Psychogeometrics

What Shape is Your Personality?
Dr. Dellinger was a management trainer for a large company and wanted to develop a quick and easy way to help managers and supervisors communicate more effectively with their teams.

In 1978 she created the Psycho-Geometrics system which she continues to use today in her many books and speaking engagements, as people are able to easily relate to a personality “shape”.
So... how does it work?

- According to Dr. Dellinger, every person has a “preferred shape”, that indicates a distinct personality type.

- Once you know your “shape”, or someone else’s “shape”, you will better understand yourself and others, improving communication and the work or home environment.
So, let’s try it!!

* Don’t think about it... which shape below do you like the best? Go with your first instinct.

Now, draw the shape on your paper
Look at the shapes one more time

Again, without thinking about it, choose your second most favorite shape.

On your paper, draw your second most favorite shape inside of your favorite shape
Most likely you will find aspects of your personality in all five shapes, but most people find that one or two will usually dominate.

You may get a clue how dominate the shapes you chose are by how large you drew the two shapes on your paper. What do you notice about the shapes that you drew?

It is important to note that there are pluses and minuses to all the shapes, and no one shape is the most desirable. You may not be the same shape today that you were a few years ago or will be in the future.

So, let’s explore the typical characteristics of each shape!
Did you choose the Square?

Squares are very hardworking people. They are characterized by the habit to do everything up to the end, and they are stubborn enough to finish what they start. They do not tolerate sloppy work.

Endurance and patience usually make a Square a highly qualified specialist in his or her field of activities. It is provided by the desire to get information.

Squares collect any kind of information which immediately finds its own place in a system of the Square’s knowledge. That’s why a Square can give you any information you need, in no time.
Do you know a Square?

One of the strongest features of a Square is the ability to analyze. These individuals think over the information and speak in sequential format: “A” -> “B” -> “C”, etc. Squares would rather “calculate” the result than guess it; and they are very attentive to details and trifles.

The Square doesn’t like changes in a well-established order of events. They are constantly trying to put to order people or things around them. They are task oriented and like to use calendars and schedules and lists.
Squares’ extreme desire to get additional information before making a decision sometimes prevent them from being quick to operate. If a Square has to make a decision with associated risk or loses, they will try to delay it. They like policies, procedures and data acquisition. Their greatest fear is to be wrong.

A Square’s rational, emotional dryness and coldness sometimes hinders establishing contacts with different people. A Square behaves inefficiently and feels uncomfortable in uncertain situations. Under stress they become critical.
How to spot a Square

* They sometimes appear to move stiffly, use precise gestures, love routine and are very concerned with detail.

* Tend to be very neat in their appearance and work space.

* They do a lot of planning and are always prompt.

* They are generally well prepared, take lots of notes and get right down to work.

* Their motto: “Give me a job and a deadline and I’ll get it done!”
If you are a Square, it would helpful for you to:

• Be a little less picky with people
• Create your own routines
• Allow yourself to make a few mistakes so you don’t limit your opportunities
• Learn to make decisions with less data
• Try taking more risks and acting spontaneously
Do you work or live with a Square? It would be helpful for you to:

• Be on time, prepared and to-the-point during meetings

• Create a regular routine with clear expectations

• Present information in written form

• When there is a conflict, avoidance is a characteristic of Squares because they don’t like dealing with emotion
Did you choose the Triangle?

• The most typical characteristic feature of the true Triangle is their ability to concentrate on the main goal. They are powerful and energetic with strong personalities. They usually have clear goals, which they often achieve.

• Rather than being concerned with details, Triangles concentrate on the core problem. With a strong desire to control the situation, the Triangle strives to solve not only their own problems, but if possible, other people’s problems as well.
Do you know a Triangle?

• A Triangle is constantly competing with other people. A dominating result in any type of event is a success and victory. A Triangle likes recognition and may put stock in status symbols.

