

TetraMap® Applications

As a new millennium model, TetraMap's history is short. However, the years preceding 2000 were filled with development, experimentation, successes and massive amounts of learning. The greatest satisfaction was in the success of TetraMap in achieving its original goals:

- ▶ Provide a fun, inexpensive tool for clients to use for self-discovery and to learn about others.
- ▶ Simplify and demystify personality typing by using an easy to remember and powerful metaphor, a map of nature.
- ▶ Support positive communication and relationship building.
- ▶ Help clients to embrace and respect diversity and thereby strengthen team performance.

The following stories are fascinating recollections of how TetraMap added value to individuals, teams and whole organisations.

Why Are You Like That?

In the early days of TetraMap development, we shyly slipped the four Elements into a training session, introducing it as an icebreaker or quick get-to-know-each-other activity called *Why Are You Like That?* Never presuming it would replace other personality models used in the corporate environment, we believed that making the small difference that it did was enough.

Over the years, feedback and visible, tangible results have given us confidence that TetraMap warrants a place in many Human Resource and Organisational Development programs. As the metaphor of nature becomes more meaningful and the integrity of the model extends beyond behaviour to a systems thinking approach to organisational issues, TetraMap has come to stand on its own. Research and data gathering are happening, but in the meantime, there's no excuse for waiting. TetraMap is about doing something now to improve communication,

to explore new perspectives and to find holistic solutions to personal, workplace, community and global challenges.

I have had great fun with the Elements. I have taken Myers-Briggs and other personality tests, but the Elements are the easiest to relate to real life.

M. Hock, webmaster, Virginia, USA

In my training with people from all walks of life – corporate, non-corporate and young people – I have found the Why Are You Like That? process to be very easy to use. After trialling the package, Scouting New Zealand has now incorporated it into their Advanced Leader Training Program, replacing an existing behavioural model. [TetraMap] is a fresh approach to introducing behavioural characteristics and its strength is in the value placed in people's uniqueness.

J. Williams, Director, trainer, Wellington, New Zealand

As a global consultancy, we've used a number of personality models over the years. No matter how good the profile (and there are some good ones) it always ended up putting people into boxes, and boxes create boxed thinking. When I first attended a TetraMap workshop I was amazed how quickly and easily the exercises led people to greater clarity and understanding of their nature. What we believe sets TetraMap apart is its tetrahedron shape. It takes thinking from 2D to 3D. TetraMap's emphasis on equal and interconnected elements puts it a step closer to understanding the reality of human nature. Intuitively TetraMap feels right, that's why it goes down well with any audience, anywhere in the world.

C. Hiles, Partner, RogenSi UK/Australia

In-House Organisational Communication

I want you to know that since we met last summer I have been using the Why Are You Like That? Workbook on a pretty informal basis with co-workers, friends and family. I had them out at a social gathering a few weeks ago with friends I have known for years. It was great and I learned a lot. I have used it with all the people in my department at work and with my daughter. The insight is quick and profound.

As I said I have kept this informal at work because I am a supervisor and didn't want anyone to feel required to take it. Everyone learned something and I am better able to communicate now. I understand my daughter's actions because of her high earth. I used it one time with people before a workshop started. Sure did understand my audience better!! I have especially liked using it with young people – they love it and 'get it' really fast!

M. Hartson, mother, Training Director, Maryland USA

This letter arrived the season after we had introduced TetraMap in Mexico City at an Accelerated Learning Conference. Obviously something struck a cord with her and she embraced its potential.

The key learning here is the ease with which the four Elements are understood. The four Elements of Nature, Earth, Air, Water and Fire immediately bring to mind intuitive understandings of the metaphor. It is easy to consider an Earthy, firm, hands-on person, an Airy, clear thinking person, a Watery, calm and caring person, and a Fiery, optimistic and bright person.

In her role as Training Director of a large organisation, she has since used The TetraMap of Behaviour to help staff members achieve the following:

- ▶ Understand each other's preferences, needs and motives better.
- ▶ Find a common language that focuses on the positive attributes of individuals and how outcomes can be achieved by recognising these preferences.

