



Don't Fire 'Til You See the Lines on His Face

**or How to Recognize
Primary "Buying Types"**

by Michael Lovas

When you can read the lines on a person's face, you can very quickly determine his personality type. That also indicates his decision-making style and primary values.

For instance, a person with a short vertical line between his eyebrows thinks intensely most of the time. He might be a computer programmer or an engineer. He needs a lot of written material to read and contemplate. He is also slow to make a decision, and he'd likely be late for your meetings.

A person with smile lines around her eyes and mouth might be a counselor or the owner of a day care center. You can bet she's not a bail bondsman. She makes decisions slowly. Her primary values are her family and animals. She probably has a dog and a new litter of kittens.

As a sales professional, would such information be important in your presentation? Absolutely! Here's how you get it. Facial lines tell you the expression the face

assumes most of the time. Seeing those lines tells you the person's general attitude. The attitude is dictated by his Personality Type (or Buying Type). Thus, reading facial lines gives you clues to knowing his values and decision-making style.

Picture four strangers standing in front of you. They all work in the same corporation. One person is a corporate attorney. Another is a human resources advisor. The third is a sales rep. And the fourth is a quality control engineer.

- Do you speak to them in the same way?
- Does each one plan his financial security the same way?
- Is each comfortable with the same amount of risk?
- Are family concerns equally significant to each?
- Does each one need the same amount of written information?
- Do they all make purchase decisions at the same speed?

If you answered Yes to any of those questions, you're in the wrong business. Each represents a different Buying Type. Since you're a sales professional, do you know how to differentiate one from the other?

Now, picture yourself speaking very briefly with each of the four people mentioned above. If you could address each person using words and phrases that are comfortable to him, don't you think he'd be more receptive? If you could make your presentation relevant to his primary values, don't you think you'd have a better shot at building your credibility and making a sale?

The key is a technique I call Facial Mapping. I teach it in our Buying Types seminar. It's the first thing you should do to ascertain a person's Buying Type. Within fifteen seconds, you'll know which person is motivated by family values and people relationships; which one is concerned with the bottom-line numbers and efficiency; which one will base decisions on gut feelings and

emotion; and which one will take your information, then research the product category and eventually fail to make a decision.

On the other hand, if you don't know the Buying Type of your prospect, you face overwhelming odds of committing serious blunders, without realizing it. That's because you, then, present inappropriate products, describe benefits that he is not interested in and head-off the wrong objections. In short, even if your presentation is perfect, you could very easily deliver it to the wrong person. In fact, since each Type represents 25% of the population, you stand a 75% chance of wasting your time.

Here's an example. In a seminar on Types that we presented to members of Mobil Oil's Global Information Services division, a woman asked me how the process of Typing could possibly indicate anything about her values. Within ten seconds, I exposed her life. I told her that her highest value was her family, that she worked diligently to maintain harmony at home and at the office, that she loved animals and probably had a puppy and a cat. Bingo! Everything I said described her life, even down to the pets. The look of shock and delight on her face was priceless.

To make a sale to that woman, you would simply couch your presentation in terms of family values and interpersonal harmony. But you wouldn't know to do that unless you could identify Buying Types.

When I delivered this material to the Richmond Association of Life Underwriters, I had a group of six people at the front of the room, all representing the same Buying Type. As I asked them specific yes/no questions about their lives, every one of them said yes to nearly every question.

What if you can't see the lines? If your prospect has dark skin or bangs, you may not be able to see the facial lines. In those cases, you go to the second step in the ID

process. You read body language and gestures. But more often than not, if you can't see facial lines, it's because you're talking with the person over the phone.

In a phone discussion about Buying Types, a financial planner asked me if I could really tell Buying Types without giving a written test. I asked him to describe the lines in his face. That took five seconds. Then, I asked if his desk was neatly organized. That answer took another three seconds. From an 8-second conversation, I told him that he is a thinker and an intellectual who collects and contemplates information. That he researches his projects to the point of indecision, and he's often late for meetings. Bingo!

To make a sale to him, you'd simply give him clearly written documents and present the information in a way that guides him to a logical conclusion. But because he is an intellectual, you would have to make him believe he came to the decision on his own.

To make the process of Facial Mapping easy to remember, we describe each of the four Buying Types as a different color.

Red. The Red has horizontal lines across his forehead from expressing interest and excitement. I call them the Roy Rogers lines. More often than not, he'll also have laugh lines around his eyes. He gestures boldly and expressively with his hands and uses his voice like a toy. He values creative solutions and craves attention. He has a short attention span and tends to act impulsively. Show him a spreadsheet and his eyes will glaze over. But he'll follow you anywhere if you laugh at his jokes, make him the center of attention and compliment his creativity.

Gold. The Gold probably has no lines at all in his forehead. That's because he is a walking calculator who generally does not display emotions. If there are lines in his forehead, they'll be the asymmetrical "V" of disapproval. He'll also have lines around his mouth.

Those lines come from being a perfectionist. Since nothing is ever perfect, he feels displeasure and expresses it on his face. That's just about the only way he is expressive. He is very conservative and never takes any more than the tiniest of calculated risks. Say, "New concept in financial products" or "developing markets," and he goes into culture shock.

Green. The Green has what I call the hatchet wound between his eyes -- a small, deep vertical line. He cannot get too much information, and he needs to process it for a long time. When he's processing information, he looks like he's frowning and expressing disapproval. Don't be fooled. When he's processing information, he also can't make a decision. Push him with any of the sales-esque tactics for overcoming objections, and you'll insult his intelligence. And you don't want to do that because, chances are, he's extremely intelligent. But, it's hard to see because he probably wears a pocket protector and reminds you of the Absent-minded Professor. I was in a seminar with a green in October. He wore a navy blue blazer and trousers from a gray pinstripe suit. His insights were poignant and prophetic, but his fashion was felonious.

Blue. The Blue has compassion lines around his eyes and mouth. His movements are slow and deliberate. His voice is soft. He is indecisive but makes decisions based almost exclusively on feelings. A Blue needs to know that everything is OK, and he needs to make peace if he perceives any disharmony in the environment. He values family and personal friends above all, but animals are close behind. If you say something like, "Bottom line is . . ." or "You need to decide right away." you can go home. You blew it.

Why are Buying Types important to you? Current research shows that it takes more than six contacts to make a sale, today. Maybe, it takes so many because sales people are not pin-pointing their prospects' Buying Types. Once you begin to recognize Buying Types, you

will be much more successful, if only because you'll be addressing the different people in terms that are relevant to them. It is truly the single, most important skill you can learn to advance your sales career.

This article is taken from the Buying Types seminar presented by Michael Lovas and Credibility Marketing. The next time it is scheduled for the public will be at the NAHU conference on Managed Care in January.

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