

humor persona

build a happier, healthier, and
more productive life with humor



advocate

YOU CREATE SPACE FOR OTHERS TO SHINE WITH THEIR HUMOR



TAKE A PEEK INSIDE

Knowing your humor persona can be the missing ingredient to becoming more memorable, improving your connection with co-workers (and fellow humans), and enjoying life *more*.



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*'The human race has one really effective weapon,
and that is laughter.'*



MARK TWAIN

WELCOME

Welcome Advocate! You're about to unlock a more productive, less stressed, and happier you by tapping into your natural sense of humor.

I know first hand how transformative learning the skill of humor can be. Growing up, I was the nerdy introverted kid who was much better with computers and video games than I was with other people. I always wanted to make friends and be social, but it was hard work and draining. I would sometimes feel awkward speaking up or dejected when I would start to share a story only for the conversation to move to another topic.

Things changed when I went to university and got pushed into doing improv comedy. While I wasn't very good to start, I had a blast learning the principles of thinking and reacting on my feet. From there, I tried my hand at stand up comedy. Once again I was terrible, but enjoyed the process and found a weird comfort in the structured nature of the art.

As I discovered, refined, and employed my sense of humor, I started noticing other changes too. I was more comfortable presenting in meetings, I was quicker to speak up, I had confidence when talking with strangers, and, when I shared stories with friends, they not only paid attention, they laughed. I also discovered that how I used humor was different than some of the other people around me, just how you use humor is different than me. Each person has a style of humor that comes more naturally to them.

Since then, I've helped more than 50,000 people, from over 100 countries on 6 continents, learn how to tap into their own humor to get better results and have more fun. I'm excited to see where your humor takes you, so let's get started!



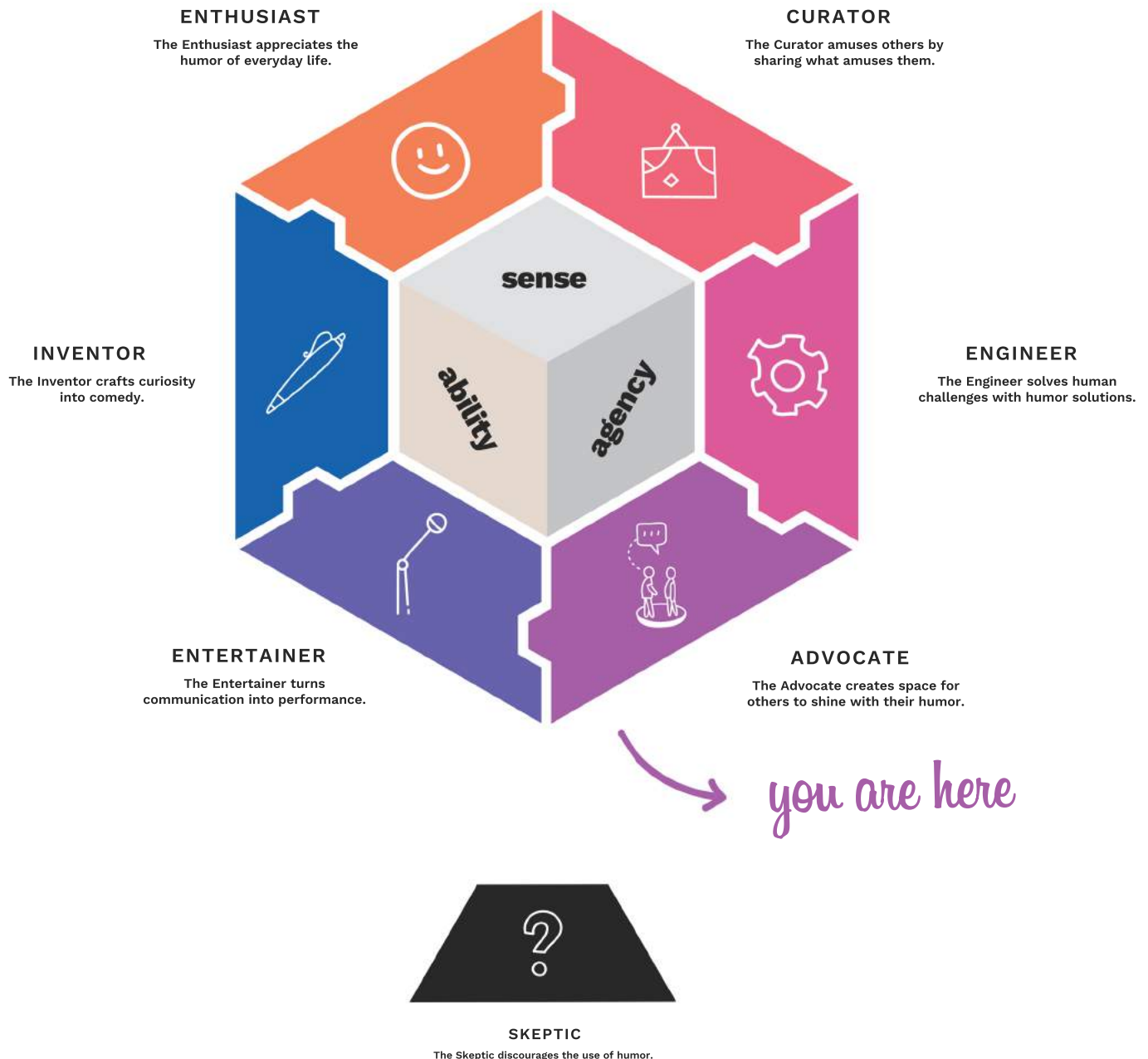
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Tarvin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ANDREW TARVIN

