

# **DISC**

## **Training Exercises and Activities**



The DISC Exercises and Activities listed in this handout provide DISC Practitioners with interactive training ideas to engage and involve their participants. Included are exercises for opening your trainings with impact, revisiting content in ways that increase retention and energizing your learners to ensure they stay involved and attentive. You will have greater impact and improve retention in your DISC training by implementing fun and engaging activities into your training sessions.

**The DISC Training Exercises and Activities handout is in your OASIS**



**LEAD LIKE JESUS**

# DISC Training Activities and Exercises

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# Alphabet Hunt

## Opening Activity

In your small group, think of one positive characteristic or behavior that begins with each letter of the alphabet. Be creative! Several examples are given below.

After your group has listed at least one word for each letter of the alphabet, pair up with someone from another group. List three behaviors that describe you, and how you use that behavior to be successful in your job.

**A** \_\_\_\_\_

**C** \_\_\_\_\_

**E** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gregarious** \_\_\_\_\_

**I** \_\_\_\_\_

**K** \_\_\_\_\_

**M** \_\_\_\_\_

**O** \_\_\_\_\_

**Quiet** \_\_\_\_\_

**S** \_\_\_\_\_

**U** \_\_\_\_\_

**W** \_\_\_\_\_

**Y** \_\_\_\_\_

**Bold** \_\_\_\_\_

**D** \_\_\_\_\_

**F** \_\_\_\_\_

**H** \_\_\_\_\_

**J** \_\_\_\_\_

**L** \_\_\_\_\_

**N** \_\_\_\_\_

**Precise** \_\_\_\_\_

**R** \_\_\_\_\_

**T** \_\_\_\_\_

**V** \_\_\_\_\_

**Xtra-Ordinary** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zealous** \_\_\_\_\_

Three behaviors that describe me:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

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## American Idol

### Small Group DISC Exercise

After you have explained each of the 4 DISC Styles and each participant has had a chance to review his/her assessment report, divide the room into the DISC styles – one in each corner.

Each group comes up with a **Team Name**, a **Team Logo**, and a **song or jingle** that they **must sing/shout/rap** to the group, based on their style.

The group (by applause vote) will pick the best jingle or routine. The winning group gets prizes. Suggested prizes might include DISC pens, DISC mugs, trinkets or candy/food items.

Send them back to their original tables to debrief the activity to apply what they just learned to the workplace.

This is a fun exercise and is very effective at bonding the group. They will talk about it long after the training is over; therefore, providing very effective reinforcement. This can also be used as a DISC review at the beginning of a second session.

## **Animal Crackers**

### **Small Group DISC Activity**

This is a great exercise to do after your group is familiar with their DISC Behavioral Style. An ideal time to do this exercise is right before or after a break.

Distribute a box of animal crackers to each member of the group. Tell them to find an animal in the box that reminds them of their behavioral style and be prepared to share their reasoning with the group.

It is a good idea for you to model this exercise for your group.

#### **Examples:**

Lion: In my job I have to be ferocious in cold calling.

Bear: Just like a bear, I have to be willing to hunt for new clients and leads.

Elephant: In the circus, an elephant has to be willing to do the same things performance after performance, with excellence. In customer service, I have to be willing to perform my job day after day with excellence.

To extend this exercise, you might also ask each participant to embellish on how this particular trait helps them be successful in their work, or how this trait when over-extended may become a weakness. Always give a personal example.

After everyone has shared an example, they can enjoy the snack.

Variation: If people seem to be stuck with trying to come up with something for an animal in the box, tell them that they can think of an animal not represented in their box that would remind them of their job or work they do.

## Appreciating Others

### Small Group DISC Exercise

Divide into D, I, S and C Groups.

With your quadrant “team”, identify at least one specific situation when your opposite “quadrant’s” DISC style added value to the organization.

Use examples of people in the room when you can.

- Write out these examples.
  
- After 5 minutes of so, have each group report out.

Example:

As “D’s” we’d like to acknowledge the “S’s” and thank them for doing \_\_\_\_\_).”

