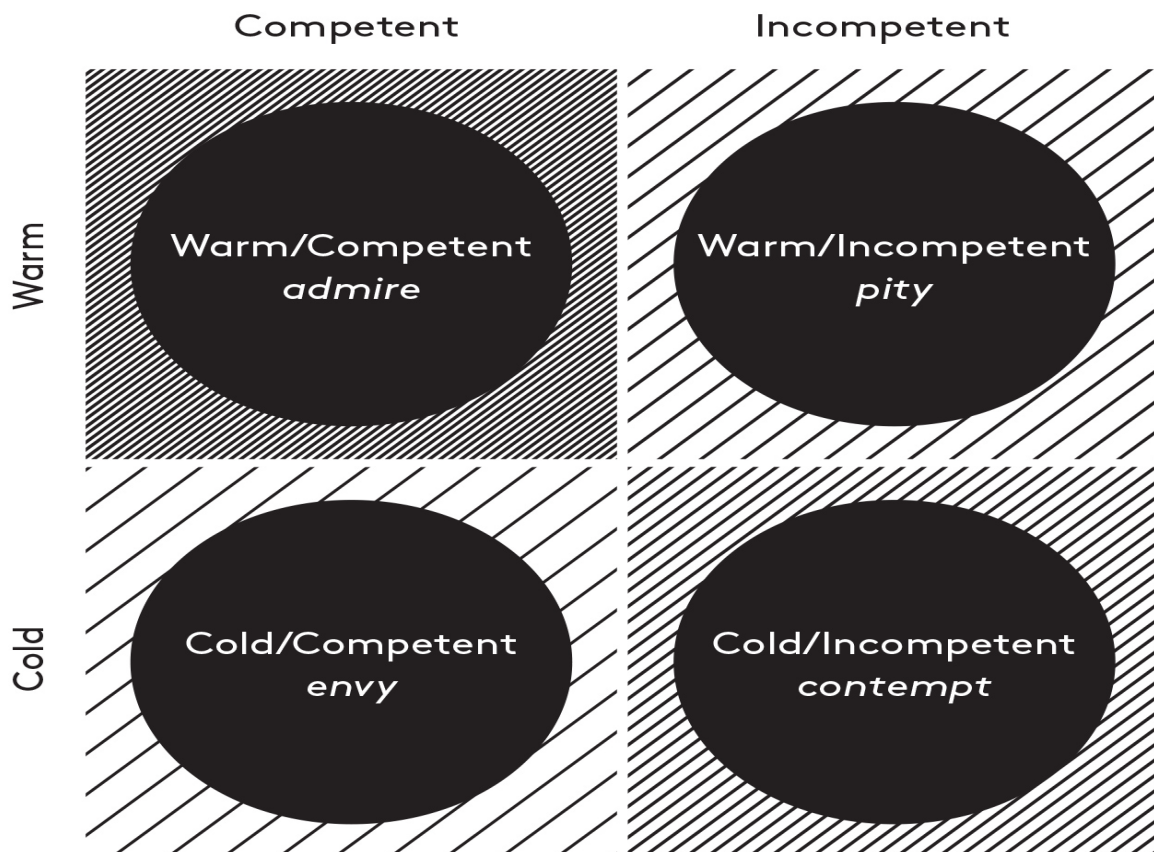


What image do you project?

If, you're judged to be too warm you may attract labels like gentle, nice or soft-hearted. If you're judged to be competent you'll hear yourself described as competitive, forceful or individualistic. When these masculine labels are applied to men they're a compliment but when applied to women they're more often a criticism.

Find out how you're perceived:



First rate yourself based on your intuition.

Then use actual examples of how you have behaved: in a range of work situations and plot where the behaviours would fall on the graph. Examples might be:

- how you've reacted in a crisis
- how you react under deadline pressure
- how you've related to your team at a time of stress
- how you relate to your team when all is going well
- how you interact with people more senior to you
- how you are on a typical day
- how you interact with people junior to you

Compare where your behavioural examples fall on the grid to where you positioned yourself based on your intuition. If there is a difference think about why that may be:

- did you only think of one of the examples above?
- did you only consider the good days/people or the bad days or with challenging people?
- are you relating to different types of people in each situation?

Then ask a few friends and trusted colleagues where they would place you (don't tell them too much about the background research, or your own self-assessment). Ask for their examples. (You might find this is an entertaining exercise to do amongst a group of friends over drinks. Or you could introduce it as a workshop exercise on a team training day.)

Is there a difference between how you're perceived by colleagues at work, and how friends and family see you at home? Think about why this is: do you adopt a different persona at work? Are you warmer with family? How can you transfer some of that warmth to colleagues?

The next step is to notice if these work habits are serving you well:

- what do you show most of and in what context?
- are you warmer in some situations than others?
- when would it be helpful to show more competence?
- do you need to increase warmth or perceptions of competence overall?

Once you have decided how warm or how competent you want to be in a given situation, a meeting or a presentation, say, set out your plan.