

THE FOUR TENDENCIES QUIZ

Detailed Report: Questioner

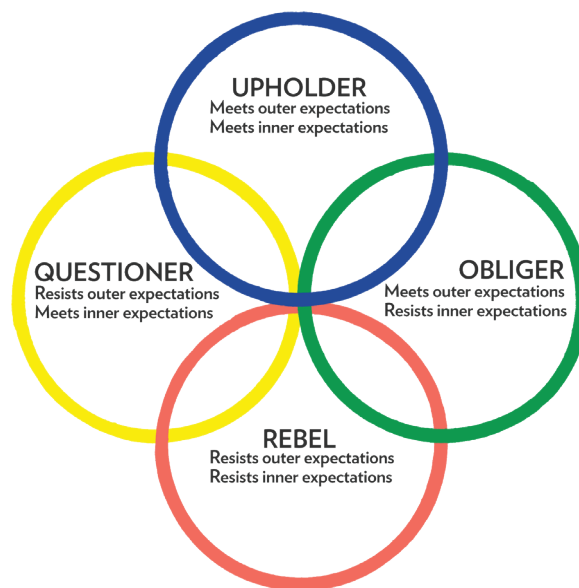
YOUR TENDENCY:

Questioner

According to your answers, your dominant Tendency is **Questioner**.

The “Four Tendencies” framework describes how we respond to expectations. We all face two kinds of expectations:

- outer expectations, such as meeting work deadlines or observing traffic regulations, and
- inner expectations, such as quitting napping or keeping a New Year’s resolution.



UPHOLDER:

“I do what others expect of me—and what I expect from myself.”

QUESTIONER:

“I do what I think is best, according to my judgment. If it doesn’t make sense, I won’t do it.”

OBLIGER:

“I do what I have to do. I don’t want to let others down, but I may let myself down.”

REBEL:

“I do what I want, in my own way. If you try to make me do something—even if I try to make myself do something—I’m less likely to do it.”

So what does it mean to be a Questioner?

Questioners question all expectations, and they respond to an expectation only if they conclude that it makes sense—in essence, they meet only inner expectations. They're motivated by reason, logic, and fairness. They wake up and think, "What *needs* to get done today, and why?"

They decide for themselves whether a course of action is a good idea, and they resist doing anything that seems to lack purpose.

Because Questioners want to make well-considered decisions and come to their own conclusions, they tend to be intellectually engaged, and they're often willing to do exhaustive research.

If they decide there's sufficient basis for an expectation, they'll follow it; they won't follow it if they think it's arbitrary, inefficient, or ineffective. They tend to take direction only from people they respect.

When making a request of a Questioner, be sure to include plenty of justification. "We need to get the car inspected by the end of next week. Otherwise we could get hit with a big fine or risk a breakdown during our upcoming road trip." Arguments such as "Everyone has to do this," "You said you'd do this," or "Because I say so," or "I'm the doctor" aren't compelling to a Questioner.

At times, people may feel overwhelmed by a Questioner's relentless appetite for information and justification. Their constant questioning may be perceived by others as disrespectful, defiant, undermining, or showing a lack of "team spirit." Skillful Questioners learn to ask questions in a way that seems constructive.

Questioners sometimes suffer "analysis-paralysis" when they find it difficult to make a decision or move forward because they keep wanting more and more information. They can manage analysis-paralysis with strategies such as setting deadlines, establishing limits, or consulting trusted authorities.

Ironically, many Questioners dislike being questioned. They consider their actions carefully so they find it tiresome or explain to be asked to justify their decisions.

Once Questioners believe that a particular habit is worthwhile, they'll stick to it—but only if they're satisfied about the habit's usefulness.

As outlined in *Better Than Before*, my book about habit change, certain strategies for habit change tend to have special appeal for Questioners. For instance, if you're trying to exercise more, you might:

- Design a habit very specifically to suit your particular character and idiosyncrasies (Strategy of Distinctions)
- Consider exactly why and how a particular habit should be kept (Strategy of Clarity)
- Get more information about your habits by wearing a pedometer or charting your exercise (Strategy of Monitoring).

When we understand ourselves and how our Tendency shapes our perspective on the world, we can adapt our circumstances to suit our own nature—and when we understand how other people's Tendencies shape their perspective, we can engage with them more effectively.

The Four Tendencies explain *why we act* and *why we don't act*.