

## The Defining Mark

Barrier Free Business Development Ideas

### This issue: Why can't you be normal, like me?

I am not sure when I noticed for sure. I must admit however, I wasn't always the sharpest knife in the drawer. It just seemed to be revealed to me over time, (several years in fact). One day a little over ten years into our marriage, I came to the realization that my wife and I are different.

It didn't stop with simple gender differences either. The manner in which my wife and I act and react to very many things could be described as "polar opposites". This made married life a learning experience since, as a friend of mine pointed out, "Opposites attract; then opposites attack."

As much as 2400 years ago, scientists and philosophers had recognized that many of the differences in an individual's behaviour followed a pattern. One of those studying the patterns of behaviour was Dr. William Marston. It was in the late 1920's while at Harvard that Marston developed his work on the Model of Human Behaviour, which culminated in him writing the book, *The Emotions of Normal People*.

The DISC model which he developed provided a language which allowed people to describe and therefore begin to understand the observable traits that people exhibit. While these traits are measured in words, they are not designed to label people or to cast judgement. The goal is understanding and therefore better communication.

These are the four primary styles, (types) which are blended together in order to create our own individual and unique personalities.

- **Dominant style** - outgoing and task-oriented. This person can tend to be direct and demanding. Expect them to "get it done" & "play to win". In order to reach them, make sure you focus on the bottom line and provide results.
- **Inspiring style** - outgoing and people-oriented. This influencing and interactive person feeds on recognition and approval. They are often the "star of the show", loving fun and excitement. Friendly and informal communication will make all the difference with this person.
- **Supportive style** - reserved and people-oriented. Ever the team player, this steady and sentimental person is great to have on your side. Doing what it takes to maintain harmony and keep the peace, the supportive person will avoid conflict. Appreciation and security are both very important to the supportive style.
- **Cautious style** - reserved and task-oriented. Careful and calculating people are an asset to any organization. Thriving on quality answers and value, the cautious type would appreciate it if you were logical and precise in your communication. Detailed information and accurate data will greatly assist in getting the decision you are waiting for.

Understanding personality styles and human behaviour are one of the greatest influencers in effective communication. It was John Maxwell who said, "As leaders, people won't go along with you if they first don't get along with you." This same philosophy can be applied to a sales environment, classroom or a home.

As it turned out, I married a lady that was given a double portion of patience. She granted me the time to "grow up" and realize that our differences, many though they are, are designed to help us complement and complete each other instead of conflict and compete. I now understand that by communicating in her style, "speaking her language" as it were, life can be grand.



Jim Carty, CSP

*"After all, if I understand you and you understand me, doesn't it make sense that we will have a better relationship?"*  
- Dr. Robert Rohm,  
Personality Insights, Atlanta GA

#### Keys to understanding:

- Start with a personality assessment, understand your own personality
- Identify the impact of personality styles has in your various roles
- Share your knowledge with family members, colleagues and clients