DISC Debriefing Guide

Goals

Your goal is to help the person you are debriefing recognize, understand and leverage their inherent strengths in their personal and professional life. Being an achiever and experiencing accomplishments in their endeavors is easier when their natural strengths are maximized. This DISC assessment is a study of their natural style and their adapted work style. The DISC tool is the gold standard for measuring **HOW SOMEONE COMMUNICATES** with his/her fellow human beings.

High achievers believe in themselves; they recognize their unique strengths and do not underestimate what they can do. They do not sell themselves short. They know their own limitations and develop a plan to overcome their shortcomings, while realizing the differences in people can be an advantage when those differences are appreciated, rather than faulted.

The concept of understanding how people are different, but not necessarily wrong, has been time-tested and proven to work. Those differences result in people being drawn to different occupations, relationships, interests and activities. A person's communication preferences and behavioral strengths are the traits that can attract people to each other or cause them to resist each other.

It has been reported that organizations who use this DISC concept increase effective communication, internal job satisfaction, productive teams and more harmony in the workplace. Personal relationships are enhanced. Building rapport becomes easier. Interactions at work, home or play are more positive. People have less stress and even better physical and mental health.

Checklist Prior to the Debrief

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1. **Use this debriefing guide to organize** information prior to and during the debriefing. Identify the individual's behaviors, so that you can create rapport and adapt your style to get the best result from the debrief - by knowing the person's preferred communication style.

2. **Identify information you may already have** about the person: behaviors, skills, acumen, current key job accountabilities etc.

3. **Provide a copy of his/her report with a pen/pencil** so the individual can choose to take notes.

4. **Establish a purpose to the debriefing**: improved leadership, increased sales, enhanced relationships etc.*****

5. **The overarching goal of a debrief** is to provide a deeper understanding and insight into the content of the report, as well as tie the assessment results to the context of the person's personal and professional life.

6. **Create an opportunity to follow up** by having him/her weigh how much time he/she is willing to invest towards the goals. If buy-in is created, the individual should want to continue in some fashion.

*NOTE: *A debrief is most effective when the individual already has established goals and you can highlight how his/her report content can help or hinder his/her progress. However, this may be unknown to you at this point; therefore, use this debrief as an opportunity to find out what is important to the person to ensure time is well spent.*

Introduction to Behaviors

In this report, we are measuring:

D (Dominance), **I (Influence)**, **S (Steadiness)**, and **C (Conscientiousness)** or:

- **D** – How you respond to problems and challenges.
- **I** – How you influence people and contacts.
- **S** – How you respond to the pace and consistency.
- **C** – How you respond to procedures and compliance.

Please keep in mind BEHAVIORS are how a person prefers to give and receive information. It does NOT tell us how intelligent a person is, their background, experience, etc. With behaviors (DISC), we can make informed assumptions about how a person will behaviorally respond to different situations.

Remember, there are no good or bad behavioral styles.
We all behave differently for different reasons. There are times when certain behaviors are more effective than others. For example, a very detail-oriented person who worries about making a mistake will most likely thrive in an environment where being on time is key and being exact is imperative to success.

The three objectives of this DISC Report debrief are to assist you to:

1. Identify and appreciate your own behavioral style.

2. Identify and appreciate the behavioral styles of others.

3. Learn to adapt behaviors to create superior performance.

The Debrief Process

1. **Start with General Characteristics:**

   Using this true/false/edit approach to all written statements will allow you to have deeper and more meaningful conversations with the person.

   a) **Ask:** "Which of these statements do you feel are most true and most important for others to understand about you?"

   b) **Highlight** or underline applicable statements.

   c) "Is there anything here you might want to edit?" ***(Sometimes a specific word or phrase may not resonate with them and they would prefer to change it to a synonym to make it more personalized for them.)*** After editing the statement, "Do you now feel it is true?"

   d) "Is there anything here you feel might be false? If so, please take the statement first to at least two trusted advisors, peers, friends or family who know you well to see if they, too, would also disagree with the statement, as sometimes we are not fully aware of how others view us."

