

What Does Your Group Culture Say? by Lillian D. Bjorseth, President Duoforce Enterprises,

Individuals are as unique as snowflakes. Likewise, groups (top management, teams, departments such as accounting, human resources, sales, etc.) also develop their own unique style or culture. It is a collection of behaviors, values and attitudes that comprise “how you do things.”

Until recently, I didn’t have an effective way to measure this culture easily. Not until the DiSC Culture Report. While it doesn’t address all elements of culture, it helps you understand many important needs, goals, fears, emotions and behaviors within your culture. The report is a compilation of group members’ individual DiSC styles.

As one client said enthusiastically

“You hit it right on the head. Now, we have the information we’ve been seeking, and it has already been the basis for hours of meaningful discussion within our company.”

DiSC is a universal communication language that helps you understand your own and others’ personal and working styles. The time-tested DiSC model describes the four major behavior styles as Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Conscientiousness. The same four styles can help you far better understand more about your culture and if it helps group members feel at home or like fish out of water.

It helps you learn the focus of your group (logic vs. people), its pace (faster, active, bold vs. slower, thoughtful, cautious), and the type of behavior it rewards and encourages (independence, optimism, teamwork, dependability). Then, it helps you move forward to improve communication, increase productivity and your bottom line.

Here’s a quick overview of each style/organizational culture.

The “D” Culture:

Encourages independence, decisiveness, directness

Frowns upon hesitation, over analysis, weakness

Advantages include a dynamic, engaging, results-driven environment

Drawbacks include a tendency toward tension, burnout, power struggles and too much risk taking

The “I” Culture:

Encourages collaboration, enthusiasm, passion

Frowns upon rules, introversion, caution

Advantages include a creative, fun, optimistic atmosphere

Drawbacks include lack of attention to details, too much socializing and too frequent change in direction

The “S” Culture:

Encourages cooperation, loyalty, team focus

Frowns upon aggressiveness, disruption, nonconformity

Advantages include comfort, security, high level of teamwork, tactful behavior

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Drawbacks include failure to challenge ideas, lack of competitive edge, resentment that may brew beneath the surface

The “C” Culture:

Encourages accuracy, attention to detail and on-time performance
Frowns upon mistakes, illogical behavior, exaggerated enthusiasm
Advantages include thoroughly calculated risk, exceptional quality control
Drawbacks include missed opportunities because of excessive caution;
insensitivity to people’s feelings; lack of informal communication

Proven Applications:

- Not-for-profit **Board of Directors** found that its high I culture led to too much talk and too little action.
- A **Corporation** found its high “D” management team was hard-driving and lacked sensitivity to employees’ wants and needs
- A **Three-person partnership** found it needed to modify individual behaviors to accommodate a data-seeking, quality-driven high “C”; a talkative, let’s keeping selling high “I”; and the high “S” who spent much of her day trying to make peace between the other two.

Now, It’s Your Turn.

What applications do you see for the group culture report in your work environment? First go to <http://www.duoforce.com/lldb/2800pps.htm> (fourth product down) and print a sample group culture report. Then share your ideas at lillianspeaks@duoforce.com. How could the information impact your productivity, profitability and people positively? The winner will receive a free online DiSC Classic profile for yourself or whomever you choose. **I’m waiting to hear from you!**

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Lillian D. Bjorseth helps you build high-value relationships by honing your business networking, business development and communication skills. She’s the author of *Breakthrough Networking: Building Relationships That Last, 52 Ways to Break the Ice & Target Your Market* and the *Nothing Happens Until We Communicate* CD and workbook series. She’s a contributing author to *Masters of Networking*. Lillian is an Inscape Publishing certified DiSC® trainer and a member of National Speakers Assn. She spent 11 years at AT&T where she trained top executives in communication and media skills. Contact her at lillianspeaks@duoforce.com, www.duoforce.com, or 630-983-5308.

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