Founder of Humor That Works

1. GETTING STARTED

There are 7 primary humor personas that people typically adopt: Enthusiast, Curator, Inventor, Entertainer, Engineer, Advocate, or Skeptic. It starts first with nurturing your *primary* persona.



2. OVERVIEW

As the Advocate, you encourage more joy and positivity in the world, whether that's by talking about the benefits of humor, creating opportunities for people to share their humor, or encouraging individuals to embrace their sense of humor.

One would hope that you wouldn't need to tell people to have more fun, and yet here we are. You **provide the space for others to shine.**

connotations

POSITIVE



planner
facilitator
leader

NEGATIVE

mandatory funner
control freak
cheesy



you're in good company

Sabrina Juran (*United Nations*)

Alan Alda (*Actor*)

Jennifer Aaker (*Professor*)

Mitzi Shore (*Comedy Store*)

Norman Cousins (*Journalist*)

Mr. Rogers (*Mr. Rogers*)

Dalai Lama (*Spiritual Leader*)

Patch Adams (*Medical Doctor*)

Walt Disney (*Entrepreneur*)

3. BENEFITS

Each of the 7 personas come with their own strengths, weaknesses, benefits, and impact on the world around them. These are the benefits to being an advocate:



FOR YOURSELF

You know that humor can **transform individuals and groups**. This means you often end up surrounded by people who wish you the best, people who want to do their best, and people who are the best.

While others may focus on being in the spotlight, you focus on making sure the **spotlight focuses on others**.



‘Laughter need not be cut out of anything, since it improves everything..’

JAMES THURBER



FOR OTHERS

Other people enjoy when you plan things or being under your leadership. They know that you'll take a **human-first approach** to whatever you're doing, and they're bound to have a fun time, no matter the circumstances.

You may notice that the groups you are a part of always seem to get bigger and more fun the more you're involved.



'A sense of humor is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done.'

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

4. WATCHOUTS

If you don't take into account different humor preferences, what you see as a fun activity can come across as "mandatory fun" or a cheesy experience that people would rather skip. Not everything has to become a game or a formal activity, **sometimes it's okay to just let things be.**

While stepping in and facilitating experiences may be your natural inclination, there are times when the best thing you can do is step out of the way completely. You don't want people asking, "who put this person in charge?"

YOU SOMETIMES HEAR...

1. "This is mandatory fun."

If people are forced to participate against their will, they won't enjoy it. Identify activities your group already enjoys, and use them to replace what they don't like (such as boring meetings) instead of something they do like.

2. "That's nice, but we need to focus on..."

When people are busy or stressed, they can feel like creating the space for humor is too time-consuming for the moment. When incorporating humor while people are stressed, it's important to be clear on how this will ultimately help them in the long run.

3. "That's not for me."

Just because you find something fun or entertaining, it doesn't mean other people will as well. When creating the space for others to use humor, it's important to focus on their strengths and what they find fun, not on your strengths or what you find fun.

