



Building a Team is like “Miracle on Ice”

I grew up in hockey country; if you don't live there, you don't get it. Trust me. The 1980 Olympic hockey team pulled off what is considered the greatest upset in sports history, defeating the Soviets 4-3 in the semifinals at Lake Placid. They went on to win the gold medal, and to be immortalized in the minds of every child in Minnesota. The team was great, and pulled off the upset because everyone had a role, and everyone played within their skill set to perfection. This group of college kids, primarily from Minnesota and Massachusetts, should be your model as you build a real estate team.

Alright, what the heck am I blabbering about? I am talking about making darn sure you have the right person in the right role. Many of you may have heard that hiring the wrong transaction coordinator can cost a principal broker upwards of \$800,000 per year in lost revenue. I want you to avoid that kind of pain. Most people get in these situations for one of two reasons; they hired friends, or they didn't know what they needed, and thus didn't know what they were getting. I will address these problems a bit later.

First off, what are you good at? What do you enjoy? A prospective team member should NOT be good at or enjoy these things if you want to increase productivity and efficiency; they should have complimentary skills. If you are not fond of or not good at office work and admin, your assistant must be. If this is what you need, then hiring a person that is great with people but weak at details will lead to headaches. Regardless of the size of your team, this is the blueprint you need to apply; what do you need, and what kind of person is good at that? You need to do what you do best; you are the rainmaker.

So how do you determine if a person has the skills and more importantly, the personality you need? The DISC profile is one option. DISC is the four quadrant behavioral model based on the work of William Moulton Marston, Ph.D. (1893 - 1947) to examine the behavior of individuals in their environment or within a specific situation. DISC looks at behavioral styles and behavioral preferences. DISC is an acronym for:

- **Dominance** - relating to control, power and assertiveness
- **Influence** - relating to social situations and communication
- **Steadiness** (submission in Marston's time)- relating to patience, persistence, and thoughtfulness
- **Conscientiousness** (or caution, compliance in Marston's time) - relating to structure and organization

These four dimensions can be grouped in a grid with D and I sharing the top row and representing extroverted aspects of the personality, and C and S below representing introverted aspects. D and C then share the left column and represent task-focused aspects, and I and S share the right column and represent social aspects. In this matrix, the horizontal dimension represents a factor of "**Assertive**" or "**Passive**", while the vertical represents "**Open**" vs. "**Guarded**".

- **Dominance:** People who score high in the intensity of the 'D' styles factor are very active in dealing with problems and challenges, while low D scores are people who want to do more research before committing to a decision. High "D" people are described as demanding, forceful, egocentric, strong willed, driving, determined, ambitious, aggressive, and pioneering. Low D scores describe those who are conservative, low keyed, cooperative, calculating, undemanding, cautious, mild, agreeable, modest and peaceful.
- **Influence:** People with High I scores influence others through talking and activity and tend to be emotional. They are described as convincing, magnetic, political, enthusiastic, persuasive, warm, demonstrative, trusting, and optimistic. Those with Low I scores influence more by data and facts, and not with feelings. They are described as reflective, factual, calculating, skeptical, logical, suspicious, matter of fact, pessimistic, and critical.
- **Steadiness** :(Submission in Marston's time): People with High S styles scores want a steady pace, security, and don't like sudden change. Low S intensity scores are those who like change and variety. High S

- persons are calm, relaxed, patient, possessive, predictable, deliberate, stable, consistent, and tend to be unemotional and poker faced. People with Low S scores are described as restless, demonstrative, impatient, eager, or even impulsive.
- **Conscientious:** (Compliance in Marston's time): Persons with High C styles adhere to rules, regulations, and structure. They like to do quality work and do it right the first time. High C people are careful, cautious, exacting, neat, systematic, diplomatic, accurate, and tactful. Those with Low C scores challenge the rules and want independence and are described as self-willed, stubborn, opinionated, unsystematic, arbitrary, and careless with details.

A common general public misconception is that if one is described as having either a D, I, S, or C style that all people are simply categorized into one of four types. The 1970's work by Dr John Geier brought DISC into practical application with substantive research. The Geier research delineated the distinct differences of persons within the 4 factor styles with the advent of the Classical Pattern definitions. It was found that there are distinct differences between persons within each of the 4 style profiles. For example not all D's behave in the same way. The same is accurate for the other styles of behavior.

If you are relatively successful in sales, I would bet you have a high degree of dominance and influence. Having an assistant with the same traits could be a nightmare. Get a potential candidate tested.

Back to hiring friends and not knowing what you need; hiring friends or acquaintances without making sure they are good at what you need them to be good at is a nightmare. Don't do it if there is even one ounce of doubt in your head. The idea of knowing what you need is pretty self-explanatory; what skills do you now have time for that you need to grow your business? How do you justify the employment cost of a new hire vs. the opportunity cost of not hiring someone? Do the numbers, and have a plan!

One of the biggest problems business people have is waiting too long to correct a bad hiring decision; chances are, if you are unhappy with someone's performance, they are unhappy doing it. Communicate what you need done and how, and if after a second chance things are not right, move on; it will be best for everyone in the long run. Firing people is not easy, but has to be faced from time to time.

In conclusion, put some real thought into the type of person you hire, and get them to take the DISC assessment; it can be the best \$50 you ever spend. You have little to lose by doing a little more due diligence, and everything to lose if you don't.

To Your Success,

Kyle French/ Founder

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