

Johari Window

Background: Taking its name from its originators, Joe Luft and Harry Ingham, the Johari Window graphically describes behavior relationships. Its quadrants represent the whole person in relation to others, and its organizations, as well as to individual relationships.

Quadrant 1: Public or Open Area

- behavior known to self and others. It is the quadrant of openness, honesty and frankness, but not naivete. It shows the extent to which two or more persons can freely give and take, work together, share and enjoy experiences. The larger this quadrant, the greater is the person's contact with reality and the more available are the person's abilities and needs to self and others.

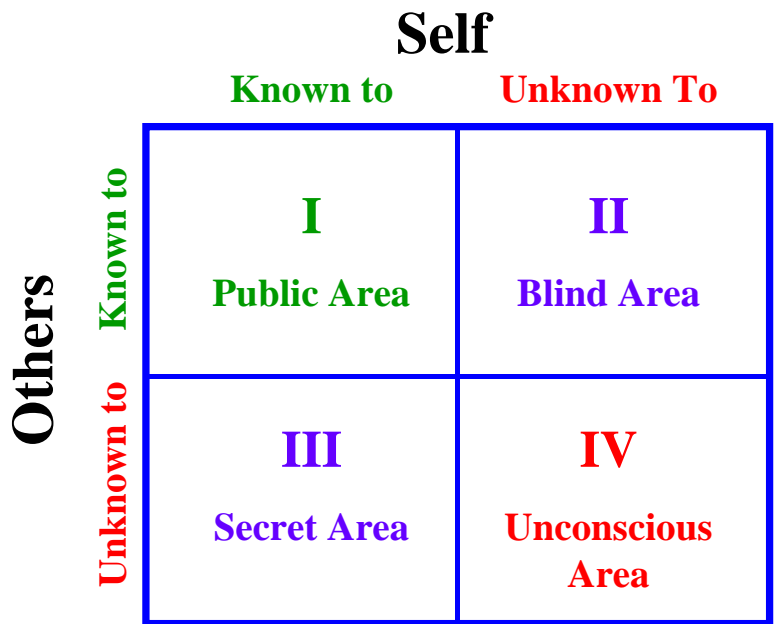
Quadrant 2: Blind Area

- behavior not known to self, but readily apparent to others. For example, a person may have an excessive tendency to dominate in a meeting. This tendency may be obvious to others but not obvious to the dominating person. Most persons' quadrant 2 is larger than they think. This can be discovered particularly easily in group situations where an individual's behavior is under scrutiny.

Quadrant 3: Secret or Hidden Area

- behavior open to self, but hidden from others. It is sometimes called the hidden agenda. For example, a person may see a particular assignment to look good as a result of doing the assignment well, but does not tell the boss why the assignment is desired nor does the person go about getting the assignment obviously. Another example is the person who resents a remark by another, but keeps the resentment inside. Or in a meeting a member may focus attention on a particular project which embarrasses another.

A way to differentiate quadrant 1 and quadrant 3 is to think of quadrant 1 as behaviors "on top of the table" and quadrant 3 as behaviors motivated by issues "under the table."



Quadrant 4; Unconscious Area

- behavior not known to self or others. We know this quadrant exists because both the person and others sometimes discover new behavior or motives that were really there all along. For example, one person may take over the group's direction during a critical period or another person may discover an ability to act calmly and efficiently in an emergency. The person never behaved that way before, but the fact is that the potential for this activity was there all along.

The Closed Person

Social convention provides a pattern for getting acquainted and it is considered bad form to act too friendly too soon or to reveal too much. This same constricted picture may be typical of persons who have difficulty relating to others. A shy person may, for example, have difficulty in developing a large quadrant 1 after much time with a group or with another individual has elapsed. Sometimes an individual may hide behind a flurry of work or words, but very little of the person becomes known or available to others.

The Open Person

The larger the first quadrant, the closer to self realization is the individual. A large quadrant is not mere extroversion, gregariousness or sociability. Rather the emphasis is on personal freedom and

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capability of working with others and enjoying experiences with others according to one's needs and work requirements. The attitude of others to the closed person is often acceptance and understanding.

Whether the relationship is between that of peer associates, superior and subordinate, or between divisions of the company or departments, open relationships result in greater understanding, cooperation, freedom of activity, more creativity and higher work output as well as individual and organizational growth. Closed relationships are characterized by suspicion, distrust, tension, anxiety and backbiting, which result in lower work output and the thwarting of individual as well as organization growth. Individuals who operate on a small quadrant 1 basis find it painful, at least initially to enlarge quadrant 1. However the enlargement of quadrant 1 results in better and more productive relationships. This is illustrated by individuals that had a fight and subsequently a dramatically improved relationship. It also can be illustrated by the cohesive bond of those who have been through a crisis together. Under great tension and stress we tend to reveal more of ourselves to those who are experiencing the same stress and tension.

The Johari Window is a technique for helping managers understand how well they work with others (employees, colleagues and their managers). A series of questions are asked in the questionnaire, then the answers are plotted on a grid to show four regions (or quadrants).

The size of each quadrant illustrates the Exposure process (the open and candid expression of one's feelings, knowledge, etc.) with the Feedback process (active solicitation of information from others). The final chart may look something like the graphic below.

Through the use of various types of personality information and the desire to learn about oneself, good managers can further develop their own skills and abilities. Since each person has a unique personality, there are a vast array of tools, questionnaires, testing techniques and learning methods available. If one method does not "feel right" or seem to fit your style, keep

searching until you find those that work for you. Many people try a variety of methods and take a little bit from each to fit their needs at the time.

The Johari Window: Combining Mask and Self-Image The Johari Window is a four-cell figure created by psychologists Joe Luft and Harry Ingram that describes possible combinations of what you know about yourself and what others know about you.

The goal of healthy relationships is to maximize what Luft and Ingram call the "public area," where both you and others know and understand who you are. The "secret area" contains traits you know about but are unwilling or unable to share with others. In the earlier example of the person who received a gift, gratitude was in the secret area since the recipient could not express it.

The "blind area" describes areas of self-deception, like the rude person who thinks he is motivated by a desire for authenticity. The "unconscious" area represents the part of the self that people may examine when they try to "find themselves." This area is considered in the next section of this exhibit.

According to the Johari Window, you are being most sincere when self-image and reputation converge in the public area, not when you are just focusing on your thoughts and feelings.

Application: Facilitators are always dealing with the known and unknown of individuals in groups. We work to maximize the Public Area by making things visible to others. What others know about you is different from what you know about yourself. If we reveal more of ourselves to others they will be more likely to reveal more of themselves to you and each other. Through this communication we build greater understanding.

Web Resources:

<http://sol.brunel.ac.uk/~jarvis/bola/communications/johari.html>

http://www.knowmegame.com/Johari_Window/johari_window.html

<http://www.dfid.uz/johariswindow.html>