5. ADVOCATES AT WORK

The Advocate is one of the most impactful personas you can have in the workplace. Whereas others see humor as a nice-to-have, **you recognize that it is a must-have in today's work environment.** You use levity as a means to building a stronger, more positive workplace culture, which pays dividends for you, your coworkers, and your organization.

By creating the space for humor at work, you also create a more positive workplace environment where people actually look forward to interacting with their coworkers. While you may not turn colleagues into “besties,” you do help prevent “colleaguenemies.”



watchout at work

Not everyone cares about making work fun and not everyone wants to be in the spotlight. Some people see their jobs as just paychecks and to have to do anything more is annoying not helpful. Others may be particularly quiet or reserved and would rather stay on the sidelines.

Focus more on **making things so fun people want to opt-in** rather than making them mandatory.

applications at work

1. **Create a channel** (such as on Slack or the company intranet) where people can share work appropriate memes, cartoons, and images for when people need a laughter break.
2. Kick off a meeting with a simple but interesting **"get to know you" question**.
3. **Solicit ideas from people** on what to do for a team-building event and have the team vote on which one to do.
4. Add a spot in the **internal newsletter** for shout outs and celebrations.
5. Encourage your team members to **find out their humor persona** so they can build their own humor skill.

when to use

The Advocate is ideal for building a more positive environment and getting the most out of your team. **Create the space for inclusive levity** and encourage other people to bring out their humor persona.



*‘When people are laughing,
they’re generally not killing each other.’*



ALAN ALDA

6. THE 7 PERSONAS

You're an advocate, however, there is a high likelihood that you will recognize yourself in more than one of these 7 types: **Enthusiast, Curator, Inventor, Entertainer, Engineer, Advocate and Skeptic**. That is because the way you use **humor isn't set in stone** and can change depending on the context, the people you're with, or simply how you're feeling that day.

Once you've mastered the persona that comes most naturally to you, I recommend you start exploring the other ones as well. The more **familiar you become with the other humor personas**, the more likely you are to forge meaningful connections AND the better you'll become at adapting yours to match theirs.



enthusiast

AMUSES OTHERS BY SHARING WHAT AMUSES THEM

Enthusiasts enjoy the humor of everyday life, whether that's a funny TV show, someone trying to make them smile, or the absurdities of human existence.

What's not to laugh about being a conscious, bipedal organism on a rock hurtling through an ever-expanding universe of uncertain origin?



curator

AMUSES OTHERS BY SHARING WHAT AMUSES THEM

Curators like to collect and share the things that make them laugh or smile. Whether that's a funny meme, an interesting quote or stories they've picked up along the way.

As Buddha said, "Happiness never decreases by being shared," neither does the hilarity of the perfect gif in a group chat. They realize they don't have to create humor to curate moments of levity.



inventor

INVENTOR CRAFTS CURIOSITY INTO COMEDY

Inventors find satisfaction in creating humor from the things that happen to them, whether that's playing through scenarios in their head, building stories from life events, or writing jokes because it's a pun thing to do.

Inventors understand the importance of structure and make use of comedic devices, like the comic triple used in the previous sentence.

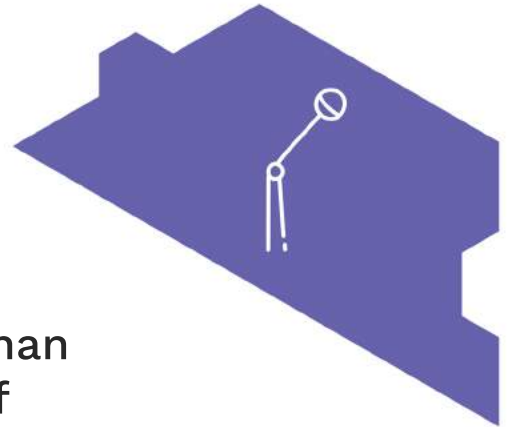


entertainer

URNS COMMUNICATION INTO PERFORMANCE

Entertainers know how to speak in such a way that other people listen, whether it's a message they planned, an idea they had in-the-moment, or simply a facial expression that says it all without saying a single word.

After all, giving a funny look is different than being funny looking. When people think of someone funny, they are who they have in mind.



engineer

SOLVES HUMAN CHALLENGES WITH HUMOR SOLUTIONS

Engineers make strategic use of humor to solve problems around them, whether that's making their own work more fun, getting past a sticking point, or better managing the hardest resource there is to manage: humans.

