




Condensed  
Sample Version

# Frontline Management: Leveraging the Strengths of Your Style Leader's Guide



**Session Goals**



- Understand **different management styles**
- Explore **strengths and challenges** of each style
- Discover how **others perceive** your strengths
- Create **action plans for leveraging** strengths

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**Session Goal and Process**



Understand and maximize our strengths in order to become better, more effective managers.

By doing so, we can:

- Become aware of our natural management tendencies
- Understand why employees react the way they do to us
- Learn to play to our strengths as managers

The DiSC® Learning Model will inform each step of today's process. With it we will:

- Understand different management styles
- Explore specific strengths and challenges of each management style
- Discover how others perceive your strengths
- Create an action plan for leveraging your management strengths

My personal goals for this session:

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**Participant Workbook**

**NOTE TO FACILITATOR:**

Begin the session by introducing yourself and addressing session logistics such as bathroom locations, respectful operating practices, break times, and parking lot for questions.

**SAY:**

- [✓] Often, when trying to develop our management skills, we find ourselves trying to conform to a subscribed method or system of management.
- However, no two people approach their jobs as managers in the same way. When we recognize our unique styles and get a better sense of how we approach the management role, we can
  - [✓] Become aware of our natural management tendencies.
  - Understand why employees react the way they do to us.
  - Learn to play to our strengths as managers.
- [✓] The goal of this program is to enable us to understand and maximize our strengths in order to become better, more effective managers.
- Of course, there are different ways to do this, but we're going to use a proven method called the DiSC® Learning Model.

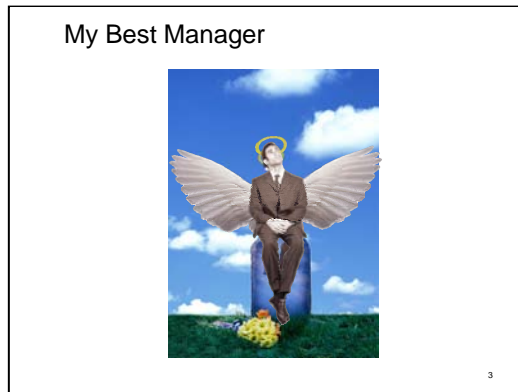
**SAY:**

After we are introduced to this model, it will inform each step of today's process.

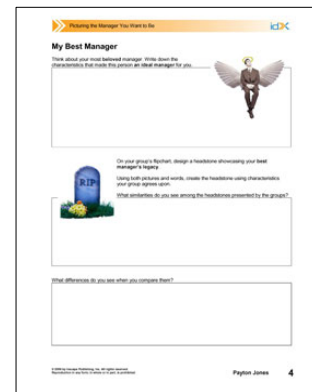
- [✓] First, we'll use this model to understand different management styles.
- [✓] Then we'll explore the strengths and challenges of your management style.
- [✓] From there we'll discover how others perceive your strengths.
- [✓] Finally, we'll pull all of this information together and create an action plan for leveraging your management strengths.

**TRANSITION:**

But before we explore the different styles, let's find out what you think makes a manager good — and not so good.



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**Participant Workbook**

**INSTRUCT:**

- [✓] Thinking about our worst manager paints the picture of what we don't want to be. Now let's think about the flip side.
- Think about your most beloved manager.
- Write down the characteristics that made this person an ideal manager for you.

*Give participants one minute to write about their best manager.*

**INSTRUCT:**

- [✓] Now, get back into your groups and, this time, pretend that many years have passed, and you are designing a headstone showcasing this manager's legacy.
- On your flipchart, create the headstone using characteristics you agree upon.
- Again, feel free to use both drawings and words.

*Give participants 5–7 minutes to make their headstone sketches. Then ask a representative from each group to present its ideal-manager headstone.*

**ASK:**

- What similarities do you see among the headstones presented by the groups?
- What differences do you see when you compare them?

*Listen for a variety of responses.*

**SAY:**

- While there are some similarities between the managers described by each group, it's clear that being the "ideal" manager in every situation is a challenging prospect.
- Recognizing what is perceived as "good" and "bad" by various people gives us a place to start when considering how to improve our effectiveness as managers.

**SAY:**

- Now let's look at some of our own management characteristics and see which might help us become the managers we want to be.

**The Manager You Want to Be**



**Visualize your ideal**

**Choose 3 qualities**

**Consider for each:**

- Does it come **naturally**?
- Will it take **effort**?

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**The Manager You Want to Be**

Copy content as given to create different contributions as manager. You have options to tick the most likely, describe your responses to the prompts, then are certain contributions that will probably come most naturally to you. An effort marker.

