

What are my "Hot Buttons?"

What are the behaviours that can cause you to react to others, rather than respond? We all differ in the ways we deal with provocation. A clear understanding of ourselves, and an appreciation of the behaviours that push our "hot buttons", will go a long way to helping us communicate successfully.

Try the following questions, using the scale:

I feel strongly about this = 2 points; This "bugs" me, but not much = 1 point; I have no feelings / opinion = 0

When other people:

don't stick to the topic or issue						
try to manipulate others to their benefit						
have no clear objectives or standards						
ask for opinions without giving theirs						
"name drop" all the time to impress me						
can only win by making others lose						
change the topic without warning						
try to pull the wool over my eyes						
don't know where they're going, or why						
interact without a clear expectation						
introduce irrelevancies to support their case						
have to have their own way regardless						
are vague about what they want						
play political games all the time						
do not have or use all the facts						
don't tell me where they're coming from						
play "poor little me" when the going gets rough						
let their emotions cloud their judgement						
demand before thinking it through						
use indirect or oblique tactics						
don't check facts or assumptions						
fail to commit to a point of view						
assert rank or status inappropriately						
are political, just so they can win						
allow confusion/chaos to continue						
are not open/up front in their dealings						
abuse my time/patience by "waffling"						
leave me wondering why they asked a question						
claim to be expert in all things						
ridicule others to gain advantage						

Column Totals: _____

Grand Total: _____

Scoring:

Sum total each of the six columns. The lowest score for each column is zero and the highest is 10 points. Then add the six column totals together for a grand total.

*If your **total score** is 46 to 60, your "operating revolutions" are too high; between 31 and 45, you're within average parameters; between 0 and 30, you're too relaxed / "laid back".*

Now, let's consider what the **impact** of your precise Hot Buttons might be.

From the previous exercise, take the six column totals and place them in the boxes on the left side of the page. The higher totals represent your "shorter fuses". The lower numbers indicate those circumstances where you have greater resiliency. Why not try the strategies suggested for all those that can "bug" you?

Misunderstood Objectives - unfocused, ambiguous or mismatched objectives coexist within the group, or changes are improperly applied.

Try: asking for a purpose, outcome or defined result before proceeding
stating the purpose of the interaction to check your understanding
describing what will result if the interaction is successful

Hidden Agenda - Needs and/or motives exist that are not being admitted, or manipulation is being practised.

Try: asking for a clarification of all the goals/results expected
confronting others with your suspicions, and asking for reassurance
redefining the circumstances under which you are prepared to continue

Inadequate Preparation - important steps in the planning/preparation have been omitted, or have not been shared.

Try: suggesting a common goal(s) and process that all are comfortable with
using a precedent or previous experience as a point of departure
requesting a total overview of the matter before you have to respond

Invalid Expectations - Objectives and/or process have not been clearly communicated to all involved parties.

Try: cross checking assumptions and expectations before you proceed
summarizing the anticipated outcomes and benefits for both sides
moving ahead just one step at a time, using summaries and reviews

Special Interest Pleading - the vested or specific interests of a particular group(s) are being asserted, or being served at the expense of others.

Try: redefining precise objective(s) sought, eliminating other considerations
suggest third party intervention or arbitration in a stalemate situation
putting all cases and proposals into writing, and in detailed form

Personal Animosity - where domination, aggression, politicking, playboying, open hostility or personal disliking prevail.

Try: role reversal technique - where each argues for the other's case
exchange of written depositions, or use of a third party arbitrator
taking time out to really get to know the other parties involved.

Food for thought and some simple actions to contribute to your communication competencies