2. **Next move on to the Graphs.**

   a. Natural Style

   b. Adapted Style

   c. Comparing the Two Graphs

   d. Wheel (Behavioral Pattern View)

   e. 12 Behavioral Factors

3. **Your Strengths:** What You Bring to the Organization

4. **Your Work Style** Tendencies

5. **Your Motivations:** Wants and Needs

6. Your Needs

7. **Your Motivations:** Ideal Work Environment

8. **Communication** Do's & Don'ts

9. **Potential Areas** for Improvement

10. **Have the client go back and select** the two most important statements/factors in each area that they feel best describes them, and transfer them to the Style Summary Page.

11. **Your Behavior & Needs** Under Stress

12. **DISC Behavioral** Pattern View

13. **If there is time in the debrief**, now tackle the Applications section – How to Use DISC with Others.

General Characteristics

Read: The **General Characteristics** narrative section one sentence at a time. With each paragraph, ask the person to put a tally mark in the appropriate column on a **T** chart (see below). If they agree with the statement, their tally mark goes in the "agree" column. Put a tally mark in the "disagree" column if they do not agree with the statement. Suggest that if they come across a particular word they disagree with, that they modify the word to be more accurate - the word, not the statement. That seems to satisfy the very high C's.

<div align="center">

Agree   Disagree

</div>

Be sure participants know they have permission to disagree. No report is 100% accurate. The goal is to determine their perception of the report's accuracy.

Calculate the accuracy: Add the total number of sentences. Divide the number of tally marks in the agree column by the total. Make a note of the percentage of accuracy according to the participant's perception.

If the percentage of accuracy perceived by participant is lower than 75%, have the participant ask someone who knows him/her very well to do the same agree/disagree exercise and then calculate their percentage to see if it's higher or lower than 75%. This can be done with more

than one person. Experience has taught us that by going through this exercise, participants often learn that some of the "disagree" statements should really be "agree".

Discussion: By referring to the statements that were determined to be true, discuss with the person how their specific traits impact their organization in three areas:

- Upward to their direct manager/supervisor.
- Laterally with coworkers.
- Down their organization to their direct reports.

They might even include names or think about specific people and list their titles.

DISC Report Bullet Point Pages

Have the person go through these sections of their report and put a plus (**+**) sign in front of all the statements he/she agrees with and a negative (**-**) sign near all the statements he/she disagrees with:

- Your Strengths: What You Bring to the Organization
- Your Work Style Tendencies
- Your Motivations: Wants and Needs
- Your Needs
- Your Motivations: Ideal Work Environment
- Communication Do's & Don'ts
- Potential Areas for Improvement

Why do they disagree with each negative (**-**) point? What would make it more accurate? People naturally obsess with the negatives rather than revel in the positives. Addressing them can help to diffuse their importance.

Then have the person complete page 14 in his/her report – **Summary of Your Style** – by putting the top two plus (**+**) sign statements from each respective category on this page.

Discuss with the person why he/she chose the two items in each category to move to this summary page. Then, go back to the sections above to discuss with your client why he/she chose the items in each category with negative (**-**) signs. Why do you disagree with that point?

What would make it more accurate?

Behavior and Needs Under Stress

This section is not the easiest section to look through because it is not how we may want to be viewed or described.

Explain: that people with very similar traits will describe them much as they describe themselves. Those people who are a little bit different from them will describe them with words a little differently. However, those people who are completely opposite from them tend to use more negative descriptors. This is an example of using their strengths to the extreme, which often do appear as negative traits to those who do not have those same strengths.

Ask: the person to pick out three of those negative descriptors from their list of how they may appear under stress. Can they name any people who may use those descriptive words?

Any situations?

Discussion:

What are their reactions when those things happen?

Discussion:

Read: through their list of Typical Behaviors in conflict. Can they agree with any of them? Why?

Read: the Strategies to Reduce Conflict and Increase Harmony. The person may want to work on these areas so that they can grow and become more effective. In other words, when interacting with people who have opposite reactions and responses, it is worth realizing that their perception is their reality.

It does not mean that they ARE that way or that they do react and respond in the way they describe the person. However, it does mean that this is the way THEY see them. So, this is when the person should consciously use their awareness, people sensitivity, and desire to be compatible to temper those strong traits.

They are not changing who they are; they are simply adjusting their natural tendencies temporarily for better relationships or effective communication.

