

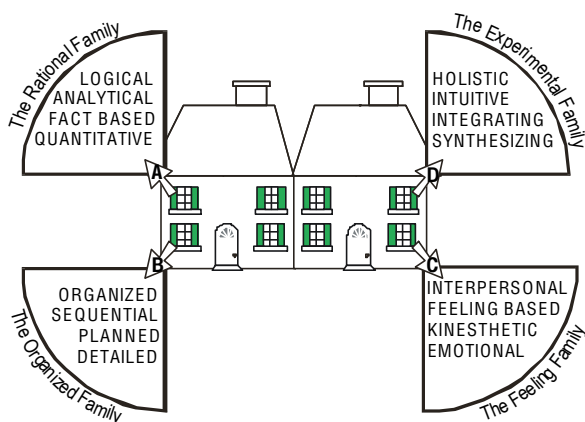
# New Strategies for Achieving Success by Putting Your Company's Whole Brain To Work

By Ned Herrmann and Ann Herrmann-Nehdi

## Exploring the Four Different Approaches

To understand brain dominance and the Whole Brain Model, it is helpful to think of “families of thinking processes” that have some commonality. Our degree of preference for each of the four thinking families can be determined by our relative attraction to, or aversion for, each of the descriptors in that family. Let us introduce you to each of the families.

Think of a four family house that represents the specialized brain. The upper left apartment A is occupied by the **Rational Family**, the lower left apartment B, by the **Organized Family**. The **Feeling Family** lives in the lower right C apartment and the family known as **Experimental** lives in the upper right apartment D.



Logical, Analytic, Quantitative, and Factual (quadrant A processes) are the “children” of Mr. and Mrs. Rational. Sequential, Structured, Detailed, and Linear (quadrant B processes) are the offspring of Mr. and Mrs. Organized. The children of Mr. and Mrs. Feeling (in the C quadrant) are Interpersonal, Emotional, Musical, and Spiritual. Mr. and Mrs. Experimental (of the D quadrant) have a handful with Imaginative, Synthesizing, Artistic, and Conceptualizing. The four thinking families taken together form a whole brain community of thinking processes available to everyone.

When the four families get together for an event, there is no advance discussion about the roles

and the responsibilities of the individual families. They fall into place naturally and predictably. A while ago, the **Feeling** family suggested that it was time for a group party, similar to last year's barbecue. Mr. and Mrs. **Organized** responded first saying, “It's been 11.5 months and if we wait two weeks it will be exactly a year since the last one. A Saturday afternoon would be perfect, with preparations starting at 4:00, dinner at 6:00, and a dessert finale at 8:00.” Mr. and Mrs. **Feeling** said, “That would be great! It allows enough time for other family members to get here.” Mrs. **Organized** said, “What other family members and how many?” “Oh, just some of our first cousins.” responded Mrs. **Feeling**.

When Mr. **Rational** overheard the conversation, he said “Great. This is an opportunity to use my new remote controlled, high-tech, stainless steel, barbecue grill setup. It's got everything, including a thermostatically controlled gas burner, Teflon coated grills, mini-fridge, wet bar, and even a state-of-the-art surround-sound entertainment system!



It's absolutely the best item in the Hammacher-Schlemmer catalogue. The only thing it lacks is a phone, but I'll bring my cellular!”

The **Experimental** family suggested an earlier starting time for a round-robin badminton game and wondered about expanding the menu to include veggie-burgers, smoked turkey, seafood-stuffed sausage, and the seven-grain buns that had just become available. They also thought kite flying would be fun. The **Feeling** family agreed, but Mrs. **Organized** said, “I think we should do it exactly the way we did it last year.” Mr. **Rational** proposed a party budget increase of 3 percent in order to take care of cost increases in food over the past 12 months, and that the cost be split equally among the four families. Whereupon Mr. **Organized** said

“Exactly how many first cousins are you going to invite?”

Well, you get the idea. Each family settles into a role that is consistent with its thinking preferences and, taken together, they will take care of everything required for “success” as they prepare for, and carry out the annual barbecue party.