We have since had the privilege of working with this organisation and meeting its talented and dedicated people. After facilitating the *Why Are You Like That?* process, we were preparing for a different workshop on day two when a participant from the previous day popped in to say hello.

She was bubbling with enthusiasm as she described a meeting she'd had with her manager after the *Why Are You Like That?* session. It seems she'd had an enlightening and memorable experience describing the Elements and explaining to her boss her natural preferences. It was an eye-opener for both to find that they had so blatantly misinterpreted each other. The discussion was revealing and made all the difference to their relationship from that point forward.

Needless to say, this organisation has been touched by TetraMap and has embraced an exciting way of viewing the world and each other. Since the initial introduction of TetraMap to the organisation, and the first edition of this book, the CEO has asked for TetraMap to be included in the orientation programme for all new staff.

Following are more messages from the Training Director and a Manager from the same organisation.

The TetraMap of Behaviour has brought results beyond my expectations. Employees have found a new way of communicating because they have had a personal experience with The Elements. People use the information they learned to talk about differences and similarities, to conduct meetings more effectively and to talk through staff evaluations.

I have been amazed by the power of this tool. I cannot recommend it strongly enough to any company who wants its workforce to improve communication on a daily basis. We have a new language!

M. Hartson, Training Director, Maryland USA

Yoshimi and Jon brought an amazingly easy, yet powerful tool into our business culture. The presentation by Yoshimi of these ideas was so clear that there was an instant recognition and an 'a-ha!' within the group. We've actually begun to communicate on a daily basis using these elements and all that they mean.

D. Hart, Director of Online Services, Columbia, Maryland

Personal and Team Transformation

Natural beauty can improve human nature.

Frederick Law Olmsted, 'father' of American
landscape architecture

Team-building sessions are often transformational. Because high performance teamwork requires focus, self-sacrifice and very high trust amongst team members, the exercises and processes involved are challenging and require stretch.

TetraMap makes the stretch of considering multiple perspectives a bit easier to understand and digest. The process of discovering an individual preference is always fun, and debriefing and discussing what this means can open new paradigms of thought for many.

TetraMap is one of the greatest inventions because it shows that none of us is perfect, but it also demonstrates that we can achieve perfection by working together.

M. Sedoglavic, student, Waikato University, New Zealand

[The workshop] successfully stripped a team of 30 or so recruitment consultants of their self-destroying egos and reminded us what we are made of and what our strengths and weaknesses are. Rather than questioning why people don't think and behave as I do, I now realise that our differences in the workplace are just as, if not more important than our similarities. I have a greater understanding of my personal relationships because of the theory you introduced us to.

L. Sheldon, Personnel Consultant, Melbourne, Australia

Inviting people to share their own Earth, Air, Water, or Fire preferences is enjoyable. Asking them to celebrate these same attributes in others is more of a challenge. In team building, or in fact, in any relationship building situation, accepting the 'weakness' of others is vital. The first paradigm to break is that this so-called weakness, may be a strength that is simply misplaced, misaligned or mistimed.

I found the four Elements of Earth, Air, Water, and Fire to be very useful when trying to look at the way a person or a group of people is behaving at a holistic level. I realised that certain qualities of the Elements that I had previously had absolutely no personal connection to, are not bad qualities but are in fact essential to productive behaviour. I realised that all the four Elements complement each other and can help you become a more balanced person.

R. Mercer, student, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Building relationships is a challenging exercise in itself, whether in a team, the workplace, the home or the community. When you think of it, relationship building is a daily exercise. When we focus on specific skills to improve communication and relationships, TetraMap comes in handy as a map based in something we are already familiar with... nature. The transition from The TetraMap of Nature to The TetraMap of Behaviour is easy and painless. The map makes sense.

