“pp52-53 Toolbox”

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DISC Personality Profiling

IS THAT REALLY YOU?

1 The tool
What is it?

Is it possible to predict how a person will act in a particular situation? Would it be useful to know what motivates them and what their fears are? What about anticipating how they will react under stress? Can we know whether someone is suitable for a certain job?

DISC Personality Profiling answers 'yes' to all these questions. The assessment tool is based on the DISC personality theory developed by William Marston. A psychologist with a PhD from Harvard, as well as being the creator of the first lie detector, Marston (1893-1947) wrote *Emotions of Normal People* (1928), and *DISC, Integrative Psychology* (1931).

How does it work?

Over the years, DISC Personality Profiling and Analysis has been developed further. Now, assessment tests and analysis graphs can be used effectively to assess a person's personality and predicted behaviour within a selected environment, such as the workplace.

Through a questionnaire, the person selects statements that are 'most like them' or 'least like them'. From this information, three graphs are produced that determine their personality: Public Self – The Mask, Private Self – The Core, Perceived Self – The Mirror.

These graphs detail the percentage of the four personality dimensions in the individual's profile. The dimensions are Dominance (how you deal with problems, assert yourself and control situations); Influence (how you deal with people, the way you communicate and relate to others); Steadiness (your temperament – patience, persistence and thoughtfulness), and Compliance (how you approach and organise your activity, procedures and responsibilities).

So, in terms of personality types, it's D = Dominant/Driver, I = Influencing/Inspiring, S = Steady/Stable, and C = Correct/Compliant.

Further information

For DISC client case studies:

- **www.coachingdynamics.co.uk**

For DISC training:

- **www.the-coaching-academy.com**
- B James, *Do It! Or Ditch It*, Virgin Books, 2001
- **www.discusonline.com**

2 The administrator
The experience

DISC has become an integral part of the coaching process for me. All my clients and management teams are DISC-profiled so that I know exactly the personality types I am working with, the way they work and think, their motivations, how they react under stress and their fears. The analysis comes from correctly and accurately interpreting the graphs according to the percentage and combination of each personality type a person has in their profile.

Through direct feedback I am able to give very accurate predictions about their management style, how they deal with situations, people and decision-making. It's fascinating!

Using the tool

I've employed DISC Personality Profiling very successfully with AV UK Ltd, a company with telesales teams. DISC was used in two different, but equally successful, ways with this client. First, by the very nature of telesales, attrition tends to be on the low side – they wanted to address that; second,

DISC Personality Profiling: pros and cons

UPSIDE

- The graphs are scientifically calculated
- The graphs clearly show how a person's personality can change
- Easy-to-understand analysis
- Findings can be used where people need to understand, motivate, manage, employ and get on well with others

DOWNSIDE

- Interpretation is only as good as the interpreter. Expert analysis may be needed for online report

the six-strong management team wanted to ensure that they understood each other well, utilised one another's strengths and were as efficient and effective as they could be for the benefit of the business.

The verdict

From the telesales perspective, the client was able to identify a common personality type in their top three and longest-serving telesales employees and use that as a guide when recruiting new staff. This has been very successful.

From the management perspective, they were able to acknowledge that they had an excellent combination of personality types who would have all areas of thought covered and to be able to appreciate, understand and utilise their strengths to the greatest effect.

The tool is effective, accurate, easy to understand and brings a depth of personal knowledge that changes how we perceive ourselves and others.

Tina Dulieu is a registered and approved Growth coach and trainer for the UK government's Growth Accelerator programme and a business and executive coach with Coaching Dynamics
www.coachingdynamics.co.uk

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3 The client

The experience

We wanted to improve the attrition of our telesales staff and we asked Tina to conduct and analyse the profiles of our top and longest-serving sales people to see if there was a commonality in their profiles.

We were amazed to find that there was! This was like turning on a lightbulb for us because this commonality wasn't what we had identified as being significant in the type of personalities that we employed.

The analysis of a prospective employee's DISC has become part of the recruiting process in looking for the personality types we know will fit in and do the job well. It also allows us to see the potential beyond the initial interview when a person might be nervous or not portray themselves at their best. We like the scientific aspect of DISC, which helps us identify where an employee's strengths are and when extra training or mentoring might be needed to help them integrate well into the company and the role.

Angela Westgarth is sales manager at AV UK

I asked Tina to analyse the profiles of our management team. Through a workshop she helped us understand the process, personality types and how we could utilise that information to best effect.

It was interesting and enlightening. We now understand how and why we react as we do, especially with regard to risk-taking business-wise.

We know who the analysers are and who wants the detail, who the drivers are and who can use their influencing skills to build relationships.

We have adopted a new language too. It's not uncommon to hear, 'You're being very D today, can you calm down a bit!' Or, what you are asking is just so C. Is that much detail really necessary?'

It has brought about a greater understanding all round, helped us appreciate and respect each other's attributes, and to understand the parts of personalities that differ from our own.

Hilary Westgarth is managing director at AV UK