

DISC PROFILE –PREDICTOR OF CANDIDATE FIT FOR THE JOB

P.M. Kulkarni, Faculty H.R.M, Institute of Management Education and Research,

Adarsh Nagar, Hindwadi, Belgaum - 11, Karnataka, India

Ph. No +9108312405512, Fax:+9108312481745

Email: praveenmkulkarni@gmail.com

Testing candidates for job positions is growing as part of the hiring process. The present study considers DISC Profile Test, an assessment instrument in selection process. Study covers history of DISC Profile; technical information about DISC profile .Finally, the study would focus on the advantage of applying tests in the selection process.

Key words:

Psychometric test, Assessment tools, DISC Profile.

1: Introduction

In the backdrop of the knowledge economy that we live in today, one is sure to say that the corporate quest for intellectual capital is going to be continuous activity. This quest is, mainly due to scarcity of the right talent or skill for respective positions. The selection process revolution is already underway and the winning organizations will be those who develop innovative methods to select the right person for the right position in the organization. In its preparation to meet the challenge to acquire the required talents, companies prepare a game plan. This requires advance, through down – to earth exercise to understand the type of talent needed. Psychometric tests have been used in a selection process to understand person job fit and to predict the further performance of the candidate on the job. These tests provide inputs on the adaptability to the present organizational culture, communication pattern, handling the pressure on the job etc. The study would help to understand these tests by considering DISC profile and their impact on the selection process.

1.1 History of DISC Profiling:

The theory of DISC profile was developed by an American thinker William Moulton Marston, who laid out his own ideas in his book in the year 1928, The Emotions of Normal People. He devised a new type of biaxial model, to describe the reactions of ordinary people in

everyday situations. That biaxial model forms the ultimate basis of DISC.. (DISC Research report, 1997)

1.2 Theory of William Moulton Marston

The success of Marston's model lies in the nature of the axes he selected, and how they combine together. In a modern system, these axes are typically referred to as Assertiveness and Openness. Assertive people are pro-active and direct. They lead rather than follow, and like to take immediate action whenever they can. They believe in grasping opportunities and making their own way. Often independent and commanding, they prefer to give orders rather than take them, and will issue instructions rather than ask for cooperation. At the opposite end of this first axis, we have people with very low Assertiveness, whom we describe as Receptive. That term describes people who are patient and cautious. They prefer to avoid taking risks, and will rarely take decisive action, unless the pressure to do so is unavoidable. They dislike change or surprise, and will seek calm, predictable situations. So, the Assertiveness axis deals with how ready a person are to take direct action. At one end, we have people who tend to act, and at the other, people who tend to react. The second axis, crossing the first at right angles, measures the concept of Openness. Extremely Open people are friendly, trusting and ingenuous. They express themselves easily, and value strong relationships with other people. Open individuals tend to work on an emotional level, revealing their feelings to others and being ready to sympathies with those around them. People who fall at the low end of the Openness axis are referred to as Controlled. Controlled individuals are practical and somewhat skeptical in style. They value hard facts and rational argument above emotional considerations, and prefer to follow their own ideas, rather than rely on other people. A defining characteristic of this type of person is that they will rarely volunteer information about themselves to other people. So, the Openness axis describes how ready a person is to communicate with others. At a basic level, more Open people tend to behave more socially, while Controlled people tend to work individually. Just as with the other biaxial models we've already discussed, the real power of this structure emerges when we consider how the two axes interact with one other. There are always four possible combinations – or quadrants - in a model like this, and we'll take a look at each of them in turn. (Thomas International Management Systems Europe Ltd)

Model of DISC Profile

Assertive Driving Competitive Forceful Self Starter	Dominance Looks for Power	Compliance Looks for Policy	Compliant Careful Systematic Accurate Logical
Influential Friendly Verbal Communicative Positive	Influence Looks for People	Steadiness Looks for Pace	Dependable Good listener Kind Good-natured Persistent

This chart is from: Thomas international Management Systems Europe Ltd

1.1 The DISC factors

The four quadrants of the biaxial model each relate to a particular type of behavior. In DISC, we refer to these as Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Compliance – the four vital ideas that lie at the heart of the theory.

The first quadrant describes people measuring high on the Assertive scale, and low on the Openness scale (in other words, they are controlled). How does an Assertive and Controlled person behave? Their active assertiveness makes them impatient to see results, and this sense of urgency makes them Direct and Efficient. Control brings a sense of individuality, so that people of this kind are actively Self-motivated, and prefer to work independently. Because of their direct independence, others can often see them as Demanding in nature, while their sense of self-reliance makes them Competitive and often Ambitious. In DISC, behaviors that combine elements of Assertiveness and Control are described by the term Dominance. Dominant individuals are attracted to roles that give them independence and personal power, where they are able to meet challenges with energy and determination. The next quadrant also contains people measuring high in Assertiveness, but here it mixes with Openness instead of Control, and the result is a quite different personal approach. The Open element in their behavior makes them much more Sociable than the independently-minded Dominant types. They're more

