

Team roles

According to **team roles test theories** there are specific and different team roles that a team requires. These roles can be either **functional, organizational, personal or even skillful**. Each team should be an ideal mix of different team roles depending on the specific goals the team wants to achieve.

When the composition is not ideal the team may run into problems. For example, a team consisting of only creative individuals will generate many ideas of which none gets implemented. A team consisting of only specialists may lose track of the big picture. Any team that is aware of the different roles required to reach a specific goal and is able to fulfil those roles within the team will perform better. In the last 30 years interest in team composition has increased and many different team roles tests have been developed.

Essentially though, **team roles** are equal to 'persona' (masks) or specific competency profiles and have been mentioned explicitly since ancient Greek history. Not just only in working life but also the roles people play in life, family and military. The application of team roles however seems to be primarily directed at management teams nowadays.

1. 123test

The [free team roles test](#) of 123test® is inspired by ideas on team roles theories, generalized competency frameworks and recent knowledge of the [Big Five personality theory](#). It measures roles found in businesses and management teams throughout the world in many cultures.

<https://www.123test.com/team-roles-test/index.php>

2. Belbin Team Roles

Dr Meredith Belbin studied team-work for many years, and he famously observed that people in teams tend to assume different "team roles." He defined a team role as "a tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way" and named nine such team roles that underlie team success.

Belbin suggests that, by understanding your role within a particular team, you can develop your strengths and manage your weaknesses as a team member, and so improve how you contribute to the team.

Team leaders and team development practitioners often use the Belbin model to help create more balanced teams.

Teams can become unbalanced if all team members have similar styles of behaviour or team roles. If team members have similar weakness, the team as a whole may tend to have that weakness. If team members have similar team-work strengths, they may tend to compete (rather than cooperate) for the team tasks and responsibilities that best suit their natural styles.

Knowing this, you can use the model with your team to help ensure that necessary team roles are covered, and that potential behavioural tensions or weaknesses among the team member are addressed.

Belbin identified nine team roles and he categorized those roles into three groups: Action Oriented, People Oriented, and Thought Oriented. Each team role is associated with typical behavioural and interpersonal strengths.

Belbin also defined characteristic weaknesses that tend to accompany each team role. He called the characteristic weaknesses of team roles the "allowable" weaknesses; as for any behavioural weakness, these are areas to be aware of and potentially improve.

A Team Role is defined as "a tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way."










- For a team to be successful it needs to have access to each of the 9 Belbin Team Roles.
- Typically, most people have two or three Team Roles that they are most comfortable with; a few others that they can manage to cover if they need to; and finally the rest that they prefer not to adopt at all.
- The nine Team Roles are detailed below.

The only accurate way to identify your Team Role strengths and weaknesses is by generating your personalised Belbin Report. You can purchase these reports as an individual, a trainer, or an organisation.



BELBIN®

Team Role Summary Descriptions

| Team Role | Contribution | Allowable Weaknesses |
|---|--|---|
| Plant  | Creative, imaginative, free-thinking. Generates ideas and solves difficult problems. | Ignores incidentals. Too preoccupied to communicate effectively. |
| Resource Investigator  | Outgoing, enthusiastic, communicative. Explores opportunities and develops contacts. | Over-optimistic. Loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed. |
| Co-ordinator  | Mature, confident, identifies talent. Clarifies goals. Delegates effectively. | Can be seen as manipulative. Offloads own share of the work. |
| Shaper  | Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure. Has the drive and courage to overcome obstacles. | Prone to provocation. Offends people's feelings. |
| Monitor Evaluator  | Sober, strategic and discerning. Sees all options and judges accurately. | Lacks drive and ability to inspire others. Can be overly critical. |
| Teamworker  | Co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic. Listens and averts friction. | Indecisive in crunch situations. Avoids confrontation. |
| Implementer  | Practical, reliable, efficient. Turns ideas into actions and organises work that needs to be done. | Somewhat inflexible. Slow to respond to new possibilities. |
| Completer Finisher  | Painstaking, conscientious, anxious. Searches out errors. Polishes and perfects. | Inclined to worry unduly. Reluctant to delegate. |
| Specialist  | Single-minded, self-starting, dedicated. Provides knowledge and skills in rare supply. | Contributes only on a narrow front. Dwells on technicalities. |



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ON A ROLE

Roles on a Team and How They Apply to the Enterprise

Some people like leading the charge. Others would rather engage behind the scenes. In the enterprise, teams typically are made up of people with different skills and can be scattered all over the world. Many companies use behavioral models to create teams in order to harness the unique skills of each member, and ensure the group works together effectively.

