



MENTORING WITH "DISC" STYLE

There are many types of people and personalities that make the world go around, and this universal fact can be even more pronounced in the workplace. As you aspire to make your everyday interactions positive ones, they can become problematic if you do not have a clear understanding of an individual's behavioral style and how that style governs the way in which they communicate with others. Having a grasp of what makes a colleague, boss, or mentoring partner "tick" can benefit you in terms of how you can get your message or request across and how it will be received.

The DISC method is a popular tool that deciphers both the behavioral styles and traits that individuals employ when communicating with others. Understanding DISC can be particularly beneficial to the mentoring relationship as it can provide tangible and beneficial insight for the mentoree and can give mentors a more accurate foundation for providing feedback and suggesting developmental assignments and training opportunities.

There are three universal principles related to DISC:

- Behavior is observable and can be predicted.
- Each person has a "core" behavioral style.
- If overextended, a person's strength may appear to be a weakness.

Understanding and respecting these different behavioral attributes is vital to mentoring success as well as how you are received by colleagues and supervisors. The more you know how to navigate different styles of interpersonal communications exhibited by others, the better equipped you are to get your own point across with influence.

Using the DISC Method, mentors can determine the nature and style of the mentorees with whom they are partnered. From this knowledge, the mentor will be much better equipped to focus the mentoring partnership through activities that play to the mentoree's strengths or strategically address any apparent weakness in a manner that is both beneficial and easily understood. The DISC method effectively unlocks the power to assess and capitalize upon personality differences within the mentoring partnership. In turn, the relationship is allowed to flourish with the knowledge of these differences that help to shape the recommended actions and activities for self-improvement.



Understanding the DISC Core Styles

<p>D is for Driver How one approaches problems and challenges</p>	<p>People high in the "D" dimension tend to be bold, courageous and daring. They are demanding, aggressive problem solvers, often have an intense sense of urgency, and are generally pioneering in their way of approaching and solving problems. In their relationships, high Ds are direct, straightforward and blunt. With this unconquerable personality, they can also be quick to anger and have a short fuse.</p>
<p>I is for Influencer How one interacts with and influences people</p>	<p>High "I" traits represent your classic "people person." They want to be liked and like just about everybody they meet, even the difficult people. They possess the "gift of gab" and can easily convince others to their way of thinking. High I's tend to be incredibly optimistic, finding the best in others and the positive in just about any situation. They are people oriented, energetic, charismatic and outgoing, open to new ideas, and very well equipped to influence others. They rely on a sense of optimism and are highly trusting.</p>
<p>S is for Steadiness How one responds to change and levels of activity</p>	<p>Individuals with a strong "S" dimension are easygoing, laid back and relaxed. They place significant value on harmony and maintaining a sense of stability. High S's are loyal team players and have a strong need to finish what they start. They are logical thinkers who possess the ability to bring lofty ideas back to the realm of the reality. These individuals tend not to show emotion and can be perceived as non-emotional.</p>
<p>C is for Compliance How one responds to rules and regulation</p>	<p>High C people place great value on quality and "doing it right the first time." They have tremendous respect for precise rules and regulations, are meticulous with details, maintain high standards emphasizing quality over quantity, and tend to be orderly and well disciplined. They prefer a safe work environment and will use highly proven methods long before establishing a new procedure to solve a common problem. High C's are also intuitive and are skilled at asking questions whose answers provide important and complete data. With this staunchly methodical and rules-driven means of accomplishment, High C's can also be a bit fearful and their reliance on rules and regulations precludes innovation.</p>



Tips for Mentoring the Core Disc Styles

Communicating with D Driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on the end result. ▪ Give them control over their destiny. ▪ Move quickly, use gestures to demonstrate intensity. ▪ Link feedback to results.
Communicating with I Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss their goals and success stories. ▪ Ask for their opinion. ▪ Stimulate them, keep conversations energetic and positive. ▪ Introduce them to new people.
Communicating with S Steadiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give them time to think things through. ▪ Present your case logically. ▪ Ask questions to draw them out. ▪ Provide personal assurances.
Communicating with C Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be specific and detail oriented. ▪ Consider all sides of the issue. ▪ Value their high standards, quality over quantity. ▪ Be diplomatic.

IN YOUR NEXT MEETING WITH YOUR MENTORING PARTNER, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What is your core DISC style (mentor)?

***Note:** The DISC graphs are calculated on a 100-point scale. To find your core style, find the highest point on your Natural DISC Graph.*

- What is your core DISC style (mentoree)?



- What do you perceive as your key differences according to your DISC style and the style of your mentor/mentoree?

- What do you perceive as your key similarities according to your DISC styles?

- What can you do to navigate and respect these differences?

- What elements of your natural behavior style can you modify slightly to accommodate your mentoring partner's most dominant characteristics? (For example, *"As a strong D, I will work to provide more detailed answers to my strong C partner."*)

- What types of developmental activities do you think would be beneficial to the mentoree's mentoring goals?



- Is the mentoree comfortable with these activities? Do the developmental activities need to be modified or changed based on his/her DISC style?

- What would be a great stretch assignment for your mentoree based on his/her DISC style?

- How does your mentoring partner prefer to communicate during the partnership (face to face, email, texting, etc.)? How can you compromise if there are great differences?

- How does your mentoring partner want to conduct your meetings? (For example, do you start and end on time? Do you like to prepare an agenda before the meeting?) How can you compromise if there are great differences?

NEXT MEETING:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location (or medium): _____

Purpose:
