Behind the Behaviour: Coaching Through a DISC Lens



Not to box you but also to help you think outside the box.

Presented by: Dr Fatima Shaaria Syed (PhD)

Email: fatimashaariasyed@gmail.com

Linked In: Instagram

Purpose



Build self-awareness of your own default DISC cues



Identify and adapt to a client's likely DISC style



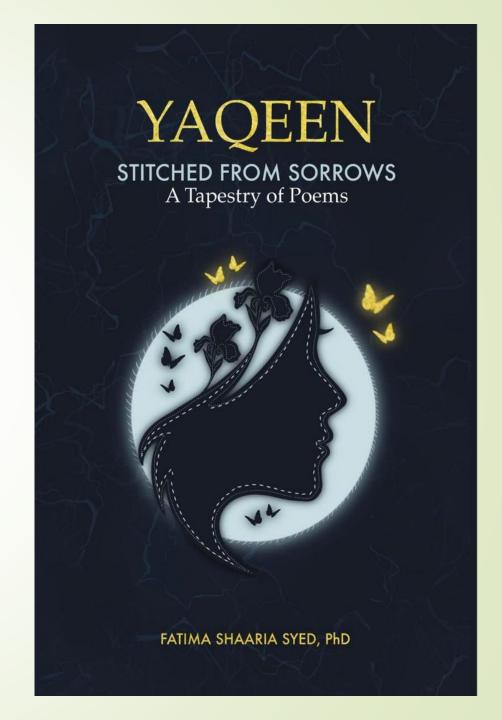
Frame goals and action steps in the language that each style finds motivating

DISC is a starting point for empathy Not a Label, but a Language

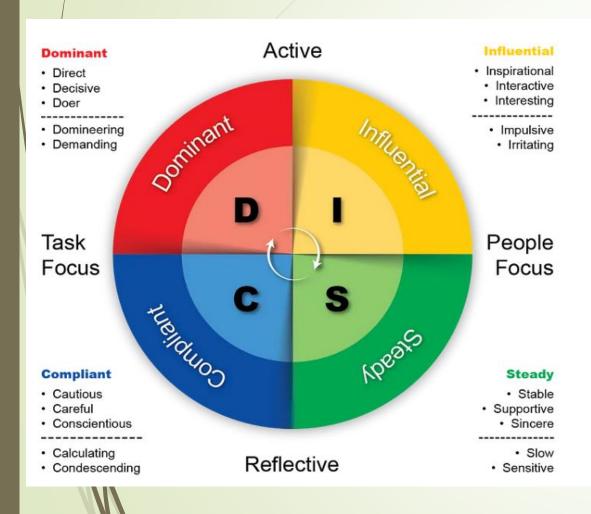
A bit about myself....

- A Digital Transformation Specialist
- A Coach.
- A Writer.
- A Traveller.
- A Survivor.

And always — A Believer in Becoming...



What is DISC?



William Moulton Marston, American psychologist:

Developed the initial DISC model in his book, *Emotions* of *Normal People* which categorized behaviors into four primary emotions and associated behavioral responses.

Four Behavioral Types of Marston's Model:

- Dominance: Direct, decisive, and assertive.
- Inducement (now often called Influence): Outgoing, persuasive, and enthusiastic.
- Submission (now often called Steadiness): Patient, supportive, and accommodating.
- Compliance (now often called Conscientiousness):
 Analytical, precise, and detail-oriented.

Evolution of the Model:

While Marston laid the foundation, subsequent psychologists like **John Geier** further developed the DISC assessment into the widely used tool it is today.

DISC Personalities

Do you know someone who is assertive, to the point, and wants the bottom line?

Some people are forceful, direct, and strong-willed. This is the D style.

Do you have friends who are great communicators and friendly to everyone?

Some people are optimistic, friendly, and talkative. This is the I style.

Do you have family members who are good listeners and great team players?

Some people are steady, loyal, and practical. This is the S style.

Have you ever worked with someone who is factual, thorough, and detail oriented?

Some people are precise, sensitive, and analytical. This is the C style.

Guess the Style

















Benefits of DISC Assessment

Style	Core drive	Pace & focus	Typical coaching need
D — Dominance	Results, control	Fast, task-centred	Channel intensity into clear, mutually agreed goals
I — Influence	Connection, recognition	Fast, people-centred	Convert enthusiasm into sustainable action steps
S — Steadiness	Harmony, security	Measured, people- centred	Strengthen confidence to voice needs and handle change
C — Conscientiousness	Accuracy, quality	Measured, task- centred	Balance analysis with timely decisions and big-picture thinking

Ethical guard-rails:

- •Treat DISC as a lens, not a label—behaviour is situational, and people are multifaceted.
- •Avoid stereotyping language ("You're such a C"); focus on observed actions and choices.
- •Encourage clients to confirm or refine your style hypothesis; the insight must resonate with them, not just with the model

Motivators

D

Motivated By...

New challenges and problems to solve

Power & authority to take risks

Freedom from many rules & regulations

Motivated By...

Flattery, praise, popularity acceptance & approval

A friendly environment

Freedom from many rules & regulations S

Motivated By...

Recognition for loyalty

A secure environment with little conflict

No sudden changes in procedure or lifestyle

Activities one can start and finish C

Motivated By...

High-quality standards

Limited social interaction

Detailed tasks

Greatest Fears

Style Fear 1 Fear 2 Being taken **Failure** advantage of Loss of popularity Rejection Change for change's sake Loss of security **Criticism without Conflict** validation

Understanding All Four Styles

10

Style	Personality Goal
D	Have Control
I	Have fun
S	Have Security
C	Have Perfection

Style	Management Style
D	Force of character "Do it!"
1	Verbal Persuasion "You can do it!"
S	Slowing down "We can do i!"
С	Information "Let's do it right!"

Style	Under Pressure
D	Blunt; Impatient
I	Over-talkative; Scattered
S	Withdraws ; Avoids conflict
С	Over- analyses; risk averse

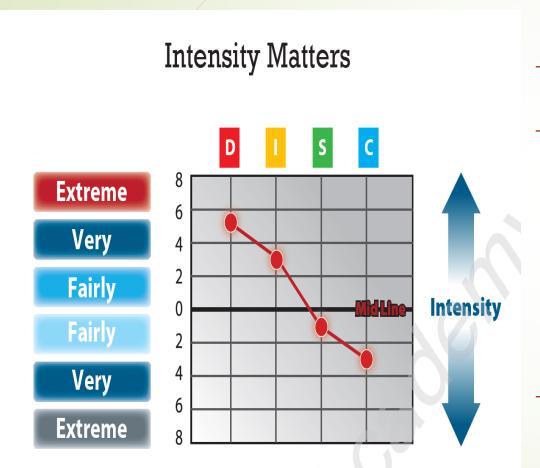
DISC in Teams Situations

Style	Conflict
D	Fix it fast
1	Talk it through
S	Avoid it
С	Analyse before acting

Style	Silence in Group Chat
D	Assumes agreement
	Sends emojis to lighten the mood
S	Wonders if people are okay
С	Think before replying

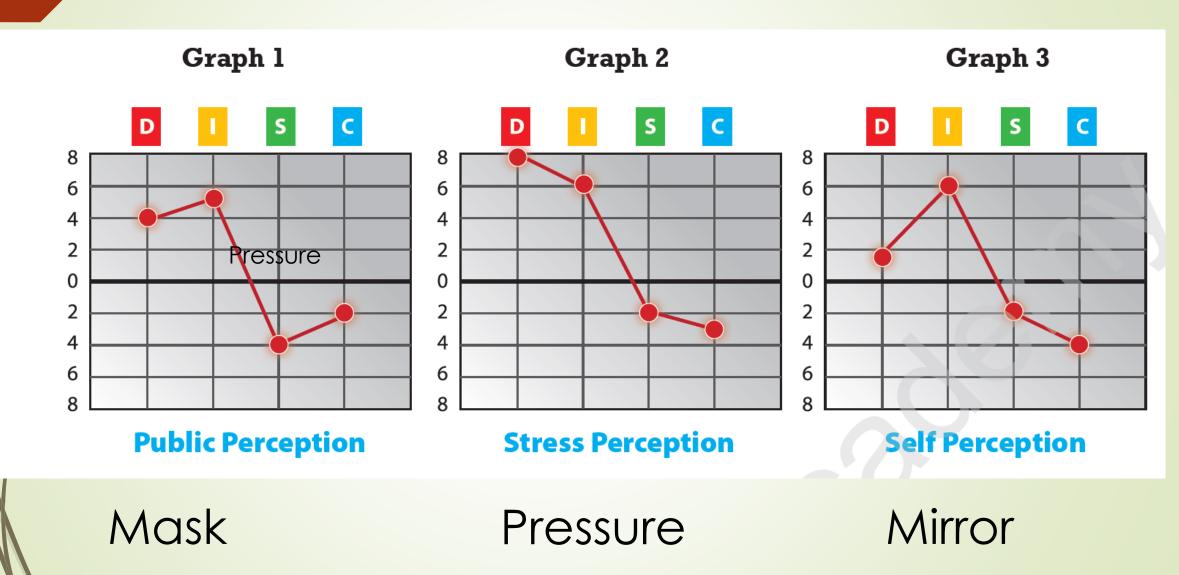
Style	Sudden Deadline Change
D	Push through
1	Improvise
S	Feel stressed by change
С	Worry about quality

