



**A Comparison of *Work  
Expectations Profile* and the  
DiSC<sup>®</sup> Dimensions  
Research Report**

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# A Comparison of the *Work Expectations Profile* and the DiSC<sup>®</sup> Dimensions

## Introduction

Inscape Publishing has researched and developed behavioral assessments for nearly 30 years. Our flagship product, *DiSC<sup>®</sup> Classic*, originally called the *Personal Profile System<sup>®</sup>*, was the first assessment to measure the DISC behavioral model, developed by William Moulton Marston in the 1920s. Inscape Publishing has continued to conduct research on DISC since the first publication of *DiSC Classic*, both to expand and improve our product offerings and to investigate possible correlations with other behavioral models. This study looks at potential relationships between the four DiSC<sup>®</sup> dimensions and the 10 work expectations scales measured by Inscape Publishing's assessment, the *Work Expectations Profile*. Background information on this instrument and the DiSC dimensions follows.

## **Work Expectations Profile**

Behavioral researchers are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of work expectations in the employment relationship. Research has demonstrated a direct relationship between the extent to which employee work expectations have been discussed and/or met and employee tenure, job satisfaction, and job commitment.

The *Work Expectations Profile* helps respondents to understand and manage their work expectations and to transform their attitude toward work. Respondents rate a series of phrases by importance while considering what they want in their current job. From these responses, 10 key areas of expectations are measured:

*Structure:* Having high expectations about structure means that you want clear instructions regarding what to do, how to do it, and what resources are available to you.

*Diversity:* Having high expectations about diversity means that you want to work with people from a variety of backgrounds and/or with varied points of view.

*Recognition:* Having high expectations about recognition means that you want a work environment where good work is acknowledged and rewarded.

*Autonomy:* Having high expectations about autonomy means that you want to have the independence or freedom to make decisions about how you will do your job.

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*Environment:* Having high expectations about environment means that you see a connection between the social and physical work environment and your well-being.

*Expression:* Having high expectations about expression means that you want a work environment that allows you to share your opinions and feelings openly.

*Teamwork:* Having high expectations about teamwork means that you expect collaboration to be a highly valued and commonly used method for reaching work objectives.

*Stability:* Having high expectations about stability means that you want job security and a work environment that remains relatively unchanged.

*Balance:* Having high expectations about balance means that you have personal and professional goals and that you want others to understand the importance of all of your commitments.

*Career Growth:* Having high expectations about career growth means that you want to make progress toward your professional goals.

## **DiSC® Dimensions**

The DiSC® dimensions are based on the work of William Moulton Marston, Ph.D., as published in 1928 in his book, *Emotions of Normal People*. Marston began his research to determine if people responded to their environment in systematic ways. He was interested not only in people's behaviors, but also in how their behaviors changed from situation to situation. In this manner, Marston hoped to increase people's understanding of themselves and others while decreasing miscommunication among people. He found that two kinds of perception were particularly useful for explaining an individual's response in a particular situation: perception of environment and perception of oneself.

As Marston observed, these two kinds of perception interact to describe an individual's response to a situation as follows:

*Dominance (D):* When the environment is perceived as *unfavorable* and an individual feels *more powerful* than the environment, he or she exhibits a Dominance response. The person will try to change, fix, or control the situation.

*Influence (i):* When the environment is perceived as *favorable* and an individual feels *more powerful* than the environment, he or she experiences a desire to Influence. The person will try to convince others of his or her point of view.

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*Supportiveness (S)*: When the environment is perceived as *favorable* and an individual feels *less powerful* than the environment, he or she experiences an opportunity to be Supportive. The person will try to keep the situation stable while supporting those in need.

*Conscientiousness (C)*: When the environment is perceived as *unfavorable* and an individual feels *less powerful* than the environment, he or she responds with Conscientiousness. The person will set clear rules within the situation and work very hard to follow them.

Although Marston created the DISC model, he never developed an instrument to measure the dimensions. For over 30 years, Inscape Publishing has researched and refined the original DISC theory to maximize its impact and accuracy. From this research, Inscape Publishing developed *DiSC<sup>®</sup> Classic*, a self-development instrument that has been used by over 30 million people worldwide.

With its continuing commitment to research, Inscape Publishing developed the DiSC-based instrument, *Focus Point<sup>®</sup>*, which asks respondents to describe how they tend to feel and behave in a particular situation or focus. Respondents rate the accuracy of a series of phrases in relation to their situation or focus. Once a score is obtained, respondents can identify which of the four DiSC dimensions they are using in the selected situation. Inscape Publishing compared the *Work Expectations Profile* to *Focus Point* in this study because of its sensitive scoring mechanism, but the research results can also be applied to Inscape Publishing's most widely used DiSC instrument, *DiSC Classic*, as the underlying model is the same.

## Hypotheses

This study was designed to determine what relationships may exist between the 10 *Work Expectations Profile* scales and the four DiSC dimensions. The following relationships were hypothesized.

