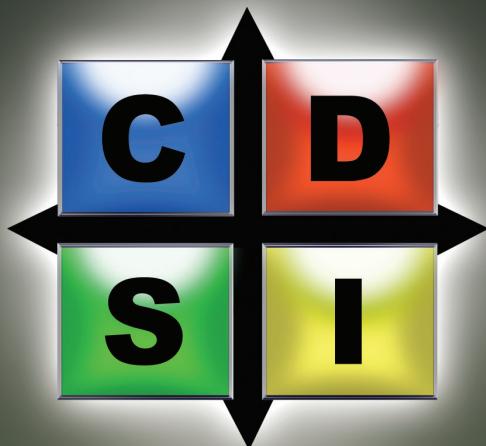


*How to Adapt Your Selling Style to
Match Every Prospect's Buying Style*



**THE
PLATINUM
RULE[®]**
for
DISC MASTERY

“Do Unto Others As They Want Done Unto Them”

**DR. TONY ALESSANDRA
SCOTT MICHAEL ZIMMERMAN**
Foreword by DAVE YOHO



THE PLATINUM RULE[®]

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FOREWORD

“Do Not Read This Book!”

by Dave Yoho

The material contained in this book has to be studied. It represents information, case studies and revelations as to “Why?” many hiring and training systems are flawed. The information herein will also reveal the numerous ways in which the intended growth of a business following an outdated “modus operandi” is both ineffective and costly.

Historically, many of the learned professionals who have examined behavior came to conclusions such as:

- Adult humans are products of their environment. Thus, their development was highly affected by what and whom they were taught in their earlier years.
- Theorists, although divided into many camps, concurred that behavior in early development, as an example up to the age of 11 or 12, drove adult behavior.
- Many of those who studied and then applied these and other seemingly positive conclusions morphed into their own theories for a hiring, selection and training process which developed their thought process.

B + FOREWORD

You need to look no further than the statements you've probably heard somewhere in life that influenced major companies, organizations, individual and group training concepts. Each of the concepts experienced some success, often confirming the beliefs of those who followed these early precepts.

Examples of numerous, earlier or current, concepts of training are pointed out not to be criticized, ridiculed or demeaned. They were however, the thinking of their time and that thinking influenced the way many individuals were segmented, examined, hired, trained and managed. Give some thought to these often-used characterizations and explanations of behavior.

- Johnny thought like an architect, engineer or scientists -- from the time he entered first grade.
- Mary is the student in our family destined to be a teacher
- Ben/Joan/(whoever) liked helping others we know he/she is going to go into the field of medicine.
- Bill has the gift of gab will probably become a preacher, politician or salesperson.
- With Jane's personality, she will have a great career if she goes into selling, marketing or advertising.
- And of course, one of the most common observations -- he/she is a born salesperson.

Many of those statements and beliefs have influenced entrepreneurial hiring and training. While major corporations with deeper pockets developed aptitude evaluation instruments, these examination tests and appraisals were well intended. The majority had common goals to determine whom to choose and how to manage that person. You might call these instruments the S.A.T. for hiring salespeople; however, this becomes a weak comparison when you examine outcomes.

Many students who score poorly in the SAT end up doing well in college. Some do moderately well in college, yet do exceptionally well

in the world of business. Conversely, many who score well in their SAT may flunk out of college or do poorly in their chosen job or profession.

When it comes to hiring sales or marketing people, the aptitude evaluation or examination of their motivational drives may not reveal the dominant behavioral factors, which enable conclusions such as --

- Can they do the job?
- Will they do the job?
- Do they fit the model of your business?

***NOTA BENE:** *Managers do not manage production, sales or budgets. They manage people – who are hired to perform functions that will create improved efficiency, produce more sales, increase production, maintain or improve customer satisfaction and sustain or increase profitability.*

*The Latin phrase “Nota Bene” literally means “note well” or more specifically, “remember this”.

CAN THEY DO THE JOB?

There are certain behavioral qualities that many individuals successfully employ in the sales role. There are certain behavior qualities that many people employ in other forms of employment that may or may not fit the needs of the job you offer. Wouldn’t it be beneficial to know how a new hiree will act or react in situations where some customers/prospects are difficult to arrange an appointment within acceptable time parameters or in highly competitive markets where your price is not the lowest? How quickly will that salesperson “give up” or “give in”?

