

DEFENSIVE DRIVING BASICS ARE YOU A “TYPE A” DRIVER?

If you like to hit the road with the same aggressive, competitive, no-holds-barred attitude you use on the job, think again. “Type A” behavior may work in the business world, but it can be a prescription for disaster on the highway. Take this little quiz to find out if you’re a “Type A” driver:

- Do you try to get where you’re going in the shortest possible time?
- Do you “fight” the traffic, getting annoyed when other drivers move too slowly or block your way?
- Do you often speed up at yellow lights?
- Do you try to maximize your use of time by solving work problems, eating, shaving or concluding business deals while driving?
- Do you get a secret thrill out of cutting someone off at an intersection or exit?
- Do people ever tell you that you seem upset when driving?
- Do you arrive at work or home feeling keyed up, tense or drained?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, maybe it’s time for an attitude check. Behaviors like those in the quiz are dangerous, to you and to other drivers around you.

Make That “Commute”, Not “Compete”

It would be nice if you could just skip driving altogether. You’d have more time to work, right? But if that’s not possible, try these approaches to drive-time competitiveness:

- Give yourself permission to just drive. In the long run you’ll be happier and more productive if you get away from your work a bit. And the daily commute is a good time to do it. Don’t try to read, dictate or solve problems. Just relax, enjoy being bored for a change. Think of the car as a refuge from the pressures and demands of life.
- Listen to relaxing music instead of the daily disaster news.
- Make a conscious effort to avoid tailgating, lane changes, making gestures or insulting other drivers. Settle down by taking several slow, deep breaths. Reward yourself when you succeed.
- Remember that you only have control of your own behavior, not the behavior of others.
- While you’re at it, give yourself a little extra time to get where you’re going so you have one less reason to be aggressive on the road.