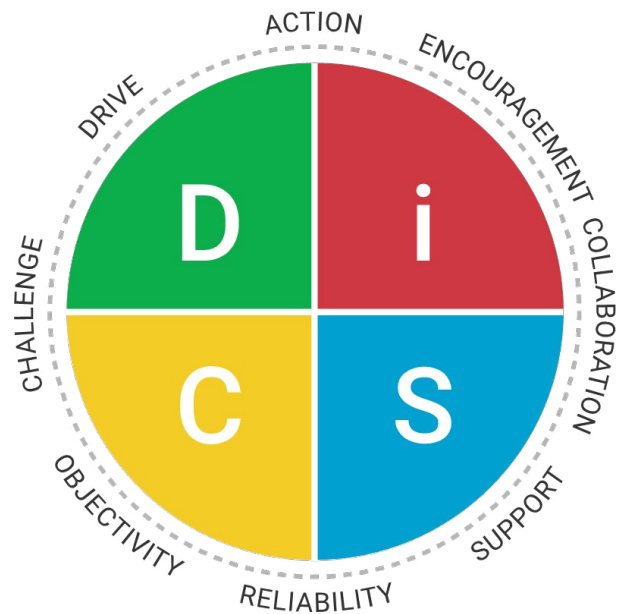


Leading DiSC® Styles Through the Challenges of Remote Work



When leading through times of intense change, it is important for managers to understand their employees' individual needs. As organizations across the globe shift to working remotely, many of them for the first time, learning about individuals' DiSC® styles, represented by the DiSC® Model on the right, is another asset in understanding how to best lead your employees. DiSC® styles are personality profiles similar to SOCIAL STYLE® or MBTI® types. They are determined through Wiley's DiSC® assessment, which categorizes employees into four groups based on personality and work behaviors. By breaking team members into these categories, you can better understand their needs and communication style. Reference the following graphic for a basic understanding of each individual DiSC® style and consider where your employees may fit.



Copyright © 2013 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. "DiSC"® and "Everything DiSC"® are registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

DOMINANCE

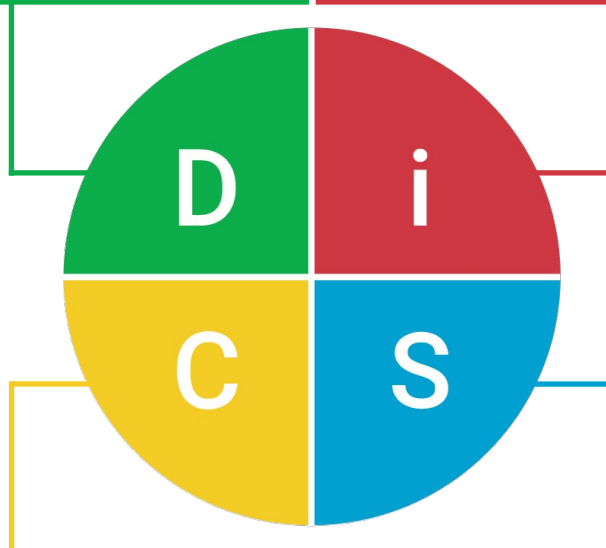
D

An individual with the **Dominance DiSC®** style has a high drive and is motivated by winning and success. They may be described as direct or strong-willed and are always looking to challenge themselves. Dominance DiSC® styles enjoy working with people they view as confident and are quick to take action. However, they can sometimes come across as aggressive and may cause conflict with their seeming lack of empathy for others or impatience.

INFLUENCE

i

An individual with the **influence DiSC®** style is people-oriented and prefers to problem solve through collaboration. They are motivated by their connections with others and may be described as magnetic or trusting. Influence DiSC® styles enjoy working with others and feel rewarded by popularity in their work environment. Because they are people-oriented, they can be impulsive to keep people happy and may lack follow-through when a task requires long periods of focus or close attention to detail.



CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

C

An individual with the **Conscientiousness DiSC®** style is detail-oriented and prefers working in a stable environment. They are motivated by opportunities to gain knowledge and may be described as systematic or cautious. Conscientiousness DiSC® styles enjoy showing their expertise and creating quality work. However, they tend to overanalyze due to their fear of being wrong, and their solitary work style may lead them to isolate themselves.

S

STEADINESS

An individual with the **Steadiness DiSC®** style is highly motivated to help others and strives to maintain stability. They excel at cooperation and may be described as calm or patient. Steadiness DiSC® styles enjoy collaboration and desire sincere appreciation from others. Because they value stability, they can sometimes be slow to adapt and their amiable personalities will cause them to avoid conflict even when it may be productive.

Now that you have a basic understanding of DiSC® styles and where your employees may fall within them, let's consider the specific challenges each DiSC® style may be facing under these new, unexpected remote working conditions.

D

DOMINANCE

Though “D” style individuals may be more motivated than ever by the idea of overcoming the new challenges of working in an unpredictable environment, they might struggle with the communication challenges of working remotely.

CHALLENGES

Communicating with others remotely:

“D” style individuals often tend to be unnecessarily blunt with their coworkers and sometimes even come across as aggressive. This may be exacerbated by the impersonal nature of online communication.

Impulsiveness due to impatience: If your “D” style individuals are accustomed to quick communication and decision-making in an in-office setting, they may get frustrated with the naturally slower communication of remote work. This could lead them to make impulsive decisions without having all the necessary information.