NOTA BENE: *During high levels of stress, the average individual will take a path or course of action, that is not in his/her own best interest.*

WILL THEY DO THE JOB?

Can you predict how an applicant will respond to the variant behaviors of what they perceive in prospects or customers - how they

will respond to what they perceive as arrogance, those unwilling to listen, price buyers, or those who are over-informed or mis-informed when evaluating your product or service.

Can you predict how quickly a new hire may give up with difficult prospects or difficult situations? How would they measure up in their ability to respond without losing their demeanor?

In short, these issues and circumstances, and how an individual may respond to them, can be measured more by behavior than by aptitude. Yet, the combination in the proper quantities can be determined with proven, effective, easy to use behavioral instruments.

NOTA BENE: *It is often difficult to motivate individuals to do anything at any time – you can; however, create an environment in which motivation takes place.*

DO THEY FIT THE MODEL OF YOUR BUSINESS? (OR THE BUSINESS YOU ARE IN?)

Determining the model of your business takes into consideration the product or service you offer and to whom. Whether you like it or not, you develop a business model. Even the lack of a model is in itself a model. The product/service you sell may be via business to business or products or services sold directly to a consumer. Those are distinctly different models.

If your product/service is sold directly to consumers, what is your price position? The lowest – somewhere in the middle – or is it the highest? How far do you travel to meet your customers/prospects? How are your salespeople compensated? How are newly hired salespeople trained? Again, all part of your business model.

NOTA BENE: *If we knew what customers really meant by their statements – or if we understood their feelings better – selling would be a much easier task.*

What methods do you use to attract new customers? – Print

advertising, direct mail, television, internet, third party aggregators, or by direct contact solicitation programs. What does it cost to attract those prospects? These and similar factors constitute the model of your business.

Now contrast these three expressed requirements derived from over 40 years of study and use versus the analytical requirements of much current recruiting for salespeople.

- What are the prevailing attitudes of an individual to situations and circumstances which are present in today's marketplace?
- What are the activators and motivators which drive the individual? How substantial are they?
- What is their level of optimism? How will the individual respond in stressful circumstance or changes in the economy?

NOTA BENE: *If you seek to change the behavior of others, it is almost always a losing battle. Modification of behavior and adaptability is a proven format.*

Again, no intent to criticize aptitude tests or other processes including those utilized that are “similar” to DISC instruments. In fact, the proper instruments can and will measure the aptitude of a salesperson.

One of the most enlightening studies on this subject was made by Dr. Martin Seligman, a renowned psychologist and former director of clinical training in the field of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. He has authored numerous books and studies on the subject of human behavior. His most notable writing is titled, “*Learned Optimism*”.

Among Dr. Seligman’s discourses and whitepapers are statements made by those who have utilized his surveys and applied principles to develop a more efficient recruiting, hiring and training system. Central to these statements is the question:

Can you predict which individuals seldom, if ever, give up – or those who are easily sidetracked from their goals by negative or counter productive language?

Another response made by the executive of one of the largest sales training organizations in the United States:

Selling habits are often described as illogical. Does that imply that it takes someone with illogical thinking to become a top salesperson?

The final example is in the next statement, which is co-related to a fundamental problem which existed at one time in Metropolitan Life, who paid for “The Metropolitan Life Insurance Study” on recruiting, hiring, and training insurance agents. They did so after examining their study in the following light.

Selling is seldom easy. It requires persistence. It therefore takes a persistent person to become a mature productive salesperson.

The Met Life executive explained this in his own words.

“Every year we hired in excess of 5,000 new agents. They were selected very carefully out of the 60,000 who applied. We interview them. We screened them and we tested them. Then we gave them extensive training.

Half of these 5,000 recruits quit in the first year. Some who stayed produced normal amounts of new business, which then frequently lessened each year. By the end of the 4th year, 80% of the original 5,000 agents were gone. Now examine our investment. It costs us more than \$30,000 to hire a single agent. Accordingly, we lost over \$75 million dollars every year in hiring costs alone.”

This executive released this statement to Dr. Seligman for open

disclosure and is cited in Dr. Seligman's book, Learned Optimism. So, that executive then raised the following question for Dr. Seligman:

Isn't there a better way to pick out, in advance, the people who will make the best agents? Then he went on to state, "We need to stem this flow of wasted human capital, as well as the high cost of our failure rate."

