

Erdem Taşdelen

The Conduit

2013

Transcription of handwriting samples and analysis reports

Written by: Erdem Taşdelen

Sent to: Annette Poizner

Dear A,

I am writing this letter to you as a sample of my handwriting with which you can conduct a graphological analysis. The task I am undertaking in writing this letter is highly unusual to me in terms of methodology. I am used to carefully planning all the stages of a work before it reaches a final form, however I am not able to determine the contents of this letter precisely since I am not allowed to copy it from previously prepared material. This means that I am making up these sentences in the very process of writing this letter and cannot foresee what it will comprise. I find that the best strategy under such circumstances is to compose a self-reflexive text.

In this project I am interested not only in the insight you will provide regarding my personal characteristics (since such an endeavour would be at best uninteresting and at worst narcissistic), but rather using it as a means to offer a meta-analysis on the field of graphology. My suspicion is that often we tend to think of fields such as this as objective methods of gaining knowledge about the self, which I think is misleading. In a previous project I did with a therapist I quickly realized that what they would bring to the table was just as important as what I would say, in terms of the final outcome. This is the reason that I would like to underline your involvement as a subjective human being. I think that what will be produced here will be the result of a reciprocal exchange, and it is that very exchange that I find enticing.

I am also excited about the prospect of giving up control, although it makes me somewhat nervous. Ultimately I can't be sure if this artwork once it is finished will be an interesting document to read or look at, but I guess at the moment I want to challenge myself and see where something unpredetermined may go.

It is hard not to be overly self-conscious when writing a text that one knows will be analyzed. I am trying to stay true to how I would normally write, and so far looking at what I've written, it looks the same as my regular handwriting. I can't, however, help but wonder whether it would look any different if I didn't have this in mind. Perhaps I need to let go of this worry since it also seems to be related to a preoccupation with control.

I want to conclude my letter by saying thank you once again for agreeing to participate in this project. I am aware that I am asking something quite unusual of you but I do hope that you will also find the resulting artwork compelling and meaningful.

Sincerely,

Erdem Taşdelen

Written by: Annette Poizner

Analyzing the handwriting of: Erdem Taşdelen

Dear Erdem,

Here is my spontaneously written sample/report on your handwriting. I'm going to discuss traits + personality style, but also mention those graphic features that indicate different psychological features, according to graphological theory.

Your writing reveals you to be multi-faceted/multi-talented. Your printscript (partly printed/partly disconnected) would indicate writing ability/literary skill. Your simplified letter forms interpret as above average intelligence. Organizational skills are indicated by the careful spacing - between words, between lines + overall placement on the page. Strong communication skills are implied by the careful legibility – showing a priority to be clean, a sensitivity to the needs of those seeing or hearing you. Note the “g”s, called ‘figure-8 g’s. The fluidity of that stroke indicates good physical coordination. Your aesthetic sense comes through the organization of the page and letter forms that are carefully + elegantly executed. This is a writer for whom form matters and therefore he attends to those letter forms, depicting them with care. Note the letter form (speaking of letter forms) which you make at the outset of your signature. I find within it a musical note, a bit of symbolism that indicates musical talent (even if you haven’t cultivated it). And note the sensitivity to detail in this sample. Each letter penned carefully. The dots of periods are perfect, like this: . Others less conscientious than you make slashes, showing a certain impatience w details (such as me! Note the shortening of ‘with’ into a w!)

Your handwriting shows an “upright slant,” associated, for graphologists, with the writer who is independent-minded, objective, detached from emotions, poised and even self-conscious (a certain degree of inhibition, formality and a strong degree of discipline).

So far a certain profile emerges: This is the writer who is ‘head over heart’ / analytical, rational, ordered and, vocationally speaking, could go into any number of fields, contingent on where his interests took him. You could have been a medical doctor, a lawyer or other disciplines that require mastery of a domain of knowledge because you have the intellect and the organizational skills that are needed (and the discipline). Or you could have been a writer. Based on the writing alone, I would not have guessed you would have chosen to be an artist as there is such a strong emphasis on control in this handwriting, implying a degree of perfectionism.

In handwriting, the control theme comes through when the script looks carefully printed, with strong attention to detail, and less loopiness (loops reveal the influence of/expression of emotion). Also, the upright slant (discussed below) denotes control theme.

