

# Highlights

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## Dayton CFA Society Professional Development Day

In August the Dayton CFA Society hosted a half day professional development conference. Following are highlights from four of the presentations.

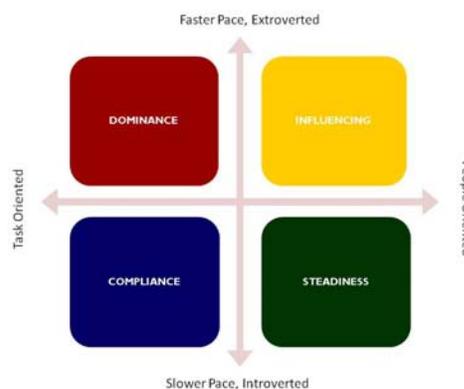
### *Leveraging Your Behavioral and Communication Style*

Kassie Steegman, CFA

Focusing largely on the DISC framework, Ms. Steegman explained that beginning to understand your own behavioral style and that of those you interact with can shape your communications in such a way as to facilitate or improve your relationships. The benefits of this carry through to your ability to address conflict, build and work in team scenarios, influence decisions, and manage and delegate. Further, appreciating the differences in behavioral styles can give you an advantage in non-work situations as well.

The DISC framework identifies four major styles. They are Dominance, Influencing, Steadiness, and Compliance and they refer to observable behaviors and emotions. Each results in tendencies that allow someone with an appreciation or the different styles to tailor communications and interactions accordingly. It is important to note that this assessment framework is a neutral one and should be understood as only one aspect of personality. Each style has its strengths and limitations and most individuals are a blend of the four styles.

Ms. Steegman offers the following three charts to help to understand the different styles.



## Summary of “DISC” Styles

<p><b>DOMINANCE</b></p> <p>The “D” is looking for: <b>Results</b></p> <p><b>Characteristics:</b> Assertive, forceful, competitive, decisive</p> <p><b>Quick Observations:</b> Extraverted, task oriented</p> <p><b>Body Language:</b> Forward leaning, walks fast, always going somewhere, a lot of hand gestures</p> <p><b>Emotion:</b> Anger (passion)</p> <p><b>Desire:</b> To Direct</p> <p><b>Preferred environment:</b> Enables efficiency, frequent challenges, freedom from constraints</p> <p><b>Value to team:</b> Results-oriented, forward-looking, initiates activity, visionary</p> <p><b>Under stress:</b> Impatient, abrasive, demanding</p> <p><b>Possible limitations:</b> Overstep authority, changes without planning, lacks tact, poor listening</p>	<p><b>INFLUENCING</b></p> <p>The “I” is looking for: <b>The “Experience”</b></p> <p><b>Characteristics:</b> Enthusiastic, demonstrative, inspiring</p> <p><b>Quick Observations:</b> Extraverted, people oriented</p> <p><b>Body Language:</b> Uses big gestures, smiles a lot, facial expressions, weaves, may run into things</p> <p><b>Emotion:</b> Trust/Optimism</p> <p><b>Desire:</b> To Interact</p> <p><b>Preferred environment:</b> Fun, friendly, high degree of people contact, freedom from control and detail</p> <p><b>Value to team:</b> Creative, optimistic, team player</p> <p><b>Under stress:</b> Overly talkative, over committed, self promoting</p> <p><b>Possible limitations:</b> Disorganized, overly trusting, lack focus on details, selective listening</p>
<p><b>STEADINESS</b></p> <p>The “S” is looking for: <b>Security</b></p> <p><b>Characteristics:</b> Patient, steady, good listener</p> <p><b>Quick Observations:</b> Introverted, people oriented</p> <p><b>Body Language:</b> Steady pace, lean back, small gestures, soft voice</p> <p><b>Emotion:</b> Non-emotional (holds emotions in)</p> <p><b>Desire:</b> To Serve</p> <p><b>Preferred environment:</b> Stable, allows time for change, friendly and supportive</p> <p><b>Value to team:</b> Dependable, team player, patient, step-wise thinker, consistency</p> <p><b>Under stress:</b> Hesitant, unconcerned, inflexible</p> <p><b>Possible limitations:</b> Dislike frequent or unwarranted change, difficulty prioritizing</p>	<p><b>COMPLIANCE</b></p> <p>The “C” is looking for: <b>Information</b></p> <p><b>Characteristics:</b> Analytical, conscientious, accurate</p> <p><b>Quick Observations:</b> Introverted, task oriented</p> <p><b>Body Language:</b> Arms folded, little hand gestures, reserved</p> <p><b>Emotion:</b> Fear (of not meeting high standards)</p> <p><b>Desire:</b> For Procedures</p> <p><b>Preferred environment:</b> Critical thinking valued, technical work, time to think things through</p> <p><b>Value to team:</b> Maintains high standards, detail-oriented, asks a lot of questions, quality focus</p> <p><b>Under stress:</b> Critical, picky, perfectionist</p> <p><b>Possible limitations:</b> “Analysis paralysis,” perfectionist, defensive when work is criticized</p>