In 1981, English management theorist Dr. Raymond Meredith Belbin identified nine distinct roles in a team that take advantage of four natural qualities. Today, this model is used by organizations around the world as a tried and true formula for building a high-performing team. **Take a look at the four natural qualities and nine roles to see where you would fit in.**

LEADING



COORDINATOR

Key qualities: Confident; organized

Tasks: Makes key decisions, delegate tasks, and clarifies goals.

Possible enterprise equivalent: Director



SHAPER

Key qualities: Creative; dynamic; energetic

Tasks: Keeps the momentum strong and ensures that the team doesn't lose focus.

Possible enterprise equivalent: Project Manager

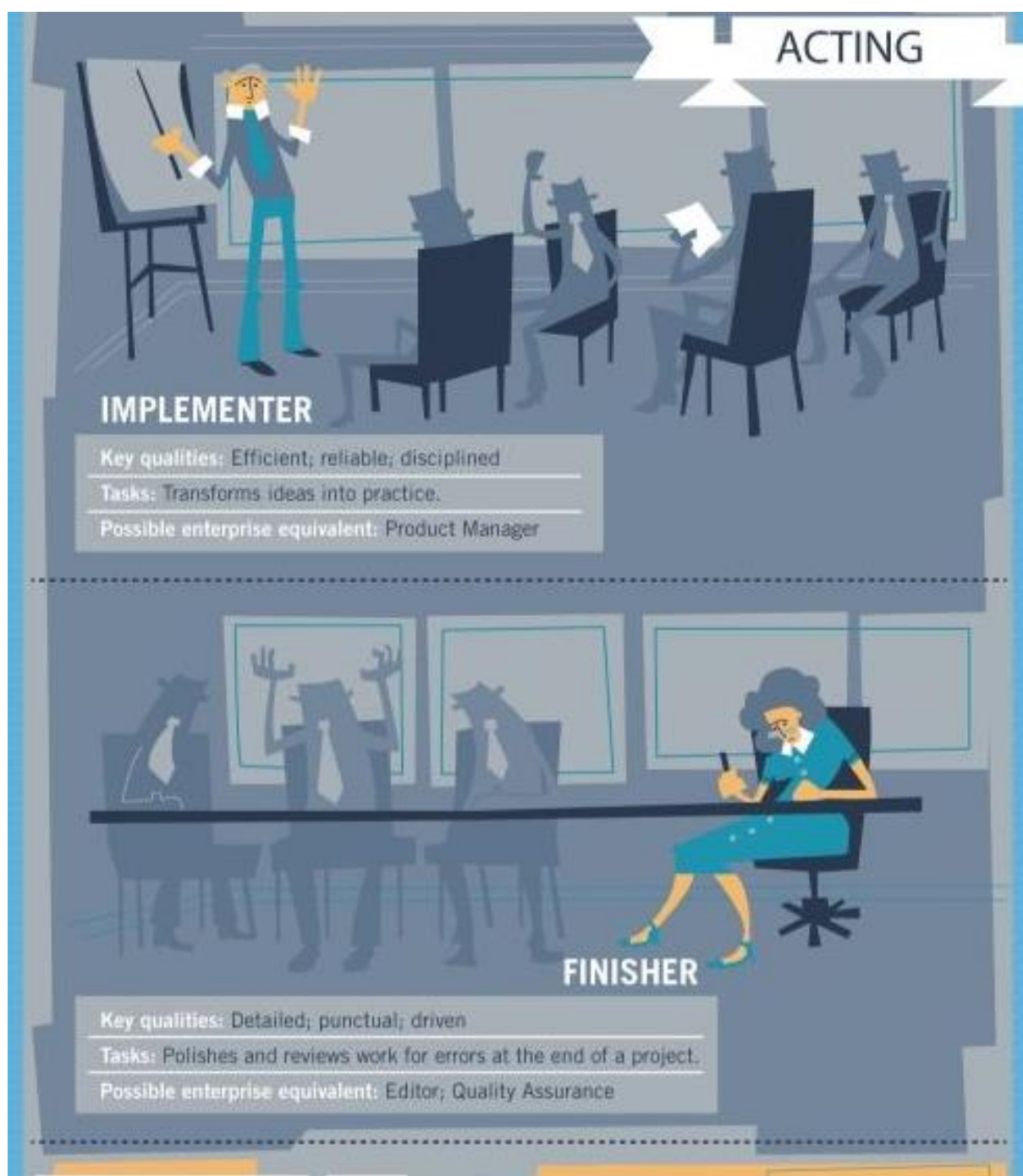


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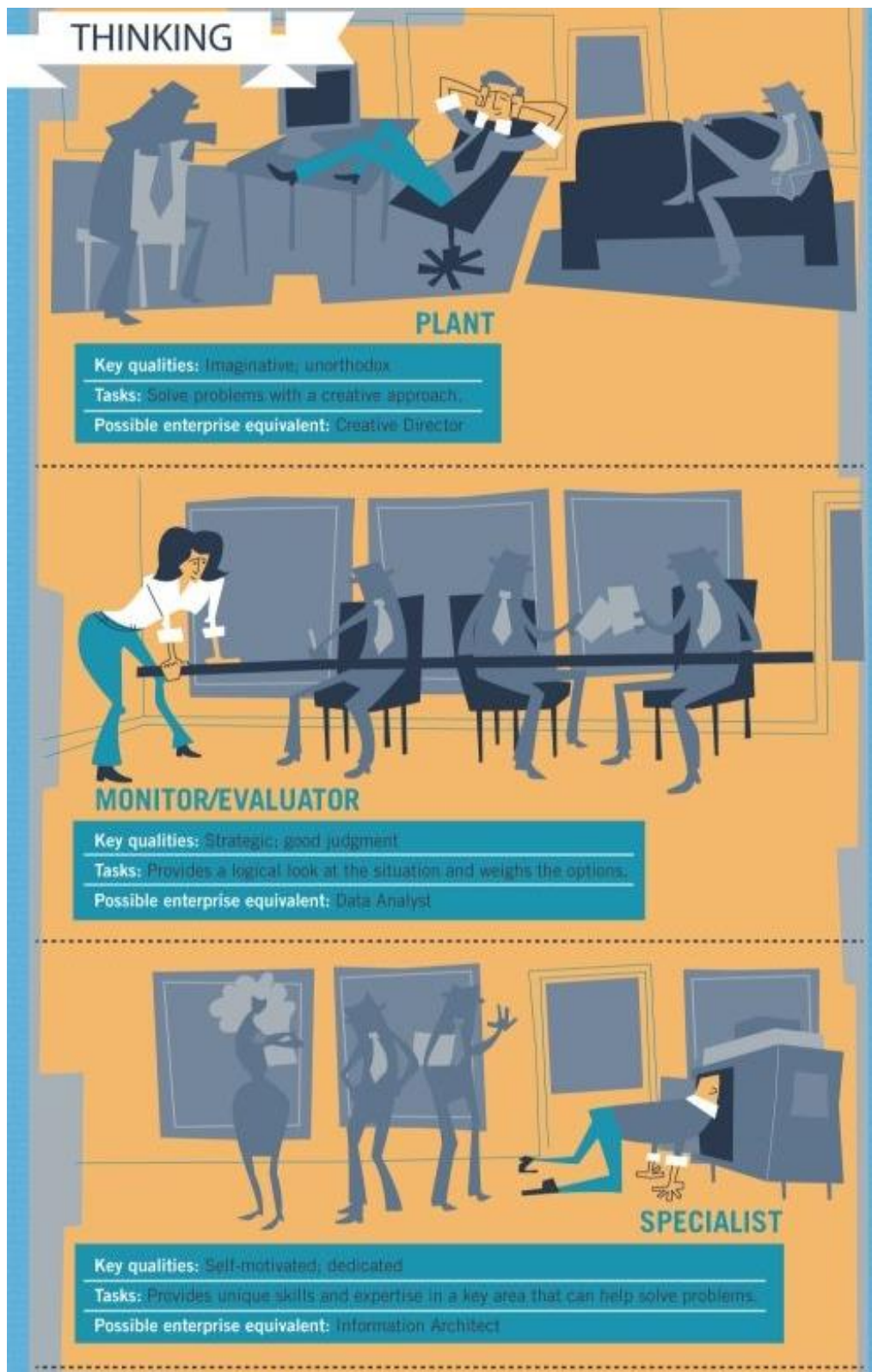


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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFsA4wUf3IO> - Belbin video



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