Natural and Adapted DISC Graphs

Explain: Right after the general characteristics section, go to the graphs and explain the difference between the Natural and Adapted graphs, labeling the **Natural as not changeable** and the **Adapted as changeable.**

Describe: the intensity of the high values and talk about the potential intensity due to very low values and the value they bring to their team.

DISC Graph I – Adapted Style

1. Based on "Most" Selections.
2. Determined by how you felt you needed to behave at work that day to be successful.
3. Graph can fluctuate from day to day for many reasons.
4. Fluctuations are typically related to responsibility, organizational, or boss changes.
5. Common misinterpretation is thinking Graph I is work environment as a whole.

DISC Graph II – Natural Style

1. Based on "Least" Selections.
2. People are more accurate about themselves when speaking in terms of "Least."
3. Graph determined how you prefer to behave in any environment, work or home.
4. Graph rarely changes over the years. No need to change, it is "what it is!"
5. Common interpretation mistake, thinking Graph II reflects only home environment.

Comparing DISC Graph I with DISC Graph II

1. The higher the intensity of each style in the six segments, the more energy generated.
2. A common misinterpretation: it is bad if the two graphs are not alike.
3. Whether graphs are similar or different, both provide helpful information.
4. Compare Graph Point "D" on Graph I with Graph II. (Do same for each of the other 3 Styles)
5. If graphs are similar, then respondent is working in their comfort zone.

6. If there is more than a 2-segment spread, then the respondent is exerting effort, working outside of their comfort zone.
7. Reflecting on the day they took the DISC Assessment is extremely valuable. If specific activities can be identified, it will explain the behavior style variance.
8. Variance can reflect a positive attribute of flexibility.
9. Variance over long stretches is not recommended.

DISC Word Sketches

There are two Word Sketches - their *Adapted Style* and their *Natural Style* – *except in the DISC-M report you will only find their Natural Word Sketch page.*

Ask: Above both their Adapted and Natural Graphs, ask the person to do the following:

- Above the D, write the words "Problems/Tasks"
- Above the I, write the word "People"
- Above the S, write the word "Pace"
- Above the C, write the word "Procedures"

Note: These four "P's" are what their life focus is in the four areas of life - *problems, people, pace* and *procedures*. The higher the bar graph, the more intensity is the observable behavior relating to those traits. These are the areas they view as most important from what we are measuring:

- Approach to problems and challenges (D)
- Interpersonal preferences, interactions with others (I)
- Preferences for the pace of the environment (S)
- The need for data, rules, policies and compliance (C)

Ask: Is there a difference between the intensity levels of the traits between their Adapted and Natural styles? If so, can they think of any reasons why the demands of their environment would cause them to react and respond differently than they would naturally?

Remember: to refer to their Word Sketch Pages for the descriptive words for these levels.

Discuss: the descriptive words on the Natural Word Sketch Page, the person's agreement with them and how they change in the Adapted Word Sketch Page.

Use this debrief segment to talk about the level of change in each of the style elements between natural and adapted and what that means in terms of stress or energy expended to be someone they are not.

Small changes up to 10 points is no big deal; 10 to 20 points and they probably feel it, but it is manageable (there is usually agreement here). Once it goes beyond 20 points difference, you might enter into a conversation about the effect on the person.

Each element is a change regarding problem solving, interaction with people, pace, and compliance:

- High D to low D indicates potential loss of control. How does it feel to the person?
- High I to low I means loss of enthusiasm and trust. Why is that happening?
- High S to low S is pressure to move faster. How is that affecting their work?
- High C to low C is inattention to detail; making their own rules. Why? What is the potential loss?

On the other side...

- Low D to high D is the need to be more proactive, decisive, and confrontational. Why are they doing that? Can they really pull it off without seeming phony? Do they realize they might be giving up some of their strength to act in a way that is foreign to them?

- Low I to High I - it is useful to just get their reaction on why they feel the need to go from cautious and skeptical to open and trusting?

The 12 Integrated DISC Style Relationships

There is more to DISC than just the 'D' 'I' 'S' 'C'. In fact, these 4 PRIMARY Factors are just the beginning. Each of the single Primary Factors has an influence on the other three; in other words, the 'D' is impacted by a person's 'I', 'S', and 'C'. The intensity of the 3 factors can help to determine the strength or subtlety of the 4th factor. Once you understand how the Primary Factors work together to determine your behavioral style, you can look even more closely by examining the 12 Integrated Behaviors.