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## Communication Tips for Core “DISC” Styles

<p><b>DOMINANCE</b> – When communicating with a person who is ambitious, forceful, decisive, strong-willed, independent and goal-oriented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be clear, specific, brief and to the point.</li> <li>• Stick to business.</li> <li>• Be prepared with support material in a well-organized “package.”</li> </ul> <p>Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking about things that are not relevant to the issue.</li> <li>• Leaving loopholes or cloudy issues.</li> <li>• Appearing disorganized.</li> </ul>	<p><b>INFLUENCING</b> – When communicating with a person who is magnetic, enthusiastic, friendly, demonstrative and political:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a warm and friendly environment.</li> <li>• Don't deal with a lot of details (put them in writing).</li> <li>• Ask “feeling” questions to draw their opinions or comments.</li> </ul> <p>Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being curt, cold, or tight-lipped.</li> <li>• Controlling the conversation.</li> <li>• Driving on facts and figures, alternatives, abstractions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>STEADINESS</b> – When communicating with a person who is patient, predictable, reliable, steady, relaxed and modest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin with a personal comment – break the ice.</li> <li>• Present your case softly, non-threateningly.</li> <li>• Ask “how?” questions to draw their opinions.</li> </ul> <p>Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rushing headlong into business.</li> <li>• Being domineering or demanding.</li> <li>• Forcing them to respond quickly to your objectives.</li> </ul>	<p><b>COMPLIANCE</b> – When communicating with a person who is dependent, neat, conservative, perfectionist, careful and compliant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare your “case” in advance.</li> <li>• Stick to business.</li> <li>• Be accurate and realistic.</li> </ul> <p>Factors that will create tension or dissatisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being giddy, casual, informal, loud.</li> <li>• Pushing too hard or being unrealistic with deadlines.</li> <li>• Being disorganized or messy.</li> </ul>

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Ms. Steegman is the president of Evolving Leadership, LLC, a coaching, consulting and training organization. She has over 20 years of business experience, predominantly in investment management and consulting. If you would like to take the DISC assessment or engage Ms. Steegman for communication or leadership coaching, please contact her at 614.506.2445.

### *Managing Your Professional Reputation*

Julie Magrath

Ms. Magrath explained that thinking of yourself as the product you are branding and marketing can help you manage your professional reputation. One of the most important things you can do, she suggests, is work on constantly improving yourself. Seeking feedback regularly and taking time everyday to take inventory are critical elements in seeking to improve yourself. She offers the following exercise toward this goal:

1. Find a friend or peer whom you trust not to judge you and who can engage with you daily (or nearly daily).
2. Craft the 10-20 questions you would like your partner to ask you. They should be closed-ended questions (yes or no answers only). They should relate to your values, your personal and professional development goals, leveraging your strengths, and putting feedback to good use. Ms. Magrath cautioned not to leave out questions related to your personal and family life. These can be as important as those related to your professional life. Some examples of questions one might come up with include:
  - Did you check in with a member of your professional network today?
  - Did you exercise today?
  - Did you read something relevant to improving your (people) management skills?
  - Did you have a full conversation with your significant other and /or child(ren) today?
3. Ask this partner to contact you daily to ask you a series of questions.
4. Offer to do the same for your partner.

