

News to Use

If you're serious about your New Year's resolutions, here's a tip: write them down.

Take a look at these statistics from a study of Yale's Class of 1953:

- 3% of the graduates said they had comprehensive written goals.
- 10% said they had modest and incomplete goals.
- 87% had no goals at all.

Twenty years later, the 3% had accomplished more — and had 10 times the income of the other 97% combined. So take the time to write down your goals for 2005 and beyond!

Product Spotlight

• Workplace Motivators

This report helps identify how individuals prioritize their time and tasks, as well as how they filter information and make decisions.

These motivators are strong indicators of which people are best suited for certain job functions, and should be used in connection with behavior style assessments to gauge how a person will perform in the workplace.

(This is a more extensive complement to the Personal Interests, Attitudes and Values report.)

Make your goals count this year

Effective goal-setting takes commitment and imagination

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New Year's resolutions are all the rage this time of the year — both as we make them, and as we race to break 'em.

Think back to how you have set goals in the past. Did you write them down? How detailed were they? Did you group them into professional and personal goals? Most importantly, did you follow through and achieve them?

If so, congratulations! You're in a pretty select minority: the majority of successful people. But if you've been frustrated by failing to achieve past goals, try putting at least two of the following ideas into action for 2005.

- **Start with the big picture.** Spend a

little time daydreaming. Where do you want your business to be in five years? Where would you like to vacation within the next five years? How can you make your life less stressful? What 25 things would you like to do before you die? (If that sounds easy to answer, try it.)

• **Identify actions that help you move closer to those goals.**

Break them into quarterly or even weekly goals, tasks and activities. Give yourself a deadline.

- **Reward yourself.** Make a list of re-

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Want action? Need results? Dial "D" for Doer

(Second article in a series about the DISC behavior assessment model.)

Since the 1950s, the DISC model has consistently proven a reliable and insightful tool for predicting workplace behavior. Although we tend to group people into one of the four dominant styles, the reality is that about 95% of us are a combination of styles.

In graphing the DISC model, the most observable behaviors show up as points either high above or far below the center line.

This month we're looking at "Ds": society's doers or drivers. High Ds are easy to spot. They tend to be aggressive, asser-

sive, demanding and direct. They are often short-tempered. They say exactly what's on their mind, and can appear belligerent.

High Ds have a number of strengths. They are good problem solvers and straight shooters when dealing with others. They like challenges and aren't afraid to take risks. They are results-oriented, and they won't shy away from taking responsibility for their actions.

Not surprisingly, though, high Ds also have several areas that need improvement. They aren't always good listeners, may overlook details and tend to be impatient

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Maximize your goal-setting this year

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wards for your accomplishing a goal. The rewards don't have to be major — a nice evening out, a weekend getaway or a new outfit are usually sufficient to keep you motivated.

• **Keep track of your progress.** Most people are visually-based, so you might try clipping magazine pictures associated with your goals. A businessman I know writes his monetary goal for the year on a piece of paper and looks at it every morning while shaving. He's met or exceeded those goals every year he's done it.

• **Keep on keeping on.** Remember that goals aren't static. They can be adjusted, even exceeded. Just stay committed to following through.

• **Challenge yourself.** Until a goal is written down, it's just a dream. So write them down! Make yourself accountable — you don't know what you can achieve until you commit to trying.

"If you can dream it, you can achieve it," writes Richard Bach in *Illusions*. "However, you may have to work for it!"

High "Ds" take no-nonsense approach

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(particularly with people who don't speak up). They expect a lot from themselves and others, and may appear demanding.

(Low Ds, in contrast, are very even-tempered and rarely speak up — which means they can appear weak to high Ds.)

High Ds fear being taken advantage of, and will respond angrily if they think that's the case. If you're dealing with an angry high D customer, let them vent. Listen actively to their concerns. Don't discount their feelings or simply quote rules or try to explain why something happened — that will all sound like ex-

cuses to them.

Instead, find the most senior person available to address their problem and provide options. Ask them what solution they'd like to see — remember, Ds can be pretty creative problem solvers.

In dealing with high D co-workers, employees or bosses, be sure to be direct and clear in all your communications. Use bulleted lists wherever possible and avoid unnecessary detail.

To take the best advantage of a D's strengths, let them know what results you expect — and then get out of their way. Resist any urge to micromanage!

Maximize Success Story

For years, the **Texas Legal Protection Plan** had used placement agencies to screen job applicants. But the result was too many unqualified applicants reaching the interview stage and wasting everyone's time. Thanks to Maximize, applicants are now screened online by a short customized questionnaire and, for entry-level positions, two additional assessments. The result? "I wouldn't hire another person without putting them through this process — even if it was my sister!" says **Executive VP Kellis Richter**. "It lets me better utilize my time with the cream of the crop candidates. We've hired three people this way and they've all worked out perfectly."