

## Case Study

Integrating Differing Cultures at a  
U. S. Navy Command Site



## The Challenge:

As part of a downsizing effort the U. S. Congress had mandated the melding of the U. S. Navy's Aviation Supply Division in Philadelphia, and its Ship and Submarine Parts Operation in Mechanicsburg, PA. into one physical entity.

## Purpose:

To achieve both a physical and cultural integration of two entirely separate naval commands operating under different leadership approaches.

## The existing conditions:

The two components were not only physically dislocated but also entirely different in terms of leadership cultures and the culture of employee communication and interaction. The bottom line was that these two organizations could not talk together.

## Desired outcomes:

**Short term:** Through the recognition of mental diversity based on brain dominance and using the Herrmann Method, create a common culture that would greatly facilitate more effective employee communication and improved working relationships of individuals and teams.

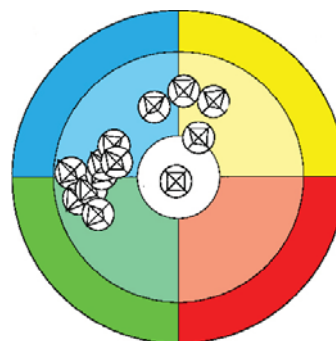
**Long term:** Fully merge two thousand airplane parts people with two thousand ship and submarine people so that the entire operation functions as a single unit with a common purpose, that would "move as smartly as a battle cruiser or F-16".

## Whole brain intervention methods, processes and strategies:

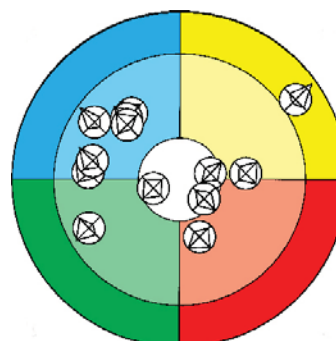
The Training Department, under Lynne Krause first profiled the top Navy Command, and by applying the Herrmann Method brought an understanding of not only individual preferences but also the composite of those

preferences at the command level: through the sharing of data and reviewing of implications and consequences, the command teams from the top down learned how to play their roles more effectively and how to work more effectively with each other. As part of the merger, new teams were formed on the basis of HBDI data, which in many cases resulted in shifting people to jobs that better suited their mental preferences.

As the merger process proceeded, partnership councils were formed at both sites to help integrate the divergent cultures. The thinking style assessment and a Whole-Brain approach were used extensively in profiling individuals and organizing and resolving problem issues. Union concerns and civilian management issues needed to be understood and resolved. In addition, communication and relationship issues effecting intact work teams and adhoc groups needed to be properly diagnosed and resolved. Whole brain concepts and tools became the accepted way of dealing with their complex issues. As more and more of the different types and levels of leadership groups were profiled, the nature and extent of the cultural differences became clear.



*Dominance Map for  
NAVICP Corporate Board  
upper level civilian  
Management  
Group from  
Mechanicsburg*



*Dominance Map for  
NAVICP Corporate Board  
upper level civilian  
Management.  
Group from Philadelphia*

The “missing” quadrant in both cultures was the “C” quadrant. This was why communication and interpersonal relationships became key training priorities. An important additional element of this merger process was the application of a parallel mentoring program. The purpose of this program was to match individuals with compatible mentors who would not only facilitate individual development, but help bring everybody on board to a common culture. Matching thinking styles using the HBDI tool was so effective that out of three hundred mentor/mentee matches, only two pairs had to be rematched. This was a clear demonstration that matching mentor and mentee using the thinking styles assessment was an effective, accurate and high quality approach to developing pairs.

### Summary of Outcomes:

**Short term:** The training process applying the Herrmann Method established a common language that bridged the gap between the two cultures and also between the different levels and types of command--Navy and civilian interaction with the union became smoother. The HBDI profiles were used extensively as a development tool to realign employees to more appropriate work. All teams were formed on the basis of HBDI data and improved work effort and morale resulted.

Military commanders became highly supportive of the Whole Brain approach and recommended it to their next level of command. The thinking style assessment has been rolled out from the top down in both cultures. Relations with the union have improved.

**Long term:** This case is still in progress, but all signs are positive. Union relations appear to be a breakthrough. The Navy commanders say they love the concept. Implementation is proceeding at flank speed.

### Success Measurement Criteria:

The success measurement process allows

for up to 100 points to be allocated to each of the four quadrants of this Whole Brain process. The success measurement points are allocated as follows:

*A quadrant:* Improved performance

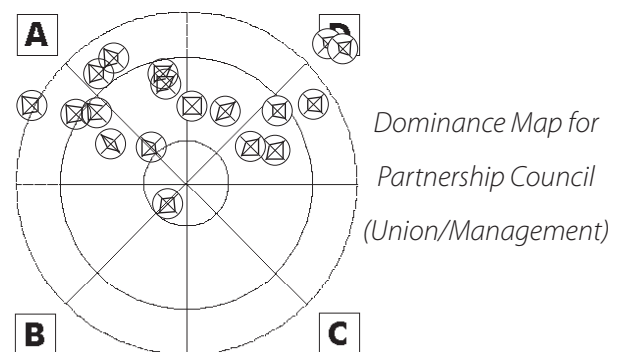
*B quadrant:* Realignment of work

*C quadrant:* Bridging of two cultures

*D quadrant:* Clarifying the future therefore integration

### Bonus outcome:

The potential breakthrough with the union is clearly a bonus to the original purpose. The relative balance of the Union/management Partnership Counselor will help ensure continued progress in union/Management relationships.



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The Originators of Whole Brain<sup>®</sup> Technology and the Creators of the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI)<sup>®</sup>  
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