

Episode #29: The 6 Types of Working Genius, Part 1

Welcome to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where corporate managers will find tips and tools to deliver results through others.

Hello. Today I want to share with you a new model developed by Patrick Lencioni called “The 6 Types of Working Genius,” which can help you discover the gifts you bring to work.

I’m your host, coach Percy Cannon.

In our last episode I shared the five principles of Ultimate Influence™ outlined in the book [*Adversaries into Allies*](#) by Bob Burg, coauthor of the Go-Giver series.

They were:

1. **Control your emotions.** Aim to make “calm” your default setting, even when others are not behaving this way.
2. **Understand the clash of belief systems.** Do not assume that the person you are trying to influence thinks in a way that is similar to yours.
3. **Acknowledge their ego.** Avoid unnecessary criticism and embarrassment.
4. **Set the proper frame.** Take the initiative and ensure the most productive frame for your interactions is set (or reset) at the beginning of any conversation.
5. **Communicate with tact and empathy.** Listen more and talk less.

I suggested you follow one or more of these five principles to become an Ultimate Influencer and avoid resorting to force to attract people to you and your ideas. Persuade by adopting the mindset of WHAT’S IN IT FOR THEM, them being the persons you are trying to influence. Avoid the dangerous mindset of WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME.

Switching gears, have you ever wondered why you feel like you could spend an endless amount of time doing certain tasks at work? And why there are others that you just do not enjoy doing and may even procrastinate until you absolutely have to perform them?

What if you knew which tasks fall into the first camp, those that you enjoy doing, and which land in the second one?

And what if you could choose a job where most of your time was allocated to the tasks you relish the most and little to no time was spent on those you dislike?

That’s the idea behind Patrick Lencioni’s new model, “The 6 Types of Working Genius.”

The premise behind the model is that, when it comes to work, everyone has a set of skills they are naturally good at and which give them joy and energy. Lencioni calls this skill set your “genius.”

Instead of guessing what your genius is, Lencioni's model will help you understand how to discover your genius and implement it in your work.

This model will also help you discover areas of frustration where you do not have a genius and should therefore employ on a limited basis.

Let me now explain what each of these six geniuses are:

1. The first one is the **Genius of Wonder**: People with this genius thrive by constantly asking WHY. They question whether things could be improved in the world that surrounds them. They spend time pondering things and situations. They are comfortable with ambiguity. They are concerned whenever they see untapped potential. They are relentlessly curious and always searching for what needs to be modified or improved.
2. Which takes us to the second genius, the **Genius of Invention**: This type of genius is all about creativity. People who have it love to generate new ideas and solutions to problems like those identified by people with the Genius of Wonder. They are comfortable coming up with something new out of nothing. They love to start with a blank sheet of paper or an empty whiteboard. I remember having a boss who I now realize had this genius. When talking to him in person, he would invariably get on his feet, grab a marker and start writing and diagramming new ideas and processes on the board. But you know, the genius of invention doesn't always come up with a great innovation. Inventors don't often know if their ideas are good or bad. They require somebody to challenge their creation.
3. And that's the **Genius of Discernment**: People with this type of genius have amazing instincts. They have a natural ability to assess and gauge if an idea or plan can produce the expected results. They have good judgment about the intricacies of making decisions that integrate logic, common sense and human needs. They connect the dots. They are an invaluable complement to the inventors, providing feedback and suggestions that can either improve a good idea or kill a bad one. But without the next genius, that great idea, project or work may get stuck.
4. Once a good idea is solid enough, they need someone with the **Genius of Galvanizing**: This type of genius is about bringing energy and movement to an idea or decision. People who have it like to start activity by rallying people to act. They inspire, recruit and organize the troops. They are great at generating enthusiasm for new programs or ideas, and do not seem to grow tired of doing this day in and day out. They however need somebody on the receiving end of their promoting...
5. ... which takes us to the fifth type of genius, the **Genius of Enablement**: People with this gift get things lifted off the ground, because the Galvanizer comes in and says, "*let's do this*" and the Enablers say "*sign me up.*" They are quick to respond to the needs of others by offering their cooperation and assistance with a project, program or effort. They say, "*I know what you're asking for. I can and will help you, and I'll do what you need, on your terms.*" An organization that doesn't have enablement will never get that idea through.

6. But organizations also need the sixth and last genius, the **Genius of Tenacity**: Tenacity is all about pushing things across the finish line. They build on the work done by the Enablers to ensure that a project, program or effort is taken to completion and achieves the desired result. Those who have this genius push for required standards of excellence and live to see the impact of their work. They make sure that everything is wrapped up and done. They won't stop until the work is 100% completed.

Summarizing, people with the genius of **Wonder** ponder things and identify an unmet need. The genius of **Invention** comes up with a solution or an idea that solves that need. The genius of **Discernment** evaluates it and fills in the gaps. They push back on the bad ideas and celebrate the good ones. The genius of **Galvanizing** gets everybody excited and ready to move. The genius of **Enablement** comes alongside and gets it going and supports it, and the genius of **Tenacity** drives it across the finish line.

These are "The 6 Types of Working Genius."

And if you haven't noticed it yet, the model spells out WIDGET: W for wonder, I for invention, D for discernment, G for galvanizing, E for enablement and T for tenacity. It has helped me remember the six types of genius and it may help you as well.

How can you apply this model to your work? The first step is understanding where you stand on these six types of genius. Two of them come naturally to you, meaning that you are good at them and they give you energy and joy. The model labels these your areas of Working Genius. You should try to spend most of your time on these.

Two of them are neither natural nor energizing for you, and most likely, you aren't particularly good at doing them. They are called your areas of Working Frustration, those you should try to avoid.

Finally, there are two types which fall in between. You can do them fairly well, maybe even very well, but you don't get great joy or energy from them. These are your areas of Working Competency.

If you want to find out which are your respective types of genius, you can take an assessment at Lencioni's website: www.tablegroup.com or email me and I'll direct you to the right place. The assessments are very affordable and available for anyone to take.

I invite you to capitalize on this new model, which can help you discover the gifts you bring to work.

I hope you enjoyed today's episode. In the next one, I will share how you can apply this model to improve your team's performance.

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you can request a free coaching call with me by visiting my website at www.cannon.consulting, or if available in this platform, using the link provided in the Details section.

This is coach Percy Cannon, working to help you *make the rest of your life...the best of your life*®.

Percy's BIO

Percy provides corporate managers and leadership teams with customized coaching programs that help them develop the skills and capabilities needed to significantly increase their business results through others and accelerate their career growth.

Percy is an "alumnus" from three multinational corporations, Procter & Gamble, IBM & Microsoft, with whom he spent close to three decades.

Since 2011 he has been helping corporate executives, managers and employees *make the rest of their life...the best of their life*®.

Percy has worked in the United States and across several countries in Latin America as an Executive Coach, Leadership Team Consultant and Keynote Speaker, serving companies such as Microsoft, Procter & Gamble, Citibank, Tiffany & Avianca.

Percy is a Certified Professional Coach from Wainwright Global, Authorized Partner for "The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team" and "Everything DiSC" and certified as a "Go-Giver" speaker & coach.

He published his first book in 2012-13 in English (*The Business Apostolate: Insights to Define and Achieve Your Mission in Life*) and in Spanish (*El Negocio Más Grande de su Vida*).

Percy is a Consulting Partner with Grupo Azimuth and the Chapter Director for the COO Forum in Southeast Florida.

He has lived in 9 different cities and 5 countries, and speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese fluently.

Percy is married, has 3 children and 6 grandchildren, and is a passionate runner & reader.

He can be reached at percy@cannon.consulting.