

Analyze Handwriting

Sheila Lowe helps you decode personality traits in penmanship.

Want to find out if your new boss is a nitpicker or a sweetheart? Just read between the lines. How we arrange our writing on the page and what shape our letters take all reveal personal characteristics. But you can crack the code. Handwriting expert Sheila Lowe, author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Handwriting Analysis (Alpha)*, makes her career out of studying the interactions between brain and hand. Below, she discusses five handwriting features and the traits they reveal. And on the facing page, she deconstructs writing samples of four notables.

1. THE BIG PICTURE

Balanced margins with clear spaces between words and lines suggest an ability to plan ahead. In contrast, messy handwriting equals a messy mind. Take a closer look: Are all the letters connected in every word? That's a highly logical thinker who enjoys debating to the point of nitpicking. Meanwhile, a person who jumps to conclusions without the benefit of logic makes many abrupt breaks between letters.

2. SIZE MATTERS

Writing size indicates how much space the writer believes he deserves to take up on the planet. Someone who writes with large letters loves the spotlight and often tries to make himself the center of attention. Recognition matters less to the person with medium-sized letters. The person with small letters appreciates

his own company and finds more satisfaction in work than in socializing.

3. THE ROUND AND STRAIGHT OF IT

Handwriting is made up of two basic forms: curves and straight lines. When I see lots of rounded letters, I know the writer is an outgoing person. Straight lines and angles indicates aggression and a person who pushes hard to get what he wants. Lots of loops and close spaces between words reveal a big imagination and a need for social contact, while wide spaces and few loops show an intellectual loner. Watch out for indefinite, thin writing with many illegible words; this indicates a creative genius—or a slippery character.

4. IN THE LOOP

The length and width of lower loops (seen in the letters g, y,

f, p, and z) reflect hidden parts of a writer's personality: hopes and attitudes toward things like food, safety, and money. Moderately wide lower loops reveal an expansive personality that welcomes a variety of experiences. Skinny loop writers prefer sticking to what they know. Extremely wide loops expose the bragger who doesn't always follow through.

5. THE SLANT ON THINGS

Upper loop slant (l, b, f, h, k) measures emotional responsiveness. An extreme right slant may reflect an emotionally explosive personality, while a moderate right slant indicates a warm and responsive person. The cool-headed writer who sees all sides of a situation slants in neither direction, but keeps the letters vertical. Left-slanters are often friendly on the surface but harder to get to know.

Click This
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between the lines,
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at spiritmag.com.

Mailee

Left Slant

Because I am so prone to use a computer, I'm afraid my handwriting has become rather sloppy - but here is a sample that, I think, is typical of my writing. Hope this will suffice.

Wide Spaces

Matching Signature
Lack of pretension

Colleen Barrett

Decoding Colleen

The handwriting of Colleen Barrett (above), the president of Southwest Airlines, indicates a lack of pretension. Still, she's not an open book: The left slant and wide spaces between words suggest a need for privacy, a logical trait for a high-profile leader.

Colleen's handwriting sample is well organized with excellent spatial arrangement. She can plan ahead and then carry out her plans successfully.

Overall, Colleen's style is conventional but straightforward. She can adapt to many social groups, though she's choosy about whom she spends her time with. She also knows how to figure things out for herself with a minimum of fuss.

DONALD TRUMP

Angles
Aggressive

THANKS FOR THE MEETING - YOU ARE REALLY GREAT AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU FOR MANY YEARS TO COME - BEST WISHES

Heavy Pen Pressure
Intense emotions

Squared Letters
Need for security

JANE GOODALL

Dashed Dots
Quick wit

Thank you so much for your analysis. And for involving the others.

Simple Strokes
Intelligence

Organization
Ability to plan ahead

Tall Capitals
Pride in her achievements

Jane Goodall

ANTHONY HOPKINS

Thick Strokes
Strong physical drives

T-cross to the Right
Enthusiasm, impatience

With many thanks for your hospital stay and making a sometimes irritating job very pleasant. Am to say the least

Illegible Signature
A private person