accepting of others, making them Friendly and Gregarious – in fact, people of this kind place great importance on positive relations with others. For all their friendliness and sociability, they still have the directness and energy associated with Assertive types, and that makes them Outgoing and Enthusiastic. In Dominant types, this pro-active nature tends to appear as self-reliance, but in this case we see it as Expressive Self-confidence, instead. In DISC, behaviors that combine elements of Assertiveness and Openness are described by the term Influence. People like this can be expected to show a persuasive and even charming nature. Where a Dominant person might be bluntly demanding, an Influential person will prefer to use strong communication to achieve their aims. In the third quadrant, we stay with Open behavior, but now we move away from Assertiveness into more Receptive characteristics. Receptive people don't show the same levels of energy and drive as those on the Assertive side of the model. Instead, we expect to see more Patient, Even and Calm characters in this area. People with this type of behavior tend to dislike change or uncertainty, so they plan their actions Thoughtfully, and tend to work Persistently once they've set out on a task. Though they're generally less confident or outgoing than Influential types, people of this kind are still Open, but that Openness to others tends to be shown in an Amiable and Generous nature. In DISC, behaviors that combine elements of Receptiveness and Openness are described by the term Steadiness. Steady people combine the undemanding nature associated with Receptiveness, with a positive approach to others, a combination which makes them generally patient and accepting in style. Finally, we complete the circle by coming to the fourth and final quadrant, where the Receptive element meets Control. Like the Steady types we met in the previous quadrant, people in this area are also generally undemonstrative and undemanding, but their Controlled element means that they have a more individualistic approach. They tend to see life in terms of structure and rules, and they're concerned with being as Accurate and Precise as possible. Because of this, they're often Cautious in nature, and Sensitive to changes and developments. With other people, their Receptive side makes them rather Restrained, while their cautious and Controlled communication style means that they're also quite Diplomatic. While people of this kind are not as naturally sociable as those showing Steadiness, they can see the value in Co-operating with others to achieve a goal. In DISC, behaviors that combine elements of Receptiveness and Control are described by the term Compliance. Compliant people combine the undemanding nature associated with Receptiveness with a Controlled approach to others, and this combination makes them generally focused on rules. So, the biaxial model gives us four distinct behavioral elements, or 'factors', corresponding to the four quadrants. They are Dominance, Influence,

Steadiness and Compliance – D, I, S and C – and those initials form the acronym ‘DISC’. Together, they create a useful common language for discussing personal attributes and behaviors. (Introducing DISC Profiling, 1996).

	DOMINANCE (D)	INFLUENCE (I)	STEADINESS (S)	COMPLIANCE (C)	
HIGH Work Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assertive • Competitive • Direct • Driving • Forceful • Inquisitive • Self-starter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicative • Friendly • Influential • Persuasive • Positive • Verbal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amiable • Deliberate • Dependable • Good Listener • Kind • Persistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate • Careful • Compliant • Logical • Perfectionist • Precise 	
LOW Support Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative • Non-demanding • Cautious • Conservative • Mild 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probing • Reflective • Serious • Factual • Logical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active • Alert • Demonstrative • Mobile • Restless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firm • Independent • Persistent • Strong-willed • Stubborn 	
Focus	Power	People	Pace	Policy	Communication Style
	Tell	Sell	Listen	Write	
Motivators	Tangible Goals	Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Team Inclusion 	Policy and Information	
	Failure	Rejection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insecurity • Exclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict • Chaos 	Fear
Question	What	Who	Why	How	Leadership Style
	Authoritarian	Democratic	Procedural	Knowledge based	

This chart is from: Technical Manual, Thomas International Management Systems Europe Ltd

2. Technical information on DISC Profiling.

The purpose of this study is to determine and understand the DISC instruments reliability and validity for assessing personality.

2.1 Reliability and Validity of DISC profiling.

Reliability: In the reliability exercise, the test-retest reliability technique is applied. A statistical evaluation of the raw data, resulting from the exercise, was then obtained by using the SAS system, reflecting Pearson’s Product-moment correlation coefficient (co efficiency of stability). The questionnaire consists of 24 questions each of which presents the respondents with four options. The respondents’ task is to select one of the options that most closely resemble themselves, and one that least closely describes them. The respondents are required to focus on the role they fulfill in their work environment and answer all the questions in relation to that role. (K.Roodt 1997)

Phrase-based: The phrase-based question set contains questions of the form ‘Behaving compassionately towards others’ or ‘Persuading others to your point of view’.