We expected those participants who responded with high Dominance (D) or Influence (i) tendencies to have high *Career Growth* expectations because of their desire to control or influence their environment, a skill that becomes easier with career advancement. We also expected these respondents to have high *Expression* expectations because those with high D and i tendencies prefer an environment that allows them to be themselves, a preference that reflects their perception of themselves as more powerful than their environment.

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Finally, we expected participants who responded with high D or i tendencies to have high *Autonomy* expectations because they feel more powerful than their environment and therefore believe that they can make their own decisions.

We expected participants who responded with high Supportiveness (S) or Conscientiousness (C) tendencies to have high *Structure* expectations. The S and C dimensions consider themselves less powerful than their environment and prefer to work within existing systems. In addition, these respondents dislike change due to their lack of control over their environment. Therefore, we would expect them to have high *Stability* expectations.

Finally, we expected those participants who responded with high i or S tendencies to have high *Teamwork* expectations because they see their environment as favorable and tend to focus on their interactions with others.

## Method

In order to test these hypotheses, we analyzed a sample of 383 respondents from the United States. The respondents completed both the *Work Expectations Profile* and *Focus Point*<sup>®</sup>.

## Demographics

The instruments were completed concurrently by 383 respondents. The sample included 171 men (44.6%) and 205 women (53.5%). Most participants were Caucasian (78.3%), with fewer African Americans (10.4%) and some persons of Asian (2.1%) and Hispanic (2.6%) heritage. A majority of the participants were between the ages of 26 and 35 (29.0%) or 36 and 45 (25.3%). For the complete set of demographic information, see Table 1.

## Results

Scale correlations confirmed all of the hypothesized relationships between the two instruments (see Table 2). As we expected, high D and i scores correlated significantly with

- *Career Growth* (D:  $r=.37$ ,  $p<.01$ ) (i:  $r=.23$ ,  $p<.01$ );
- *Expression* (D:  $r=.28$ ,  $p<.01$ ) (i:  $r=.20$ ,  $p<.01$ );
- *Autonomy* (D:  $r=.36$ ,  $p<.01$ ) (i:  $r=.15$ ,  $p<.01$ ).

In addition, those respondents who responded as high S or C were significantly correlated with

- *Stability* (S:  $r=.31$ ,  $p<.01$ )(C:  $r=.21$ ,  $p<.01$ );
- *Structure* (S:  $r=.29$ ,  $p<.01$ )(C:  $r=.21$ ,  $p<.01$ ).

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Finally, a significant relationship was found between high i and S scores and

- *Teamwork* ( $r=.21, p<.01$ )( $r=.15, p<.01$ ).

We also found other correlations that were not previously hypothesized. High D scores were significantly correlated with

- *Diversity* ( $r=.25, p<.01$ );
- *Recognition* ( $r=.16, p<.01$ ).

Because high D respondents want to be in charge of their situation, they may seek recognition from their colleagues as an affirmation of their power. In addition, the correlation between diversity expectations and high D respondents may be explained by the fact that people with high expectations for diversity realize that different views can lead to conflict, and high D respondents are eager to face challenges and overcome obstacles. Handling multiple perspectives from diverse sources may offer high D respondents new opportunities for challenges. We did not, however, anticipate this correlation, so we plan to examine it further in order to increase our understanding.

High i scores were also significantly correlated with

- *Diversity* ( $r=.24, p<.01$ ).

This relationship probably exists because respondents with high i scores see their environment as favorable and tend to expect and/or enjoy interactions with different types of people, including those from diverse backgrounds.

Finally, high S scores were significantly correlated with

- *Balance* ( $r=.18, p<.01$ );
- *Environment* ( $r=.27, p<.01$ ).

This correlation is probably due to high S respondents' tendency to see their environment as favorable and to expect comfortable surroundings. High S respondents also expect their personal time to be valued by the organization. The correlation could also be explained because High S respondents feel less powerful than their environment and desire stability in their lives.

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## Demographic Group Comparisons

ANOVAs were conducted to identify differences within demographic variables on expectation scale scores. No significant differences were found between men and women. Significant differences were found, however, for age.

Significant differences by respondent age were found on three of the expectation scales: *Career Growth* ( $F=2.55$ ,  $p<.001$ ) *Stability* ( $F=1.75$ ,  $p<.021$ ) and *Structure* ( $F=1.71$ ,  $p<.036$ ). Further analyses (Tukey's HSD) indicated that respondents from 18 to 35 years of age reported higher *Career Growth*, *Stability*, and *Structure* expectations than those respondents age 36 and older.

The data suggest that these differences reflect true distinctions within the research sample, rather than a bias in the instrument.

## Conclusion

The relationships that were found between the DiSC<sup>®</sup> dimensions and the *Work Expectations Profile* scales are significant. By comparing the work expectations scales to *Focus Point*<sup>®</sup>, Inscape Publishing has confirmed a connection between the *Work Expectations* and its DiSC products, including the *DiSC Classic*. This latest research has further validated each of the instruments as powerful measurement tools that can help us better understand ourselves and others in order to achieve personal and organizational success.