This exercise can also be done as a partner exercise if the individuals work together and have had opportunities to observe their work. Ask individuals to find a partner who has a different high style.

## Behavior Locator Opening Activity

The following list describes many common D,I,S,C behaviors. Find other participants who think one of the listed behaviors applies to them. Ask the person to sign his/her name on the line next to the item. You may have more than one participant sign each behavior. Your goal is to get as many signatures as possible during the time allowed.

Name	Behavior
_____	I usually like challenges
_____	I tend to be persuasive
_____	I tend to be relaxed and easy going
_____	I tend to be diplomatic and cautious
_____	I tell it like it is
_____	I see myself as lively and energetic
_____	I am a good listener
_____	I am good at analyzing things
_____	I want to be in charge
_____	I find it easy to meet people
_____	I see myself as soft spoken
_____	I focus on the quality of my work
_____	I see myself as bold
_____	I have many friends
_____	I like to be part of a group
_____	I pay attention to details
_____	I stick to my decisions
_____	I can easily persuade others

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# Behavioral Style Continuum

## DISC Activity

Turn to the Adapted Style Continuum and Natural Style Continuum in your DISC Report. Review the behaviors in each column that are high-lighted. Individually identify the five behaviors you think are most important for being effective on your job. After doing this individually, each member presents their selections with a partner or small group, plus the rationale for their thinking. Further discuss how these behaviors are observed and what actions you might take to develop these behaviors.

1. List five behaviors you think are most important for being effective on your job. Be prepared to share your rationale for your selections.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are some examples of these behaviors at your job?

*Example: Team Player – As a Manager, I must motivate my group to work together as a team and be a good example of a team player to achieve our customer service objectives.*

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3. Give an example of what you might do to develop one or two of these behaviors to be a more effective leader or team player.

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**Billboard Banner**  
**Uniqueness's and Misunderstandings**  
**Team DISC Exercise**

- Break into D, I, S, and C groups
- Give each group a piece of Flip Chart paper and several colored markers
- Each group has 7 minutes to draw 1 picture that depict their unique contributions as a D-I-S-C style and draw 1 picture of how they are often misunderstood
- Each group
- Each group shares their poster with the entire group
- Debrief with questions such as these:
  - Do we have a balanced team?
  - What are the consequences if we are missing any of the styles?

Stress the importance of creating value and respect and need for all 4 styles, and then brainstorm what we can do to create respect in our work environment.

## **Bumper Sticker**

### **Small Group or Individual DISC Exercise**

Break into D, I, S, and C groups, and give each group a piece of flip chart paper and markers. Ask each group to design a bumper sticker that describes how they want to be communicated with.

(Example: The D's bumper sticker might be: "Be Brief. Be Bright. Be Gone").

Variation when working with a small group: Give each person a piece of paper and markers. Have them design a bumper sticker that describes how they want to be communicated with.

Post flip charts or papers around the room. Ask groups/individuals to share their Bumper Sticker with the whole group.

Debrief by asking how they could apply this information to their work or personal world.

# DISC Find-A-Word

Find and circle or highlight the words listed at the bottom in these letters.

G N I D N A T S R E D N U Y W  
P A T I E N T U J V Z Q C T A  
S G D P A E M O T I O N A L C  
P D E L I B E R A T E S U A C  
I U T O R I T U L I V S T E U  
O J N M C N A T K T I E I V R  
N P E A H S R N A E S L O B A  
E R T T A P E E T P A T U S T  
E E N I R I D V I M U S S A E  
R C O C M R O D V O S E N E Q  
I I C Y I I M A E C R R W D I  
N S Y V N N S M S T E A D Y G  
G E Z D G G Q T I Z P P G L I  
A M I A B L E V I T I S N E S  
A N I M A T E D E C I S I V E

Accurate

Adventurous

Amiable

Animated

Assertive

Cautious

Charming

Decisive

Deliberate

Diplomatic

Emotional

Inspiring

Moderate

Optimistic

Pioneering

Precise

Restless

Sensitive

Steady

Talkative

Understanding

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# Let's Play D-I-S-C-O

D-I-S-C-O is just like BINGO. Each box identifies something about the people in this group. Seek out the different participants and ask them to sign their name in the box if the item pertains to them. Please obtain only one signature per box. Collect as many different signatures as you can!