DISC Style Blends There are 41 style blends and 12 special patterns



Style	High Intensity	Low Intensity
D	Decides for all	Decides NOT to decide
I	You won't get a word IN	You won't get a word OUT
S	No changes please	Will change in an instant
С	Lots of data	Do not bore me with the facts

The 3 Graphs – Full DISC Assessment



Discussion

HOW CAN WE USE DISC TO BUILD TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR CLIENTS?

ONE INSIGHT YOU'RE TAKING
AWAY
ONE THING YOU WILL DO
DIFFERENTLY

It is not that I'm so smart. But I stay with the questions much longer."

Albert Einstein

Further Information

Free DISC Test - DISC Personality Testing

Short online free assessment with your questions focused on work environment. There are many other free ones available too.

DISC Personality Profiling | The Coaching Academy

Where I got my DISC practitioner accreditation although there are many providers of DISC practitioner course.

Disclaimer

External links are offered for convenience and do **not** imply endorsement. Content and policies may change—review each site's terms before use. Free DISC quizzes are illustrative only and not a substitute for accredited assessments. Confirm any certification meets your professional-body requirements.

Key characteristics of different Styles

D Style – Outgoing + Task General Characteristics		
Strong Willed	Impetuous	
Productive	Exerts sound leadership	
Decisive	Establishes goals	
Practical	Can be too busy for family	
 Visionary 	Impatient with poor performance	
Optimistic	Knows the right answer	
Courageous	Has little need for friends	
Likes to Lead	Very independent	
Compulsive need for change	Reluctant to say 'I'm sorry'	
Must correct wrongs	Excels in emergencies	
Not easily discouraged	May be right, but unpopular	
 Won't give up when losing 	Resolute	
Independent and self sufficient		
Can be perceived as		
Overly dominant	Argumentative and impatient	
 Unsympathetic and cold 	Opinionated	
 Insensitive and inconsiderate 	Crafty	
 Blunt and sarcastic 	Not complimentary or emotional	
 Unforgiving 	Quick to anger	
 Self sufficient and domineering 		
Occupational Characteristics		
Organises well	Low tolerance for error	
 Seeks practical solutions 	Doesn't analyse detail	
 Moves quickly to action 	Bored by Trivia	
 Delegates work 	Rash decision maker	
 Insists on production 	Rude or tactless	
 Stimulates activity 	Manipulative and demanding	
 Thrives on opposition 	End justifies the means	
 Goal orientated 	Demands loyalty in the ranks	
 Sees the whole picture 	Work may become all consuming	

	,
Intensity	
 The higher the D value the more active and aggressive an individual will be whilst overcoming problems and obstacles 	The lower the D value the less of a need to be in control or in lead position
In an antagonistic environment:	
 High D types will respond aggressively and decisively 	
Emotion	
 The D factor can also measure the emotion of anger The High D will be quick to anger 	The Low D will be slow to anger
D Style Overview	
Motivated by	Power and Authority
Management style	Directing
Communication style	Tells
Method of control	Force of character
Value to organisation	Drive for results

