

For immediate release

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- If Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus, it's all in our heads -

The battle of the sexes has been raging for centuries, but there may be more scientific evidence for some of the key differences between men and women than we thought.

Let's begin by generalising. Women talk more than men, and are more expressive. Men want logic. Women don't deliver. Women express that they are upset about something, men offer a solution. Women get annoyed - a solution's not what they want. Men get confused; don't know what to say; so stop talking. Women accuse men of never talking to them. Sound familiar?

Whole Brain Thinking experts Herrmann International have profiled more than 2 million people in 20 countries around the world using their innovative assessment tool, the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument™ (HBDI™). The results show several fundamental, scientifically proven differences between men and women including:

- Men are better at maths, women are better at reading
- Men have a higher mechanical aptitude, women can master foreign languages
- Women are better listeners
- Men have spatial ability where women have verbal talents
- Men are into theories, women are intuitive
- Men see things in a linear fashion, for women the view is holistic
- Men come up with a solution to a problem, women understand the problem
- Men understand facts, women understand the process
- Men form task-oriented teams, women form groups and communities
- Men are thing oriented, women are relationship oriented

Honed through 30 years of intensive research into the way we think, and developed by a former manager at General Electric, Ned Herrmann, the HBDI™ is a practical, easy-to-use tool to determine the strength of our preference for certain thinking styles, through a series of 120 scientifically-designed questions.

Responding to those questions, a high 59.1% of men chose maths as their best subject at school, compared to 35% of women; 28.3% of men said analytical work was their strong point compared to 13.5% of women; 17.6% of men said they were best at technical aspects of their job, compared with 5.4% of women; 28.7% of men rated themselves highly on problem solving, compared with 13.6% of women; and nearly twice as many men as women thought they were strong on the financial side.

And while Herrmann's research certainly relates to personal relationships between the sexes, it also translates into the business world, where men and women work together on teams and report to one another, sometimes with limited success.

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“Those with opposite thinking styles tend to frustrate each other,” Mr Michael Morgan, CEO of Herrmann International Asia says, “and it’s not hard to see why. More men than women prefer the “blue” thinking style, and want to talk in terms of facts, figures and information. The opposite is true of many women, who are strong in the “red” thinking style, which prefers collaboration, discussion and expressing emotion.

“The typical fallout in the workplace is men thinking women are talking too much and sharing personal feelings rather than just passing on relevant information, while women find those men arrogant and cold, unwilling to talk things through. The same scenario is repeated in living rooms and bedrooms around the country night after night.”

Based on the brain’s physiology, Herrmann International has identified four thinking styles and created a colour-coded four-quadrant model to reflect them:

A – blue – analyser: quantifies, logical, critical, realistic. Often works as an accountant, actuary, engineer.

B – green – organiser: neat, timely, reliable. Often works in as manager or administrator.

C – red – personaliser: sensitive, supportive, empathetic, talkative. Often works as teacher, trainer, social worker, salesperson, writer, musician or actor.

D – yellow – strategist: risk-taker, visualises, impulsive, breaks rules. Often works as entrepreneur, artist, strategist, consultant.

We all have at least one preferred thinking style, women often have several and very few of us are equally dominant across all four quadrants – only 3% of the population.

Around 12% of men have a “triple dominant profile” with strong preferences in three of the four quadrants, while 30% of women fit this description – giving credence to the popular claim that women are much better at multi tasking.

But having inherently different thinking styles doesn’t have to mean men and women can’t learn to understand each other, says Mr Morgan. “It’s no secret that there are vast differences between the sexes on many levels, but rather than clashing we can learn to resolve conflict, solve problems together and enjoy more harmonious relationships by understanding how each individual thinks.”

“If we learn to activate the parts of our brain we normally neglect, we can improve our performance in situations we might typically avoid, such as disputes with our colleagues of the opposite sex.”

Again, in the workplace, Mr Morgan says forming teams made up of men and women, rather than homogenous teams, will improve creativity and innovation, even though it may sometimes cause tension and disputes along the way.

“When people are similar, and think in the same way, they quickly reach consensus and can get a lot done. However, it is only when different thinking styles are brought together that we see truly creative thinking and innovative solutions. Once you get over the initial teething problems of a heterogenous group, and team members start to see the results of their collaboration, improvements in productivity and diversification will be rapid and long lasting.”

Whole Brain Thinking and the HBDI™ have been used by countless global corporations, small businesses, educational institutions, government organisations and individuals to improve their results. Satisfied clients **include IBM, Microsoft, Shell, Novartis, PwC and BMW** to name a few.

Why HBDI™?

Herrmann's work is widely regarded as superseding "left brain/right brain" thinking models, and the HBDI™ is the validated, worldwide standard for assessing thinking styles. Prominent psychometric research institutions and universities (including University of Texas and University of California) have validated Herrmann's methods, as have major studies of up to 8000 participants.

Whole Brain Thinking has been the subject of more than 60 doctoral dissertations and the HBDI™ is available in 20 languages, in 20 countries. More than US\$500,000 has been injected into validation and reliability studies.

The HBDI™ also meets the standards of The American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education