<b>D</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>O</b>
Knows a good joke and will tell it	Plays a musical instrument	Drives a pick-up truck	Tends to be persuasive	Owens a pet
Prefers to listen more than talk	Married to a reserved, cautious person	Likes to rearrange furniture	Has traveled west of the Mississippi	Shops for a bargain
Owens a Mac computer	Has conducted at least one seminar	Likes a challenge	Enjoys hosting a party	Tends to be outgoing
Has a Facebook account	Persuaded someone to buy something	Carries a paper calendar	Has held the same job for 5 years or longer	Has a messy desk
From a state or town that begins with A-E-I-O-U	Tends to be a soft spoken person	Uses a calculator when shopping for groceries	Has an outgoing child	Left-handed person

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## DISCommandments

### Small Group DISC Exercise

In your small group, read these commandments aloud. Add two more at the bottom of this page and share your new commandments with the rest of the group.

1. Thou shalt judge less and understand more.
2. Thou shalt understand and respect thyself.
3. Thou shalt understand and respect your co-workers.
4. Thou shalt create an environment conducive to bringing out the best in others.
5. Thou shalt remember all behavioral styles are created equal.
6. Thou shalt embrace the “differences=better” mentality.
7. Thou shalt show respect for all behavioral styles.
8. Thou shalt be committed to communicating your needs.
9. Thou shalt be willing to adapt to other behavioral styles.
10. Thou shalt remember to ask yourself often, “Am I using the appropriate behavior in the appropriate amount?”

11. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Discuss:** Which DISCcommandments are the easiest and which are the most difficult to adopt?

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## DISCOVERY Card Exercise

### Opening Exercise

This exercise requires that you create a set of DISCOVERY Cards. DISCOVERY card template is found in your OASIS. Print the D cards on red color card stock paper, print the I cards on yellow color card stock paper, print the S cards on green color stock paper, and print the C cards on blue color stock paper. Divided into four color-coded groups of 32 cards each, the cards contain words that describe D-I-S-C behaviors This entertaining card game quickly introduces learners to DISC.

The exercise works well for a large group but could be modified for smaller groups as well

**DISCOVERY Cards Set up Instructions:** Count out 5 DISCOVERY cards for each participant (one of each color, plus one color duplicate) and place them on the table in front of each participant's materials. Make sure you have no word duplicates in the grouping for each participant. You may want to paper clip them together.

**Exercise Instructions:** Say: "To start the day, I'd like you to take the five DISCOVERY cards that are in front of you and select three words that describe your strengths or behaviors. "Discard two cards that are least like you. Next, trade cards with other participants in your table group to find 3 words that BEST describe your strengths or behaviors."

After trading with table mates, move about and trade cards with other participants in the room. Your goal is to get 3 cards that are the most like you as possible."

**Next, follow these instructions:** Say: "Review cards that others discarded on their tables If you find a card that is a better description of you, pick up the new card and discard one. Your goal is to have three cards that contain adjectives that are very descriptive of you."

After a few minutes say: "Now, return to your tables. Each participant will have 2 minutes at your tables to answer this question: 'How will these personal characteristics help you

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(select the best discussion topic for your workshop)"

- contribute to the organization's mission and goals
- be successful on their job
- create a stronger team
- be a better (leader, salesperson, customer service rep., trainer, teacher, etc.)

## Four Corner Exercise Group Exercise

This exercise helps participants become more familiar with their DISC tendencies and generates discussions that improve their ability to adapt their style to different behavioral styles.



