

Upstream/Downstream: A Fable For Our Times

It was many years ago that villagers in Downstream recall spotting the first body in the river. Some old-timers remember how Spartan were the facilities and procedures for managing that sort of thing. Sometimes, they say, it would take hours to pull 10 people from the river and even then only a few would survive.

Though the number of victims in the river has increased greatly in recent years, the good folks of Downstream have responded admirably to the challenge. Their rescue system is clearly second to none: most people discovered in the swirling waters are reached within 20 minutes—many in less than 10. Only a small number drown each day before help arrives—a big improvement from the way it used to be.

Talk to the people of Downstream and they'll speak with pride about the new hospital by the edge of the waters, the flotilla of rescue boats ready for service at a moment's notice, the comprehensive plans for coordinating all the manpower involved, and the large number of highly trained and dedicated swimmers always ready to risk their lives to save victims from the raging currents. Sure it costs a lot but, say the Downstreamers, what else can decent people do except to provide whatever is necessary when human lives are at stake.

Oh, a few people in Downstream have raised the question now and again, but most folks show little interest in what's happening Upstream. It seems there's so much to do to help those in the river that nobody's got the time to check how all those bodies are getting there in the first place. That's the way things are, sometimes.

My quick DiSC style is:

My co-worker's style is:



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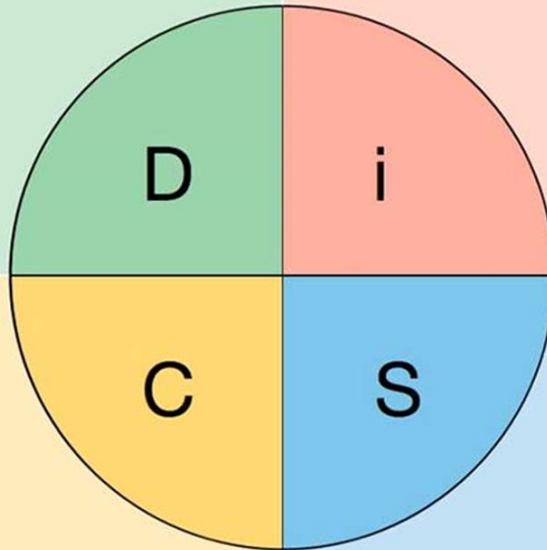


DOMINANCE

- Direct
- Results-oriented
- Firm
- Strong-willed
- Forceful

INFLUENCE

- Outgoing
- Enthusiastic
- Optimistic
- High-spirited
- Lively

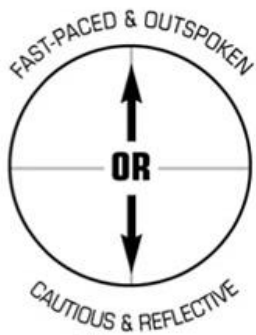


- Analytical
- Reserved
- Precise
- Private
- Systematic

- Even-tempered
- Accommodating
- Patient
- Humble
- Tactful

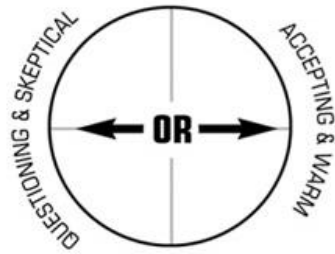
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

STEADINESS



Pace

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Agreeability

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DiSC Tendency

When working with the D - or *Dominance* - style

Try to:

- Make communication brief and to the point
- Respect their need for autonomy
- Be clear about rules and expectations
- Let them initiate
- Show your competence
- Stick to the topic
- Show independence
- Eliminate time wasters

Be prepared for:

- Blunt and demanding approach
- Lack of empathy
- Lack of sensitivity
- Little social interaction

When working with the i - or *Influence* - style

Try to:

- Approach them informally
 - Be relaxed and sociable
- Let them verbalize thoughts and feelings
 - Keep the conversation light
 - Provide written details
 - Give public recognition for individual accomplishments
 - Use humor

Be prepared for:

- Attempts to persuade/influence others
 - Need for the "limelight"
- Over-estimating self and others
 - Emotional responses

Questioning
Logic-focused
Objective
Skeptical
Challenging

Active
Fast-paced
Assertive
Dynamic
Bold

Accepting
People-focused
Empathizing
Receptive
Agreeable

When working with the C - or *Conscientiousness* - style

Try to:

- Be logical and systematic
- Value high standards
- Be precise and focused
- Provide background information & facts
- Be tactful and emotionally reserved
- Show dependability
- Give time to prepare

Be prepared for:

- Questions
- Resistance to vague or general information
- Desire to double check
- Little need to affiliate with other people

Thoughtful
Moderate-paced
Calm
Methodical
Careful

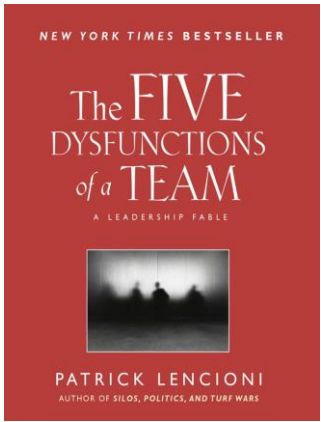
When working with the S - or *Steadiness* - style

Try to:

- Be warm and supportive
- Give clear expectations and deadlines
 - Allow precedent to be a guide
- Provide a consistent and secure environment
 - Let them know how things will be done
 - Use sincere appreciation
- Show their importance to organizational good

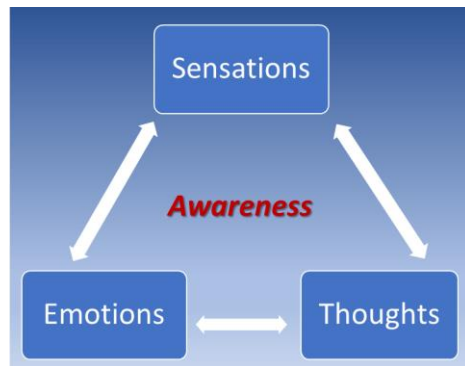
Be prepared for:

- Friendly & warm approach
 - Slower to change
 - Difficulty prioritizing
 - Difficulty with deadlines





Stop
Take a breath
Observe & Open
Proceed



Notes for the STOP technique (just for you)

1) Describe a recent situation or interaction that didn't go as well as you had hoped.

2) Describe your reaction.

3) What were some thoughts and emotions present?

4) If there were other people involved, how did they react?

Now, imagine we had a time machine, and you could go back to that same situation or interaction BEFORE the reaction you described above. Imagine you had practiced the STOP technique.

Stop and notice what sensations are present in the body that are urging you to immediately react. What emotions are interrupting your cognition? *Describe them.*

Take a breath (or three). Slow down and put space between the trigger and your response.

Observe and open your perception to notice all the information you missed the first time. *Describe them.*

Proceed slowly now. What questions would you ask to gather more information? How do you feel after responding in this way? Are there other people involved—how might they feel? *Craft your ideal response and write it here.*

References/Resources

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For information on additional workshops, questions, or comments, please feel free to connect with me.

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