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# Leadership Styles of Park and Recreation Professionals in GRPA

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### LEADERSHIP STYLES OF PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSIONALS IN GRPA

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#### Introduction

What is your leadership style? Are you an authoritarian or persuasive leader? Is your style more decisive than tentative? What makes the average Park and Recreation professional tick? Is there any commonality in Park and Recreation professionals personality/temperament? Why should someone know his or her leadership style or personality style?

A group of undergraduates in the Park and Recreation Administration program at Columbus State University conducted a temperament survey to answer some of these questions. We used the Keirsey Temperament Sorter II to identify the temperaments/leadership styles of 50 randomly chosen Park and Recreation professionals within GRPA. The Keirsey Temperament Sorter II is a personality questionnaire that follows the Myers-Briggs method of assessment. It has been in use for over 20 years. The 70-question test can be taken in an average time of 10 minutes. Approximately one in four assessments are off the mark. This is due to the fact that individuals vary in the degree that they can honestly and accurately observe their perceived behavior.

Why do you need to learn about your leadership style or temperament? As a Park and Recreation professional you are responsible on a daily basis for organizing subordinates or the public. Having a better idea of yourself will allow you to better understand other people. It is the duty of every leader to evaluate himself / herself and to recognize his/her strengths and weaknesses. An individual who does not know her / her own capabilities and limitations can never hope to be a leader. To know what motivates someone or what they value can only make you a better leader and Park and Recreational professional. Making a conscientious effort to observe the subordinates you oversee will enable you to recognize individual differences and gain have a better understanding of how they react and function under various conditions. This will improve your understanding of how best to employ them effectively. The Keirsey Temperament Sorter II was designed to allow people to better understand themselves; it is entirely up to the individual to determine the accuracy of the results.

The Keirsey Temperament Sorter II divides people into four main temperaments:

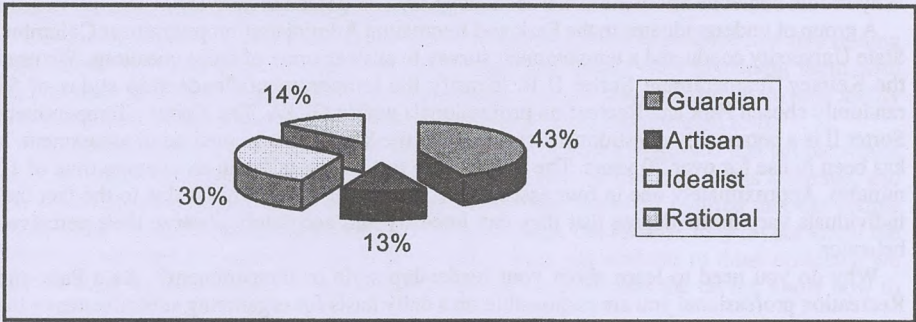
- ◆ Guardian
- ◆ Artisan
- ◆ Idealist
- ◆ Rational.

These four temperaments are then divided into four sub-categories each. There is no ideal temperament; the categories are just a description of what makes folks different than or the same as other people. Of the U.S. general population 40-45% are **Guardians**. Keirsey describes guardians as highly skilled in logistics. Thus their most practiced and developed intelligent operations are often supervising and inspecting, or supplying and protecting. They are usually stoical about the present, pessimistic about the future, fatalistic about the past, and their preferred time and place is the past and the gateway. **Artisans** comprise 35-40% of the general population. **Artisans** can become highly skilled in tactical variation. Their most practiced and developed intelligent operations are usually promoting and operating, or displaying and composing. They [live for] the present,



ptimistic about the future, cynical about the past, and their preferred time and place is the here and now. **Idealists** represent 5-10% of the general population. **Idealists** can become highly skilled in diplomatic integration. Their most practiced and developed intelligent operations are usually teaching and counseling, or conferring and tutoring. Gullible about the future, mystical about the past, and their preferred time and place are the future and the pathway. **Rationals** comprise 5-10% of the population. **Rationals** can become highly skilled in strategic analysis. Thus their most practiced and developed intelligent operations tend to be marshalling and planning, or inventing and configuring. They are strong willed. They are usually pragmatic about the present, skeptical about the future, [subjective] about the past, and their preferred time and place are the interval and the intersection (<http://www.keirsey.com>).

### Kersey Temperament Sorter II Group Percentage of General Population

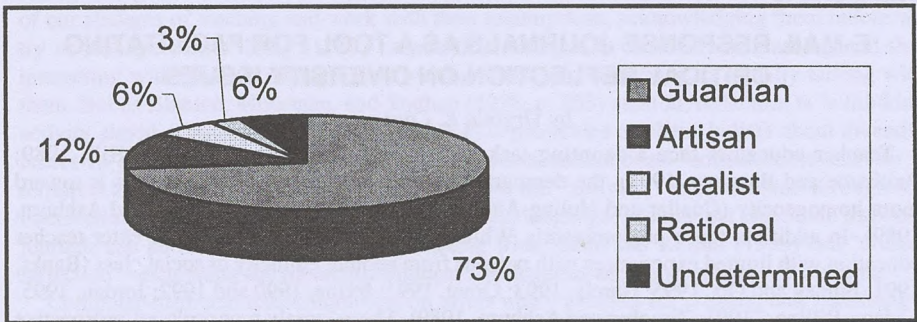


What temperament is the average Park and Recreation professional in Georgia? Of the 33 respondents 24, or 73% were Guardians, 4, or 12% were Artisans, 2, or 6% were Idealists, and 1, or 3% was a Rational. Of the 33 respondents 9, or 27% are considered to be Guardian Supervisors. The following is an explanation of **Guardian Supervisors** as explained by Keirsey (<http://www.keirsey.com>).

Supervisor Guardians [ESTJ] are squarely on the side of rules and procedures, and they can be quite serious about seeing to it that others toe the mark or else face the consequences. They do not hesitate to give their stamp of approval, nor do they withhold their directions or suggestions for improvement. Supervisors go by experience—not speculation. Supervisors are gregarious and civic-minded, and are usually key players of their community. They are generous with their time and energy, and very often belong to a variety of groups, supporting them through steady attendance, but also taking a vocal leadership roles.



## GRPA Professionals



As you can see from the pie charts Park and Recreation professionals for the most part fit into a specific category. It only makes sense though when you think about it that like-minded people would be interested or drawn to work in a like field. This is not hard to understand; the real challenge is figuring out how best to use your leadership style or temperament to influence others to work toward a common goal. Another challenge is becoming familiar with your employee's temperament and using their strengths to accomplish the mission. We would like to thank the individuals that took the time and made the effort to participate in this survey. For more detailed information on Temperament or to take the test on-line go to <http://www.keirsey.com>.

## References

<http://www.keirsey.com>

Chris Bryant, Trannie Carter, Larry Coates, Robert Dwyer, Kelly Folden, Gary McCormich, and Trevor McCarthey are undergraduate students in the Department of Physical Education & Leisure Management at Columbus State University, Columbus, Georgia. They undertook this research as part of a class project under the supervision of PELM Instructor Micheall K. Taylor.