1. Begin by dividing the group by D-I-S-C styles into the 4 corners of the room. The Ds are in the opposite corner of the Ss and the Is are in the opposite corner from the Cs.
2. Give each group a piece of chart paper, tape and several colored markers. Have them post the flip chart on the wall.
3. Group members work together to list:
  - a. their 3 greatest strengths
  - b. option 1: a movie character, TV character or cartoon character that clearly depicts their style and be prepared to provide evidence  
option 2: a slogan or quote that best portrays their behavioral style
  - c. 2-3 ways to adapt to your opposite style.
    - D Group list ways to adapt to the S style
    - S Group list ways to adapt to the D style
    - I Group list ways to adapt to the C style
    - C Group list ways to adapt to the I style
4. After 10 minutes ask each group to give a short presentation and specifically address their opposite style when sharing how they would adapt their style to meet the needs of that style.
5. As a Facilitator, after each group makes their presentation, turn to the opposite group and ask several questions:
  - How would that work for you?
  - Is there any thing else the opposite style could do to be sensitive to your needs?

## Getting To Know You Group Exercise

This activity is designed to allow each behavioral group to share insights about themselves. The information will help teams capitalize on each other's strengths.

This exercise generates a lot of energy and usually laughter among the group. Have fun with this exercise. Encourage creativity.

Read aloud directions:

1. Break into similar D, I, S, and C groups.
2. With your group members, think of quotes, songs, logos, symbols, pictures or famous people that represent your behavioral tendency. Be creative and have fun.
3. As a group, create a poster, skit, commercial, dance, song or saying which exemplifies your group's behavioral style. Feel free to include props, pictures, or music which represents your behavioral tendency.
4. After 10 minutes, each group will give a short presentation exemplifying the distinct characteristics of your behavioral style.

As a debriefing exercise:

1. Ask other groups (if not obvious) what message each group was trying to depict in their presentation.
2. Ask why is it important for us to know "the messages" that other styles send to us.



## Helping Others Succeed

### DISC Group Exercise

This activity has been designed to increase your understanding of how you can help others be successful by identifying what people need from you.

1. In mixed DISC style small groups, have people brainstorm answers to the following question:  
“What do you need from each of the other 4 DISC tendencies?”
2. Discuss one tendency at a time.
3. Go around the group, one at a time, until everyone has offered an idea. If it is your turn and you’re not ready to offer an idea, just say, “pass”. Continue going around the group until everyone has offered at least one idea.
4. Remember, D’s need things from other D’s S’s need things from other S’s, and so forth.
5. One person will record all the ideas on chart paper. Create a separate chart for each D,I,S, and C tendency.
6. In this activity there are no wrong ideas, just different ones. Every idea is a good idea. The purpose of brainstorming is to list as many ideas as possible.
7. Post each chart on the wall.
8. Allow time for each person to reflect on how they can meet the needs of other people in their organization. Have each person develop a personal action plan on how they will contribute to the success of others.
9. If time permits, have them find a partner and share their action plan.

## M&M Activity

### Opening or Review Exercise

Give each participant a small bag of M&Ms and ask them to select TWO M&Ms from the package; each a different color. Explain that each color represents a different topic which they will be asked to share with their tablemates. Note: If you have a small group, ask them to share their topic with everyone in the room.

After each person has their M&Ms, reveal a flipchart or PowerPoint slide with the following:

Green – Hometown

Brown - Professional Background

Yellow - Hobby or Interest

Orange – Travels or Favorite Vacation

Red – Favorite Childhood Memory

Blue – Greatest Personal Achievement

Have them share one fact about themselves according to the chart. After the first round, repeat the activity with a different fact based on the color of M&M they chose.

#### **Variation:**

You may select the topic/fact for them to share based on the application of the meeting or training topic. Other discussion ideas are listed below:

A historical person they would like to emulate

The name of their favorite leader and why

A best manager or teacher they have had and why

A best piece of (management/leadership/customer service) advice they have received

A D,I,S,or C strength they use to be successful on the job

A habit that gets them good results at work

Something they anticipate learning in the class

The most challenging project of their career

What behavioral style is easiest for them to work with and why

## Name Tent Opening Exercise

Give each person an 8½x11 white piece of paper. Have colorful markers on the table. Tell them that they will be making a name tent that will include their name as well as some facts about themselves.

