

# FOUR TENDENCIES

by Gretchen Rubin

These roles represent the most likely way that you will respond to the idea of expectations and/or rules which can be:

1. Outer deadlines - from others
2. Inner expectations - comes from inside you

You can be a success or a failure in any of these categories. Many people have! None is better than another, it's all about working *with* your tendency.

1) **UPHOLDERS** - readily respond to any inner and outer expectations.

1. **Motivated by:** fulfillment. They are fulfilled by getting things done. They want to check it off and feel accomplished
2. **Need:** To know exactly what's expected and when to quit. They want to avoid making mistakes, getting blamed, letting people down, including themselves.
3. **Wake up and say:** "What's on the to do list today?" Lets start checking it off
4. **Good at:** self-starting. They don't need much or any supervision or accountability. Good at seeing the rules beyond the rules - what are the rules no one is seeing yet
5. **Cons:** They can become rigid and constrained by rules, In rare cases they can even become paranoid and obey rules that don't exist. They can be overwhelmed and paralyzed when rules are ambiguous. They is sometimes a relentless quality about them or their work that can be draining to those around them. They sometimes communicate that they know how people should behave and they expect them to behave that way and don't have sympathy for people who don't behave that way.

2) **QUESTIONERS** - question the expectations but they'll do it if they think it makes sense.

1. **Motivated by:** sound reason
2. **Need:** to know why, to be convinced that something is important and justified. Then they must decide for themselves that a course of ac-

tion makes sense. Whatever they're working on, they have to endorse it themselves, especially outer expectations.

3. **Wake up and think:** "What *needs* to get done today?"
4. **Good at:** being intellectually engaged. They ask, "Why, why, why?" They want to understand and are strong advocates once they do. They will not follow rules that don't make sense to them, that they disagree with or seem arbitrary (this can be a strength or a weakness).
5. **Cons:** if they don't understand pretty quickly, unless they feel it's incredibly important, they pass things over that could benefit them or others because they don't understand why they should do it. Sometimes if a rule doesn't make sense to them they may not follow it or tell you that they aren't. They can become paralyzed if there are good arguments on both sides or they feel like they don't have perfect information. Their constant questioning can be exhausting for others working with them. They'll also sometimes say they feel exhausted by their own need to always ask and prove they know what they're doing is the right thing.

3) **OBLIGERS** - readily meet outer expectations but struggle to keep commitments to themselves.

- 1) **Motivated by:** external accountability. They thrive on deadlines, incentives, other people relying on them and role modeling to others.
- 2) **Need:** difficult to fulfill obligations that inspire them to work hard. They also need accountability for self-care and emotional permission to say no so that they'll better keep commitments to themselves.
- 3) **Good at:** doing what they say they're going to do. They're easy to work with and great for the team. They respond well to deadlines, coaches, late fees, and the responsibility of being a role model - doing it for someone else.
- 4) **Wake up and think:** "Whats expected of me today?"
- 5) **Cons:** mostly fall on them. They call themselves "people pleasers". And might be heard to say, "Why can I do everything for everyone else but I can't ever do anything for myself?" This makes them susceptible to burn out. They may also say yes to everyone else but not take care of themselves.

- 4) **REBELS** - don't want to take orders from anyone, want to do what they want to do when they want to do it.
1. **Motivated by:** present desire, choice and freedom.
  2. **Need:** They need big reasons that they feel passionate about in order to engage. Need people who believe in them and important things to do that make a difference.
  3. **Wake up and think:** "What do I want to do today?"
  4. **Good at:** thinking outside the box. When motivated they'll often do and accomplish things others wouldn't even think of doing. They have a high level of engagement because they're doing what they want to do.
  5. **Cons:** Dread rigorous habits, boredom and sameness. They resist habit or ritual forming which could make getting things done easier for them. They more easily reject good ideas wherever they come from because they want to feel free. They can sometimes reject good things because they see it as an expectation or because they don't want to. They sometimes resist control and can struggle with self-control.