Unlike computers, humans have "emotions" and have to "sleep" and do things out of "joy" and not because they were programmed to. They know how to tap into positive emotions to increase productivity.



skeptic

DISCOURAGES THE USE OF HUMOR

Skeptics doubt the use of humor, whether that's by avoiding humor themselves, discouraging others from doing it, or actively banning it from their presence.

Why turn a frown upside down when you can wipe a smirk off someone's face?

Being a skeptic isn't always bad. They understand that humor doesn't always work.



These are the 7 humor personas and, even though this report focused on your primary persona, imagine the results you'll attain and how confident you'll feel when you're able to seamlessly move from one persona to the other.

7. OPTIMIZE YOUR TEAM'S PERSONAS

Once you've refined your own humor persona, you'll be able to spot qualities from the **other personas in the people around you**, your family, friends, colleagues, even that guy in the subway who's laughing a little too loud at a video on youtube.

By knowing the personas of the people around you, you'll have a strong advantage in connecting with them and they won't even know it. Imagine being able to **set them up for success** (and fun) by putting them in positions where they can leverage their strengths. This leads to high performing teams that actually like each other and aren't on the verge of burning out.



**to humor
is to human**

If we're asking people to bring their whole selves to work, humor absolutely has to be part of the equation.

Whether you decide to do a team or organizational assessment (or not,) simply getting your team to reflect on how they choose to let their personality and **sense of humor show at work** is an incredibly valuable exercise.

THINK ABOUT THE PEOPLE ON YOUR TEAM

Who are the **enthusiasts**?

Who are the people that lift others up and how can you make sure they also feel appreciated?

What about the **curators**?

Tap into their ability to know what's going on by asking for stories, pictures, or examples whenever you need to communicate something out to the larger team.

Identify the **inventors** so they can help you create effective communication and use the **entertainers** as meeting leaders or event emcees.

Find the **engineers** so you can go to them when you need help solving a problem and leverage the **advocates** to create a more positive workplace environment.

And for the **skeptics**, encourage them to explore the type of humor they're most comfortable with and know that they may not enjoy what you do no matter how impressive or funny it is, so don't let the haters get you down.



8. WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT

Now that you have a better understanding of all the personas, let's return to you as the Advocate. You understand how important it is for people to have a good time, to laugh, and to feel included.

You may not be the funny one in the group, but you **create the space for the fun moments to happen.**



Whereas other personas think about themselves and their own humor, you think about others. As a result, **you don't understand when people use exclusionary humor**, when they punch down or insult others, or why some people feel the need to talk over or ignore the quieter people in the group.

Girls (and boys (and everyone) just want to have fun, and you create the space for them to do so.



*"Two things reduce prejudice:
education and laughter."*

LAURENCE J. PETER

9. PUTTING IT INTO ACTION

how to nurture your advocacy

1. Research the **benefits of humor** and share your findings with others.
2. Facilitate an exercise or game to **bring some levity** to your friends, family, or team.
3. **Thank someone for their humor** contribution when they do something that makes you laugh or smile.
4. **Teach a friend**, family member, or colleague something you've learned about humor.
5. Create an **opportunity for another person** to leverage their humor persona.



RELATED SKILL

inclusion

PROMISE

want to be more impactful?

10. NEXT STEPS

Publicly or privately recognize someone for the humor they shared.

bottom line

If you tell someone a joke, they laugh for a moment. If you teach someone how to joke, they can be happy for a lifetime. Humor can transform lives and you can be that guide.



"Humor has a way of bringing people together. It unites people. In fact, I'm rather serious when I suggest that someone should plant a few whoopee cushions in the United Nations."



RON DENTINGER



how well do you know your team?

Think about the people on your team right now. Which of the personas do you see? Diversity strengthens a team and makes it more cohesive. Leaders need to know how to tap into their team's variety of personas to give them the best chance to succeed.

We can also **run the assessment for your team or organization** so you can skip the guesswork and know exactly how to best leverage each person.

If you have questions, or want to learn about some of our other programs like the cubicle comedy challenge, let's connect!

Find me on LinkedIn at drewtarvin or you can reach me directly at **andrew@humorthatworks.com**.

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