



Track: Customer Relationship Development

Unit 8: Understanding The Customer's Buying Style

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the influence of behavioral style on buying and selling
- Recognize three behaviors that depict each of the four buying styles
- Read a customer's behavioral style
- Describe at least one strategy to increase customer comfort for each of the four behavioral styles



Take a few minutes and review the style information that was covered in Module 3 on the next page, and then complete the DiSC Scavenger Hunt activity below. See how many characteristics you can identify correctly!

Perfectionist _____	Demanding _____	Good Listener _____	Fact Finder _____	Unorganized _____
Emotional _____	Competitive _____	Resists Change _____	Detail Oriented _____	Optimistic _____
Indecisive _____	Social _____	Risk Taker _____	Team Player _____	Analytical _____
Decisive _____	Accurate _____	Enthusiastic _____	Direct _____	Loyal _____
Influential _____	Patient _____	Arrogant _____	Logical _____	Goal Oriented _____

STYLE CHARACTERISTICS

High D - Dominance



- Emphasis on shaping the environment to get results
- Result or goal oriented
- High ego strength
- Fears loss of control
- Motivated by challenge
- Communicates the big picture
- Listens until they think they have heard enough

High I - Influence

- Emphasis is on influencing others
- People oriented
- Optimistic
- Unorganized
- Motivated by social recognition
- Fears rejection
- Communicates and communicates and communicates
- Listens for the chance to talk



High S - Steadiness



- Emphasis is on cooperating with others to carry out a task
- Team oriented
- Predictable
- Values stability and security
- Fears change
- Motivated by recognition
- Communicates with patience
- Listens implicitly for clarification and direction

High C - Conscientiousness

- Emphasis is on achieving quality and accuracy
- Task oriented
- Analytical - attention to detail
- Perfectionism
- Fears personal criticism of work
- Motivated by quality and accuracy
- Communicates details
- Listens for clearly defined expectations and reinforcement of quality and accuracy



The Influence of Style on Buying and Selling

Reflect individually on the questions below.

- How might your style influence the way you buy? (Pace, information gathering, risk taking, motivation to buy, etc.)
- How might your style influence the way you sell? (Pace, communication, gathering information, asking for commitment, etc.)



A Key to Sales Success Is Adaptability

- What _____ behavioral style is doesn't really _____
- What really matters is how _____ you are
 - Adaptability is the extent to which we sense the interpersonal _____ needs of our customers and _____ our own behavior to meet those needs
- Adaptability is both a _____ and an _____
- If you are _____ to adapt, it is easy to _____ the skill

