



# Team Dynamics Report for Newco Inc.

December 13<sup>rd</sup>, 2008

Prepared for: John Somebody

Prepared by: Robin W. Pratt, Ph.D.

Date: November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**TAIS**

The  
Attentional &  
Interpersonal  
Style Inventory

## Part 1

### The Implications of Your TAIS Results for Team Dynamics

**Attentional Processes:** The way you pay attention affects everything you do. Yes, that is a big statement—one which has been validated countless times. To start with, your attentional styles dictate the kind of information you take in. You may have heard that you are what you eat. In reality, you are also what you pay attention to. TAIS inventory is based on the reality that no one can pay attention to everything. Thus, we all have to choose to which channel we will attend. And these choices highlight some information and delete other input from consciousness. This is why your ability to perform depends on how well the way you pay attention meshes with the task at hand. For example, you cannot react to someone's needs if you don't notice that person. Many of us are haunted by inattention to details. And, while we all need to be strategic, many get caught up in some task and fail to consider the big picture. So, let's see what your attentional profile reveals and consider some ways to make your mistakes less often.

Your mind is almost always occupied with what is possible rather than the often mundane details right in front of you. To be sure, your thinking remains current because you have almost as good a street or political sense as you have the capacity to process copious amounts of information and make connections in an innovative manner. But even though you are stimulated by your surroundings, you quickly go to where you are most comfortable and that is inside your head. There are all things are possible. Time does not exist in the frontal cortices of the human brain. This is both its strength and its greatest limitation because thoughts can often outrace the reality of implementing them. The wonderment of this most advanced part of the human brain is that we can imagine things that never have been, but people who think like you do tend to think that because the image is so vivid to them that it will come to pass almost as quickly. And it always takes longer to do things than to think them up sadly. Always. So you can be frustrated by the slow pace and in particular by people whose anal need for premature closure keeps initiatives from getting off the ground. They do not have your confidence that they can fill in the gaps as they go (improvise and think on their feet). You are decidedly questioning of the status quo and always wonder why things can't be different and better. Your information processing score is lower than expected because you apparently do not want to burden yourself with juggling how a lot of people feel about things. **You will need to be more focused or linear in your thinking especially when you are handing off an idea to someone who will implement it. Almost by definition, such people think more step-by-step than you do. This means that they will not fill in what is intuitively obvious to you and thus you must literally walk them through each step. As frustrating as this can seem at times, you need to rely on checklists and PowerPoint slides to make sure you don't leave**

**things out. Encourage others to hold up their hands to slow you down when needed. Take a deep breath when this happens and remind yourself that it will save you time in the long run and that you don't really want to do the details yourself. And then develop good habits to ensure proper care of details like documentation when you're not inspired by some adrenaline rush and you are stuck completing some mundane but key task.**

**Your uniqueness within the team— Because we are all curious about how we stack up against our peers, we have plotted your scores against the profile of your team as a whole. Your team, like most, shows some tendencies in the composite profile. Yet we know that there is no such thing as the average or typical person within a team or profession. It is always interesting to note those areas in which your scores fall outside of the gray area which encompasses the middle two thirds of your team. Bear in mind that it is neither possible nor prudent to make any blanket statements about the value of your style based solely on whether your score is higher or lower than the composite tendency. In the space below, we will merely try to point out what is interesting about the ways in which you are unique within your team.**

You think big picture unabashedly like a CEO although you have less concern for and need to receive emotional validation than most of them do. While many of your colleagues are roughly as analytical or conceptual as you are, few of them are as decidedly logical or almost Spock-like as you are (notice we said “almost”). Obviously there are times when people's emotions need to be taken into account and there are other times when human feelings obscure or complicate our thinking about an issue. Because you seem to be far less dependent upon the praise and approval of others, your thoughts about how to get out of the ruts or routines are often provocative in a positive sense. The team needs your independent thinking and you need to realize that not everyone feels the same way about matters as you do and that is all well and good in the larger scheme of things.

