

Activator

"When can we start?" This is a recurring question in your life. You are impatient for action. You may concede that analysis has its uses or that debate and discussion can occasionally yield some valuable insights, but deep down you know that only action is real. Only action can make things happen. Only action leads to performance. Once a decision is made, you cannot not act. Others may worry that "there are still some things we don't know," but this doesn't seem to slow you. If the decision has been made to go across town, you know that the fastest way to get there is to go stoplight to stoplight. You are not going to sit around waiting until all the lights have turned green. Besides, in your view, action and thinking are not opposites. In fact, guided by your Activator theme, you believe that action is the best device for learning. You make a decision, you take action, you look at the result, and you learn. This learning informs your next action and your next. How can you grow if you have nothing to react to? Well, you believe you can't. You must put yourself out there. You must take the next step. It is the only way to keep your thinking fresh and informed. The bottom line is this: You know you will be judged not by what you say, not by what you think, but by what you get done. This does not frighten you. It pleases you.

Action Items for This Theme

Seek work in which you can make your own decisions and act upon them. In particular, look for start-up or turn-around situations.

Take responsibility for your intensity by always asking for action when you are a part of a group.

To avoid conflict later, ensure that your manager judges you on measurable outcomes rather than your process. Your process is not always pretty.

Prepare a simple explanation as to why any decision, even the wrong one, will help you learn, and therefore will make the next decision more informed. Use it when people challenge you and tell you to slow down.

Try to work only on committees that are action-oriented. Much committee work might prove very boring for you.

Be ready to:

Give the reasons why your requests for action must be granted; otherwise, others might dismiss you as impatient and label you a "ready, fire, aim" person.

Recognize that your "pushiness" might sometimes intimidate others.

Partner with someone with a strong Strategic or Analytical theme. This person can help you see how high the cliff is before you fall off it.

Avoid activity for activity's sake. If you want people to join in your activity, you will need to provide them with a purpose for their actions.

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