

## Steady as She Goes



Originally a maritime reference, the phrase “steady as she goes” referred to the ships that navigated difficult waters. It was important to keep the ship steady so that it didn’t take on water.

The old ships would sail along especially well in predictive seas. The first sign of unpredictability, however, can put the ship into chaos requiring a strong leader at the helm. A similar analogy can be used to describe people who are naturally hardwired as stable and methodical. They will go with the flow steadily and deliberately plotting their way to their destination.

These traits can be an individual’s greatest asset or their biggest inhibitor in growing their business. People who prefer stable work environments also tend to create long-term relationships and are easy to get along with. However, they can also be slower to adjust to new people, new situations, or change that is not carefully planned.

In *Me, Myself, and Why? The Secrets to Navigating Change*, there is a character named Calm Chris. Chris enjoys a relaxed, patient, and stable environment but doesn’t like unplanned change. Behaviorally, you often see him strolling down the hallway and methodically crossing off tasks in the order in which he placed them on his list. But the more pressure that is applied to Chris, who works best in stable and routine environments, the more difficult it is for him to perform. So how do you leverage and manage this hardwiring that is so automatic?

### Leveraging Strengths

**It’s important for someone naturally wired with this methodical trait to work in environments where they have stability and predictability.** People who have this trait do their best work in environments where there are clear expectations and areas where they can make systematic improvements. They typically produce work of high quality and have an eye for detail. This keeps them focused on the end product. Their greatest strength is their natural ability to think through the entire process and spot the potential issues of implementation.

### Managing Your Hardwiring

If you’re like Chris, your natural hardwiring has its strengths, like the ability to systematically carry out the process, create long-term relationships and maintain existing structures. If left unmanaged, however, these same traits could prevent you from getting results especially as you grow your business and may need to create new structures, with new people, and carve out new paths.

**If you’re wired in this steady way, and are feeling the tension rising, remember to:**

**Create a Checklist.** You have a tendency to become intolerant with interruptions and can get distracted. In fact, you look at interruptions as inefficient. You will generally write out a checklist in the order you will implement them and this can help you manage the change. You also may need to surround yourself with people who do like to carve out new environments and can support the business growth in this way.



**Be Flexible.** If you are told of a change, your first response may be to resist it especially if it is unknown territory or outside of your experience. Instead of looking at the change as more work for you or getting nervous about what you don't know, consider how it will benefit everyone that is involved and how much you will gain in this new experience.

**Speak Up.** One of your natural gifts is to see the entire process. When changes are proposed, voice your concerns over how that new change will affect the process.

**Ask Others for Help.** Keep in mind what you do well: establish strong relationships with people you know and develop plans that are organized and thorough. Show flexibility in implementing the new plans and tap into those relationships to help you complete projects or assignments especially during unexpected changes.

### Interacting

**When you're interacting with someone who is methodical in their approach, remember these tips:**

**Outline the phases or steps.** People naturally wired to be more systematic need to see how the change will affect them. Visually outline the steps or phases of the change and enroll them in the process.

**Steer Clear.** When there are changes, individuals hardwired this way approach change in a steady and deliberate way. This can be especially irritating to people who are more impatient because they want to see an immediate reaction. The tendency is for people who react to situations to put more pressure on these individuals who are more steady and methodical. However, the tactic doesn't work. In fact, the more pressure you put on individuals who are more methodical in their approach, the worse they perform. Agree on timelines and the key objectives and leave them alone to execute the steps.

Denying this hardwiring for long periods of time actually de-energizes an individual. Getting the hardwiring met and aligning your business growth plans with it, yields increased results more quickly. Understanding your hardwiring (and that of your clients) is critical to growing a sustainable business.

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