

## Frequently Asked Questions about DISC – and some Answers

### Q-1. What is DISC?

**A:** DISC is a needs-motivated, observable behavioral assessment system which measures the energy you are putting into dominating problems, influencing people, steadying the environment, and complying to rules and details.

### Q-2. Why do people use assessments like this?

**A:** To help people better understand their specific strengths, stresses and limitations. Most people have a fairly accurate perception of their own personal makeup - few are surprised by the results of this assessment. What they are less certain of, however, is how they compare with other people. Some of the scores may point out specific areas that are not readily apparent. Also, some people have trouble seeing their overall behavioral pattern. The complete picture provided by the DISC Continuum can be very helpful.

**A:** To help people understand the behavior of others. People are different. While most of us realize that fact in principle, truly accepting it in practice is difficult. One way of dramatizing the diversity is to use objective evidence like that found in these assessments and discuss the results in a way that allows everyone to see that there are not "best" or "bad" patterns. The graphs provide the objective evidence of individual differences, needs and expectations.

**A:** To provide enjoyment. One of the secondary reasons we are using an assessment like this is because most people tend to enjoy it. People like to find out about themselves. They want to know why they tend to behave like they do. The goal is to strengthen a person's self-concept - to get them to accept themselves as they are, and then to help them adapt strategies that will lead to the positive relationships and results they want in their life.

**A:** To enhance relationships and results. A main purpose of using a tool like this is to help people communicate and relate more effectively with others and therefore get better results from their efforts.

### Q-3. Which pattern is the best pattern? What pattern should I have to be successful at home or work?

**A:** Your style is the **best!** All styles have unique strengths and challenges. There is a strong feeling among people that there must be one *best* way of doing things. However, it has been shown that people with different patterns can be successful in almost any activity. One reason for this lies in the person's values and motivation to succeed. Another is that people often modify their behavior to fit the situation. In general, the effectiveness of a behavioral style is determined by the needs of the environment and the person's ability and willingness to adapt strategies to meet those needs.

### Q-4. Are you saying I need to change who I am? Do I need to change?

**A:** No. A person's behavioral "bent" is not easy to change. You do not need to change your

behavioral style. We are suggesting that by learning about yourself, you can capitalize on your strengths and minimize your limitations by adapting or modifying your behavior in different situations.

**Q-5. How accurate are the DISC assessment results?**

**A:** DISC has high statistical accuracy, validity, and reliability through studies over many years. The best measure of face validity is YOU – does it represent how others see you behaving at least 80+% of the time? If there is inaccuracy, it is typically caused by human error– time, focus, or objectivity. If you think too much, take too long, focus on more than one area or try to trick the assessment, the results could be inaccurate. It's best to do it quickly, without too much analyzing, and go with your natural gut response.

**Q-6. *I felt hurried when I responded to the assessment. Would it make a difference if I could have taken more time? Would the results have been different?***

**A:** You may have felt some time pressure when responding. The time recommended to respond to the assessment is 8-10 minutes. Studies show minor differences in results when a person takes an unlimited amount of time vs. when a time constraint is imposed. However, from the standpoint of validity, the results obtained under a time limit describe the individual more accurately. In other words, we obtain more valid results under a time constraint which forces people to go with their first impression, rather than with their second thoughts.

**Q-6. *I felt that I was contradicting myself when I responded to the assessment.***

**A:** That is a common feeling. That happens in a forced choice instrument, which is what this tool is. It will not affect the validity of the results.

**Q-7. What does DISC actually measure?**

**A:** DISC measures our underlying emotions, needs and fears and our primary concerns that drive much of our behavior. Through self-selection, you choose the words that are **most** like you and the words that are **least** like you, and through those responses, the tool reveals your behavioral style.

**Q-8. Why don't all D's, I's, S's, or C's act/communicate in exactly the same way?**

We all have different preferences, values, experiences, education, and intelligence levels that influence our behavior. DISC is a combination of nature and nurture, and we all have had different things shape us. The same way that we all have different hair or prefer different flavors of ice cream, we all act and communicate in different ways.

**Q-9. What happens if someone tries to outsmart or trick the assessment?**

**A:** The DISC assessment can be tricked, but it's not that easy! It is not always obvious what the answer "should" be (most and least is the basis, not a scale, and the algorithm is based on both). There are also some answers that are specifically validity answers to ensure integrity of the results.

**Q-10. Would the report be different if I took the DISC assessment in a different role?**

**A:** Very likely, yes. The assessment provides a snapshot of who you are in your adapted style at the time you took the assessment, depending on the role you had in mind. It is recommended that participants keep focused on a single role while filling out the assessment. However, wholesale changes in behavior are rare.

**Q-11. What do I do if my results are inaccurate?**

**A:** Some styles never feel they get it “right”. Ask someone who knows you well about what they observe in you to ensure you aren’t missing something (blind spot).

**Q-12. *It seems to me that a lot of information and interpretation is based on one response page containing 24 blocks of word choices.***

**A:** Part of the research has been focused on reducing the response page to that size. The purpose of the research was to develop the shortest response form which would still provide a valid measuring device. These 24 blocks of words were the result of that research.

**Q-13. *This just isn't me? I'm not like this at all?***

**A:** (Ask this individual: "What were you thinking when you took the assessment? What environment did you select?") From time to time an individual feels the report truly does not represent their natural behavioral style. This may be the result of many factors that could skew the report. They may have been rushed, stressed, ill or pre-occupied when responding. Or they may have been unclear about their focus (professional or personal). You may want to have them retake the assessment at a later time.

**Q-14. What is the Energy Line (Mid-line) on the graphs?**

**A:** DISC measures the energy of life you are putting into dominating problems, influencing people, steadying the environment, and complying to rules and details. The energy line is the mid-line representing 50%: styles above it are high, and below it are low (in varying degrees). The energy line represents the amount of energy you are putting into that behavior – above the line is more energy, and below the line is less.

**Q-15. What is the difference between Graph I and Graph II?**

**A:** Based on the words you chose, your most choices show up on your adapted graph (I), and your least choices show up on your natural graph (II). Your least answers are reversed to reveal your natural style.