

WORK SMARTS™

People Smart

What Is It?

People smarts (or interpersonal intelligence) is the ability to perceive and respond to the moods, intentions, and feelings of other people. This includes being sensitive to facial expressions, voice, and gestures and the ability to respond effectively to those cues. In other words, people who have highly developed people smarts are very attuned to other people. They have developed a wide array of social skills that they rely on in their person-to-person communications.

How They Learn

People who are people smart naturally learn best through interactions with others. It is the type of learning that occurs when they work with and relate to others as part of a team. They learn best through discussions, cooperative learning activities, and brainstorming. As such, they tend to thrive in smaller class environments where there is more opportunity to share thoughts and ideas.

People Smarts & Careers

People smart people have no shortage of career options available to them. They are well suited for occupations that involve understanding others, listening to their issues and problems, and communicating effectively either person-to-person or in group situations. They can empathize easily and are especially good at occupations that require active listening, interpersonal communications, and conflict resolution skills, such as teachers, public relations specialists, and customer service personnel. However, the ability to get along with others and work as part of a team are highly valued in nearly any occupation. Being a “people person” doesn’t hurt when you are trying to persuade someone to join your cause, use your service, or buy your product.

Keep This in Mind

Look at the big picture – You probably have and use most of the eight intelligences to some degree or another throughout your daily life. You may even excel at multiple intelligences and use them effectively in your career. That’s why it can be useful to read through the materials for each intelligence.

Develop career aspirations – The theory of multiple intelligences can help you explore intelligences you possess and then use this knowledge to help you make career choices. Remember that the *Work Smarts* assessment is not designed to match you with an occupation, but it can help you explore many occupations related to your intelligences that you might not have considered before.

Embrace your strengths – Remember that multiple intelligences stretch over a wide spectrum of abilities, not just those traditionally valued by society, such as English and math. Now is your chance to see the different ways that you are intelligent and to capitalize on your strengths.

Don’t ignore hidden intelligences – The theory of multiple intelligences allows you to identify and work to develop your hidden or underdeveloped intelligences. It is never too late to awaken unused abilities. Doing so can even open up career paths that you will find more productive and rewarding.

“Down in their hearts, wise men know this truth: The only way to help yourself is to help others.” – Elbert Hubbard

Top Occupations for People Smart People

Public Relations Specialists engage in promoting or creating good will for individuals, groups, or organizations by writing or selecting favorable publicity material and releasing it through various communications media. They may prepare and arrange displays and make speeches.

Outlook: Faster-than-average (14% to 20%) growth with a need for 61,000 additional employees for 2006–2016.

Median Earnings: \$49,800/year

Social and Human Service Assistants assist professionals from a wide variety of fields—such as psychology, rehabilitation, or social work—to provide client services, as well as support for families. They may assist clients in identifying available benefits and social and community services and help clients obtain them.

Outlook: Much-faster-than-average (21% or higher) growth with a need for 153,000 additional employees for 2006–2016.

Median Earnings: \$26,630/year

Sales Managers direct the actual distribution or movement of a product or service to the customer. They coordinate sales distribution by establishing sales territories, quotas, and goals and establish training programs for sales representatives. They may also analyze sales statistics gathered by staff to determine sales potential and inventory requirements and monitor the preferences of customers.

Outlook: Average (7% to 13%) growth with a need for 103,000 additional employees for 2006–2016.

Median Earnings: \$94,910/year

Human Resources Managers plan, direct, and coordinate human resource management activities of an organization to maximize the strategic use of human resources and maintain functions such as employee compensation, recruitment, personnel policies, and regulatory compliance.

Outlook: Average (7% to 13%) growth with a need for 43,000 additional employees for 2006–2016.

Median Earnings: \$84,440/year

People Smart Workplace Skills

Persuading others to change their minds or behavior.

Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as such.

Talking to others to convey information effectively.

Providing personal assistance, medical attention, emotional support, or other personal care to others.

Profiles in Intelligence

Martin Luther King, Jr., was one of the key leaders of the civil rights movement in the United States. He was a Baptist minister who became a civil rights activist early in his career. He was the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his work to end racial segregation and discrimination through non-violent means. King also spoke out about poverty, the Vietnam War, and other aspects of social injustice. Above all, it was his ability to empathize with the plight of others that gave King the strength to be a great leader.

MI Resources

Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons in Theory and Practice, Howard Gardner

7 Kinds of Smart: Identifying and Developing Your Multiple Intelligences, Thomas Armstrong

www.thomasarmstrong.com/multiple_intelligences.htm

www.newhorizons.org/strategies/mi/front_mi.htm