An elevator pitch can be a very important tool in building your brand. You should have a few elevator pitches at the ready. An obvious one would be the answer to the question, “what do you do?” Also, have one prepared for the company you work for and perhaps one for what you want to do (career aspirations). When you are crafting your elevator speeches, think in terms of **mission, value, and unique value**. When you have your pitches crafted, practice them often.

Networking is another key element to building and protecting your reputation. Ms. Magrath explained that networking efforts should be high touch and these days may be high tech. Regardless, you should be focused and intentional in your efforts. Some examples suggested include:

- Send articles you find online or in print to members of your network with a personal message about how you came to associate it with that person.
- Volunteer with a professional association like CFA Institute or the Dayton CFA Society.
- Join or at least target the local Chamber of Commerce.
- Connect with members of the media by writing an article.
- Get on LinkedIn.
- Help others look good at their jobs.

Ms. Magrath suggests one of the single best “to dos” when it comes to the high touch side of things is to teach, train, or mentor. She offers that one key “not to do” on the high tech side of things is to start participating if you won’t or can’t keep up with it. In other words, don’t start a blog if you won’t be able to post to it very regularly.

Finally, here are two tests that Ms. Magrath suggests applying as often as possible:

- Ask yourself, “will this hurt my brand?”
- Ask yourself, “How would I explain this to {insert name of the person whose opinion of you means the most to you}?”

Ms. Magrath is an executive coach. You can learn more about her, and connect with her if you are interested in engaging her as a coach, on the CFA Institute Career Centre. Click [here](#) (CFA Institute log in required).

### *Asset Management... for Your Career*

Bill McGinnis, CFA

Mr. McGinnis used the framework of asset management to provide practical career management and job search advice. One’s career is, after all, for most people the primary means for funding his/her personal portfolio. If one does not maximize his career, (s)he’ll not maximize his/her wealth come retirement.

Mr. McGinnis stresses being proactive in a number of different ways. The following are some examples:

- Instead of asking yourself what’s next for your career, think about where you want to end up and work backwards to where you are now, just like you would if you were setting a financial plan. This makes it easier to weigh opportunities that may present themselves to you. Since CFA charterholders tend to be broadly capable professionals it’s entirely possible that you could have a lot of paths open to you and having a clear sense of where you wish to end up will help you evaluate these various paths.
- Don’t wait for your boss to write your annual review. If he or she isn’t providing it in a timely manner, write your own. Give it to your boss to edit but also give him/her a timeline within which to do so and explain that if there are no edits, he should simply sign it so you can send it to HR for your file. It behooves you to have your successes documented and on record so if your boss isn’t facilitating that, do it for yourself.
- If there is a project you want to work on at your job. Go the extra mile and work on it. Obviously, don’t slack on your primary responsibilities and don’t deter from the official project team’s progress, but contribute thoughtfully to the project in your spare time.
- Networking is absolutely essential to career management, but it will not help you nearly as much if you only do it when you need something. Start networking immediately and stay dedicated and committed to it.
- If you are not happy with your job and want a happy home/personal life, change jobs as soon as possible.

Mr. McGinnis also offered a good deal of insight into the role your resume should play in your job search. Keep in mind the job market is intensely competitive these days (and is likely to remain so for some time to come). It is not good enough for your resume to be just good enough. It has to be perfect. A perfect resume will rarely, if ever, be a general resume. In

other words if you craft your resume to show that you are generally good at a lot of things you will necessarily fail at demonstrating that you are particularly good for a specific job.