So we see here a strong individualist, someone who is rational and objective and will not be easily influenced. He makes up his own mind, carefully analyzing all related facts in an ordered way. He’s not prone to dependence on others. He prides himself on having an independent posture and he doesn’t

easily surrender to relationship owing to the fact that those with control issues have difficulty trusting – self + others. Further, the independent orientation means that he prefers working on his own.

So all of the above would give us a flavour of a certain personality type (and I keep having associations to the rational protagonist in Robertson Davies' book *Fifth Business*). Yet graphology, in Europe, is often used in the clinical context and therefore we expect a window into the more personal facet, as well. Note that there is one writing style for the text and another for the signature. In fact, the signature is more free-form, relaxed, expressive (less controlled), more loopy, less beholden to the idea that each letter must be rendered in a perfectly legible way. So now we see a tension: a writer with two ways of being. As if there is an aspect of self that hungers for more spontaneity, more looseness, less contraction. These are emotions awaiting expression, after all!

But there is also a strong theme of avoidance of that rich interior. Look at the avoidance of the left margin. The right margin associates with the “outer” world. The left one relates to the more personal, vulnerable tender “sweet spot” within. This writer prefers to be ‘out there’ in the visible world of accomplishing, rather than hang out in the more ambiguous world of feelings + subjectivity. And note the spaces between words. That space need be no more than one character width. In this writing, the writer leaves wider gaps – islands – and the graphologist interprets a gap between feeling + thinking, a gap between self + other. There's an emotional distance here, an overly controlled, contained way of being that disallows full expression, and the prohibition is loosened when it comes to penning the signature. So the sum result of the disconnect, the duality that is not hosted in the most ideal way, is the experience of tension. This is the writer to whom I would normally recommend yoga, stretching, water sports, towards the end of learning how to allow (versus doing) and surrendering (versus needing to maintain control). And a successful journey would allow him to open up – to self and others. In his handwriting, his current level of privacy is indicated by the way he abbreviates his first name (in his signature). The first name is the personal self, the surname represents the more public self. This writer cloaks the personal self by abbreviating and by rendering the letter illegibly (is that a J? an S? a glyph?)

Written by: Barbara Weaver

Analyzing the hand writing of: Annette Poizner

Anon

The first thing that strikes me is that you are larger than life. You are gregarious and outgoing. You are most likely regarded as an extrovert because the minute you walk into a room everyone will know you are there. You need lots of attention and seek the limelight. You need a lot of elbow room which makes me feel that not everyone would be happy sitting next to you on a long-haul flight! Mainly because you find it difficult to sit still for very long. You want to know what everyone else is doing + because you like to be with others, you are constantly seeking people out. You enjoy social interaction but dare I say it – on your terms. You are or can be quite demanding. Mundane concerns of the ego + everyday matters are important to you so that your own needs + concerns take centre stage. Whilst you might want to impress others with your friendly effervescence, you are not really mindful of what others are saying. You are more a taker than a giver.

You assume an air of self confidence but this in fact is hard for you to maintain. Your midzone ranges from 1mm to 7mm revealing considerable emotional lability. You are pretty much on a rollercoaster of emotions most of the time which inevitably leaves you feeling tense and very “uptight” inside. In fact, you are likely to lash out at times exclaiming ‘oh forget it!’ or some such exasperated remark.

To add to your feelings of inner tension is the problem you have of taking on too many things at once. You are constantly juggling lots of balls in the air because you find it so difficult to say “no” to people. You love doing more than one thing at a time but unfortunately you don’t have a good sense of time. By taking on too many things at once, you inevitably can’t deliver. You find it difficult to prioritise and often things get left undone or you procrastinate because you cannot decide which task should take priority. By spreading yourself too thinly, you can’t ever hope to be effective in all you take on board. Nevertheless, this is unlikely to daunt you. You are cheerfully optimistic most of the time and helps to stop you from going into sombre moods. Looking at life through rose-tinted specs has its advantages after all, but this can result in you overestimating your own abilities whilst underestimating the problems that lie ahead.

Your optimistic approach to life also makes you popular with friends + associates. Others feel good when they are with you because you can replenish their store of hope if their world has crashed around them. You have such an excellent ease of expression that you will be able to make others feel good. You are happy to express your views and can be quite forthright, even if no one has asked for them. Despite all your warmth and friendliness you are frustrated that you are unable to get really close to others. Something always gets in the way. Could this be that you don’t really open up about yourself? You can talk freely and incessantly at times but you don’t give very much away about your true feelings. Escape traits individually are not strong but as a combination they do have an effect on your ability to share

intimate revelations. Perhaps by talking and by hogging the conversation you can keep your problems at bay.

