SPARROW STRATEGY
VULTURE

STRATEGY
DOVE

STRATEGY
Bury your head in the sand. Pretend nothing is wrong.

Cower and complain about how awful things are, but don't venture to try to change things.

Stay cheerful. Try to make the best of a difficult situation.

Mimic those around you. Work hard to be as much like them as you can so you'll fit in.

Be neutral and try to blend into the background. Keep a low profile and nobody will notice you.

Move fast; be efficient; it's hard to hit a moving target.

Shrug off your different ness. Make yourself indispensable by doing the jobs nobody else wants to do.

Be colorful and charming; fit in by becoming the center of positive attention.

Do your job, but stay aloof so you don't get hurt. Gain respect by being dignified.

Become valuable and important to the organization by developing your wisdom and becoming "expert" at something the organization needs.

Dazzle others with your incredible talent and positive results.

Become valuable to the organization by being a skilled hunter - bring in new business, new opportunities.

Become the peacemaker, the troubleshooter who solves problems.

Cut your losses and fly south in search of a more hospitable environment.

Rise above the situation and play a leadership role in changing your organization for the better.
Strategies for “Birds of a Different Feather”

OSTRICH STRATEGY – Bury your head in the sand. Pretend nothing is wrong. This strategy may work for you for a while, but in the long run, it will probably not serve you well. Ignoring organizational realities can endanger your career potential and leave you open to getting blindsided when you least expect it.

CHICKEN STRATEGY – Cower and complain about how awful things are, but don’t venture to try to change things. You can see that there are problems in your organization – problems that have a negative impact on you. But you are too frightened or too insecure to take a risk to try to change things. This strategy may keep you “safe” but it will also add to your feelings of powerlessness and insignificance.

BLUE BIRD STRATEGY – Stay cheerful. Try to make the best of a difficult situation. You may be the kind of person who can put a positive spin on any situation. You are probably an optimist by nature, you often see the good in other people, and you see the “silver lining in every cloud.” This strategy can be quite effective, because you often get what you expect in terms of positive outcomes, and even when you don’t you know how to turn “lemons into lemonade!”

MOCKING BIRD STRATEGY – Mimic those around you. Work hard to be as much like them as you can so you’ll fit in. People who adopt this strategy are good at assimilating into an organization – they are flexible and adaptable and can often fit in very well. This is a fine strategy and can lead to great career success. However, mockingbirds need to be aware that the personal price they pay for adapting may be very high. Some people almost lead “double lives” – they act one way at work, and they can only relax and be themselves away from work. Think twice before you “sell your soul” to be successful.

SPARROW STRATEGY – Be neutral and try to blend into the background. Keep a low profile and nobody will notice you. This strategy can help you survive for a long time and you may be happy flying through your career like this. You will probably survive many organizational dangers and threats. Since you don’t stand out you probably will not be a target. But you may pay a price by never contributing new ideas, taking risks, taking a stand on an important issue on which you have strong feelings, or gaining credibility and visibility for potential career advancement.
Strategies for “Birds of a Different Feather”

**HUMMINGBIRD STRATEGY** – Move fast; be efficient; it’s hard to hit a moving target. You can get a lot of mileage out of this strategy, and be quite successful in your organization and your career. You will probably be seen as a good worker who can be depended upon to produce quick results.

**VULTURE STRATEGY** – Shrug off your different ness. Make yourself indispensable by doing the jobs nobody else wants to do. You may take on the “mission impossible” projects that others are afraid to tackle; or you may willingly do the boring but important work that needs to get done. You can make yourself a key player in your organization by using this vulture strategy.

**CANARY STRATEGY** – Be colorful and charming: fit in by becoming the center of positive attention. Being charming and entertaining can take you a long way in life and in your work – especially in certain fields. This is a natural strategy for people in sales and other fields as well. But be sure to develop some “substance” to back up that “style.” If you’re “all fluff,” people will figure that out sooner or later.

**SWAN STRATEGY** – Do your job, but stay aloof so you don’t get hurt. Gain respect by being dignified. Some people command the respect of others by virtue of their impressive personal presence – they convey an image of natural poise and confidence. This often comes from a deep-seated sense of self-worth or demonstrated competence and skill. Swans can be very successful in their careers and in their lives.

**OWL STRATEGY** – Become valuable and important to the organization by developing your wisdom and becoming an “expert” at something the organization needs. Every organization needs owls – technical experts, subject matter experts, or simply long-term experts who have a lot of organization history and learning in their heads. You can make yourself an indispensable part of your group if you become an owl.
Strategies for “Birds of a Different Feather”

PEACOCK STRATEGY – Dazzle others with your incredible talent and positive results. But be aware that others may be uncomfortable with your flash and dazzle, or they may be threatened by your success. Peacocks can be quite successful as superstars in any field, but it can sometimes backfire on them when other people are put off by their style. You may have to learn when to keep your feathers folded up modestly and when it’s okay to flash them open for effect. Most people enjoy being around peacocks, but sometimes peacocks overdo a good thing, and it turns into a bit of a problem. Some organizations (like penguin organizations) will not tolerate peacock behavior at all, so peacocks should be careful where they decide to work and how they may be required to change their behavior when they work there.

HAWK STRATEGY – Become valuable to the organization by being a skilled hunter – bring in new business, new opportunities. Hawks are very valuable people in any organization, and they are usually appreciated and treated very well, even if they are somewhat “different” from the mainstream. Your job security and your career success are a function of your ability to generate opportunities, new business, or growth in the organization. You’ll do well.

DOVE STRATEGY – Become the peacemaker, the troubleshooter who solves problems. This is an important role, since all organizations experience conflicts or problems – in operations, in employee relations, in finance, in marketing, and in many other areas of work. If you are good at resolving conflicts, sorting out complex issues, and solving problems, you will be valued by your organization – by any organization!

GOOSE STRATEGY – Cut your losses and fly south in search of a more hospitable environment. Sometimes what’s important is to know when to cut your losses and move on. If there are “irreconcilable differences” between you and your organization (or you and your boss) and none of the other strategies seem workable to you, then leaving the organization might be your best option. This is a highly personal decision, and only you can decide if this is the right choice for you.

EAGLE STRATEGY – Rise above the situation and play a leadership role in changing your organization for the better. It’s not easy being an eagle. If often means ignoring your own feelings for the sake of a larger good, and making personal sacrifices which will benefit everyone in the long run. There is always a price for becoming a leader, but there are also great rewards. Do you want to be a leader in your organization? Can you make a contribution that will help make the place a better workplace with a strong future? If so, soar as fast and as high as your wings will carry you. The world needs more leaders!