How does this apply to your business? Think about what portion of your hiring practices exposes you/your company to both financial loss as well as the feeling of failure that occurs for both the hiring company and the person being hired.

From the discourse that arises out of Dr. Seligman's work arose the (ASQ) Attributional Style Questionnaire, which was then used to search for behavioral styles which, when defined, identify which behaviors are more attributional to the specific practices of those companies hiring salespeople.

It is the intended purpose and goals of the DISC instrument to aid management in better understanding the behavioral implications of those within their organization and those they are about to hire, to search for the causes of costly turnover, to seek out and correct unwise communication processes between employees, associates, customers and management and to enable management to develop more efficient teams to fulfill desired goals. Further, it is the goal to enable management to improve understanding of the use and benefits of behavioral profiling and its connection to selection, training and performance.

NOTA BENE: *If you seek to become educated as to behavior of others, start by understanding your behavior first.*

In management jargon, one of the most sought after, yet overused and least understood, concepts is that of motivation. To improve understanding of how best to accomplish this goal, examine the current prevailing wisdom regarding this subject. Call them rules if you like.

I. You can seldom motivate people to do what you would like them to do or to fulfill your goals, or often to even do what is in their own best interest.

Exhorting people to fulfill a goal and offering compensation as an incentive does not necessarily compute as a successful model. If it did, why is it that many people succeed for a period of time in their role (position), but ultimately fail in effectively fulfilling the requisites for which they were hired?

An example – a salesperson sells a specific volume of business and is compensated based on a percentage of the sale. In an effort to increase sales performance, management raises the amount of the incentive and believes this constitutes motivation. Research indicates the following: frequently, the salesperson sells less business, yet at a higher incentive. The salesperson makes as much or more money as they had previously. The outcome: The salesperson was motivated to perceive their increased incentive as a means to do less and earn the same amount or more.

NOTA BENE: *The power of an idea can be measured by the degree of resistance it attracts.*

II. Abundant research indicates that an organization can create an environment in which people will often motivate themselves; this is defined as **creating a motivational environment.**

When people understand their potential and current limitations, they are in a position to utilize their prevailing awareness to accomplish tasks and complete goals that might otherwise be unattainable. The task of creating a motivational environment is not just in the hands of upper management. The primary responsibility is that of the first (immediate) line of supervision.

Managers do not manage production, sales or budgets. They manage

people who are hired to perform functions that will create improved efficiency, produce more sales, increase production, maintain or improve customer satisfaction and sustain or increase profitability.

A major requirement of improved management methods starts by having a greater understanding of the perception and the value system of the person being recruited, originally during the interview, and then if hired, while in training and later in “day-to-day” management.

When hiring, there are three major components to (attempt to) uncover during the interview, plus a consideration as to who will manage them:

- Can they do the job?
- Will they do the job?
- Do they fit the organization and its model of operation?

Consideration: Can they be managed and by whom?

The purpose of utilizing the (DISC) behavioral profile is to detect issues which might not be apparent in a conventional interview. It also aids in the reduction of costly mis-hires. The proper use of a behavioral profile creates insights into the applicant’s perception and opens the door to better understanding of the individual’s value system and what their true motivational drives are. Effectively utilized, the behavioral profile aids management in seeking information so as to make selections based on empirical (provable) data, as well as utilizing appropriate training and management techniques.

NOTA BENE: *The person who knows the most about a circumstance or situation has the power to affect change, resolution, compromise or fulfillment.*

Potential outcomes with appropriate use of a behavioral profile:

- Utilizing information provided in the profile to uncover behavior of someone who might succeed in the specific role.

- Avoid selecting someone whose behavior might not fit the role requirements or the operational model and may fail.
- Placing and then monitoring the hired individual in an optimistic environment that creates a potential for success.
- Avoiding unwarranted judgments regarding the capabilities, skill level and adaptability of those interviewed or selected.

III. Despite the latter, all people are motivated to do what they do at all times whether the actions are in their best own interest or not.

The tardy employee, those who rebel against authority, those who are disruptive at meetings and/or training sessions, and even those who break policy and rules despite the consequences for such actions are motivated to do what they do. While we might not be in a position to fully understand what motivates someone to do all of the latter behaviors, there is a “payoff” for them, otherwise the behavior would not be repeated.

