What type of worker are you?

Time management, like everything else, is personal, says workplace expert Carson Tate, the author of the book *Work Simply*. The trick is to know your "productivity style" and to play to it. Tate breaks down the four styles—and how each can function to maximum capacity.

MORE HOURS IN THE DAY
Do you cluster meetings or break up collaborative tasks with quiet work? Knowing your tendencies can save you time.

1
The Planner

You add things to your to-do list that are already done—just for the joy of crossing them off. Most of your e-mails consist of bullet points and action items. And you heart your calendar.

MAXIMIZE YOUR already organized mind by batching and scheduling tasks. "Set a time to make all your phone calls each morning," says Tate. "Plow through document filing all at once." And even schedule blocks of time for thinking and reflecting. "Once you set a schedule," she says, "you're likely to stick to it."

GO INWARD
Quiet, cerebral jobs can fall through the cracks for Planners, who are so task-oriented. Batching all your "thought-work" will help you concretize it and give it the focus it needs.

2
The Prioritizer

When a colleague tries to chat you up, you're tapping your (mental) watch, thinking, *Just the facts, ma'am!* You send direct, one-sentence e-mails. You like data. And you know just what needs to get done and the order in which it should be done.

TIME YOURSELF running through your work routines. (Chances are you already have a fair number of routines.) How long does it take to respond to your morning messages? How long to review notes before a meeting? "Prioritizers have a competitive mindset," says Tate. "When you have the data, you'll be motivated to best your score." Also, see what you can routinize that you haven't yet. For example, you might want to create templates for e-mails you find yourself sending over and over again.

3
The Arranger

Your e-mails start with a warm "How are you?" and are packed with info and questions. You're a natural facilitator of projects, and you do your best work when collaborating with others.

SCHEDULE TIME every day to interact, even when most of your urgent work is solo. "When Arrangers spend too much time working on solitary tasks and projects," says Tate, "their efficiency and energy drop." Other types of external stimulation (not just the human kind) can also make it easier for you to focus. Listening to quiet music while you work, for example, could actually improve your concentration.

FOR MORE FROM THIS EXPERT, GO TO CARSONTATE.COM.

4
The Visualizer

A whiteboard, markers, and Post-its are your favorite companions. You often send florid e-mails about ideas, and you're game for creative risks. Ideas flow, but process can be a drag for you.

VARIETY HELPS keep you happy and productive, says Tate, so when possible, organize your day to alternate between ho-hum tasks and active, creative work. Switch things up every 20 minutes or so if you can. A visualizer tends to stay energetic, focused, and engaged when acting "as a sprinter, rather than a marathoner," says Tate.

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EPIC (WORK) FAIL: When I was in high school, I had a job at a vet's office. One day, a hamster was brought in to have a growth removed. The vet tech and I were prepping him for surgery. She was shaving him, and I was supposed to be vacuuming up the hair. I sucked up the whole hamster instead! I was terrified that I had killed him. But the vet fished him out of the vacuum tank, and it turned out he was fine. *—CRYSTAL L., VIA FACEBOOK*