
TEAMWORKS

42 Tips to Help
TEAMS
Thrive & Survive



by
Michael Spremulli

TEAMWORKS

42 Tips to Help
TEAMS
Thrive & Survive



by
Michael Spremulli

Introduction

This booklet is intended to provide a variety of practical, easy-to-implement tips for creating, maintaining, and communicating effectively with high-performance teams. Whether you are dealing with the executive management team of a large corporation, or a committee of three at your local chamber of commerce, the same interpersonal dynamics apply. This booklet will show you how to begin to understand the behavioral design of others, and ultimately transfer that understanding into the arena of teams.

Michael Spremulli possesses a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology and is a Certified Professional Behavioral Analyst. Michael is a noted speaker, corporate trainer, and consultant. He is President and CEO of The Chrysalis Corporation. Michael and his firm specialize in helping companies hire, manage, and motivate employees. He has worked with various teams throughout his life, both professionally and personally, not the least of which is the team of cats living with Michael and his wife.

For information about quantity and customized booklet purchases, or any of Michael's products or consulting services, please use the contact information listed below.

The Chrysalis Corporation
2001 Hammock Drive
Valdosta, GA 31602

Voice: (229) 257-0665
Fax: (800) 886-2563

Website: www.chrysaliscorporation.com
Email: info@chrysaliscorporation.com

© 2001 The Chrysalis Corporation.
All Rights Reserved



Communicating Effectively With Others

Knowing a person's core behavioral style will enable you to predict how a person will behave in a one-on-one situation and on a team. It will also dramatically increase your ability to communicate with him or her.

1 Understand that there are four basic styles, or factors of human behavior: Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Compliance. Everyone has a combination of these four factors; however one is usually more prominent than the others. Each style has positive and negative characteristics that depend largely on the context of a situation. This system of describing human behavior is referred to as the DISC model. The model is based on the work of William Moulton Marston, an American psychologist. Researchers have validated, elaborated, and refined Marston's theories into the current model used today. It is important to note that no behavioral style is superior to another.

2 Think of each behavioral style as being an ingredient in a cake. Some cakes have more flour than eggs, others may have more sugar than butter. Everyone has some (**D**)ominance, (**I**nfluence), (**S**)teadiness, and (**C**)ompliance in their behavioral design. What makes us unique is the intensity of each one of these factors. For example, some people may have a lot of **D** factor and very little **I**, **S**, or **C** factor. Others may have a low **D** factor, high **I** and **S** factors, and low **C** factor. Still others have low **D** and **I** factors, with high **S** and **C** factors.

3 Realize that there are many combinations of these four factors. The good news is that with some practice and by consciously observing people, you can quickly determine which factor(s) are most prominent within an individual.

4 Pay close attention to how individuals behave. People provide you with many behavioral clues that the average person ignores. Once you learn to read these clues, your ability to interact effectively with others will greatly improve.

5 Focus your attention on the words that they use, rate of speech, the presence or absence of gestures, and overall work pace. This information becomes invaluable when determining a person's core behavioral style.

6 Understand the differences between the terms extroverted and introverted. *Extroverted* describes people who enjoy being in the spotlight, on the front line, and highly visible. *Introverted* describes those who prefer to keep a low profile, work behind the scenes, and have a minimal amount of attention drawn to them.

7 Study and commit to memory the behavioral tendencies associated with each of the four styles.

- People with a high Dominant factor (**D**) are task-focused, extroverted, and are geared to enjoy a challenge. They are quick decision-makers. They are at ease in leadership roles and are comfortable taking risks. **D**'s usually speak at a rapid pace and use a fair amount of hand gestures when communicating. Being efficient is important to them. They enjoy competition and sometimes a bit of conflict. These types of people are known for "taking the bull by the horns" and generating results.

- Those with a high Influence (**I**) factor are people-focused, extroverted, and tend to be very persuasive. They find it easy to generate a lot of excitement and enthusiasm for a person or cause they believe in. **I**'s speak with a large amount of tonal variation, at a fast pace, and use large hand gestures. They are very outgoing and enjoy interacting with people. They play the role of cheerleader and generally have an optimistic view of life.

- Individuals with a high Steadiness (**S**) factor are people-focused, introverted, and are excellent planners. They approach their work in a logical, stepwise fashion. **S**'s speak slowly and deliberately while using a limited number of hand gestures. They are calm, cool, and collected. They excel in creating structured environments and possess a high degree of patience. They are relatively low risk-takers and usually are very loyal to people and organizations.