To make the name tent, follow these instructions:

1. Make a small fold, about 1 inch at the top of the short side of the paper. This will serve as the flap to hold the name tent in place.
2. Fold the paper as though you were going to mail it in a business size envelope (two folds).
3. The paper is now ready to be used as a name tent.
4. It is wise for you to model this exercise.

Have them print their name in the middle of the tent and in each corner they will be writing something about themselves that will be shared with their tablemates or large group.

Horseback Riding	San Diego, CA
<h1>Sam</h1>	
My Dad	Learn how to manage my pride

You can give them verbal directions or have this written on a flipchart/PowerPoint slide:

In the upper left corner write a **hobby**

In the upper right corner write your **hometown**

In the lower left corner write the name of a **hero**

In the lower right corner write a **hope** for this class

Each person has up to 90 seconds to share the facts on their name tent with the group. **YOU** go first.

Variation: Other H words you can substitute

**H**istory - something interesting about you

**H**oliday – favorite

**H**abit – that gets you good results

**H**appiest moment in your life

## People Reading Exercise

Learning to read another person's behavioral style gives you the benefit of being more effective at:

Coaching or managing

Selling

Servicing

Building a relationship

Creating stronger teams

Avoiding conflicts

**How to use the People Reading Guide** (see next page)

Select a person that everyone in the group would know - a politician, celebrity, actor/actress, local icon. Select someone that everyone is familiar with and has observed their behavior.

**Step One;** Look at the first set of questions: Is this person more...

**Direct and Fast Paced** or **Indirect and Moderate Paced**? Make a choice.

**Step Two:**

If the person is **Direct and Fast Paced**, answer the second question: Is this person more...

**Guarded and Task Oriented?** – If so, this person is likely a **D**.

**Open and People Oriented?** - If so, this person is likely an **I**.

If the person is **Indirect and Moderate Paced**, answer the question: Is this person more...

**Guarded and Task Oriented?** – If so, this person is likely a **C**.

**Open and People Oriented?** - If so, this person is likely an **S**.

Continue to do this exercise with other noted persons until the exercise becomes natural and easy. You may want to have members of the group people-read a customer, client or colleague they work with, or a family member they live with.