Lack of communication when feeling insecure: “D” style individuals are conscious of their image and fear being perceived as vulnerable by their coworkers. As a result, they may be reluctant to voice concerns or insecurities they have about their tasks or work environment.

TIPS FOR MANAGING

Make sure your “D” style employees are aware of remote communication etiquette:

Encourage them to take the time to converse with their teammates beyond task conversations and participate in opportunities to strengthen their connections with their coworkers, such as any team-building exercises your organization may be employing during this time.

Ensure that your “D” style employees have an open line of communication to you:

Remember, these employees will want to make decisions fast and, even if you need to pump the breaks on their behalf, it will be encouraging for them to at least know they are being heard.

Check in on your “D” style employees: Even if they are outwardly displaying confidence, “D” style individuals will be more likely to open up in a one-on-one setting when they don't have to worry about their coworkers' opinions. It's important that you catch any signs of regression early, so don't rely too heavily on outward appearances.

i

INFLUENCE

In many ways, it may be your “i” style individuals that are best equipped to foster the connections within your team, even under difficult circumstances. However, they are the most likely to be hit with feelings of isolation that may seriously affect their engagement.

CHALLENGES

Not enough social interaction: The “i” style individuals thrive on social interaction and working remotely may cause them to feel ignored. They may even go as far as to view a lack of communication as disapproval.

Lack of organization when working from home: The “i” style individuals often struggle with staying on task and being organized. The distractions of working from home, particularly if they are working around family members or a significant other, could become a significant hurdle for their productivity.

Perceived lack of recognition for their work: The “i” style individuals are motivated by social recognition. When working remotely, they may feel unappreciated when their victories are celebrated privately through chat messages or phone calls.

TIPS FOR MANAGING

Keep a running conversation with your “i” style employees: Encourage their teammates to do the same. They will also appreciate having conversations beyond work topics so that they can continue to feel like their relationships are developing.

Help your “i” style employees stay on task: Depending on the type of work your “i” employee does, there are different ways you can support them. Some may benefit from a frequently updated list of priorities, an easy-to-use project management tool or a daily standup with their team.

Share their victories: Consider ways that you can give your “i” employees the social recognition they want when they succeed. This may be in the form of a shoutout during your next team meeting or a group email that will allow others to join in on celebrating them.

S

STEADINESS

Though your “S” styles will be extremely forthcoming in providing the support you need to navigate any organizational changes, they are also the ones most likely to struggle during a time when stability and social interaction may be lacking.

CHALLENGES

Lack of collaboration: “S” style individuals enjoy helping others, and the shift to remote work is likely to leave them feeling isolated. They may find solitary work to be less fulfilling, resulting in lower engagement.

Insecurity due to lack of stability: “S” style individuals value stability very highly and are likely to feel insecure by the uncertainty posed by today’s work challenges. This can quickly lead to regression, even in tasks they would perform confidently under normal circumstances.

Difficulty adjusting to new tools: “S” style individuals are accustomed to working in a specific way. They like to use the same tools and processes every time they complete a task. However, working remotely may cause limited access to their typical ways of working. Some may be slow to adopt new technology such as online messaging platforms and videoconferencing tools.

TIPS FOR MANAGING

Find channels of collaboration: There are a wide variety of online platforms that enable your employees to continue to collaborate even when working remotely. Utilize these and encourage conference calls and videoconferencing to enhance your team’s remote collaboration.

Provide professional and emotional support: Though you may not be able to answer all the questions your “S” style employee is likely to have about the future, lend them a listening ear so they can voice their concerns. Reassure them and collaborate with them to explore ways to help them through their challenges.

Provide them with learning resources: Find any learning content you can to guide your “S” style employees through using new tools and processes. If you can, take the time to walk them through any new technology or processes they are struggling to adopt.

C

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

“C” style individuals may be quick to embrace the solitude of working remotely, appreciating the opportunity to focus all their attention on their work without the distractions of the office. However, their desire for stability and perfection may cause them to struggle with the agility necessary to navigate a quickly changing work environment.

CHALLENGES

Voluntary isolation: “C” styles are at risk of weakening their connections with their coworkers due to leaning into the inherent isolation of remote working. They are unlikely to want to reach out to their coworkers beyond necessary communication for their tasks.

Insecurity due to loss of established processes: “C” styles are at their happiest when using the tools and processes they consider to be tried and true. If they are removed from these or forced to adjust them due to working remotely, they may lose confidence in their ability to perform certain tasks.

Slowed productivity due to over analysis: “C” style individuals may be slow to adjust to the agility of an uncertain, constantly changing work environment. They don’t like making decisions without thinking through every possible scenario. If they don’t have the time to think through a task as thoroughly as they want, it may lead to them being unable to act due to their fear of making a mistake.

TIPS FOR MANAGING

Encourage them to socialize with their team: Your “C” style employees may need an extra push from you to maintain their connections with their coworkers under these circumstances. You may also need to clearly state if you expect them to communicate with coworkers about a task.

Reassure them of their abilities: “C” styles may place a lot of value on the processes and tools they have honed to perfection. When they are forced to work without these, it is important to ensure that they maintain confidence in their own abilities. You may need to emphasize your confidence in their expertise and give them the opportunity to think through new processes.

Be their sounding board: When forced to work nimbly, “C” styles will appreciate the opportunity to run their thought processes by you to ensure that they are moving in the right direction. Be prepared to answer a lot of questions. If you can alleviate some of their fear of failure early on in a task, it may instill them with the confidence to make tough decisions.