Harkening back to being proactive, Mr. McGinnis suggests that you should draft your work experience element of your resume the day you start a new position. Write the entry the way you want to be true when you leave it, when you've accomplished your goals for being in the position you've taken. Obviously, you will revise it upon actually leaving the position, but writing it in advance maintains the less biased perspective you have going into the position, documents your goals, and gives you an indication of when it will be time to move on.

Additional tips regarding your resume include:

- Keep it to 1 or 2 pages.
- Whatever you consider to be the most important value proposition you have to offer should be obvious to someone looking at it briefly from three feet away. This speaks to size and clarity of font selection.
- If you want to get paid for a skill or knowledge base, you should list it in your resume.

There are some additional valuable suggestions Mr. McGinnis adds when the situation is that you've been laid off. He strongly encourages taking several weeks completely off before beginning to look for a new job. This way you aren't tempted to call up your most useful contacts for leads when you are not truly prepared to launch an object and strategic job search. Rather, a week or so into your time off, begin explaining what happened to your close friends and family. Make a point of letting these people know and really own the situation. The point is to take the bitterness and anger out of your language (and body language) so that by the time you are answering the question of why you left your last job in an interview situation you are not bringing any of the "baggage" with you to spoil a future opportunity.

Mr. McGinnis, CFA, is a career coach and president of Exponential Careers. If you are interested in engaging him as a coach or resume writer, please contact him at 414.228.1888 or by email at [bill@exponentialcareers.com](mailto:bill@exponentialcareers.com).

### *Discussion with Executive Recruiters*

Scott Jennings and Chris McGraw

The recruiters provided some insight into the hiring climate in this economy as well as the role recruiters are playing. They noted that corporate recruiters are keeping more immediate need searches in house to save money thanks to the convenience of LinkedIn and a plethora of job boards. Executive recruiters are largely used for very senior searches as well as finding currently employed talent and future talent. Executive recruiters, it must be remembered, are compensated by the hiring company and so owe their allegiance to the company's best interest before the job seeker's.

The panelists suggested that hiring is happening and the job market is improving, but it will be a slow climb out of the bad job market. Also, contract and temporary work is on the rise; we're becoming more of a freelance economy. They suggested that their clients are looking for stability in new hires. Employee turnover is expensive for a company so they are not interested in bad fits whether that's a bad skill fit, bad goal fit, or bad cultural fit.

There is a paradox that is emerging along these lines. Despite a company's preference for good long term hires, upward mobility within a company may seem limited as companies strive for a "flatter" structure. In any case, if this is why you

find yourself trying to change jobs and companies—because career progression is limited at your current company—tell your story with a stability theme.

Recruiters care about your career “story.” Your skills, accomplishments, values, and career goals need to all come together in a story that can easily be impressed upon hiring managers. An executive recruiter is in the business of selling your story to hiring managers, but you need to be able to tell and sell your story really well too. Your story should be reflected in your online presence. Never leave out your professional designations and your “soft” skills when you are telling your story.

When asked about “breaking in” to the industry, the panelists admitted that it is very hard to do so at this time. Experience trumps professional designations and MBAs, but these are great steps to take if you are trying to break in. In this market, you may find you have to settle for less than the ideal break through position. If this is the case, pay close attention to benefit packages available, especially whether things like education or time to pursue professional designations are available to you. Also, remembering that employers mostly prefer to hire from within, if you have to settle in terms of position try not to in terms of companies. Try to get in at a company that does the kind of work you want to do even if you can’t start in those positions when you first walk through the door.

Scott Jennings is the owner of Performance Recruiting, LLC in Cincinnati and you can connect with him on LinkedIn at [www.linkedin.com/in/ecruit](http://www.linkedin.com/in/ecruit). Chris McGraw is a division director with Robert Half Management Resources and you can connect with him on LinkedIn at [www.linkedin.com/in/chrismcgrawohio](http://www.linkedin.com/in/chrismcgrawohio).