Interpersonal Comfort And Adaptability



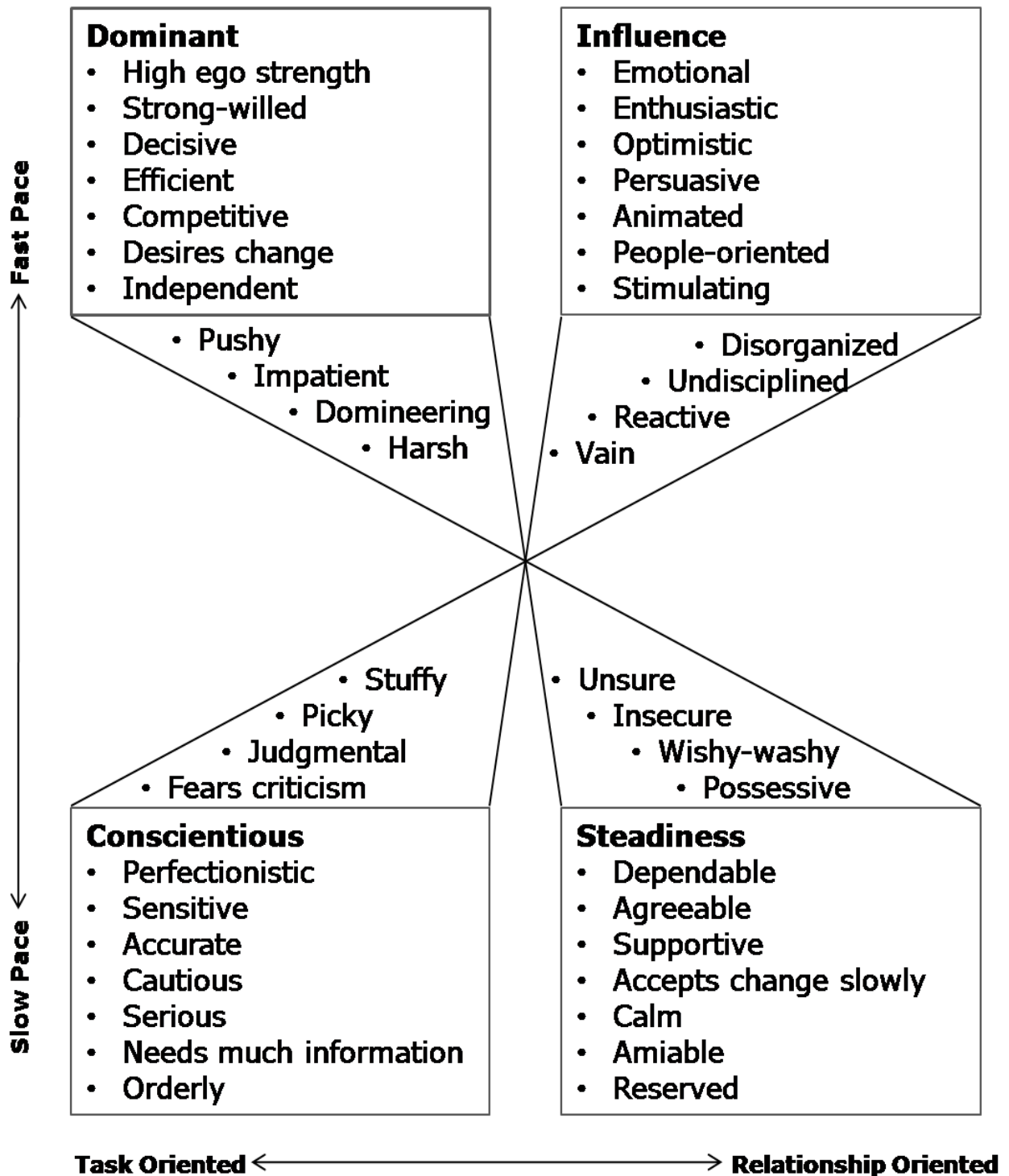
Whether consciously or not, we tend to deal best with customers who are the most like us, in terms of behavioral style. Because they are similar, there is little tension in the relationship, and it's easy to work with them. Customers that are different than us, are much less comfortable to work with, and we are often not as effective selling to them.

Take a few minutes and think about the style combinations below, and decide what the likely degree of comfort would be between the styles, if neither party adapted. In other words, what is the natural comfort level between the style combinations? To do this, think about how they are similar or dissimilar in terms of pace and orientation (task or people), and think about how their communication styles would mesh. Use the chart on page 6 to aid you.

Style Combination	Likely Level of Comfort			Why?
"D" and "S"	High	Medium	Low	
"C" and "I"	High	Medium	Low	
"S" and "S"	High	Medium	Low	
"C" and "C"	High	Medium	Low	
"D" and "I"	High	Medium	Low	
"C" and "S"	High	Medium	Low	
"D" and "D"	High	Medium	Low	
"I" and "I"	High	Medium	Low	
"D" and "C"	High	Medium	Low	
"S" and "I"	High	Medium	Low	

What conclusions do you draw from the data?

BEHAVIORAL STYLE CHARACTERISTICS



Recognizing Buying Styles

The D Style

- Assertive, results-oriented demeanor
- No-nonsense attitude
- Fast, action-oriented pace
- Opinionated
- Direct or blunt way of speaking
- Willingness to take risks
- Open skepticism
- Impatience with small talk
- Eagerness to control discussions
- Tough-minded approach
- Quick, decisive style

The I Style

- Warm and approachable
- Upbeat and enthusiastic approach
- Positive outlook
- Friendly demeanor
- Reliance on intuition or gut instinct
- Fast, action-oriented pace
- Relationship oriented
- Consideration of other's feelings
- Eagerness to meet new people
- Tendency to make small talk
- Willingness to try innovative or groundbreaking ideas

The S Style

- Agreeable and welcoming manner
- Softer spoken
- Moderate, methodical pace
- Attentive, patient listening style
- Calm, gentle demeanor
- Frequent displays of modesty and accommodation
- Reluctance to commit quickly
- Caution or hesitancy when making decisions
- Even temper
- Avoidance of change

The C Style

- Professional, even stoic demeanor
- Slow, methodical pace
- Reliance on logic and reason
- Avoidance of emotional expressions
- Discomfort with small talk or personal questions
- Open skepticism
- Caution when making decisions
- Private, reserved nature
- Desire to have things be exact
- Interest in details

Think about your best and worst customers. What are their buying styles?