I style – Outgoing + People General Characte	ristics
Outgoing	Memory for stories
Charismatic	Enthusiastic
Warm	Expressive
 Friendly 	Good on stage
 Talkative 	Wide-eyed
Life of the party	 Innocent
 Compassionate 	Lives in the Present
 Demonstrative 	Changeable disposition
 Generous 	Compulsive talker
Sincere at Heart	 Exaggerates
 Good sense of humour 	Optimistic
 Positive 	
Can be perceived as:	
 Undisciplined 	 Undependable
Weak willed	Over-optimistic
 Restless 	Egocentic
 Naïve 	Dwells on Trivia
 Disorganised 	 Controlled by circumstance
 Unproductive 	 Angers easily
Occupational Characteristics	
 Volunteers for jobs 	 Would rather talk than work
 Thinks up new activities 	 Forgets obligations
 Looks great on the surface 	 Does not follow though
 Creative and colourful 	Easily distracted
 Has energy and enthusiasm 	 Confidence fades fast
 Starts in a flashy way 	 Undisciplined
 Inspires others to join in 	 Does not always prioritise
 Charms others to work 	 Decides by feelings
 Wastes time talking 	

Intensity	
 The higher the I value the more the active, verbal and persuasive an individual will be whilst overcoming the problems and obstacles 	The lower the I value the more the person will use data and facts with a tendency to be more non-verbal.
In an antagonistic environment:	
 High I types will respond actively and may try and negotiate an agreement 	
Emotion	
 The I factor measure the emotion of optimism. Extremely High I are joyful and optimistic 	Low I tend to be more pessimistic
I style Overview:	
Motivated by:	Praise and recognition
Management style:	Motivating and inspirational
Communication style:	Sells
Method of control:	Verbal persuasion
Value to organisation:	Working well with people and generating enthusiasm

S Style – Reserved + People General Characteristics	
Likeable	Diplomatic
Efficient	 Organised
 Dependable 	Conservative
 Practical 	Reluctant Leader
 Low-key personality 	Easy going
• Relaxed	Patient
Well Balanced	Quiet, but witty
 Sympathetic 	Kind
 Keeps emotions hidden 	Happily reconciled to life
Can be perceived as:	
 Unmotivated 	Blasé
• Spectator	Self-protective
 Indecisive 	Fearful
 Unenthusiastic 	Reticent
 Avoids responsibility 	Passive resistance
Too compromising	An observer
Occupational Characteristics	
• Competent	• Steady
 Peaceful 	Agreeable
 Has administrative ability 	Mediate problems
 Avoids conflict 	Finds the easy way
 Resents being pushed 	Lacks self motivation
 Not goal oriented 	Desire to complete tasks

J	•
Intensity	
 The higher the S value, the slower a person will undertake activities. The more the person prefers to start and complete one project at a time. The higher the S the more resistant to change 	The lower the S value, the faster the pace and greater the desire for change.
In an antagonistic environment:	
 High S types will respond passive/aggressively and seek to blend in 	
Emotion	
 The S factor measures emotional expression. The higher the S value the more difficult it is to read an individual. 	The lower the S value, the emotionally expressive the person is.
S style Overview:	
Motivated by:	Security
Management style:	Organising
Communication style:	Listens
Method of control:	Slowing down
Value to organisation:	Service and support

C style – Reserved + Task General Characteristics		
 Analytical 	 Idealistic 	
 Perfectionist 	 Conscientious 	
 Loyal 	 Sensitive 	
 Self-sacrificing 	 Self disciplined 	
 Serious 	 Purposeful 	
 Genius prone 	Talented	
 Creative 	Artistic	
 Musically gifted 	 Philosophical 	
Can be perceived as:		
 Moody 	 Negative 	
 Critical 	Rigid	
 Legalistic 	 Sensitive to criticism 	
 Revengeful 	 Unsociable 	
 Theoretical 	 Impractical 	
 Becoming depressed over 	 Not people orientated 	
imperfections	Hard to please	
Occupational Characteristics		
Schedule oriented	Perfectionist	
 High standards 	Detail orientated	
 Persistent 	 Thorough 	
 Orderly 	 Organised 	
 Economical 	 Sees the problem 	
 Finds creative solutions 	 Needs to finish what he/she starts 	
 Likes charts, graphs and figures 	 Prefers analysis to work 	
 Can spend too much time planning 	Deep need for approval	

. .

