

## Extended DISC® Australasia July 2011 *FactSheet*

### *Greetings*

There are some exciting things happening in the world of Extended DISC®.

We have just returned from our World Meeting which was held in Norway this year and was well attended by Worldwide representatives of the Extended DISC® family. The theme of the conference was based on the best selling book *"Our Iceberg is Melting"*, written by John Kotter, Professor Emeritus at Harvard Business School, described as the World's foremost leadership and change guru. In producing the book, he has been assisted by Holger Rathgeber who is described as "the modern global manager".

The book, which is well worth a read (available through Amazon) is based on pioneering work that shows how Eight Steps produce needed change in any sort of group.

The behavioural style assessment world has become very competitive and although worldwide Extended DISC® has continued to grow by 20% to 50% over these last few difficult years (Australasia's growth has exceeded 140%), we know that there has to be a totally new approach to the way we do business. Extended DISC intends to lead the way with this and our new online platform will be released on 11/11/11. So watch this space!

This month we have decided to steal an article written by Richard Gilman of Extended DISC® Thailand and we hope you enjoy reading it as much as we did. Titled *"Assessment, Friend or Foe"* it addresses some of the attitudes that surround working with behavioural style analysis and the reason our Thailand office, who have a large consulting team, rely heavily on assessments.

This article is followed by a case study from Extended DISC® Thailand.

The reactions of the four different styles can be amusing in some circumstances. This month we look at a typical situation, which we refer to in our training when people are confronted with the news that "The Boss wants to see you".

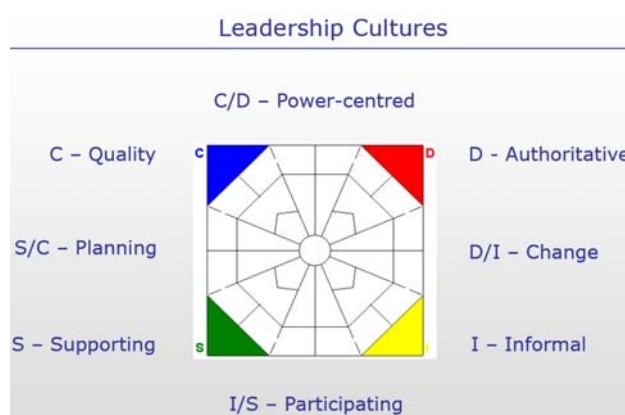
### *Assessment, Friend or Foe?*

*By Richard Gilman from Extended DISC® Thailand*

*"When a practitioner becomes a researcher into his own practice, he engages in a continuing process of self-education" .....SCHÖN*

Assessments are the foundation stone of development. Without assessments how can we know which areas to develop and to what extend?

Yet, assessments are all too often viewed with suspicion. For many they are seen as a threat, a prelude to discipline or dismissal. The biggest influence on the success of any development program is the attitude of the participant. It is fair to say that where assessment is concerned:



**Attitude is aptitude. It is not what you know so much as your attitude toward learning that determines your skill level.**

We view assessment as the key to the success of our Human Resource or Organisational Development interventions. We believe that one of the reasons for our success is our access, through our international partners, to an extensive range of sophisticated assessment tools. Furthermore, we have experienced practitioners who can tailor or create assessment tools to suit the competency and/or candidates being assessed.

We assess people in three areas:

### **1. Knowledge**

How much does the candidate actually know about the areas to be assessed? These assessments are generally in the form of a questionnaire and we will tailor them to suit the topic and the level of the candidate.

### **2. Competency**

Of course, knowledge is only a small part of the picture. The crucial factor is the ability to apply knowledge appropriately and effectively. We will assess a candidate's skills or competencies using a variety of tools. Often we will give the candidate a written test that assesses his/her ability to apply the right techniques to common management problems. We also use third person feedback (90, 180 or 360-degree) to gauge how effectively the candidate applies his/her knowledge on the job. We may also choose to observe the candidate at work or create role-plays to see first hand how he/she performs.

### **3. Natural Style**

An important area of assessment that is often overlooked is the natural style or behaviour of the person being assessed. As individuals we are all unique and will respond to given stimuli differently. APM we use a variety of proven assessment tools to measure many styles and behaviours according to the overall competency being assessed.

### **Assessments Aren't Only for People**

Another common mistake that organisations make with their development programs is to focus entirely on the people. It's important to remember that even highly knowledgeable and competent staff can't perform in a flawed organisation.

**Organisational assessments** come in many forms from cultural alignment to readiness for change and organisational effectiveness (value chain advantage), but they all play a crucial role in ensuring that staff enhancement programs find an environment conducive to growth and development.

### **Gaining Commitment for Assessments**

As a manager or supervisor how can you get your staff to commit honestly to the assessment process?

#### **1. Communication**

Meet with candidates face to face and explain the objectives of the forthcoming development program. Tell them why they have been selected to attend and emphasise the career planning and development aspect. Invite questions. In particular, make sure that everyone knows the value of openness and honesty during the assessment. An assessment is like a computer, if you input inaccurate information, you will get inaccurate results.