The 12 Integrated Behaviors are determined by the interaction of the 4 Primary 'D' 'I' 'S' 'C' Factors to predict observable behavior in most situations. Each of these 12 Integrated Behaviors is ranked with an 'intensity' level. The higher the intensity level, the more likely that behavior is going to be displayed/observed in most situations. Likewise, the least intense behaviors will be the least likely to be displayed/observed most of the time.

Every behavior or communication directive, concern and fear is reflected by the INTENSITY of the 12 integrated behaviors. (How the four (4) Primary DISC Behaviors is altered by the other three (3). **Intensity** scores the strength of the behavior and the frequency of its appearance. We name and provide clear definitions for each of the 12 integrated behaviors.

In the DISC report, each of the 12 Integrated Behaviors is displayed with a precise definition of that behavior, an intensity level, and the combination of primary styles that impact that particular integrated behavior. You will also find a blue box that identifies the *range* of all scores within the general population for each integrated behavior.

This allows you to see how a particular individual compares to the general population for each integrated behavior in terms of intensity. You are also provided with an *Intensity Scoring Legend* to help identify the likelihood of observable behavior.

Start: your 12 Factor debrief at their highest intensity descriptions, reading what the high intensities mean as well as the low. **High intensities are areas of strength.**

What the person is naturally powerful at behaviorally. Also, **spend some time with the low intensities** asking if those behavioral traits are important in their job and how those requirements affect their performance. Here is where it might be useful to have the adapted 12 as well. The 12 is a higher resolution of behavioral tendencies and this section is valuable in the debrief as it really focuses on their strengths and what they should stay away from. The 12 Factors can be a powerful, insightful tool in understanding the person's behaviors.

Example:

Note: All 12 integrated behaviors are in their report.

View Intensity Strength (2 Highs, 2 Lows or 1 Moderate Intensity score.

3. The Vitality Behavior (I/S) [High Moderate Intensity]

0............10............20............30............40............50............60............70............80............90............100
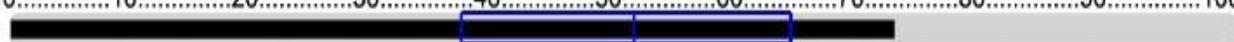
"How this individual's people focused extroversion is impacted by their preferred pace and activity level."

The Vitality behavior measures HOW the strength of this individual's desire for interpersonal connections is influenced by their degree of urgency, preferred pace and activity level. Higher intensity scores reflect a high energy, freewheeling, confident and engaging style that will likely embrace new ideas and concepts while Lower intensity scores reflect thoughtfulness and care when crafting both words and deeds as one moves steadily toward the identified goal and objective.

Intensity Scoring Legend – *The Intensity score is a measure of both the strength and frequency of HOW each of the 12 integrated behaviors will likely be displayed when interacting and communicating ideas, decisions, beliefs, recommendations, concerns and fears with others.*

Low Intensity Scores = This behavior will be absent in MOST situations.
Low Moderate Scores = This behavior will SOMETIMES be displayed in SOME situations.
Moderate Scores = This behavior WILL BE STRONGLY DISPLAYED if one of two situations occur. First, if the situation is considered to be very important OR if a situation is spinning out of control.
**High Moderate Scores** = This behavior will be frequently displayed in many situations.
High Intensity Scores = This behavior will be clearly displayed most often and seen in most situations.

DISC Behavioral Pattern View (Wheel) Design

On their DISC Wheel, the placement of the Circle is their Natural Style and the Star is their Adapted Style. It is a visual aid in showing how closely their natural and adapted are positioned or how far apart they are. Are they adapting a lot? Can they just be themself or do they have to adapt?

