

# THE 5 DRIVERS METHODS

The method of 5 drivers is inscribed within the so called “decisional psychologies” and precisely the Eric Berne’s Transactional Analysis.

It is adoptable to qualify the culture of an individual, or a group where the members are in physical contact or a whole human entity, like a company, even a country, where there is an influence (cultural impact) also if there is not an interaction among all the members of that entity, also called “virtual group”.

The basic principle underlining the driver model is that every entity, from individual to groups to extended human agglomerations, decides his connotation, his driver.

From now on we’ll refer in this script to the term “entity”, to mean indifferently the 3 forms. Or, in other cases as a matter of simplicity we’ll refer to the individual, but the conclusions are extendable to physical and virtual groups:

The choice of own characterising driver is among 5 potential drivers, which are offered by the ordinary and extraordinary events surrounding those entities.

The first basic distinction between a driver and an ordinary behaviour is that the latter is requested by the environment (hexogen event) and the former is self activated, with an endogen sake.

**The 5 potential drivers that are presented to the individual (group), allowing the further choice are expressed in term of imperatives:**

## *1) Hurry up!*

It is the invitation, sometime with thrust and urgency, to act faster than useful, possible or necessary, like moving, growing, changing, stopping quicker than the real situation requires. For example several companies try to grow faster than they are requested by their mission or their external context or managers make yes or no critical decisions without the correct time requested for both answers or simply some professionals physically walk through their activity at an unnecessary speed.

If this behaviour is not demanded, is it a first clue that that entity adopted the “hurry up” driver.

In some companies if workers, from blue collars to directors take their time to achieve the result they are expected to produce there could be a form of punishment or social depreciation

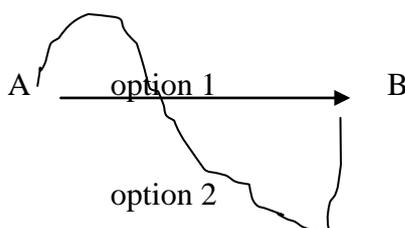
If people adjust to this “faster than necessary style” it is not said that they “have hurry up”, perhaps they simply conform. But if the same persons, when non requested or in different environment, show that behaviour, this is a clue that driver is their cultural connotation

## 2) *Make the effort!*

A manifestation of this driver is occurring when one person (group) has two options to reach a result and he follows the one which is the most difficult, time consuming, energy depleting and typically ends to achieve the necessary outcome but with a visible human fatigue

Some people try to impose this behaviour on their children, subordinates and they probably conform, as an imposition from a higher hierarchical status, at least so perceived. As far as it is conformed, it is not a driver of that entity, unless it operates also when non requested.

Using a graph representation



Sometimes there is not the second “harder” option so the entity makes the effort to create it and then choose it.

The frequent failure when an individual/ an organization try to impose this driver is a further proof that is not possible to transfer or build a culture but that every entity decides his own culture.

In several companies, the performance has to be accompanied by a demonstration of strong effort, such as devoting a long time or preparing thick and complex reports and a relaxed person, although successful, is not appreciated. These kinds of companies generally unwillingly can discourage efficiency.

At the opposite in other cultures or organization is very appreciated an “elegant performance”, which employs what is necessary for the sake, not more.

## 3) *be strong!*

This driver is manifested by such a behaviour: when all the external/ internal clues and signals are suggesting that one person (or entity) should stop his activity, that person removes those signals and proceeds, even if not requested, non productive or when there is another person that could make the initiative for him. It could be defined “unnecessary sacrifice”

For example, there could be circumstances where a person is stressed, tired, exhausted or there could be an advantage in postponing the action (or decision) or another person could be more able to deal with the occurrence, but the “be strong” person ignores all these factors and option and goes on anyway.

“Be strong” individuals or companies generally make at late night important decisions or act when in bad shape, physically, financially, when the personnel is not ready and similar characteristics.

A “be strong” organisation generally promotes people which make unnecessary sacrifice and defines incorrectly this behaviour “availability”. It is important not to confuse this driver with organisational behaviours which are appropriate or inevitable.

#### **4) *Be perfect!***

This driver leads people/ organisations to care with the same importance the most critical core factors and the slighted details, with no priority. For examples a decision will be made later than necessary for a need to evaluate also the non relevant aspects or a report will insist to describe meaningless facts or remarks. Delay and confusion are the risk with this driver.

Programming short and simple activities is sometime necessary, sometimes is a clue of “be perfect”.

This driver is also evident in companies/ product introductions to customers or external actors.

#### **5) *Try to please***

The Try to Please driver invites people/ organisations to make decision or to act in order to please somebody else when this is not the appropriate criterion.

The person to comply could be a hierarchical superior, subordinate, even the customer. Of course there are many situations where this form of compliance is functional and due and in this case we are not experiencing the presence of this driver. The driver is evident when there is no request for the compliance or even worse, this driver is combined with the other’s “mind reading”. In some companies a person would be appreciated if he doesn’t ask but “guess” the right thing to do, to say, to decide etc.

#### **A “law” about the 5 drivers.**

A driver is a cultural decision of an entity, from individuals to large group.

The decided driver is not evident in regular conditions but tends to emerge in situation of stress, or when a high risk or a great opportunity is facing that entity.

The driver is a “point of failure”, the weak ring of the chain.

If a company (person) “has” the driver Hurry up could arrive late, as there could be the need for remaking unfinished works. It is a classic way to lose time.

“Make the effort” could deplete people and organisation energy, resulting in a failure to achieve the wished result or arriving to it but compromising the resources (psychological but also financial) to tackle the other or future needs.

“Be strong could cause that an individual or an organisational collapses in situations where they need the access to all their strengths.

“Be perfect” people or companies care obsessively all aspect but miss the one that was critical for the situation

“Trying to please” everybody generally results in a loss of credibility, which is the very opposite of the driver intention.

### **Strategies to deal with the individual or organisational drivers**

Individuals and organization can manifest more than one driver but in most cases, in condition of high stress it emerges the most significant one.

Although there are some ways to reduce or remove a driver, which anyway requires the conscious collaboration of the person (group), it seems simpler and more efficient to take the driver into account.

Some considerations:

- when composing a team, try to avoid team members with the same driver, although it is instinctual to look for those with the same driver.
- If in condition of high stress (both for risks and opportunity), avoid to give a person or team a task whose characteristics would trigger the person/ team driver. For example if a real urgency is faced and the conditions are very critical, the “hurry up” person should be avoided.
- “Try to please” driver is one of the most dangerous. To neutralize it in critical conditions it is a safe precaution to introduce in the team one or more people whose driver is not this one.