If behavioral profiling uncovers a perception or style of behavior that is inconsistent with the needs of the group or the individual being profiled, it is better to determine this earlier than later. Without the use of an instrument which, most often, determines these otherwise hidden factors, hiring frequently becomes “mis-hiring” or “mis-managing”.

A properly designed instrument such as the DISC behavioral profile, beyond meeting the needs in the recruiting process, has to be part of a simplified training and administration process.

NOTA BENE: *If you want to influence people, stop trying to change them; change the way you interact with them. The concept is called adaptation.*

WHAT WORKS BEST WITH BEHAVIORAL PROFILING? (THE BIG “IF’S”)

- **If** - it is self-administered electronically with simple instructions

and is adaptable to both large and small companies, as well as individuals.

- **If** – it can be utilized in developmental training for team-building or internal promotions by retaking it at measured intervals.
- **If** – the instrument has the capability of immediate and simplified interpretation for interviewing and “post hire” training.
- **If** – with support and interpretative information provided, it does not require extensive educational development of management personnel. (Is a tutorial provided?)
- **If** – it is an evaluation tool that is easy to understand and simplifies management’s comprehension of the complexity of human behavior as it applies to the environment in which an applicant will be expected to function.
- **If** – the instrument, designed for focusing on behavior, allows management to depersonalize differences and conflicts.

Example: If we describe John as someone who may talk too much, is overly-aggressive, tends to overstate issues or uses too much anecdotal (story-telling) information, we are defining behavior. However, if we state, “he drives me crazy and I can’t stand to have him around,” we are attacking John as a person. This is called *value judging*.

If, by utilizing the overview of an individual’s completed behavioral profile, we recognize that properly trained, certain skills can provide an outlet for information which will be useful for interaction with associates, customers/prospects and vendors, we are assessing John’s behavior.

The next step is to define “How can John be managed within the organization and who will be his manager?” Again, the instrument can define the “who” by addressing the behavioral style of his direct manager or trainer who has previously taken the behavioral profile.

If the instrument contains a non-threatening format, the hiring organization will have the capacity to utilize the information in team-building, individual counseling, stress identification and conflict resolution. "Skillsets" can be stimulated by managers who understand the behavior and the goal perceptions of those selected.

NOTA BENE: *If you can keep your head while those around you are losing theirs and blaming it on you -- Rudyard Kipling from his poem – "If"*

IV. People do things for their reasons, not for yours.

Their behaviors are stimulated and frequently disengaged by their personal history, their perception of consequences and their personal feelings regarding their worthiness.

Interviews are frequently impacted by the perceived communication skills of the person being interviewed. The interviewer may assess this as an effective selling or management skill. Profiling may determine that the form of articulation being used has great social value, yet may not produce business (in the case of the sales candidate) due to the inability of the salesperson to lead the sales presentation to the most successful conclusion, i.e., eventually getting business (getting an order).

Effectively used, the behavioral profile enables the interviewer, after evaluating the report, to ask a series of questions which will more efficiently determine whether the applicant fits the role for the position being offered. It also can aid in determining how the applicant will perceive circumstances which develop on a regular basis in the performance of a task and how the applicant might respond.

V. An individual's weaknesses may be an over-extension of their strengths (and vice-versa).

To raise again the analogy made in point #III about the applicant who is articulate, frequently those with this behavior trait (speaking

skills) often do not respond well to bringing an issue to closure (closing) or completing “paperwork”.

Conversely, applicants who adhere well to data and detail may be lacking in skillsets which enable them to describe complicated processes so as to be visualized and internalized by others.

Again, an example: An accountant efficient in the compilation of reports, figures, and the need for structure, may underplay the necessity of articulation to define the needs of structure for others. Conversely, salespeople who perceive the need for skillsets in articulation, emotionalism, and the development of relationships, frequently shun paperwork detail and structure.

NOTA BENE: *An individual's weaknesses may be an over-extension of their strengths (and vice-versa).*

VI. The person who understands the situation and circumstances better than those with whom they interact has the potential to control the circumstances and situations with which they are dealing.

It is important to exercise some judgment in the use of the word “control”; remember, we are talking of controlling circumstances and situations, not people.