Intensity	
 The higher the C value the more the person will comply with rules set by others 	The lower the C value, the more an individual will challenge rules and seek independence
In an antagonistic environment:	
 High C types will respond passive/aggressively and seek to justify their actions 	
Emotion	
 The C factor measure caution. The higher the C factor the more an individual moves cautiously and analytically forward 	The lower the C factor, the more fearless the individual
C style Overview:	
Motivated by:	Systems and procedure
Management style:	Rule enforcement
Communication style:	Writes
Method of control:	Information
Value to organisation:	Quality and standards

Growth areas...

If you are a D:

- Strive to be an 'active' listener
- Be attentive to other team members' ideas until everyone reaches a consensus
- Be less controlling and domineering
- Develop greater appreciation for the opinions, feelings and desires of others.
- Put more energy into personal relationships and courtesy
- Show your support for other team members
- Take time to explain the why of your statements and proposals
- Be friendlier and more approachable

If you are an I:

- Weigh the pros and cons before making a decision; be less impulsive
- Be more results oriented
- Exercise control over your actions, words and emotions
- Focus more on details and facts
- Remember to slow down your pace for other team members
- Talk less; listen more
- Consider and evaluate ideas from other team members
- Concentrate on following through with tasks

Growth areas...

If you are an S:

- Be more open to change
- Be more direct in more interactions
- Focus on overall goals of the team rather than specific procedures
- Deal with confrontation constructively
- Develop more flexibility
- Increase pace to accomplish goals
- Show more initiative
- Work at expressing your thoughts, opinions and feelings

If you are a C:

- Concentrate on doing the 'right' things, not just doing things right
- Be less critical of others approaches and methods
- Respond more quickly to team goals
- Strive to build relationships with team members
- Be more decisive
- Focus less on facts and more on people
- Take risks along with other members

How can we recognise DISC styles?

How recognise a D-style

The High D Observable Behaviours — (i.e. Alan Sugar)

- Strong handshake
- Probably running behind schedule
- Impatient and impulsive
- Tries to dominate or take over very direct
- Will have a 'can do' attitude
- Will interrupt you while you are talking
- Will do something else while you are talking (read, make a phone call)
- Will use challenging questions
- Desk may be untidy
- Office will be functional rather than stylish
- Will put paperwork in piles not files
- Will give direct, steady eye contact
- Will lean forward if interested and lean back if not
- Will use finger pointing gestures to make a point
- Will be keen to sort out problems immediately

How recognise a I-style

The High I Observable Behaviours – (i.e. Will Smith)

- Very friendly handshake may pump or hold
- Very enthusiastic & friendly
- Extremely verbal telling stories whenever possible
- Very trusting
- Happy to share their feelings
- Friendly and sociable
- Very positive and optimistic
- Office may be disorganised and untidy
- May have pictures of self and/or awards openly displayed
- Likely to have the latest executive toy or gadget
- Friendly eye contact that is steady they can 'smile' with their eyes
- Very expressive facially
- Will use hand gestures (even when describing something on the phone)
- Will prefer to persuade rather than demand
- May delay decisions if they feel it will be unpopular

How recognise a S-style

The High S Observable Behaviours – (i.e. Michael Parkinson)

- Security conscious often reluctant to change the staus quo. Needs time to adjust to change and the decision to change
- Will prefer to manage or 'smooth' a situation rather than make a aggressive decision
- May have a slow pace or response
- Will be a good listener
- Friendly, firm and sincere handshake not aggressive
- Office will be well organised with neat piles of paper
- May have a name plate on the door and will have family possessions and pictures on display
- Furnishings could well be worn but comfortable
- Tends to dress for comfort rather than fashion
- Tends to question in order to clarify a situation or request
- Sincere eye contact and excellent listening skills. They will listen carefully and considerately

How recognise a C-style

The High C Observable Behaviours — (i.e. Bill Gates)

- Loose, brief handshake (sometimes nervous)
- Normally very polite and diplomatic
- Well prepared, unhurried, organised and punctual
- Time disciplined and diplomatic
- Detailed, logical, precise questions. Very fact and detail and evidence orientated if not totally satisfied will be reluctant to make a decision
- Will probably have a neat orderly office (almost impersonal) The desk may well be clear apart from the item they are currently working on
- Everything neatly filled in a system that works
- Tends to avoid a lot of eye contact, particularly in an aggressive or hostile situation. Therefore may
 have fleeting eye contact
- Tends not to share personal feelings
- Tends not to show feelings though facial expression
- Can get defensive when threatened
- Will quote facts, policy, rules when in conflict