Read the list of contributions and personalize your feedback by putting a ✓ next to things that are like you, an X next to things that are not like you, and a ? next to things you aren't sure about.

**U**

- I try to create a stable and predictable environment
- I often provide support to others on their own matters
- I'm apprehensive about concerns and problems
- I'm well-organized and timely
- I don't push my ideas on others but those of others
- I'm knowledgeable of my work
- I'm logical and systematic
- I'm looking for others to give answers
- I'm a calm person
- I'm making decisions or making decisions
- I'm solitary and self-reliant
- I'm usually better together or not
- I check in with people to make sure they're doing ok
- I'm available to answer questions and clear up confusion
- I try to guide people rather than lead them around
- I'm open to opinions or decisions from others
- I don't explain the reasoning behind my decisions

This may make some sense because of the situation. Read of these contributions about a high value (one working effectively with others and consistently all the others contribute). They also contribute (usually, sometimes, and occasionally). Read the list of 30 contributions and mark naturally to you.

Check which qualities from the poster and your feedback that you would like to focus on to become the manager you want to be.

Qualities to focus on:	Come Naturally	Take Effort
1.		
2.		
3.		

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**Participant Workbook**

**INSTRUCT:**

- [☞] In your workbooks, you will find a description of some of your likely contributions as a manager, based on your responses to the prework.
- Personalize the description by putting a checkmark next to things that are like you, an “X” by things that are not like you, and a question mark next to things that you aren’t sure about.

*Give participants 1–2 minutes to read and personalize their feedback.*

**INSTRUCT:**

- [☞] Now, think back to the posters of ideal managers that were created in the last activity, and visualize the kind of manager you would like to be.
- Choose three qualities from the posters and your feedback that you would like to focus on in order to become this manager, and write them on the lines provided in your workbook.

*Give participants 3–4 minutes to write down their ideal management qualities.*

**INSTRUCT:**

[☞] Now, based on your feedback and what you know about yourself, note whether each characteristic is likely to come naturally to you or whether it will take significant effort to achieve.

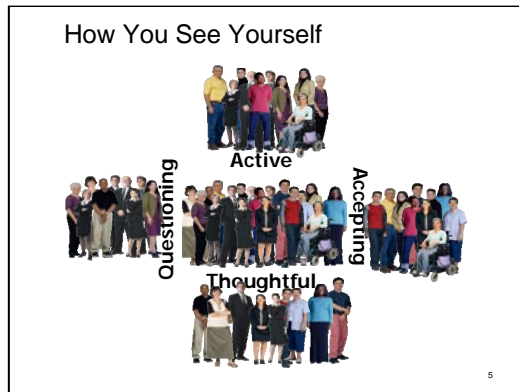
*Give participants 1–2 minutes to decide.*

**SAY:**

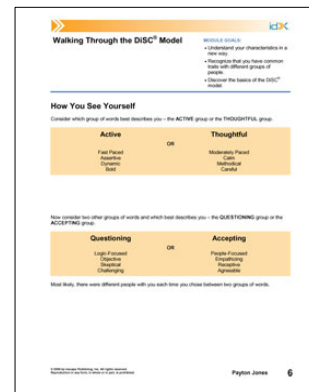
- By describing what we want to contribute as managers, we are taking the first step toward becoming the managers we want to be.
- While it might be easiest to just act and react in the ways that are most natural to us, we need to make a deliberate effort to represent the qualities we most admire.

**TRANSITION:**

- The preferences for different management styles that we have seen here are not random. We can begin to understand these differences by looking at a model of behavioral styles.



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Participant Workbook

## Walking Through the DiSC® Model

### NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

Refer to the Preparing the Classroom section of the Quick Start for detailed instructions on setting up the room for the upcoming “Walking Through the DiSC® Model” activity.

### SAY:

[🗣️] Let’s take a look at some basic differences and similarities among people.

### INSTRUCT:

- [🗣️] At the front of the room is a flipchart labeled [🗣️] “Active.” The other words are “Fast Paced,” “Assertive,” “Dynamic,” and “Bold.” In the back of the room is another flipchart labeled [🗣️] “Thoughtful.” The other words are “Moderate Paced,” “Calm,” “Methodical,” and “Careful.”
- Please move either to the [🗣️] front or the [🗣️] back of the room, based on the words you think tend to describe you as a manager.

*Give participants a moment to gather by either the “Active” or “Thoughtful” flipchart.*

### INSTRUCT:

- Take a minute to look at who is in your group.
- Now, on the left side of the room is a flipchart labeled [🗣️] “Questioning.” The other words are “Logic-Focused,” “Objective,” “Skeptical,” and “Challenging.”
- On the right side of the room is a flipchart labeled [🗣️] “Accepting.” The other words are “People-Focused,” “Empathizing,” “Receptive,” and “Agreeable.”
- Go either to the [🗣️] left or the [🗣️] right, based on the words that best describe you.