In terms of self you are independent minded when it applies to your work. You are confident in what you do and have no real interest in changing your ways or methods in line with new or fanciful ideas. You believe your ways are right and you prefer to stick with the familiar. However in terms of self and your personal appearance or personality characteristics you need considerable approval. Making a good impression is important to you. You set high standards and you want to build a reputation that will command respect. You are conscious about your appearance + your self esteem comes from the approval of others. You work hard to receive praise. Since this is a major focus for you in everyday life, you can feel distressed when others dole out the criticism. But then, can't we all?

At the time of writing you feel considerably irritable. You are impatient with detail and this can result in you making mistakes. You blow hot and cold and especially when you feel irritable you are likely to lash out at others with short temper bursts. At times like this, your willingness to communicate with others is affected and you feel like 'kicking ass'. You will come across as abrasive.

You have a good mixture of thinking styles which means you are flexible and adaptable when problem solving.

Although your willpower isn't overly strong, you do have the trait of 'persistence' in your making. This means that despite the fact you have too many things on the go, you will not be defeated. Once you have committed yourself to something, you won't give up easily. You do try + stay with whatever it is you are trying to accomplish. Some little voice inside keeps telling you that you can surmount the obstacles along the way. Even during setbacks, your optimistic approach will surface + if necessary, you could be prepared to start all over again. Problems do not seem to faze you – they just irritate you! You are a fighter.

There is considerable push and pull in your handwriting. As my system of handwriting analysis involves the measurement of slant, you can go the full spectrum of slant areas within one word. You are pulled in all directions which inevitably means that you can be moody and unpredictable in your responses which others may find difficult when they are on the receiving end of your mood swings. The past has an important hold on you and despite your eagerness to meet others, the future is something of a threat. You are unsure of your feelings about the very people you want to meet. This seems to me the real issue to be addressed. On the one hand you want to be with others and need their companionship but you don't allow them to get close. It is essential to listen to what others are saying and to share in intimate + social undertakings. Some of your crude letters show that you are throttling the life out of intimate communication. Open up + let them in.

Written by: Erdem Taşdelen

Sent to: Barbara Weaver

Dear B,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to submit my handwriting to you so that you can conduct a graphological analysis. As I had mentioned to you earlier in an e-mail, I wrote a similar letter to another graphologist and asked for their analysis to be sent to me in handwriting. Initially I was thinking that I would send you the exact same letter, but after consulting both of you I realized that this would not be possible since the letters need to be written spontaneously and copying text is not allowed. Nevertheless, the formats are the same and so is the handwriting; hopefully I am able to achieve a level of consistency. I find this project compelling for a number of reasons, one of which is that I am not able to foresee the outcome. I have never had my handwriting analyzed before, so on the first level I am curious to see how you will interpret it. But I don't think that that in itself is sufficiently engaging, since I can not assume that people are going to be interested in finding out about me as a person. This is why I have invited you to do something that might perhaps be outside of your usual comfort zone. I am sure that you must have had your handwriting analyzed before, but most likely not in a context such as this, or not as a document to be viewed by others. For this reason I am keeping both of your identities anonymous. I think that such an approach underlines the fact that I am more interested in the field of graphology and its methodologies than the specificity of the characters involved in this exercise. The project is very much about the idea that singular specificities can and should be taken into account in all cases, but since this is a conceptual undertaking rather than a practical one, the resulting work will be a meta-analysis and not an exposé of the individuals.

Perhaps all of this is a little bit more convoluted than it really needs to be. Essentially what I am saying is that I am excited to see what kind of "meaning" will be produced with this work as a conduit. I'm sorry if I seem like I am over-intellectualizing the whole thing or trying to make the conceptual framework too predetermined.

On a more concrete note, I am slightly worried that the resulting work will not be visually stimulating, but I think that I need to accept that as part of the theoretical parameters. It would be pointless to try to beautify my handwriting since I am required to stay true to myself here.

I am very thankful that you have agreed to participate in producing this work with me. I do hope that the result will be gratifying to me, to you, and to our audience.

