clashes and reassuring them to seek assistance where they feel less confident, you will communicate the message that you perceive that the new starter will add value. This will help boost engagement and communication from the outset.



Foster the right working environment

The new starter's Team Role report can also provide advice as to the working environment which will be most conducive to their success.

For example, the **Placement Suggestions** report indicates that Ali is systematic and dependable and needs structure and encouragement. With this in mind, it's important to ensure that Ali is given clear guidance as to what is required (especially at the outset) and that the working environment is not subject to lots of unsettling changes.

It might be useful to talk through this page of the report with the new recruit and discuss how these requirements can be met to ensure best performance, and where any tensions might arise.

Ali Blue

Placement Suggestions

Based on your Self-Perception and 6 Observer Assessments

Work Environment

As a dependable person who takes a systematic approach to work, you're likely to fare best in a job which is already structured. You'll feel most comfortable with taking on additional responsibility if you're in a positive team environment which offers continued encouragement and support.

Others see that you would be suited to:

- jobs where there is need for dependability.
- a job where looking after others is highly valued.
- providing support for clients or colleagues as required.

Presenting Yourself

- Point out to others that you are not afraid of hard work and actually find it rewarding.
- Show that you are someone who likes planning, organisation and running a system.
- However, do point out that you are able to adapt when needed and can be flexible.
- Let people know that you are happy to fit in and be versatile. Ask, "How can I help?" when appropriate.
- You're naturally attuned to others' wants and needs. You'll be appreciated for your ability to listen and can empathise.
- However, whilst your willingness to compromise is hugely appreciated, ensure you don't shy away from difficult topics.

Announce your strengths. You are likely to:

- work best in a well-structured environment which is not subject to frequent change.
- be able to adapt to others and relied upon to do what needs to be done.
- be accomplished at planning and organizing your work.
- use your intuition when working with colleagues and help to defuse friction in the team.

Be aware of your weaknesses. You may:

- worry too much about trying and failing.

Keep an eye on the integration process

It is important to ensure that good intentions don't fall foul of heavy workloads and other distractions.

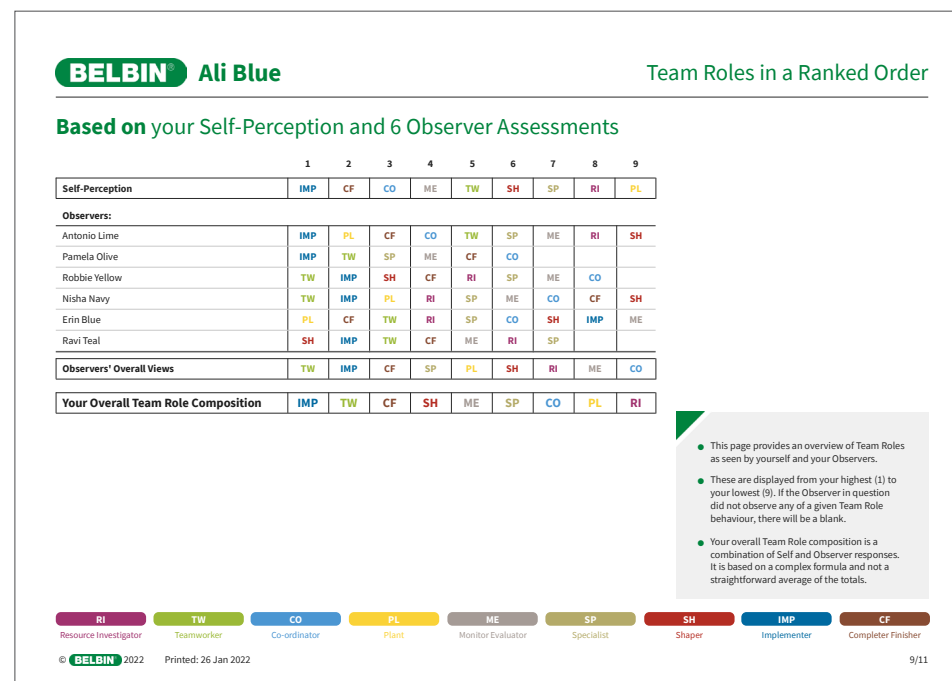
Once an individual has got to know colleagues and worked with them for a longer period of time (we usually recommend at least six months), ask the team to complete Observer Assessments so that you can get a rounded picture of the role the new recruit is playing within the team and how their contributions sit with other team members.

Perhaps two of the most useful pages of the Individual report in this situation are the **Team Roles in a Ranked Order** and the **List of Observer Responses**.

The **Team Roles in a Ranked Order** page gives an idea of the Team Role behaviours others see. It could be that this varies from the individual's Self-Perception, if the person is adapting their behaviours to meet the needs of the team.

When exploring the report with the newcomer, look at:

- The level of agreement between Observers – do they see different behaviours? Are there any obvious reasons for this? For example, do they adopt different behaviours with managers and colleagues? Do they play different roles when they would otherwise be lacking?
- The level of agreement between individual's Self-Perception and the Observers – does the person seem to be making a Team Role sacrifice or is there a Team Role strength which is not being played or recognised? Would they like the chance to try playing different Team Roles within the team and is this a possibility?



Whilst this analysis can give an indication of perceived Team Role contributions, it doesn't necessarily tell you whether the individual is playing the role to best effect or which behaviours are useful to the team.

The List of Observer Responses report can help to provide a fuller picture.

With this report, it is useful to look at:

- The top five words – do these build up an accurate picture of the individual in question? Are there any surprises?
- The distribution of words denoting strengths and associated weaknesses (the latter are shown in italics) – are there any prominent weaknesses which the individual could be helped to manage?