People-Reading Guide



Outgoing/Direct? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster pace • More telling • Louder speech • More inflection 	OR	Reserved/Indirect? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slower pace • More asking • Softer speech • More monotone
More Competitive & Directing (D)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed posture • Unexpressive/cool face • Feelings unexpressed • Formal • Focuses on “What?” • Priority on goals & results 		More Accepting & Doing (S)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open posture • Relaxed/warm face • Feelings expressed • Casual • Focuses on “How?” • Priority on cooperation & stability
	OR	
More Talkative & Interactive (I)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open posture • Animated/warm face • Feelings expressed • Casual • Focuses on “Who?” • Priority on people & approval 		More Assessing & Thinking (C)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed posture • Unexpressive/cool face • Feelings unexpressed • Formal • Focuses on “Why?” • Priority on quality & analysis

Think about some additional customers that you work with, and use the guide above to discern their styles. Capture your ideas below.

People Reading Practice



Review the characters on the list below from several popular television series, and see if you can identify their primary behavioral styles. Some of these characters you might even be able to identify a secondary style!



The Office

- Dwight Shrute
- Michael Scott
- Phyllis Vance
- Angela Martin

NCIS

- Gibbs
- Tony
- McGee
- Vance
- Abby

Game of Thrones

- Eddard Stark
- Brown
- Tyrion Lannister
- Jon Snow
- Cersei Lannister

Big Bang Theory

- Raj
- Howard
- Sheldon
- Leonard

Friends

- Monica
- Joey
- Chandler
- Phoebe
- Rachel
- Ross

Guardians of the Galaxy

- Rocket
- Quill
- Gamora
- Drax
- Groot
- Nebula
- Mantis

Adapting Your Selling Behavior

Think about each of the four behavioral styles, and how they would like someone to sell to them. How would they prefer that you communicate with them? What would motivate them to buy from you? How would you ask them for commitment? How would you create comfort with your follow-up?

Selling To:	Strategies
The High “D” Customer	
The High “I” Customer	
The High “S” Customer	
The High “C” Customer	

DiSC Sales Strategies

Process	Dominance	Influence	Steadiness	Conscientious
Planning	Goal of control over their environment	How your product increases their influence and approval by others	Step-by-step approach to maintain stability and improve results	Performance record of your product. Be logical, accurate and specific
Opening	Limit socializing. Get to the point. Relate to results	Be casual and friendly. Relate to feelings and aspirations	Be informal, low pressure, but methodical	Get to business swiftly, but tactfully. Don't invade their space. Let them be expert
Interviewing	Focus on desired results. Anticipate what questions	Be enthusiastic and ask questions to reveal motivations. Expect who questions	Be sincere and focus on questions that demonstrate concern for task and relationships. Anticipate how questions	Be businesslike and ask questions that allow them to demonstrate their expertise. Expect why questions
Presenting	Emphasize efficiency, savings and profits	Emphasize how they will save effort and look good to others	Emphasize maintaining a predictable, harmonious environment	Emphasize accuracy, logic and quality
Responding to Concerns	Accept their bluntness. Show your desire to help them achieve results	Respond to feelings with empathy. Use testimonials of others' success	Acknowledge their feelings. Offer on-going support. May need to probe for real concerns	Respond with information to most pressing questions. Reinforce logic and provide evidence to reassure
Gaining Commitment	Provide options and allow them to make the decision. Make a direct close	Be upbeat. Provide ideas to implement action, and use assumed close	Support their decision with step-by-step actions. Seek firm commitment without pushing	Acknowledge their demand for logical action. Clarify priorities, and use direct close after time for consideration
Servicing	Efficiency and delivery as agreed upon. Follow up with evidence of results	Actions to spare them efforts. Be responsive, informal and open in your dealings	Personal attention, availability, and repeated, scheduled follow-up to assure stability	Use specific assurances for reliability. Review periodically verbally and in writing

Homework: Adapting to A Difficult Customer

Think about a customer with whom you would like to improve your relationship. Use your people reading skills to identify their style, and then create a strategy for how you will adapt to create better comfort for the customer. Capture your strategies below.

My Difficult Customer: _____

My Customer's Behavioral Style: _____

Planning: Given this person's behavioral style, what are some things you must make sure you do and avoid doing?

Opening: How much and what kind of interaction is most appropriate?

Interviewing: What questions will you ask to understand what's important to this person?

Presenting: What are some benefits of your product/service that will motivate this person to buy?

Responding to Concerns: What are some likely concerns this person may have, and how can you reduce them?

Gaining Commitment: What closing approach is likely to be most effective for gaining a commitment from this person?

Servicing: What servicing expectations is this person likely to have?