Sincerely,

Erdem Taşdelen

Written by: Barbara Weaver

Analyzing the handwriting of: Erdem Taşdelen

Erdem

You are a complex and contradictory individual. You have push and pull elements within your personality which are exceedingly influential. On the one hand you are a warm + outgoing individual. You make an effort to get close to others but then back away nervously. You are unable to get really close to others and hence your relationships are not very successful. You tend to see a relationship from your point of view which inevitably wears thin with whomsoever you partner. Your ambivalence means that although you are eager to meet others and move positively towards the future you also want to spend time alone, which is probably all well + good as it enables you to spend the time you need on your artistic undertakings. You have learned over the years to sublimate your feelings into your artistic work. Strangely your writing shows little abstract imagination which to some degree would be essential from an artistic point of view. However you are intuitive and the approach to your work is intuitive. You grasp an idea + turn it into a lucrative project instead.

You are a straightforward individual. You like and crave simplicity without embellishments. You are straight-forward in the sense that you are direct and like to come straight to the point. You don't like to hedge. You say what you have to say so there is an element of frank matter-of-factness about you. You are efficient because you want to move straight to the heart of the problem without wasting time. This also influences your thinking and by concentrating on the essentials, you can quickly ascertain which bits are important + which bits can be left out. Your succinct style gets things moving. Even so, you may appear rather too candid for some people who may be offended by your brusque comments. However you do possess sufficient tact to cushion some of the blows.

You have the ability to concentrate for long periods – you can focus exclusively on a task blocking out all distractions. This is good as far as artistic accomplishments are concerned but if you are interrupted in the process, you will let rip and you will find it difficult to re-focus for a while. You are attentive to detail which makes you a perfectionist towards your work. Surprisingly the details which you see as essential really irritate you. You are idealistic + give great importance to the work you do. You are well organized but like things just so. If anything is not in its place then that will really bug you. You will also dislike anyone invading your space or privacy, but you will normally handle these sort of situations with a degree of poise and equanimity.

You are good with your hands. You are manually dexterous. Coupled with this you tend to think in a sequential and systematic way. You have always had to learn steadily, building facts on top of one another. You have needed 'hands on' practice to learn new things but once you have learned things, they are likely to stay firmly fixed in your memory. In addition you have a degree of analytical thinking which allows you to use the information already learned + apply it creatively. You are a master

craftsman in that sense. Your analytical side contributes to good judgment and does not lessen your ability to make decisions.

Because you are decisive, you are willing to accept the consequences of your actions. It also helps to choke doubts within yourself. The positive side of your nature means you are disposed to take a stand on things you believe to be right. However, this also means that you won't be happy unless you feel you are in control.

You are also independent-minded. Freedom means a lot to you. Freedom to say what you want + do what you want without anyone else trying to tell you how to do things. You don't want to be tied down by other people's views + opinions. Foremost you will hate taking orders from anyone because ultimately, you believe you can go it alone. You like to be boss – your own boss. Consequently you will not stand for being interfered with + will react angrily if anyone tries to stop you from doing what you want to do. You will not work well in a team + would be best working on your own. This is because you don't like to be told how to do things as you rely on your own intuition which tells you how things should be done. Not only that but you won't like to take orders from anyone especially if you are not motivated by them or they don't command any respect from you. You believe your system – your way of doing things – is the right way + are usually indifferent to criticism. You are your own authority + are unlikely to be receptive to new ideas, issues are mainly black or white.

Finally your contradictory nature can be seen in your signature which is the representation of your public face – your public image. You want to be in the public eye. You want to be praised and recognized for your achievements. You want to appear more confident and important than you inwardly feel. You do not behave the same in public as you do in private. You feel you have to put on a 'mask'; almost a showman-like 'façade' to counteract the fairly modest levels of self esteem, self confidence that you normally possess. This is likely to give rise to inner tension when you are trying to project an image which is outwardly different to your true inner self.

There is something that stands out in your writing and that is the letter 'g'. This is made with a counter stroke, since you are right handed. It does not mean the same at the end of the word as it adds to fluidity. You will find the same 'g' formation in my handwriting. However it is also found at the beginning of a word. The word 'gratifying' on the penultimate line of your 2 page letter is made with a counter stroke in the sense that it begins at the baseline and not at the top where it should normally begin. This amplifies your reticent nature. You feel you have to maintain control over conversations so that your feelings won't spill out. You find it difficult to talk freely about what you feel inside + will need to be drawn out to expose any aspect of your innermost self. This degree of aloofness makes it hard to initiate friendship, because real friendship means exchanging intimate revelations with a degree of trust. If you lighten up on the control you have over yourself, you might find relationships become more rewarding.