## Part 2

# Key Team Building Interactions

**Team Building realities—Even though humans are more alike than different, we recognize people based on the ways they differ, often their behavioral signatures. Vive la difference. The way in which you react to people who are different from you can make or break a team's success. No matter how fascinating other people are to us, the reality is that those people who march through life with a different tempo from ours tend to get on our nerves even if we love and respect them. Among life's more poignant ironies is the fact that the people we most need to fill in our gaps are those very people who are different from us. In this section, we are going to help identify a couple of your teammates who can help complete your puzzle. We might even suggest some ways to appreciate these wonderful, yet irritating individual differences. When all else fails, a good sense of humour about our idiosyncrasies can go a long way towards bridging the gap.**

All things considered, Ben Hart thinks and acts more like you than anyone else on the team. While you don't need each other as complementary teammates, it is heartening to have at least one kindred spirit no matter how prickly and provocative he may be. Greg Phillips is a nearly mirror image of you in terms of attentional and interpersonal style (except that you both are controlling and headstrong). Even though his need for perfection will occasionally drive you up the wall as it slows you down, he will sweat the small stuff patiently and thoroughly in a way that would give you a hernia if you tried to do it for long. So even though your tempos are noticeably out of sync, you definitely need him. He also needs you to think ahead more strategically. This includes even minor interruptions to let him know that he is over engineering some task that has grabbed him and won't let go. You can provide the perspective that says his efforts are not only more than sufficient but are needed more elsewhere. You will need to have talks ahead of time about such disruptive differences so that at the very least you both expect them and are prepared to handle the obvious frustrations that come when people walk at a different rate. Mike Miller is focused enough to bring reality to your many ideas and he can be a go-between for you and Greg because Mike, while focused, is also a quick decision-maker like you are. He will be able to appreciate the perspective of both you and Greg.

## Part 3

### Your Interactions with Antonio Vianna

**As the straw that stirs the drink, Antonio Vianna's strong presence sets the tone for how people on your team interact and at what speed. Thus, how your styles stack up against his will affect almost all the interactions among you. Even though Antonio's confidence and decisiveness may send a strong message that his style is the right one, we know that no style works ideally all the time. Let us take a look at how you and he diverge in the way your approach work and communication and see how we can use these differences proactively.**

Both Antonio and you are thinking several moves ahead of most others including the competition. Both of you are sure that you are right most of the time as evidenced by how often you dominate conversations. Both of you need better listening skills and patience. One difference is that you do not even pretend to be all that focused or detail oriented whereas Antonio likes to think he remains task oriented amidst his flurry of activity and long-range thinking and often grandiose ideas. In that sense, you are more in touch with who you really are and make no excuses for it whereas Antonio feels enough social responsibility to try to be focused as well. And he probably can be as targeted as anyone when he is in hot pursuit of a competitive edge, but as indicated, you don't feel any conventional need to be all things to all people. It appears that you are only too happy to let Antonio be the point man in political matters. We have advised him to run most of his initiatives by you because you are one of the few who will tell him for sure where you agree and where you do not and present the rationale for your thinking. For him to put together the strongest team, he has to use you in this manner. You also have to realize when to hold your cards and let Antonio do what he has to do in his position.

## TAIS & Change

### **Distractions: the weeds of concentration, the enemies of performance.**

In general, distractions dilute or diminish performance on any competence. In addition, feeling distracted or off your game means that you have fewer mental resources to deal proactively with change. Thus, you do not want high scores on any of the following three scales—the noise side of the positive attentional styles or signal.

- External Distractibility—external events cause attention to leave task to track or notice irrelevant happenings.
- Internal Distractibility—wandering minds cause listening gaps and can overcomplicate communication. They cause a lot of “accidents.”
- Reduced Flexibility—indicates the degree to which either of two main human emotions (anger and anxiety) causes tunnel vision, slowing down adjustments in real time. Almost no one is ever creative, clever, or flexible when angry or anxious. As one consultant has proclaimed, “Stress makes people stupid.” Or at least resistant to change and not very clever.

**Individual Change Challenges.** Essentially, TAIS inventory profiles indicate your preferences or tendencies. Having to react in a manner opposite your stated preference takes you out of your comfort zone so we all feel motivated to get back to situations that we like. Thus, you can look at all TAIS inventory scales especially the interpersonal styles as indications of your ideal working style. Any human characteristic can be helpful or counterproductive depending on the situation. In general, your goal is to master each style of attending or interacting so you can use it at the right time in the right amount. The above sections provide some hints as to where you may tend to do too much or not enough of a specified reaction.