## The Brain At Work

If we now change the scene to the workplace and translate their barbecue party behavior into styles of management, we’ll be able to see the business implication of brain dominance. Consider this scenario: Mrs. **Rational** is manager of finance at the local manufacturing plant. She is courteous and polite but is always focused on business and tends toward the more directive side of management. The Human Resource staff often gets complaints that her style is too hard, with an emphasis on the facts and less attention to individual’s feelings. Mr. **Organized**, on the other hand, is the plant manager and in charge of production. Efficiency is paramount. His department follows a comprehensive manual of procedures that he himself developed and for which he won a managerial award. No deviation is permitted. Making sure that the plant runs according to plan, safely, and on time is everything to him, so he tends to be impatient with ideas and methods that deviate from the norm.

Mrs. **Feelings** operates a day-care center that has the reputation of being the nicest and most pleasant children’s facility in the area. The kids love it and the parents couldn’t be happier, not only with their kid’s reactions but also with the way they are treated when they visit the center. The place is called Lots of Love Day-Care Center, and parents are encouraged to participate on a regular basis. However, Mrs. **Feelings** hasn’t found it easy to “crunch out” that business plan to expand her facility.



Mr. **Experimental** is a creativity course developer. He functions as the leader of a small group of corporate trainers who develop innovation and creativity programs. He has a knack for thinking up very imaginative, almost unheard of ideas, but the real reason he is a leader is that he excels at anticipating employee development needs

by at least a year in advance, and is good at conceptualizing prototype designs. His biggest challenge is solid implementation and follow-through of all those ideas.

## Understanding Managerial Styles

These examples give you an idea of managerial styles for each separate quadrant of the Whole Brain Model. Keep in mind that in an attempt to define purely A, B, C, and D styles, they are extremes of the norm. Most managers would be a combination of these styles, as most people prefer more than one quadrant. Here is a brief synopsis of the styles illustrated in the previous scenarios.

**A Quadrant style:** logical, analytical, bottom-line-tough, fact based decisions, reality is “now”

**B Quadrant style:** very detailed, structured, solid, down to earth, with no equivocation and ambiguity

**C Quadrant style:** highly participative, team-oriented, people are considered to be the most important asset

**D Quadrant style:** intuitive, holistic, adventurous, and risk taking.

## Impact of Dominance

Our experience clearly shows that brain dominance leads to the development of thinking style preferences, which in turn establishes our interests, which then leads to our development of competencies. These competencies in turn influence our career choices and ultimately the work we do, how we do it and how we succeed in it. Now, let’s look at success from each quadrant.

**A Quadrant:** financial, bottom line, technology based.

**B Quadrant:** on-time completion, tactical excellence and zero defect quality.

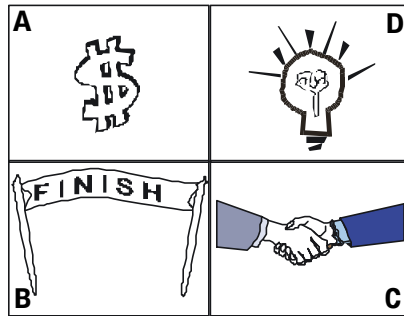
**C Quadrant:** customer/employee/community satisfaction, moral issues and effective teams and communication.

**D Quadrant:** clear vision, effective strategy, breakthrough ideas and products and success at a global level.

All are important, but it is essential to understand what the success measurement criteria will be as we engage in projects. Equally significant is the need to promote the value of the success you bring to the table.

## Achieving Success the Whole Brain Way

In over twenty years of research and application of Whole Brain Technology, some key lessons have been learned about how to



achieve success by putting a company's whole brain to work. This research shows that to optimize organizational performance it is essential to:

- 1) Understand the mentality of the organization's intellectual assets: the thinking styles represented. There is certainly more mental diversity than is often expected.
- 2) Diagnose the mentality of the work to be performed and whenever possible, align employees to the work they do best. Productivity and employee satisfaction will increase.
- 3) Apply Whole Brain approaches to leadership, management, supervision, strategic and employee challenges. Results will be significantly improved.
- 4) When determining success, think Whole Brain--beyond traditional measures. By using Whole Brain approaches you will be better positioned to understand, predict, position and most likely expand the outcomes and overall success of you project.