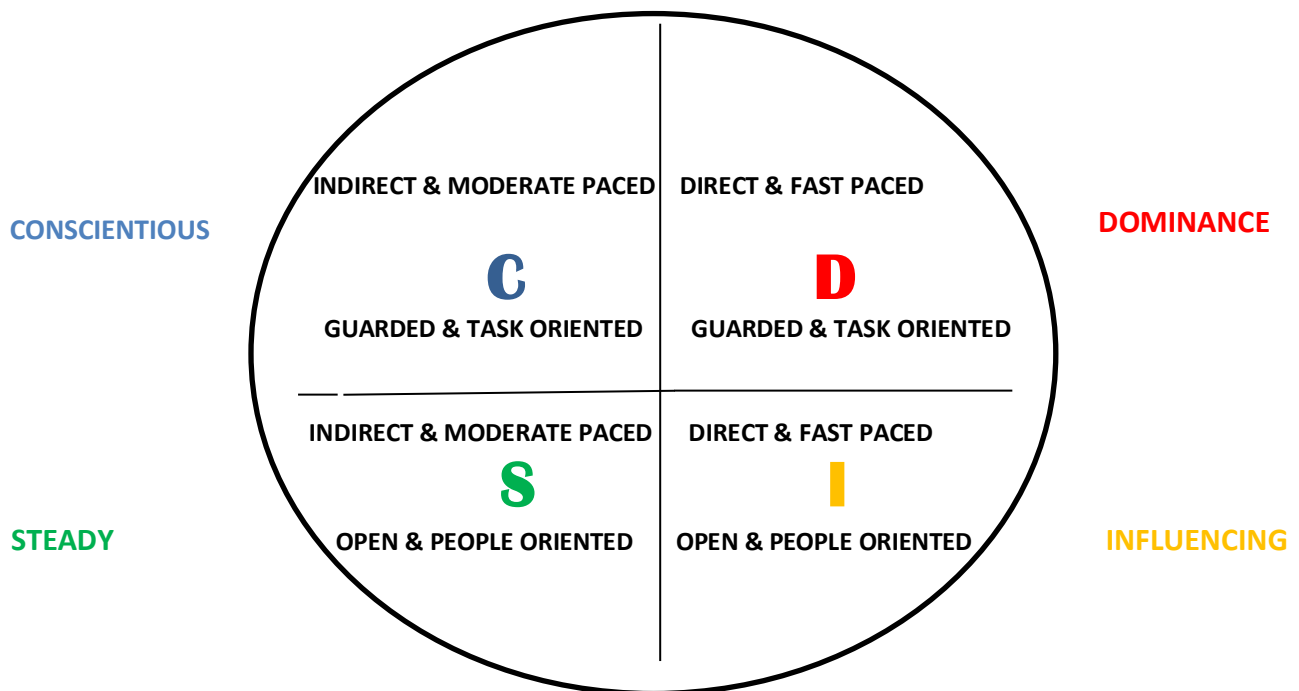
## People Reading Guide

You can quickly and accurately identify each of the four behavioral styles by focusing on a person's observable behaviors. To identify a person's primary behavioral style, ask the following questions and check one circle in each box:

Is this person more:    Direct & Fast Paced, or                       Indirect & Moderate Paced

Is this person more:    Guarded & Task Oriented, or    Open & People Oriented

Combine the check marks above to determine the primary behavioral style of the person you identified by referencing the 4 quadrants in the circle below.



When we integrate both the natural tendency to be either **DIRECT** or **INDIRECT** with the natural tendency to be either **GUARDED** or **OPEN**, it forms the foundation for one of the four different behavioral styles:

- D** = Individuals who exhibit *direct & guarded behaviors* define the **Dominant/Directive Styles**.
- I** = Individuals who exhibit *direct & open behaviors* define the **Influencing/Extroverted Styles**.
- S** = Individuals who exhibit *indirect & open behaviors* define the **Steady/Patient Styles**.
- C** = Individuals who exhibit *indirect & guarded behaviors* define the **Conscientious/Cautious Styles**.

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## Recognizing My Strengths Small Group DISC Exercise

1. Break into similar D, I, S, C groups.
2. With your group members, discuss and list your style's "natural strengths". List these on a flipchart.
3. Post your flipchart on the wall.
4. Give everyone 6 large sticky dots. Ask each person to go to the three posters that are different from their primary DISC style.  
For example: Each High D person would go to the I, S and C charts.
5. Place 2 dots on each poster next to the strength or attribute that you most appreciate about this style.
6. After everyone has posted his/her dots, allow time for each D, I, S, and C group to go to their poster and make note of what their colleagues most appreciate about them.
7. Group Discussion: Were there any surprises? Now that you know what people MOST appreciate about your natural strengths, how will you use them to help others be effective and successful? Or how will you use your strengths in your role as a (manager, sales person, customer service agent, etc.)

Here are sample strengths listed by other groups

Strength of a C individual – ability to concentrate on key details, diplomatic

Strength of a D individual – willingness to make the tough decisions, confident

Strength of an S individual – calming excited or irritated people, good listener

Strength of an I individual – getting all people to contribute in a meeting, persuasive

This activity helps each DISC style recognize what others appreciate about them and how they can use their natural strengths to improve productivity in the workplace.

## Scavenger Hunt Group Exercise

- Break into similar D, I, S, and C groups
- Send each group off to find 5-7 items which would describe them. Give them 10 minutes.
- When they are back in the room, each group shares their items and how the items link to one of their D,I,S, or C contributions or strengths.
- Debrief
- Note: This exercise works best in a retreat setting. The entire exercise can take 30 minutes, so allow plenty of time. It is very interactive, energizing, and entertaining.
- This exercise can also be used for an opening at the second meeting if you are doing a series of DISC training sessions.