It is important to repeat Team Role analysis with any team, as things can change over time. Individuals can adapt their behaviours to meet the changing dynamics of working relationships and developing needs of the team, and the team's own purpose could change significantly. Whatever challenges a team may face, Belbin Team Roles can provide insights to help people work more effectively together.

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Ali Blue

List of Observer Responses

Based on 6 Observer Assessments

Here is a complete list of the words and phrases your Observers chose from the Observer Assessment in descending order. Words for associated weaknesses shown in *italics*.

reliable	11	<i>resistant to change</i>	3	seizes opportunities	2	<i>unenthusiastic</i>	0
caring	8	<i>indecisive</i>	3	keen to impart expertise	2	<i>oblivious</i>	0
helpful	7	<i>reluctant to allocate work</i>	3	diplomatic	2	<i>over-delegating</i>	0
efficient	6	<i>fearful of conflict</i>	3	outgoing	2	<i>manipulative</i>	0
imaginative	5	perfectionist	3	accurate	2	<i>inconsistent</i>	0
hard-driving	5	meticulous	3	<i>over-sensitive</i>	1	<i>restricted in outlook</i>	0
perceptive	5	competitive	3	<i>fussy</i>	1	<i>eccentric</i>	0
practical	5	outspoken	3	<i>territorial</i>	1	<i>uninvolved with specifics</i>	0
encouraging of others	5	methodical	3	shrewd	1	<i>inflexible</i>	0
conscious of priorities	5	consultative	3	tough	1	<i>absent-minded</i>	0
<i>frightened of failure</i>	4	willing to adapt	3	impartial	1	<i>procrastinating</i>	0
studious	4	logical	3	enterprising	1	<i>over-talkative</i>	0
creative	4	dedicated to subject	3	free-thinking	1	<i>confrontational</i>	0
inquisitive	4	<i>unadventurous</i>	2	challenging	1	<i>pushy</i>	0
persevering	4	<i>sceptical</i>	2	motivated by learning	1	<i>impulsive</i>	0
self-reliant	4	<i>impatient</i>	2	corrects errors	1	<i>engrossed in own area</i>	0
realistic	4	inventive	2	confident and relaxed	1	original	0
disciplined	4	persuasive	2	analytical	1	broad in outlook	0

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Notes:

Accreditation

The Belbin model has numerous other applications. To ensure that you are using the Belbin Team Role reports to their maximum potential, and making the most of your investment, we would recommend attending the Belbin Accreditation Course.

Belbin reports – The intelligence your team needs

Our personalised behavioural reports focus on the nine key clusters of behaviour (Team Roles) needed for team success. They help people to better understand their strengths, cultivate hidden talents and work more effectively together.

It all starts with the Belbin Individual report. This details someone's Team Role 'fingerprint' and gives in-depth advice and guidance on how they can articulate and promote their strengths to best effect.

But it doesn't end there. Once you have a set of Individual reports, you can generate a suite of additional Belbin reports, most of which require no additional input from you or your teams.

To find out more, contact the Belbin office or visit belbin.com.

Further Reading

Team Roles at Work – offers managers a practical guide to improving their teams within the workplace to deliver significantly better results for their organisations. This reflects well on them as a manager whilst also saving them time and energy, by using each team member to their best advantage to achieve overall team goals.

R Meredith Belbin, *Team Roles at Work*, (Butterworth Heinemann, 2nd ed., 2010) ISBN: 978-1-85617-8006

**For more information on Belbin products and training,
please call +61 7 5530 5522 or visit www.belbin.com.au.**

Belbin Team Role Descriptions



Resource Investigator

Strengths:

Outgoing, enthusiastic, communicative.
Explores opportunities and develops contacts.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Over-optimistic. Loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed.



Plant

Strengths:

Creative, imaginative, free-thinking.
Generates ideas and solves difficult problems.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Ignores incidentals. Too preoccupied to communicate effectively.



Shaper

Strengths:

Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure.
Has the drive and courage to overcome obstacles.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Prone to provocation. Offends people's feelings.



Teamworker

Strengths:

Co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic.
Listens and averts friction.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Indecisive in crunch situations.
Avoids confrontation.



Monitor Evaluator

Strengths:

Sober, strategic and discerning.
Sees all options and judges accurately.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Lacks drive and ability to inspire others.
Can be overly critical.



Implementer

Strengths:

Practical, reliable, efficient. Turns ideas into actions and organises work that needs to be done.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Slow to respond to new possibilities.
Somewhat inflexible.



Co-ordinator

Strengths:

Mature, confident, identifies talent.
Clarifies goals. Delegates effectively.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Can be seen as manipulative.
Offloads own share of the work.



Specialist

Strengths:

Single-minded, self-starting, dedicated.
Provides knowledge and skills in rare supply.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Contributes only on a narrow front.
Dwells on technicalities.



Completer Finisher

Strengths:

Painstaking, conscientious, anxious.
Searches out errors. Polishes and perfects.

Associated/Allowable Weaknesses:

Inclined to worry unduly.
Reluctant to delegate.



The only sanctioned way of finding out your Belbin® Team Role strengths and weaknesses is by completing the official Belbin® Self-Perception Inventory online, and receiving a Belbin® Individual Report.

Over 3 million Belbin® Reports have been generated worldwide for individuals, managers, teams and organisations.
We can help you every step of the way.

Contact us at [belbin.com](https://www.belbin.com) to start your Belbin® journey.

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