• Triangles don’t like to not be right; it is hard for them to say they made a mistake. Even if somebody objected to a Triangle’s decision, they would do it their own way. They tend to be very outspoken and love to debate and argue.

• Triangles have confidence in themselves and don’t hesitate to tell everyone else the way the world is.
The most negative characteristic of a Triangle is their strong egocentrism. They are ready to reach their aims by any means, paying no attention to anybody else, and even at the expense of others.

They want everything and everybody centered around themselves. Without it, their life will lose its sense.

They have powerful voices; love to tell jokes and play as hard as they work.
How to spot a Triangle

• Focused on goals; impatient; no nonsense.
• Looks at the “Big Picture” – don’t need to know all the research or be bothered with lots of details
• Confident, competitive, takes charge and moves fast
• Hates meetings. Wants to get to the bottom line and move on.
• They like recognition and are often interested in politics.

Motto: “So what’s your point??!”
If you are a Triangle, it would be helpful for you to:

• Slow down, and don’t shoot from the hip

• Develop more interest in the opinions of others

• Give people a little more room to come on board

• Learn to have more fun, just for the sake of it

• Be more aware of your impact on others
Do you live or work with a Triangle?
It would be helpful for you to:

• Present the goal along with the big picture
• Explain WHY
• Provide milestones and targets
• Be succinct and to-the-point
• Provide support for the details
Did you choose the Circle?

• The Circle is a people person, the shape with the most empathy, perception and consideration for the feelings of others. Relationships count.

• Circles like harmony and have difficulty in dealing with conflict and making unpopular decisions. They do not like to say “no”.

• Circles are good communicators, primarily because they are good listeners. They are able to sympathize, feel sorry for and emotionally react to others. Therefore, circles attract people and tend to have lots of friends.
Do you know a Circle?

• Circles can easily “read” people, identifying in a minute the pretender or cheater.

• They do not always make the best managers because they think about people, and not business. They try to please everyone, trying to keep peace and sometimes tend not to take a firm position or undertake unpopular measures.

• Circles are often dominated by stronger personalities (like Triangles). If there’s a conflict, the Circle is usually the first to give in.
Other characteristics of Circles

• They like to get multiple opinions before making a decision.
• Their greatest fear is poor performance, which would mean a loss of identity to them. Under stress they lock down.
• Circles process information not sequentially, but in mosaic format, “A” -> “C” -> “B”. They rely more on intuition, feelings, estimates, values, etc.
• If you’re a woman, even if you’re not a circle, some circle traits have been conditioned into you.
How to spot a Circle

• They want everybody to be satisfied, but can be firm when dealing with problems related to morals or violations of justice.

• They are accommodating and nurturing. Circles often serve as the “glue” that unites a working team or family together, and stabilizes it.

• They are “too nice” and can’t say no. They are better at caring for others, than caring for themselves.

Motto: “I’ll do it – somebody has to!”
If you are a Circle, it would be helpful for you to:

- Learn how to say NO... and mean it!
- Worry less about what other people do and think
- Learn to hold others accountable
- Learn how to make unpopular decisions when necessary
- Give yourself permission to do something for yourself!
Do you live or work with a Circle?
It would be helpful for you to:

• Be flexible
• Be willing to talk about whatever is at hand
• Provide a harmonious environment
• Provide opportunities for you to add your own perspective
Did you choose the Rectangle?

• Yours is the only shape that is not frozen. You cause confusion in the people in your life because you change from day to day. All people go through rectangular periods when they are in a state of change.

• You are a seeker and an explorer and the most receptive of the shapes to new learning. You are always searching for ways in which you want to grow and change. You ask “Who am I? What is the world about?”
Do you know a Rectangle?

• Rectangles are not satisfied with their way of life and are actively looking for something better. They often have low self-esteem.

• Rectangles are very quick-minded, curious, are greatly interested in everything and have a searching mind. They are brave, trying to do things they have never done before and ask questions they never would have dared ask before. They are eager to try anything new, but are also extremely gullible and naïve. That is why they are easily persuaded and manipulated.
Other characteristics of Rectangles

- Rectangles are characterized by confusion, uncertainty and an indefinite attitude toward themselves at the moment.

