


Facilitation Difficulty: 

 45-50 min.

 In this form,
groups up to 25

 No preference

Purpose – To understand a variety of tendencies in group working behaviors. Similar to the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory, this exercise uses descriptions of preferred actions when working together, helping us to understand how our own and others’ tendencies affect our working interactions.

Group size – Medium size groups, 8-25 people

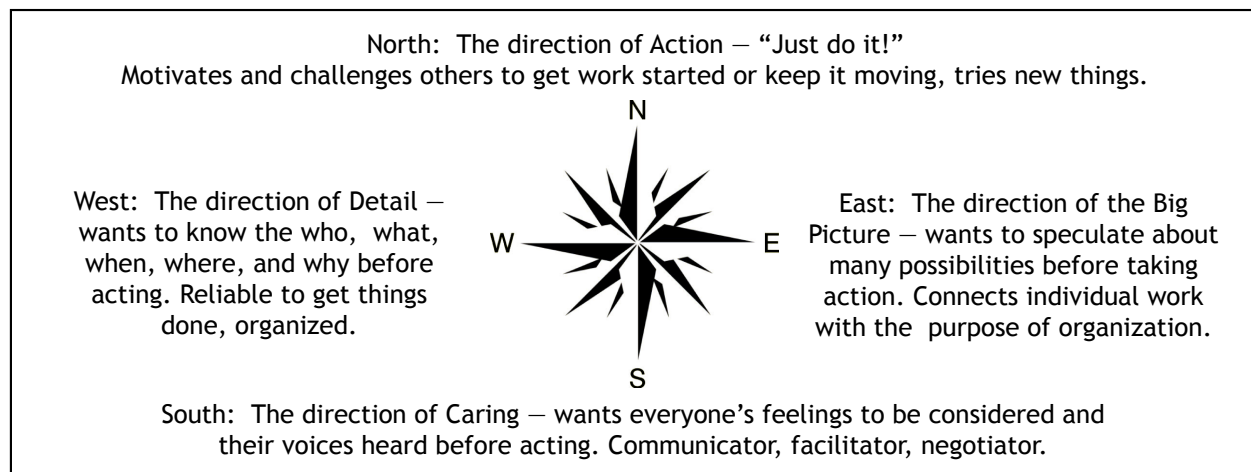
Preparation – Setup chart paper on each of four walls designating the four points of the compass. Label them: North (Acting), East (Big Picture), South (Caring), and West (Details). Place a second blank piece of chart paper adjacent to each. Bring sufficient copies of the Compass Points Activity Worksheet for all participants.

Options – [Compass Points II](#) and [Compass Points III](#).

Steps:

1. **Review** – Direct participants to examine the chart below (Figure 1). Read through the descriptions of work styles and elaborate on the behaviors or preferences of each direction. Distribute worksheets. Ask participants to think about the behaviors they gravitate towards when they’re at work with peers, as opposed to the behaviors they may prefer when they’re at home with their families, in classrooms with students, or in other scenarios. (5-7 min.)

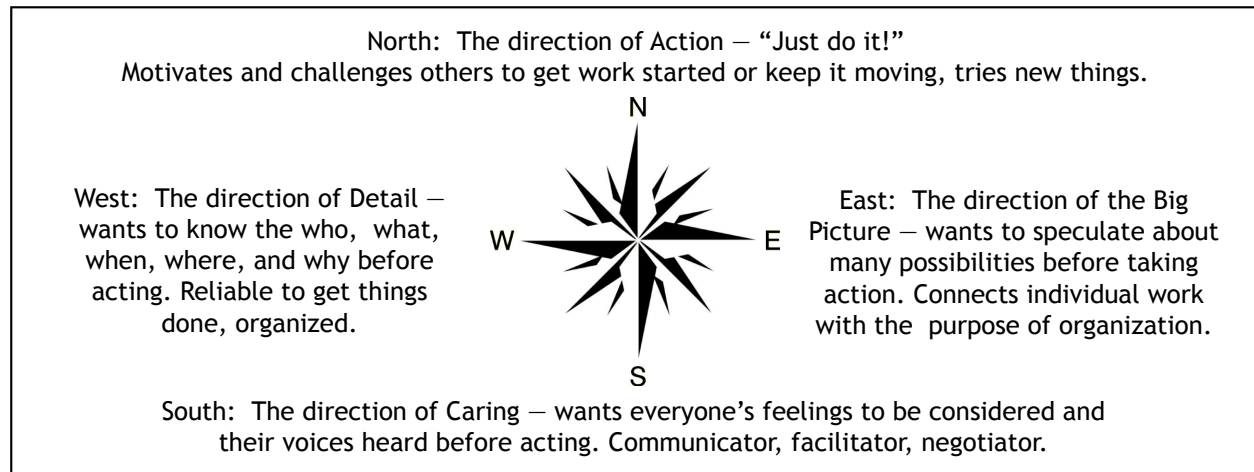
Figure 1



2. **Move** – Invite participants to rise from their seats and gather at the chart paper representing the “direction” that they think best describes their group work style. No one is only one “direction,” but for the sake of this activity, everyone must choose one as their predominant perspective. (2 min.)
3. **Group work** – Each smaller group should write their answers to the questions on the Compass Points Activity Worksheet on their chart paper. (10-15 min.)
4. **Report** – Ask for a volunteer from one “direction” to report back to the group, referring to their chart paper. Then cycle around the room to hear from each direction. (7-10 min.)

5. **Debrief** – With this activity in particular, it is imperative to debrief. The reflection and interaction provides learning beyond recognizing one’s own “direction.” (10 min.):
- *What did you think of the activity? Was it helpful?*
 - *What happens if a group is missing a direction?*
 - *Note the distribution among the “directions” in your group. What might this distribution mean for how you proceed?*
 - *What is the best combination for a group to have? Does it matter?*
 - *How can you avoid being driven crazy by people from another “direction”?*
 - *How might you use this exercise with others? Students?*
 - *When you do an activity like this with students, what might you want to be careful of? (Explore the possibility of stereotyping.)*
6. **Optional written silent reflection** –
- *What do you want to remember about this experience?*
 - *How might you use it in your work?*

Figure 1



Decide which of the four “directions” most closely describes your personal style and gather with others at the chart paper representing that compass point. Then spend 15 minutes answering the following questions as a group and noting your answers on the chart paper.

- *What are your strengths of your style?*
- *What are the limitations of your style?*
- *What style do you find most difficult to work with and why?*
- *What do people from the other “directions” or styles need to know about you so you can work together effectively?*
- *What do you value about the other three styles?*
- *(Optional) What catch phrase/symbol or mascot would represent your direction and why?*