However, we must constantly remind ourselves that the map is not the territory. The map is not reality, but it can help us to see ourselves in a different light with a sense of dignity, celebration and even fun. Understanding skills and techniques to improve communication in the workplace can often be a powerful catalyst to embracing a new way of seeing and behaving in the world.

TetraMap has given me a clearer framework from which to more easily identify the working style of others and how to work with those people.

S. Bennet, student, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

TetraMap is a simple, easy to understand concept that can be used at any level within our organisation from managers through to manufacturing. Using TetraMap to explain and work through peoples behaviours has enabled us to develop teams into productive, motivated groups that understand, communicate and support each other in order to achieve the goals of the group and the company.

G. Nathan, Employee Development Officer, Auckland, New Zealand

Strategic Planning

A man becomes creative, whether he is an artist or a scientist, when he finds a new unity in the variety of nature. He does so by finding a likeness.

Jacob Bronowski, *The Ascent of Man*

The use of TetraMap sets a firm foundation as an opening process for a number of organisational development challenges. One of the more recent and exciting applications has been TetraMap's role in strategic planning.

Having extensively studied strategic management and developing strategic plans, I have to say I was profoundly surprised by the new dimension that [TetraMap] can bring to a strategic development process.

T. Hall, CEO, South Taranaki, New Zealand

We've supported the strategic planning process for a variety of organisations large and small. From very systematic, model-based formats, to more free-wheeling visioning sessions and everything in between, the chosen design of the planning process reflects the nature of the organisation.

In earlier sessions at either end of the planning spectrum, there always seemed to be something missing. Sometimes it was a lack of vision clarity... often times it was confusion or lack of buy-in from management or staff. Other times a fantastic, compelling vision was left to burn brightly with no tangible plan of action. In contrast, other sessions resulted in wonderful action plans with little to no accountability for seeing the actions through or no clear cut way of deciphering if and when the targets were actually achieved.

TetraMap again provided evidence that a holistic perspective is not only natural, but also comprehensive. Working with 12-24 people often ensures that all areas of the organisation are contributing. No longer is the visioning process limited to the thoughts of a few at the top. The process instead focuses on:

- ▶ A cross representation of the group that the plan is intended to guide;
- ▶ People contribute from perspectives that reflect their natural motives and interests.
- ▶ At minimum, four perspectives encompass a holistic approach to planning and action taking.

I was very pleased that we were able to use the four Elements to help the team understand each other in simple and uncomplicated ways. Subsequently assigning the Elements with roles and actions for our business development that aligned with their nature has had huge tangible benefits already.

G. Simpson, General Manager, telecommunications, Auckland, New Zealand

Training Consultants

Trainers, facilitators, consultants and human resource managers have incredible choice in terms of finding product solutions to their organisational training issues. Each solution reflects a personality of its own and undoubtedly mirrors the background and intent of its author. TetraMap is no different as it quickly appeals to Fire and Water Elements. Earth Elements realise the value of the model through tangible experience and observations. Air Elements may find the model a bit lightweight until the integrity and logic of TetraMap become apparent.

Trainers, managers and educators who embrace the beauty and logic of the model and who support the success of their learners, find TetraMap to be a rich, meaningful and useful map. Not only does TetraMap serve as a guide to improving relationships, but also provides a holistic perspective on people and business development.

TetraMap is an insightful, simple and cost effective tool that adds a huge amount of value to any training programme. It acts as a hook, from which to hang management training, leadership training, sales training and customer service training. Unlike other psychometric tools I have used, it is very quick to complete and quick to understand. In any training evaluation form, almost all delegates mention TetraMap as the most useful and interesting part of the workshop.

C. Hollett, Blue Sky Consulting, UK

Our team of facilitators has used TetraMap in training, development and coaching for a diverse range of clients. It is applicable for teambuilding, customer service, people management, conflict resolution and any other situation where communication and relationship building has value.

J. Alley, Director, trainer, Auckland, New Zealand

We had a fun time – the feedback was great. During the debrief, the learnings came through really well. I'm hearing this morning many people being a lot more careful about how they approach their communication with each other. This is an area that needed improving! I used the above as a lead into a change management workshop.