## 2. Modelling

Some of the most suspicious, hesitant, and reluctant participants that we have come across have been senior managers. They seem to feel that an assessment will betray a weakness that will destroy their credibility. However uncomfortable you may feel initially, you must abandon this attitude. Of course, the results of an assessment are confidential if the candidate wishes them to be, but to treat them as such displays a very negative attitude toward the assessment process. As a manager you should lead by example. Share your results, show a desire to learn from yourself and others, and encourage openness.

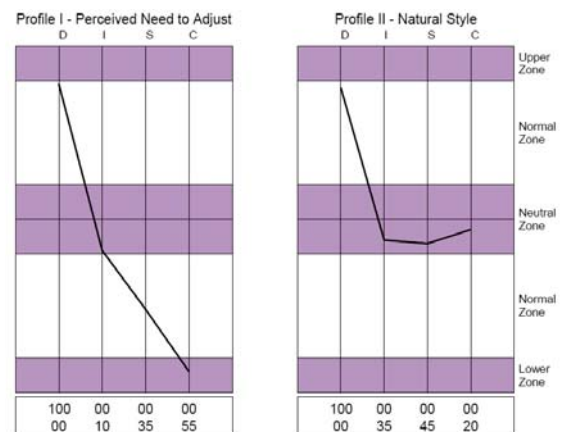
## 3. Act on it

People often fail to commit to assessments because they've "Seen it all before and nothing ever changes". As a manager, you must continue to set a good example by acting on the results of the assessment, implementing development programs and ensuring that changes are permanent. Ensure that assessments deliver tangible, observable benefits for the candidates and the organisation.

### *Case Study – Disappointing Sales*

A company in the food industry had a problem with disappointing sales figures despite the fact that demand in the market was strong and the sales team had recently been expanded. The Sales Manager had reported to the CEO that the performances of some new sales representatives were disappointing and that this had had an impact on sales. The new members of the sales team were all experienced salespeople with successful track records and so the CEO asked Extended DISC® (Thailand) to investigate why the team wasn't performing up to expectations. The Extended DISC® consultants performed a Team Analysis and the results indicated the reasons for the team's disappointing performance:

1. The profile of the Sales Manager was strongly 'D' Style and he displayed the characteristics associated with this behavioural style – highly autocratic, goal focused, impatient and aggressive.
2. The members of the sales team were strongly 'I' and 'S' Styles. Typically they were people oriented and thorough. They wanted to create lasting relationships by building rapport and trust with their customers and prospects. They felt uncomfortable with the high-pressure, fast results style advocated by the Sales Manager.
3. There was strong pressure on the team members to adapt their behavioural styles to reflect the style of the Sales Manager. This movement was outside the flexibility (comfort) zones of the team members.



The Extended DISC® consultants arranged a meeting of the whole sales team (including the Sales Manager) and acted as facilitators as the team members considered the results and looked for ways to solve the problems highlighted. During the session, all members of the team came to realise how their natural behaviour both assisted and hindered their performance and their relationships. With the consultant guiding the process the team agreed a new strategy that emphasised the strengths of all the members.

The key points arising from the session were as follows:

1. The Sales Manager agreed to a more collaborative approach to setting sales targets and to give the salespeople time to build their relationships with the customers/prospects.
2. The Sales Manager committed to develop his active listening skills and to seek the opinions of his team before making decisions.
3. The sales team committed to a more goal focused approach involving an agreed timetable to hit targets.
4. The sales team committed to attend a training course on decision-making. The sales team committed to review their client base quarterly and, where necessary, make hard decisions about low volume/high maintenance customers.

As a result of the intervention the 'mood' of the sales department was transformed almost overnight. People now feel part of a team united in a common purpose. In the first quarter following the intervention, sales showed a significant increase and team members submitted optimistic forecasts for the current quarter. This quarter has started very positively with almost all the salespeople ahead of even their optimistic forecasts.

*Note: The name of the company has been withheld for ethical reasons*

### ***Behavioural Style reactions – The Boss wants to See You!***

Boss says: "I need to see you right after this meeting."

**D Style:-** "It must be a promotion. Pretty good! Great news!"

**I Style:-** "I bet he wants to do an article about me and put my picture on the cover. I'm glad I'm wearing this new suit today.

**S Style:-** "Damn it! Someone must have screwed something up and I probably have to stay after work to fix it."

**C Style:** "Immediately starts to investigate every project he has worked on recently so he/she can find out what could have possibly gone wrong and so he/she can justify why they did it that way.

### ***August 2011 Webinar – Work Pair Analysis***

**Presented by Saffi Curran**

Our Work Pair Analysis Report is a very powerful tool. It is easy to use and very cost effective. It is no wonder that it is so widely utilised. Work Pair Analysis is designed to provide information that allows two individuals to take action that will have a positive impact on their performance. In this month's webinar we will look at how the Work Pair Analysis can be used, how to create it in EDOS and the interpretation of a Work Pair Analysis.

The webinar is on 18 August at 3.00pm NZ time. To learn more about this great tool, [register now!](#)