

Are you the only 'normal' person at your office?

Ever wondered why you're the only 'normal' one at your office? Better understanding your behavioural profile, those of your colleagues and customers can help break down communication barriers and help you achieve results. It also helps overcome that feeling that everyone else around you is obviously completely insane!

The DISC model looks at a person's natural behavioural style and the way they approach the world around them. Using the psychological theories of Carl Jung, William Moulton-Marston defined the four dimensional behavioural map (or DISC).

Characteristics of 'D' people

Think Gordon Gekko from *Wall Street*. 'D' represents dominance. The characteristics of people with a heavy 'D' profile are likely to include:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| • Hard and fast decision making | • Often perceived as aggressive or assertive |
| • Like to be in charge | • Appears to lack patience |
| • Results focused | • Risk takers |
| | • Bold |

This is a driven, results oriented type of person. You can often find 'D' profile people in management because it gives them the control they need to feel comfortable. They are also not generally known for worrying about everyone else's point of view.

How to deal with a 'D'

- Be prepared; have the facts ready to go
- Be assertive; you need to be able to back up your opinion or they are likely to dismiss it
- Be concise; 'D's' don't want you to take up their time getting your thoughts together
- Don't be offended. It's natural for this profile to be assertive.

When a 'D' profile gets stressed, they can be bullying, rude and aggressive.

Characteristics of 'I' people

These are people who like to be the centre of attention and share their thoughts, energy and enthusiasm with everyone around them. 'I' represents influencer and are often entrepreneurial. Think Richard Branson. You can often find 'I' profiles in the public domain as speakers, trainers, and sales people or entrepreneurs reaching for dizzying heights. Characteristics of the 'I' profile include:

Continued over the page

Christmas in September

Ever noticed that Christmas – the lead up to it and the event itself – is getting longer? In the week after Father's Day the major retailers started putting up their Christmas decorations. For retailers and the hospitality industry, this can be a good thing. It gets people thinking that the end of the year is almost here; Christmas presents, planning parties, entertaining and fixing up the house, all come to mind with the share of the consumer's wallet following.

For every other business, it can trigger delays with customers unwilling to commit to decisions until the New Year. Depending on your customer base, Christmas, New Year, and the end of the financial year are generally all critical points in the consumer psyche. It's the time when people are making decisions about what to spend, what to cut back on, and what can simply wait until they return from holidays. Every good marketing plan should factor in these realities and implement accordingly. If the time to acquire each sale is slowing down, give your market an incentive to commit now or lay a firm foundation for the New Year.

Quote of the month

"A 'No' uttered from the deepest conviction is better than a 'Yes' merely uttered to please, or worse, to avoid trouble."

Mohandas Gandhi

-
- Talkative
 - Motivated and persuasive
 - Animated and energetic
 - Upbeat and optimistic
 - Receptive, open and agreeable
 - Are not great listeners – they're just waiting for you to be quiet so they can start share their views with you
-

How to deal with an 'I'

- Show interest
- Don't ask for their feedback if you're not prepared to acknowledge it
- Put details in writing and set goals
- Be constructive in your criticism

When an 'I' profile gets stressed, they complain, can lose focus and be dramatic.

Characteristics of 'S' people

The team players. 'S' represents steadiness or submissive. These are the people who look out for everyone else around them. They are:

-
- Calm and stable
 - Supportive
 - Like to work with a structure and procedures where the rules are known
 - Like to work through issues, plan and then implement
 - Don't like change or being put on the spot
-

How to deal with an 'S'

- Make sure they have time to digest information and make decisions
- Don't be confronting
- Be supportive and build trust
- Plan for change

When an 'S' profile gets stressed, they tend to internalise their problems, can be emotional, indecisive and lose confidence.

Characteristics of 'C' people

The specialists of the behavioural world, the 'C' profile is happy to be locked away and focus on the one thing until they reach a conclusion. Key characteristics include:

-
- Logical and questioning
 - Sceptical and persistent
 - Has high standards for themselves and expects everyone else to have these same standards
 - Likes things to be right (regardless of how much time that takes)
-

Dealing with a 'C' people

- Set time limits
- Be logical in your approach
- Show competence
- Use a more formal approach

When a 'C' profile gets stressed, they stop communicating, become critical and over analytical, isolate themselves and get bogged down.

There are no wrong or right characteristics. It's just that some profiles are better suited to some situations and roles than others. Most people are capable of adopting other characteristics when they need to; it's just that most of us will always revert to what feels natural. Think about the jobs you avoid doing or have to force yourself to do – chances are these jobs are inconsistent with your behavioural type. You can do them, but they take a whole lot more energy than those jobs that are consistent with your natural behavioural style.

Jack Welsh, former CEO of General Electric once told a reporter that he spends 50% of his time on people issues. Looking at the different characteristics of the people you work with, you can see why it takes so much energy.

For your customers, understanding how they need to work with your company and your products can mean the difference between a successful and viable relationship and one that goes nowhere.