- People with a high Compliance (**C**) factor are task-focused, introverted, and tend to be perfectionists. **C**'s speak using a limited amount of tonal variation, and even more limited hand gestures. Generating quality work is a top priority. They have very high expectations for themselves and others. Data is extremely important in their decision-making process. They tend to follow rules and procedures "by the book" and encourage others to do the same.

8 Focus on the bottom line when communicating with a person who has a strong **D** factor. If a **D** asks you what time it is, tell her the time—do not tell her how to build a watch. **D**'s like succinct information presented in a bulleted format. They also prefer that you stick to business.

Offering too many details to **D**'s will frustrate them and ultimately break the communication cycle.

9 Begin the conversation with a social comment when communicating with a person who has a strong **I** factor. **I**'s enjoy people and a lot of social interaction. If an **I** asks you to join her for lunch, do it. You will create instant rapport with this person. **I**'s also appreciate an energetic and enthusiastic approach. If you must address details, put them in writing. **I**'s have a tendency to be a bit disorganized.

10 Proceed at a *slow* pace when communicating with a person who has a strong **S** factor. If an **S** says that he needs time to think about something, give it to him. One of the fastest ways to lose rapport with an **S** is to rush him in the decision-making process. **S**'s approach their work in a very logical manner that requires them to mentally work through all possible scenarios, and this takes time.

11 Pay extreme attention to details when communicating with a person who has a strong **C** factor. If a **C** requests additional data from you, be prepared to deliver it in an organized manner. **C**'s are not interested in socializing in a work setting, so refrain from engaging in idle chitchat. After you have provided **C**'s with all of the data that you thought they could ever ask for, be prepared for them to ask you for more. **C**'s can never have too much data.

12 Recognize the way that each style would write an email.

- **D**'s will usually write no more than a couple of lines, getting right to the heart of the matter. They most likely will omit a formal greeting.

- **I**'s will begin with a warm and fuzzy greeting such as, "Dear Beth, it was great to see you at the regional meeting. Hope all is going well—we need to get together again soon. I was wondering if you could help me with something. . . ." **I**'s are also known for forwarding "joke" emails with the subject line saying "You Gotta Read This!"
- **S**'s will send an email to remind you about the staff meeting that you need to attend tomorrow. They will also include an agenda. This is after they have reminded you in person, twice, and left you a voice mail. They just want to be *sure* that you are informed.
- **C**'s, like **D**'s, will also get right down to business; however, they will either be asking for or providing you with much more data. **C**'s feel very comfortable communicating via email because it gives them an easy way to keep track of who said what to whom and at what time.

13 Anticipate how each style will behave at a team meeting.

- **D**'s will want to cover the agenda items as quickly as possible so that they can end the meeting and do something else. **D**'s usually have several projects running simultaneously.
- **I**'s will want the meeting to have a social component. They might suggest, "Let's get coffee and donuts; it will make the meeting more fun." Expect them to become excited and animated when topics are discussed that they feel strongly about. **I**'s sometimes have a tendency to steer the meeting off track.

- **S**'s will support creating a detailed plan of action. They may suggest that separate committees or subcommittees be formed to address specific issues. They want to be sure that every possible outcome is examined.
- **C**'s will make statements like, "Our sales are up 23.27% compared to last quarter," or, "How valid is this research, how old is it, and who conducted it?" You can count on **C**'s to be precise, accurate, and to question any ambiguities that they detect.

14 Look at the way people have their offices arranged to gain insight into their behavioral styles.

- A **D**'s office will usually be arranged with the desk in the center of the room with two chairs in front of it. This arrangement sends a message of authority. The office will be efficient, but not necessarily neat.
- **I**'s will decorate their offices with pieces of their past. Their walls and bookshelves will be covered with awards that they have received, certificates of achievement, and photos. **I**'s are also referred to as stackers, which means that their desks will contain numerous stacks of paper. And for the six stacks that you can see on top of the desk, there are probably twelve stacks underneath and behind it.
- The office of an **S** will be a peaceful place. Soft lighting may be used instead of fluorescent lights, along with aromatherapy and fragrances. Plants will be part of the environment as well as photos of her family and pets. Other individuals within the organization may "escape" to this office because it has a calming effect.