## Success Wheel: Stop – Start – Continue Individual and Partner DISC Activity

This activity allows team members to give feedback to their team mates in a non-threatening yet eye-opening way. The purpose is to provide each D, I, S and C style a look into their own behavioral style as viewed by other members of the team. And they will learn specifically what they can do to become more effective and collaborative on the team.

This is a good exercise to do AFTER you have given an overview of the DISC model and discussed the strengths and limitations of each style.

Supplies: 3x5 cards and paper plates (the cheap kind).

Tell the group that they will now have an opportunity to give their team mates some feedback regarding behaviors that people wish others would STOP – START - and CONTINUE. The ultimate goal is build a more productive and cooperative team.

1. Give each member four 3x5 cards. Have them write D on one card, I on the second card, S on the third and C on the fourth. Then on EACH card write STOP – START – CONTINUE. See sample below.

<b>D</b>
<b>STOP:</b>
<b>START:</b>
<b>CONTINUE:</b>

2. Individually and anonymously, have each person write on each card what they would like D's, I's, S's and C's to stop, start and continue doing. Be sure to emphasize that this should be a positive feedback session and they should use language that will help their teammates be more effective working on the team.

3. Once everyone has finished, collect the cards and post the cards on 4 flipcharts, labeled: **D, I, S, C**. Post these four flipcharts around the room.

4. Give everyone a paper plate and tell them this is their Success Wheel. Have them take their plate and a pen/pencil and go to the flip chart of their primary style and write down things that they will START, STOP and CONTINUE doing to be more effective and successful. Be sure to point out what a great opportunity this is for them to receive direct feedback from their peers in terms of creating a positive, productive team. Encourage them to go to the chart of their secondary DISC style for additional feedback.

5. If time permits, have people pair up with a partner. With their Success Wheel in hand, share three things that they plan to do to become a more valuable team player/manager/salesperson/customer service rep, etc.



## What Will You Do? Skill Practice DISC Exercise

In preparation for this exercise, put 4 chairs in the front of the room. Two chairs should be placed in front of the other two – arranged like car seats with two in front and two in back. Ask for 4 volunteers, one D, one I, one S, and one C style.

**Ask the D to sit in the driver's seat and the I to sit in the passenger seat next to the driver. The S and C are to sit in the back seat. Once everyone is seated, read aloud this scenario:**

*Imagine the four of you work together and decide to go to lunch at one of your favorite restaurants. Several members of the group have already left and are awaiting your group at the restaurant. Your group goes together in one car. Shortly after leaving work you turn down a street heading to the restaurant, only to find a long line of cars backed up due to what appears to be a major car accident in the distance. By this time there are cars all around you stuck in the same traffic jam as you, making it nearly impossible to back up or drive ahead. Your assignment is to decide what your group will do. How will you solve the problem of getting to the restaurant?*

Have them discuss this aloud so the entire group can observe their interactions. After several minutes of brainstorming, or once they have determined their course of action, debrief the exercise with the whole group. Ask members of the group at large to share their observations, and then the facilitator should share his/her insights from the activity.

Then ask for another 4 volunteers to come to the front but this time put the S in the driver's seat, the C next to that person, and the D and I in the back. They have to act out the role appropriate to the new seat – so the S is to act like a D, the C is to act as an I, and so forth. If necessary, read the scenario aloud again.

Repeat the directions and again, have them discuss this aloud so the entire group can observe their interactions. After several minutes of brainstorming, or once they have determined their course of action, debrief the exercise with the whole group.

Lead the group in a discussion on how difficult it is to act outside your normal behavioral style, and what happens when we have to take on a position or behavior that is uncomfortable for us? Dialogue about when and why we have to stretch our behavioral styles to meet other's needs or get results on the job, and the consequences of not doing that. End by asking the group the insights they learned.

**Note:** If this is too high risk for your group, you may simply do the exercise at each table, and have each group report back with the strategy they developed and the dynamics/insights of the exercise.