If the circle and star are not closely placed, can they see how their Adapted style may be stressing them? If the circle and star are very far apart, their job may totally tire them out. If they are close, their environment can actually energize them.
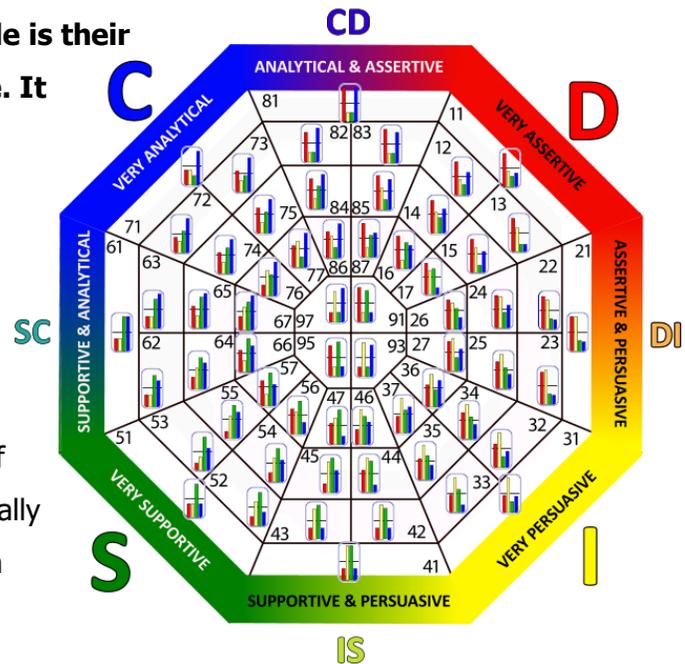
The DISC Wheel only represents 60 graph possibilities; a small percentage of the total graphs possible. Also, notice that the graphs only relate to elements above the 50% line and only in limited variations. The value of the DISC Wheel is as that it has more resolution than the four quadrants. It is also used effectively for group (or team) reports so you can more easily see the differences in members of the group. Also, the DISC Wheel is used in our DISC Career Management report where each of the 60 numbered segments generate a list of possible occupations by DISC Wheel segment number using the U. S. Government O*Net Codes.

The numbering system for the eight Behavioral Pattern View segments is designed for ease of recognition. We start at the upper right position of the 'D'. That section has the outer section numbered 11 representing only the 'D' above the 50% line. Directly below that section are sections 12 and 13 and below that you will see 14 and 15, and finally the last two sections in that Diamond segment are numbered 16 and 17.

Adjacent to that Diamond segment are sections numbered 21 through 27. 21 represents both the 'D' and the 'I' above the 50% line and equal in value, both very high. Going to the next

Diamond segment, you have 31 to 37 with 31 representing the 'I' above the 50% line. Once again, the only reason that the numbers are there is for identification. We actually chose this numbering scheme to ease the understanding of where someone's DISC Wheel position might be; high Ds in the first segment would be in sections numbered 11-17. High Cs would be in sections numbered 71 – 77, and so forth.

As you move towards the center, 12 and 13, 22 and 23, 32 and 33 and so forth, you will see that the graph represents two elements above the 50% line. Notice for example, 13 and 22 are both high 'D' high 'I', but in 13 the difference between the 'D' and 'I' is greater than in 22 representing the relative positions to the DI Wheel segments. Notice the pattern repeats itself throughout that ring.

In the next ring, 14 and 15, 24 and 25, and so forth, you see three elements above the 50% line. Note that the highest element corresponds to the main segment. In 14, 15, and 24 it is 'D'. The other two elements are adjacent to the 'D' on each side. This pattern repeats itself around the ring.

The last ring 16 and 17, 26 and 27, and so forth also have three elements above the 50% line. The difference is that you have one adjacent element and one across the DISC grid. For example, section 16 is DSC. The 'D' and 'C' are adjacent with the 'S' across. As you look at the sections in the Behavioral Wheel, you see that the pattern repeats.

The center section represents what we call the conflicting graphs. Section 91 for example has 'D' and 'S' above the 50% line. Here you have task/people conflict and fast/slow conflict. A me/me conflict.

Summary

Do not judge people to be wrong, but realize they are different in their approach to problems and challenges, with their interactions, to the pace of the environment and with their need for compliancy, rules, policies and data.

All of the characteristics have a specific fear and people are motivated to avoid their fears. So understanding the fears of the different styles helps in understanding why people do behave as they do.

Use the application section of their report as your reference guide for further study and understanding the DISC concept and how to adjust accordingly when necessary for effectiveness and most importantly, to appreciate their strengths and leverage them for their own success. Appreciate what others can add to their limitations and leverage those relationships for even more success.

Remember it is all about being able to...

DANCE ON THE DISC!