8

- The office of a **C**, as you may have guessed, will be "decorated" with data. The walls might be covered with charts, graphs, and financial projections. Data will always be easily accessible. **C**'s are the most organized of all the styles. *Everything* will have its place. Files will be color-coded and alphabetized, pencils will be sharpened and grouped together, and paper clips will be sorted by size.



Selecting and Running a Team

There are many types of teams in the world. You are part of numerous teams and are surrounded by even more teams. There are work teams, committees, subcommittees, civic teams, social teams, and family teams. When two or more are gathered to work towards a common goal, a team is present.

15 Ask yourself if it is really necessary to create a team before you decide to form one. Too often teams, committees, and subcommittees are unnecessarily formed out of habit. If the task(s) at hand can be easily completed by an individual, formation of a team could be counterproductive.

16 Envision the team's purpose before you create it. This ensures direction. If you are unsure about the team's purpose, it is certain that the team will also be unsure.

17 Select between four and eight people to be on a team. The "magic" number is six. This number can be increased or decreased by two in either direction depending on circumstances. Less than four will not give you enough diversity. More than eight will diffuse responsibility.

9

18 Request that a newly appointed team select its own leader. The process will help “break the ice” between members and will also let the team know that they will be responsible for making important decisions as they work together. Chances are that if there is a **D** on the team, she will quickly volunteer to serve in the role of leader.

19 Arrange for some type of formal team development experience to occur shortly after the creation of a new team. This activity often gets put on the back burner until problems develop among team members. You can reduce many potential conflicts by making team development a top priority.

20 Set clear boundaries regarding what the team can and cannot do. Decide if they can set their own hours, hire additional staff, give themselves raises, or purchase equipment and supplies. Addressing boundary issues from the start reduces confusion and uncertainty.

21 Allow teams to experience growing pains. As a manager, you might be tempted to intervene the moment a team experiences a challenge. Resist that initial temptation. Challenges provide a rich environment for team members to develop leadership and management skills. See how the group responds to the situation, then offer just enough guidance to point them in the right direction.

22 Give teams responsibility *along with* authority. Managers frequently fail to give individuals and teams the authority needed to be effective. If you are unable to bestow authority to a team and its members, you are better off not having a team at all.

23 Share the company’s mission and vision statements with the team. It serves to remind them why the organization exists.

24 Know the difference between a **mission** statement and a **vision** statement. A **mission** statement describes an organization’s current purpose. A hospital’s mission statement may read, “To provide quality healthcare to all patients, regardless of income, from a staff of competent and caring medical professionals.” A mission statement focuses on what the organization is doing *now*. A **vision** statement contains the organization’s long-term goal(s); it describes where they would like to be five or ten years from now. An example might be, “To be the largest healthcare provider in the Southeast.” A vision statement is much more general and future-oriented.

25 Ask the team to create its own mission statement. The team’s mission should be to support the mission of the organization, with specifics on how they are going to achieve this objective.

26 Design the team mission statement so that it contains more details than the organization’s mission statement. Make it action-oriented.

27 Ensure that each team knows that its results or lack of results has an impact on the entire organization. Team members will become more committed to quality when they realize that their work is directly related to the organization’s success.

28 Formulate a written agenda prior to any team meeting. An agenda ensures that key points will be addressed and helps to keep the meeting focused. Distribute the agenda prior to the meeting whenever possible so that team members will arrive prepared to discuss current issues.

29 Praise team members in public for their accomplishments. Regardless of an individual's behavioral style, most people like to receive praise for a job well done. This praise can take the form of a company-wide email, a column in the monthly newsletter, or a formal award ceremony.

30 Realize that each team member has his own unique behavioral style. No behavioral style is better than another. Each style brings something positive to the team.

31 Create an environment that enables team members to work on activities that are matched to their behavioral styles. When people are allowed to do what comes naturally to them, they can spend their energy on the task at hand rather than on adapting their behavior.

32 Encourage **D**'s to embrace tasks that challenge the status quo. They usually enjoy being team leaders. People with this style have the ability to keep tabs on many projects simultaneously. They have an uncanny ability to cut through all the "red tape" and focus on the bottom line. **D**'s will push lagging team members to perform.

33 Prompt **I**'s to focus their energies on activities that involve interacting with people. These are the people who find it extremely easy to build alliances with other team members as well as with people from other departments within the organization. **I**'s are also comfortable speaking in front of a group. This person could summarize the team's progress to the board of directors and enjoy doing it.