M. Louie, Training Consultant, Auckland, New Zealand

Students

TetraMap, as a new millennium model, will hopefully find its place with the leaders of tomorrow. Presented for over four years as a tool for newly enrolled MBA students, the concept has also found popularity with university undergraduates. The simplicity and sheer delight of learning about self and others gets energetic, optimistic responses from our leaders of tomorrow.

Wow, you guys rock. It was excellent to be able to identify my 'style' and what I need to work on to be able to make myself more well rounded and able to work in a team environment.

Anonymous university under-graduate, New Zealand

TetraMap made me think about how all elements of personality type are present in each individual, and helped me identify the areas where I can step out of my comfort zone and develop myself to my full potential. It also made me think about interacting with different people and the importance of appreciating where others are coming from.

E. Raingford, student, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

TetraMap helped me to understand how I tick, but more importantly, how others tick. It also helped me to see there is a little bit of Fire, Air, Water and Earth in all of us.

R. Hunter, student, University of Otago, New Zealand

Primary and Secondary Preferences

It is helpful to remind ourselves that every one of us houses and demonstrates the behavioural preferences of all four Elements. It's also interesting to remember that many of us have two preferences that complement each other to create our uniqueness. Whether a person is an Earth/Fire, Air/Water, Water/Fire, Fire/Air, or any other combination, how each perceives and reacts to the world is a unique blend of the Elements in the circumstance of the moment.

Understanding Earth, Air, Water and Fire for their more common preferences however, can be of great help to any manager, leader, facilitator, parent or friend. The distinctions between a Water/Fire Element and a Water/Air Element can range from a small behavioural tendency to a substantial difference in motives and approach.

The following letter came from a manager who has come to understand the Elements through a variety of team and planning workshops. This manager has obviously tapped into the deeper benefits and value that TetraMap offers.

I have recently bought together a new team of people within a large New Zealand company. Team members came from different places within the organisation, and ranged in age from 25 to 53. They ranged in skill types from someone who was recently a customer service rep to someone who'd been responsible for running an IT shop with multi-million dollar budget responsibilities.

I used the TetraMap exercise for our first-ever planning session as a team. The exercise had a triple purpose – as an exercise to help people relax and feel comfortable with each other, as a tool to gain greater understanding of each other, and as a tool to give me, as their manager, a greater understanding of 'where they are coming from'.

Despite the variety of backgrounds and ages, the tool proved valuable for everyone, giving them greater understanding and placing them all on the same level irrespective of their place in the team or their age/experience.

Whilst it was relatively easy to recognise people's first Element, the second provided a valuable guide to behaviour. For instance, one person whose primary Element is Water felt very insecure about the role in the new team. The second Element, Air, gave me insight into why the person seem weighted with so many problems. The person's role was new and not detailed or numerated in terms of specific responsibilities and deliverables. The person felt that there weren't enough facts or clarity about what was expected. There was concern about how they were going to be measured (performance appraised). As Water, this person was very in touch with personal emotions which, as an Air Element, created incredible discomfort!!!

I would recommend TetraMap as a great tool for all teams. We continue to use it to explain to each other why we have acted the way we have and how to help us do our jobs the best we can, particularly when the going gets tough.

T. Sutton, Programme Director Operations, Wellington, New Zealand

A common, stark observation of the relevance of the 'second Element' often surfaces in workshops when people meet in Elemental groups, and are then asked the same question to answer and present to the others. An example of this was a presentation involving four Earth Elements answering three questions dealing with how they preferred to be approached, and how their Element adds value to teamwork.

A flipchart easel separated the four people with a man and woman on the left, another man and woman on the right. Throughout the presentation, the two on the right explained in graphic detail the answers to the questions. The flipchart was straightforward, but embellished with colour and a few metaphorical icons. Their bodies were in motion as they expressed how their Earthy-ness added value through leadership, decision making, etc.

When at last the gentleman on the left was asked to contribute, he pointed to the bullet pointed items, and stated that that summed it up.

Before they sat down, the facilitator asked the two on the right if they were by chance Earth/Fire; the two on the left, if they were Earth/Air. Perfect split... even to their positioning next to the flipchart easel! They, and the audience were surprised, but then again, these four Elements absolutely behaved their Element throughout the presentation... loud and clear.

The question is, why was it so surprising? We speak and behave naturally in our Element comfort zone much of the time. The opportunity we all have is to listen, recognise, listen more, remember, listen more and respond to meet Elemental needs. Easier to say than execute. The awareness of Elemental diversity, however, is a start.

We learn about the art of listening and creating true dialog in many personal and professional development courses we sign up to. Signing up to, however, doesn't guarantee learning. Learning is practising, trying creative approaches, and having the courage to change strategies and habits. Consider the Elements of Earth, Air, Water and Fire and begin to listen for the needs and wants of the two (or three!) Elements in the next person you converse with.

A Return to Holistic Thinking

Twenty-seven years down the track, the initial insights into the four Elements of Nature have expanded to applications never before imagined. As the key forces and elements of this planet, Earth, Air, Water and Fire not only help us to describe our own nature, but the nature of almost everything that we see, do or touch.

Nature is holistic. Nature is synergistic. Nature is inter-dependent. Every movement, action, thought, behaviour has an effect on something else. Many religions, cultures and models reflect this interaction, and yet as humans we continue to work in silos and believe, or care little for the effect we have on each other. For many, it may not even be a matter of caring or not... merely an unconscious habitual way of seeing the world from a perspective of, *"How much can I get out of this? How can I win?"* We often overlook the opportunities for synergy and the possibilities of what we can create in an inter-dependent world.

As in the health and learning sectors of many cultures, the return to holism is apparent. Excruciatingly slow as the process may seem, there is an on-going search for holistic solutions to illness – physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. There are persistent educational campaigns that consider the holistic view of the learning individual. Scientific studies into brain-based learning, and a myriad of mind/body research support our holistic understanding.

In the meantime, the pace of accepted research or experiential evidence is dauntingly slow and costly. Waiting is not an excuse for slowing down the forward thrust and development of what we do know, or remember. We do know that learning is no longer about input and output of data. We do know that people learn in a variety of ways and that as educators, parents, facilitators, trainers, managers and in general, responsible human beings, we can better embrace diversity and differences if we also embrace holistic perspectives of the world.

War is the result of a chronic lack of creativity.
Yodimi

There is no excuse for not working together synergistically. We must find strategies for avoiding the silo mentality, for example in a:

- ▶ Corporation that houses four distinct departments called Sales, Marketing, Service and Finance, each believing that it holds the place together.
- ▶ Culture holding on to traditions of competitive violence and superiority, without thought for the sustainability of our planet and our humanity.

Applying TetraMap has enabled many to develop teams that combine strengths across the Elements. TetraMap today is colourful, fun, quick and easy to use in any setting. And like all great metaphors has hidden depths and complexities that rise to the surface for those that choose to explore them.

- ▶ The **Earth** Element of TetraMap's evolution has been the creation of better leaders and better teams, achieving better cultures and better results.
- ▶ The **Air** Element has been the evolution of TetraMap systems that enable people to find pathways through behaviours and cultures they had relegated to a black and white analysis or had avoided because of grey shadows.
- ▶ The calm **Water** Element of the evolution of TetraMap has been sharing the model, developing it as an accessible tool in varied environments. Also contributing to TetraMap's development are the many dedicated facilitators, educators and leaders committed to taking personal responsibility for humanity's development.
- ▶ The **Fire** Element has been to inspire, to unleash creativity where it may have laid dormant, and to apply that creativity to making "the world work for 100% of humanity"

Collectively, weaving journeys through all the Elements is enriching the synergies and inter-dependence amongst people across the planet; weaving nature and our natures into one congruent whole.