This also underscores the necessity of salespeople understanding the thought process which their prospects/customers undergo in their decision-making. If salespeople understand the “value system” of those to whom they are trying to sell products, services or ideas, they become more effective in their role and produce more sales and better customer satisfaction.

To quote from *The Science of Successful In-Home Selling*[©] –

“If we knew what customers really meant by their statements – or if we

understood their feelings better – selling would be a much easier task.”

While it is not possible in most cases to profile customers, remember that salespeople and others in your organization are the interactors between you and your customers. Companies spend untold dollars and time to develop prospects and customers, then turn them over to salespeople, service departments and similar. It is therefore important to know how that person perceives relationships, as well as company and customer values.

Once management can clearly define the perception and tendencies of a salesperson, they are able to define and deliver the concepts of structure, training and process to the salesperson’s value system, thereby preparing the salesperson to do the same thing with his/her prospects and customers.

In a 17 year study on the use of effective decision making language (power linguistics[©]—<http://www.powerlinguistics.com>), it was determined that while we might be incapable of training someone to be more aggressive (modifying behavior), we are in the position to affect changes in the language used, appropriate response methods, including scripting and improved listening techniques.

The outcome of these modifications usually leads to improved performance, which usually leads to improved self-confidence, which frequently accelerates the use of more effective communication skills – again, improving performance.

Management’s Challenge

What stimuli or motivational device will you utilize to effectuate the desired goals of your organization or yourself?

We utilize communication as a stimulus while failing to perceive that one person may attach a different interpretation to that communication and it may not be the interpretation that was intended by the sender. The differences in these interpretations often reflect the differences in our background, training and experiences. There is also communication

that is not received at all because it lies outside of our selected range of stimuli.

The process utilized in this style of DISC profiling is based on the model created by Dr. William Moulton Marston whose research as early as 1928 produced an outstanding study entitled *Emotions of Normal People*. Dr. Marston, unlike his contemporaries Freud and Jung, went beyond an interest in pathology or mental illness. His interest lay in how normal* people felt and behaved as they interacted with the world around them.

* *The word normal is complex in itself, in the sense that people who are functioning normally without pathological or mental illness deterrents have a decision-making process, which stimulates their behavior. In turn, their behavior is based on numerous factors inclusive of the environment, their values, past history, and personal experiences including mentors, teachers, etc.*

Dr. Marston's model is based on 2 perceptions:

- 1. The environment is perceived as either favorable or unfavorable**
- 2. The person is more (or less) powerful than the environment**

Our perceptions guide us through events and circumstances, which in turn creates reality. Our perception is more important than what those events and circumstances portend and will differ greatly in terms of how people react to them. As an example, people respond to fictional accounts in books and movies as though they were (are) real. Individuals will laugh or cry as certain situations seem to warrant. In cases where they misunderstand a conversation, command, or entreaty, they may panic or develop high levels of stress, depending on their perception of certain circumstances. Thus, an individual's perception of a situation involving people and/or events most frequently determines their reaction to them.

A REFLECTION:

Stimuli: Cut down a tree and utilize it as firewood; it will provide heat and warmth for you and your home. Convert the tree to lumber creating a building that will sustain weight, provide security and endure external elements. Or instead, use the lumber to create a floating device – a raft or a boat. Now examine the following: the tree remains the basic product exposed to different stimuli (a process) and thereby different outcomes are achieved with the same product.



DAVE YOHO presides over one of the oldest and most successful consulting groups representing small business in the US. He sits on the board of public companies and has made over 5,000 speeches in all 50 states and in 22 foreign countries.

Dave is regarded as a leading authority on the use of DISC instruments for recruiting, interviewing, hiring, training and managing others. His nationally acclaimed recorded series is entitled, *“Recruiting and Hiring Sales & Marketing People.”* (<https://www.daveyoho.com/product/recruiting-hiring-sales-personnel/>)

He has appeared in over 100 training movies/videos for corporations. He has appeared on the most popular talk shows, including the Tonight Show, the Today Show and was invited to the White House 3 times. He is often referred to as “*The Dean of Modern Training and Motivation*”.

He has written numerous books (2 have become best sellers). Dave Yoho Associates has represented numerous Fortune 500 companies, and even more small businesses, aiding them in the development of their communication systems, hiring and training, and becoming more profitable.

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