34 Plan for **S**'s to work on tasks that require creating organization and structure. Once a goal is established, **S**'s have the ability to develop a well-thought-out action plan that will enable the team to reach the goal. The **S** behavioral style brings a sense of balance and patience to the team. This style finds it easy to play the role of diplomat when two team members do not see eye-to-eye.

35 Focus the **C**'s on data collection and analysis. People with this style can never have too much information when making a decision. Number crunching and proofreading are two tasks that are appealing to the **C** behavioral style.

36 Strive to have all four behavioral styles represented on the team. Doing so will create a team that has someone who is behaviorally "matched" to any type of task that needs to be accomplished.



Conflict is bound to eventually happen on a team. How that conflict is handled determines the overall strength and effectiveness of the team.

37 Stress the importance of addressing conflict as soon as it arises. The longer a person waits to deal with conflicts or challenges, the worse the situation becomes.

38 Be aware that when conflict between team members occurs it can usually be traced back to a behavioral style issue. An example is a **D**

interacting with a **C**. The **D** will want to focus on the bottom line and make quick decisions, while the **C** will take much longer in his decision-making process and will want to be sure that he has examined every piece of data relevant to the situation. When team members do not understand how other behavioral styles operate, friction will develop.

39 Understand that conflict can also be caused when team members' behavioral styles do not match the jobs that they are assigned to complete. If a **C**, who is naturally task-focused and introverted, has to handle projects that involve high degrees of interaction and contact with people, he will experience conflict between his behavioral style and the tasks he must complete, along with a decreased level of job satisfaction.

40 Realize that research has confirmed that organizations experience increased turnover and lower productivity when team members experience conflict with others or with the tasks they must perform.

41 Create an opportunity for team members to tell other members how their behavioral styles affect the ways they prefer to work and interact. Have this happen soon after a new team is formed.

42 Schedule regular performance reviews (approximately every six months) with all team members, including the leader. This eliminates the possibility of someone saying "I didn't know what was expected of me." Everyone will know that feedback and direction will be provided regularly. It will also give you an opportunity to inquire about any type of conflict that might exist and explore solutions.

Let Us Support Your Success

We can help you learn more about your behavioral style, the behavioral style of your subordinates, or the behavioral style of your team members. The DISC system is a powerful management tool that literally takes years off the learning curve of understanding how your employees behave.

We offer a detailed, twenty-six page DISC Style Analysis assessment that describes an individual's general characteristics, their value to the organization, how they prefer to be communicated with, how they do not want to be communicated with, how they prefer to be managed, what motivates them, specific behavioral strengths and growth opportunities, plus a detailed Style Analysis DISC graph.

Managers that have this type of behavioral information about each of their employees have a distinct advantage. They are able to assign tasks that are matched to an individual's behavioral style, thus creating a more energized, productive, and satisfied employee.

This system will also assist managers in creating effective teams. The behavior styles of potential team members can be analyzed *prior* to the formation of a team. This saves time, diffuses potential conflict between team members, and ensures productivity.

We also conduct a variety of in-house seminars that incorporate the DISC model.

For information about quantity and customized booklet purchases, or any of our products or consulting services, please use the contact information listed below.

The Chrysalis Corporation
2001Hammock Drive
Valdosta, GA 31602

Voice: (229) 257-0665

Fax: (800) 886-2563

Website: www.chrysaliscorporation.com

Email: info@chrysaliscorporation.com

10 Tips to Promote YOUR Business with This Booklet!

(It can even be customized for you.)

1. Send this booklet to your clients at year's end, thanking them for their business.
2. Use this booklet as a "thank you" for a sales appointment.
3. Mail this booklet to your prospect list to stay in touch with them.
4. Offer this booklet free with any purchase during a specific time, with a certain purchase amount, or when opening a new account.
5. Distribute this booklet to prospects at a trade show.
6. Give this booklet as an incentive for completing a questionnaire or survey.
7. Include this booklet as a "thank you" gift when mailing your invoices.
8. Package this booklet as a value-added bonus with a product you sell.
9. Deliver a copy of this booklet to the first "X" number of people who enter a drawing or come to your store.
10. Provide copies of this booklet to people and organizations who can refer business to you.

What are you waiting for?