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**Table 1. Characteristics of the Research Sample**

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| <u>Gender</u>                | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | <u>Employment</u>                | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Male                         | 171      | 44.6     | Secretarial/Clerical             | 32       | 8.4      |
| Female                       | 205      | 53.5     | Executive                        | 16       | 4.2      |
| Missing data                 | 7        | 1.8      | Mid-level Management             | 50       | 3.1      |
|                              |          |          | Supervisory                      | 31       | 8.1      |
| <u>Age</u>                   | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | Professional                     | 59       | 5.4      |
| Under 18                     | 0        | 0.0      | Mechanical/Technical             | 58       | 5.1      |
| 18 – 25                      | 58       | 15.1     | Skilled Trades                   | 5        | 1.3      |
| 26-35                        | 111      | 29.0     | Warehouse/General Labor          | 7        | 1.8      |
| 36-45                        | 97       | 25.3     | Assembly Worker                  | 4        | 1.0      |
| 46-55                        | 91       | 23.8     | Customer Service                 | 25       | 6.5      |
| 56 or older                  | 24       | 6.3      | Sales                            | 23       | 6.0      |
| Unknown                      | 2        | 0.5      | Health Care Worker               | 14       | 3.7      |
|                              |          |          | Teacher/Educator                 | 21       | 5.5      |
| <u>Education</u>             | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | Custodial/Housekeeping           | 2        | 0.5      |
| Some high school             | 1        | 0.3      | Homemaker                        | 4        | 1.0      |
| High school graduate         | 18       | 4.7      | Other                            | 26       | 6.8      |
| Some college                 | 176      | 46.0     | Missing data                     | 6        | 1.6      |
| Technical or trade school    | 22       | 5.7      | <u>Industrial Classification</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> |
| College graduate             | 108      | 28.2     | Manufacturing                    | 64       | 16.7     |
| Graduate/professional degree | 55       | 14.4     | Finance/Insurance/Real Estate    | 70       | 18.3     |
| Missing data                 | 3        | 0.8      | Public Administration            | 8        | 2.1      |
|                              |          |          | Wholesale/Retail Trade           | 29       | 7.6      |
| <u>Heritage</u>              | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> | Business Services                | 47       | 12.3     |
| African-American             | 40       | 10.4     | Educational Services             | 48       | 12.5     |
| Asian-American               | 8        | 2.1      | Health Services                  | 28       | 7.3      |
| Caucasian                    | 300      | 78.3     | Transportation/Utilities         | 10       | 2.6      |
| Hispanic                     | 10       | 2.6      | Other                            | 72       | 18.8     |
| Native American              | 8        | 2.1      | Missing data                     | 7        | 1.8      |
| Other                        | 16       | 4.2      | <u>Location</u>                  | <u>N</u> | <u>%</u> |
| Missing data                 | 1        | 0.3      | Central States                   | 150      | 39.2     |
|                              |          |          | Western States                   | 32       | 8.4      |
|                              |          |          | Eastern States                   | 54       | 14.2     |
|                              |          |          | Southern States                  | 120      | 31.3     |
|                              |          |          | Missing data                     | 27       | 7.0      |

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**Table 2. Correlations**

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***Work Expectations Profile and DiSC<sup>®</sup> Dimensions of Behavior***

|                             | <b><i>Dominance</i></b> | <b><i>Influence</i></b> | <b><i>Supportiveness</i></b> | <b><i>Conscientiousness</i></b> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b><i>Autonomy</i></b>      | .357**                  | .145**                  | -.087                        | -.078                           |
| <b><i>Balance</i></b>       | .028                    | .010                    | .176**                       | .105                            |
| <b><i>Career Growth</i></b> | .373**                  | .229**                  | -.033                        | .027                            |
| <b><i>Diversity</i></b>     | .254**                  | .239**                  | .063                         | -.013                           |
| <b><i>Environment</i></b>   | .055                    | .245**                  | .266**                       | .041                            |
| <b><i>Expression</i></b>    | .276**                  | .197**                  | .015                         | .005                            |
| <b><i>Recognition</i></b>   | .157**                  | .059                    | .067                         | -.015                           |
| <b><i>Stability</i></b>     | -.036                   | .123                    | .309**                       | .206**                          |
| <b><i>Structure</i></b>     | -.102                   | .071                    | .288**                       | .211**                          |
| <b><i>Teamwork</i></b>      | .104                    | .209**                  | .149**                       | .045                            |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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## About the Publisher

Inscape Publishing is committed to maintaining high professional standards of instrument development and application. This is accomplished through careful research and development processes, with periodic evaluations by independent behavioral measurement experts.

Inscape Publishing profiles meet quality standards with

- field-based research;
- substantiated claims;
- validity;
- a scale based on the current population;
- appropriate applications;
- respondent involvement;
- easy administration and interpretation;
- confidential, non-threatening feedback.

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