Adjective-based: The adjective-based question set contains words such as ‘kind-hearted’, ‘persuasive’ and ‘modest’. The correlation analyses are reflected in table 1 below

TABLE 1: CORRELATION MATRIX: BEFORE AND AFTER SCORES
Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient
r = values
p = values

	DOMINANCE BEFORE	INFLUENCE BEFORE	STEADINESS BEFORE	COMPLIANCE BEFORE
DOMINANCE AFTER	r=0.72831 p=0.0001	r=0.11048 p=0.2972	r=0.61917 p=0.0001	r=0.16192 p=0.1252
INFLUENCE AFTER	r=0.22558 p=0.0325	r=0.64578 p=0.0001	r=0.5282 p=0.6210	r=0.33619 p=0.0012
STEADINESS AFTER	r=0.58452 p=0.0001	r=0.14199 p=0.1819	r=0.73004 p=0.0001	r=0.22517 p=0.0329
COMPLIANCE AFTER	r=0.17989 p=0.0898	r=0.36256 p=0.0004	r=0.17270 p=0.1036	r=0.55000 p=0.0001

The significance level chosen for this instrument is alpha = 5%. Where the p-value is less than 0.05, the scores show a significant correlation. In the reliability analysis the p-value in all the cases is as low as 0.0001. This indicates significance at alpha = 0.001. It can therefore be said the correlation is significant at 1% level. The reliability coefficient of the measuring instrument is close to 1 and can therefore be seen as reliable.

Validity : Content Validity: Content validity refers to the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. The individual DISC variable scores were correlated with all the fifteen factors of the 16-PF, resulting in significant correlations at 1% level of significance and at 5% level of significance. The results of these findings are reflected in tables 2 (p-values) and table 3 (r-values).

Table 2: Comparison between the discus dimensions and the fifteen factors of the 16-pf. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (5% level of significance) (1% level of significance) p-value

Discus Dimension	16-PF Factor	1% Level of Significance (99%)	16-PF Factor	5% Level of Significance (95%)
Dominance	Q1	0.0004	E	0.0141
	X (Q2, E)	0.0003	Q2	0.0331
	X (G, L, Q1)	0.0083	-I	0.0110
Influence	A	0.0011	F	0.0146
	-Q2	0.0011	-Q3	0.0426
	H	0.0070		
Steadiness	None	None	-E	0.0363
			-Q1	0.0231
Compliance	-E	0.0095	-G	0.0244
	Q2	0.0092	O	0.0446
	-F	0.0045		
	-H	0.0025		

This Chart is from: reliability on the DISC profiling, Inscape Publishing Company, 2000

Table no: 3 Comparison between the discus dimensions and the 16-pf factors r-values

Discus Dimension	16-PF Factor	1% Level of Significance r-values	16-PF Factor	5% Level of Significance r-values
Dominance	Q1	0.32128	E	0.22442
	X (Q2, E)	0.32846	Q2	0.19551
	X (G, L, Q1)	0.24180	-I	0.23320
Influence	A	0.29825	F	0.22519
	-Q2	0.29593	-Q3	0.18776
	H	0.24791		
Steadiness	None	None	-E	0.19215
			-Q1	0.20907
Compliance	-E	0.23678	-G	0.20715
	Q2	0.23768	O	0.18529
	-F	0.26000		
	-H	0.27583		

This Chart is from: reliability on the DISC profiling, Inscape Publishing Company, 2000

It is found that the DISC instrument is reliable at a significance level = 0.01. In the validity exercise it was found that the majority of the factors of the 16-PF show a significant correlation with all four dimensions of the DISC using the p-values.

3. Results

3.1 Job Matching:

Especially where DISC is used in recruitment, Job Matching provides an extremely useful tool. This involves the construction of an ideal behavioral profile for one or more roles, and comparing these against an individual set of DISC results. This makes it possible to calculate which roles suit a person's style the best.

3.2 Candidate Matching

Candidate matching is essentially the opposite of Job Matching. Once we have a selection of role templates (called Job Profiles by DISC), we can take one of these and compare it against a sequence of candidate profiles. This helps to quickly determine which candidate (at least in terms of behavior) is best suited to a particular role.

3.3 Advantage of Applying DISC Profile in the selection process:

- DISC Profiling identifies candidates with emotional stability.
- DISC Profiling provides additional information before interview.
- DISC profiling reduce selection errors
- Decision making in selection process is fast
- DISC Profiling predicts subsequent job performance
- DISC Profiling enables the measurement of characteristics in an objective, cost-efficient manner.
- DISC Profiling promotes a constructive approach to the differences between individuals.

4. Conclusion

For future research it would be interesting to include other instruments to determine whether DISC Profiling also correlates with other instruments and how accurate the person job fit ensures the reduction in the turnover of the employees in the organization would be additional information on the application of these tests in the selection process. Finally one area where future research can be applied is the perception of the candidates towards these tests in the selection process.

5. References

1. K. Roodt, A reliability and validity study on the DISC Personality profiling system, Inscape Publishing, 1997, p 4-6.
2. Technical Manual, Introducing DISC Profiling, Inscape Publishing Inc, 1996,p 3-4
3. Technical Manual, this chart is from: Thomas international Management Systems Europe Ltd, p 8-9
4. Technical Manual, this chart is from: Thomas international Management Systems Europe Ltd, p 11-41.
5. The DISC Research report, Inscape Publishing Inc, 1996, p-1-2.