- They can’t live without communication with other people

- They are no less capable than others, but are not certain of themselves at this point in time (the transition)

- The Rectangle is often in a transitory phase before assuming another shape.
How to spot a Rectangle

• Shows dissatisfaction with the way things are
• Appears confused, unorganized and bogged down by problems and uncertainty, going from one crisis to another
• They have an inherent fear of being “put on the spot”
• May be in a new job or in the process of adjusting to a change in life circumstances
• When not at work, can often be found in the local drinking establishment contemplating which way to turn
If you are a Rectangle, it would be helpful for you to:

• Recognize that you are in a period of transition and thus are extremely vulnerable and prone to manipulation. Try to avoid making any hasty or drastic decisions.

• Think about contracting or working from home, to give yourself the flexibility and variety that you need during this period of transition.

• Make a conscious effort to become more organized and dependable. Pay attention to your impact on others!
Do you live or work with a Rectangle?
It may be helpful for you to:

• Realize that they are in a state of transition and are doing the best they can to find their way

• Understand that they are disorganized, inconsistent and unreliable and try not to put them into situations where they are bound to fail

• They do better with a schedule with lots of variety

• Give them their own space, both for their sake and for the sake of others around them
Did you choose the Squiggle?

• Your shape symbolizes creativeness and is the most unique out of the five, being the only shape that is not closed.

• As a child you preferred to draw your own original pictures to color. You often colored trees purple, leaves yellow and the sky green.

• Squiggles are multi-task oriented. They have high energy and like to do fifteen things at once….actually getting them done, however, is another issue!
Do you know a Squiggle?

• They sometimes appear a little flaky because their mind moves so fast. They make cognitive leaps in their thinking, jumping from “A” to “F” to “M” to “X” – they drive Squares crazy!

• Squiggles like to try new and different things and are easily bored with the same-old, same-old

• They are visionaries who are always thinking of new ways to do something. They enjoy breaking the rules.

• They are flamboyant, dramatic and extremely creative. Most performers and writers are Squiggles.
Other characteristics of Squiggles

- They are “Idea People”

- They try to be organized but tend to lose their lists

- They prefer and an unstructured environment

- They are conceptual, creative, intuitive, expressive, motivating, witty, inventive.

- Squiggles like to combine absolutely different, unlike ideas and build something completely new and original. They are experts at thinking “outside of the box”.
How to spot a Squiggle

• A Squiggle is off-the-wall and eclectic. They have a short attention span and if they don’t get excitement at work, will cause it elsewhere in their life.

• They are creative, extroverted, and intuitive. They will reach out around them into new areas and to other people. But they aren't particularly systematic or dependable.

Motto: “I just got the greatest idea!!”
If you are a Squiggle, it would be helpful for you to:

• Slow down and pay better attention to the details
• Focus on the task at hand. Work on completing projects that are left half-finished.
• Think before you speak and act
• Pay attention to your impact on others
Do you live or work with a Squiggle? It may be helpful for you to:

- Be flexible and avoid clinging to preconceived ideas
- Provide the Squiggle with an unstructured environment, offering multiple choices
- Provide some help with follow-through
- You may have to remove distractions to get a Squiggle’s attention
Some Final Thoughts...

Good teamwork needs all the shapes to collaborate together:

• We need the Squares to get the work done

• We need the Triangles for leadership and decisiveness

• We need the Circles to keep harmony and make sure all voices are heard

• We need the Rectangles to keep questioning

• We need the Squiggles for ideas and enthusiasm
Do you want to explore more?

Communicating Beyond Our Differences: Introducing the Psycho-Geometrics System by Susan Dellinger
Available at amazon.com

Psycho-geometrics: The Science of Understanding People, And the Art of Communicating With Them by Susan Dellinger
(VHS) $39.99 at amazon.com