

## URBAN MYTHS

By Nancy Clark

Are you a Jerk? A Wimp? A Nerd? Or a Mouth?

Denver Master Coach Becca Robinson insists you've got to be one of the four. Because that's all there is, folks.

The types, say Robinson, are all about how each of us give and receive communication. Even if we're looking at the same thing, we're not all seeing it the same. It's like a room full of people looking at the Batman logo. Some people see the shape of a bat; others see a mouth full of teeth.

Jerks use words like "bottom-line, get to the point, what's next, if they would do it the way I told them to, I don't have time for this." They tap their feet or fingers, glance at their watches and look beyond you. They drive fast, eat fast, arrive late for appointments but are annoyed with other's tardiness. Yikes.

Wimps are slow to communicate and strive for accuracy using words like "I don't want to argue about it, I give up, just remember I wasn't in favor of this in the first place, can't everyone just get along, we have rules that need to be followed, this isn't the way it should be done, fine do it your way." They take notes, ask to have things repeated and move away from conflict. I'm feeling the Kum-bye-ah.

Nerds are methodical and process-driven. They use words like "I need more time and information, let me think about that, I'll research that, I don't care if that's what you want to do, what's the rush, slow down." They rub their heads, chart information, use calculators and looked dazed when activity is present. Yawning yet?

Mouths are fast-talkers, processors, movers and reactors using words like "Don't worry about the details, we'll figure it out later, what do I get if I win, what's next, how long will this take, I can do anything and everything, let's have fun." Party on.

Jerks are the must-have in a business, the drivers who bring ideas to fruition, hurdling obstacles and taking risks. Wimps like data and organization, the more information, the better. Sometimes they appear paranoid. Nerds can turn negatives into positives and would rather support others than compete with them. Mouths can sell anything to anyone and can be highly convincing.

If you want to win over a Jerk, avoid ambiguity, stick to business, and give jerks options supported by facts and the potential for success. To win over the Wimp, present factual information and let him digest it. Come to Nerds prepared with facts and don't debate data with them. Ask a Mouth to brainstorm and let her do most of the talking to get what you want.

To identify yourself, answer two questions: Do I perform activities quickly or slowly? Do I externalize or internalize emotions? A Jerk is a higher-paced internalizer. The Mouth is

a higher-paced externalizer. The Nerd is slower-paced internalizer. And the Wimp is a slower-paced externalizer.

It's that diversity that makes the world go round and businesses fare well, says Robinson who maintains that the best-functioning enterprises incorporate all four types in their operations.

It's enough to make you consider your workplace, your family, your friendships and the organizations you work with. No where in Robinson's categorizations exists a Loser. So maybe it's okay to be a Jerk after all.