Best wishes

Barbara Weaver

Written by: Annette Poizner

Analyzing the handwriting of: Barbara Weaver

This is the writing of a focused introvert, a brilliant woman with an impeccable work ethic, highly disciplined and known for the thoroughness she brings to any project. Barbara has the capacity to apply herself with great concentration for hours and has a constitution that allows her to exert effort steadily, maintaining directed attention of her end goal right to the very end. Her work style is “slow + steady wins the race.” She refuses to be rushed and instead will set her own pace + establish her own structures + routines so that she will do any job to the satisfaction of supervisors (and herself). She would have been an A+ student in school but, at the same time, have a strong need to work independently + do things her way, a way characterized by ingenious innovations and shortcuts. She trusts her own authority when it comes to what to do + how to do things.

Barbara is analytical + creative, possesses excellent organizational skills + executive abilities, writing ability, musical + artistic talent (were it cultivated through training) and strong appreciation of the fine things in life. As a young adult, it would have been a wide world of opportunity: “Should I be a medical doctor? (dermatology... NOT emergency medicine!) A lawyer? A researcher? A writer? A scholar? A psychologist?” She could have moved in any number of different directions with those broad based skills. She could have done virtually anything that would engage her analytical skills, her capacity to be objective and wield her capacity to silo information in an organized way and work to the high standard that is her birthright. She will tirelessly pursue her goals, patiently working independently + without the need for close supervision.

As in introvert, Barbara’s demeanor is dignified, private, “stiff upper lip;” formality versus spontaneity, committed to grace + “right action.” She was raised to do the good + right thing in a family culture that celebrated her hand work, scholastics, the value of modesty as a virtue, the importance of being economical or thrifty, and other stalwart traditional values. That environment, though, was also characterized by strictures that could be described as repressive. The writer hosts tension + restriction. She may talk in a pressurized way as an outlet, when she is not otherwise sublimating that energy into her work efforts. This is an individual who could benefit by applying herself to realms where there is no right or wrong answer – theatre training, fine arts, comedy improvisation exercises. She could then explore the playground of possibility to experiment with a more permissive, less academic, more expansive way of being. Of course now her outlet would be intellectual – thriving when she allows herself to learn, read + know about many areas. We would then have her moving into more experiential states of freedom + exploration.

The central dynamic at play in this handwriting relates, in fact, to the theme of freedom. On one hand Barbara looks like the highly obedient worker who has mastered the art of submission to higher principles. Take a close look and you will see a quiet rebellion at play. On a macro level, she gets the job done impeccably – look at the spacing, the regularity of her script. But a closer look reveals she has a

highly individualistic way of shaping letters which often renders words illegible. She doesn't close her small case 'p's or 'j's. The word 'your' frequently looks like 'you.' 'Very' looks like 'vey.' Many 't's are not crossed. It goes on + on, so that the writer has found a way to show signs of obedience in her script (straight baseline, uniformity of script, straight left margin, perfect spacing) and disobedience on a micro level, when she consistently defies norms about how one would shape a given letter. It means that she will choose her own way of doing things as an assertion of independence, a quiet expression of anger, having been subjugated by stringent rules in her youth. These little rebellious assertions show that developmentally it was hard for Barbara to move through the angers + assertions associated with adolescence. Without permission from her family culture, she only found token ways of defying the social order. And for this reason my therapeutic task for her would be to send her back to adolescence to do the role experimentation associated with that age: i.e. theatre training, learning how to draw or sing... finding new ways of expressing.

When someone with these issues evolves, suddenly the writing changes + becomes a little less perfect looking, because the muscles are looser, the repression is lightened. But in the meantime, + until that outcome, there are anger issues which will not be expressed overtly, but will motor the little rebellious gestures mentioned above, + also control issues, intensities that can be channeled into work + productivity. Notice her signature: her last name (representing the professional or public self) is basically legible. The first name, representing the personal or private self is illegible. The issues I describe above represent a contraction of the personal self, subjugating that self in favour of the public self that accomplishes. With the resolution of these issues, we might expect more emphasis on, less distortion of, the first name, allowing the emergence of that which is essentially or intrinsically Barbara!

Best,

Annette Poizner, MSW, Ed.D., RSW