*Give participants a moment to gather by either the “Questioning” or “Accepting” flipchart.*

### ASK:

Look around. Are there different people in this group than in your last group?

*Give participants a moment to look around and observe how the group has changed.*

**Your DiSC® Management Style**

Read your **feedback**

Personalize with  
 ✓ = like you  
 X = not like you  
 ? = not sure

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**Participant Workbook**

## Understanding the DiSC® Management Styles

**SAY:**

- [✓] We often assume that everyone approaches his or her role as a manager in the same way.
- However, we each have unique approaches to management, grown out of our unspoken expectations, personal needs, strengths, and challenges.
- Our DiSC® style influences the approach we take when managing others.

**INSTRUCT:**

- [✓] Read your individualized feedback about your DiSC management style.
- Personalize the description by putting a checkmark next to things that are like you, an “X” by things that are not like you, and a question mark next to things that you aren’t sure about.

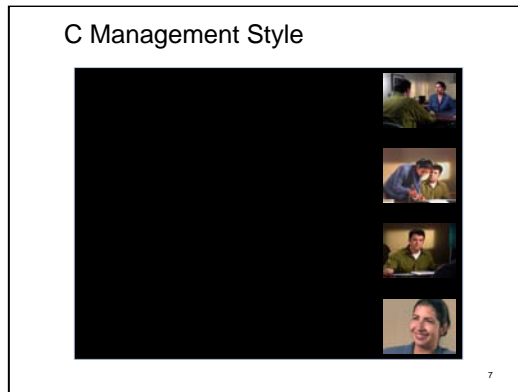
*Allow 1–2 minutes for participants to read and personalize their feedback.*

**NOTE TO FACILITATOR:**

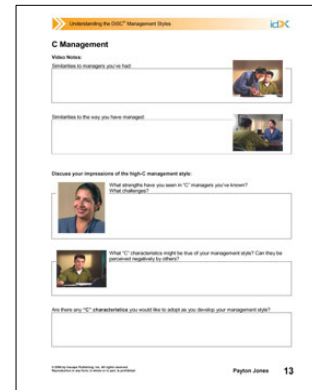
If participants find that their primary style does not match their result from the *Walking Through the DiSC Model* activity, assure them that neither interpretation is wrong. They may find that they used a secondary style for their focus in the activity. Also, you can remind them that estimating a style in an activity is likely to be less reliable than the assessment because it uses a limited number of questions. It is important that participants feel that they can personalize their information to make it most relevant for them.

**INSTRUCT:**

- Now that you have an idea of your own DiSC management style, let’s explore all four styles in a little more depth. We’ll begin by watching a video segment that focuses on the “D — Dominance” style.
- As you watch the video, write down on the next page of your workbook any similarities that this manager has to managers you’ve had in the past. Or note similarities to ways that you may have managed in the past.



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**Participant Workbook**

[🎧] *Video Segment: “C Management Style.”*

**ASK:**

[🎧] How was this “C” manager effective? How did the employee respond?

*Listen for: complimented good work, gave constructive direction for improvement, solicited his ideas. Employee was open to changes and asked questions for clarity, he was relieved when he was given support.*

**SAY:**

Now let's take a look at a different view of a “C” manager. The next piece shows how employees might perceive the “C” management style when it goes to extremes.

[🎧] *Video Segment: “C Management Style Gone Wrong.”*

**ASK:**

[🎧] Has anyone here ever **felt** like you couldn't do anything right or you had to account for every move you made? What did the manager do or say to make you feel this way?

*Elicit responses and facilitate discussion.*

**INSTRUCT:**

In small groups, take a few minutes to talk about your impressions of the high-C management style. Discuss:


- [🎧] What strengths have you seen in “C” managers? What challenges?
- [🎧] What “C” characteristics might be true of your management style? Can they be perceived negatively by others?
- [🎧] Are there “C” characteristics you would like to adopt as you develop your management style?

*Give participants 2–3 minutes to discuss.*

**TRANSITION:**

Now that we've seen some powerful examples of each type of manager, let's discover the strengths and weaknesses of each DiSC® management style.

### Directing and Developing



Communicating  
Delegating

→ **Directing**

→ **Developing**

Decision-Making  
Managing Time  
Problem-Solving  
Motivating Others

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Identifying Your Management Strengths and Challenges

#### Directing and Developing

The table provides descriptions of the people with your "U" style best to direct and develop people as managers. Personalize your feedback by putting a checkmark next to things that are like you, an "X" next to things that are not like you, and a "?" next to things you aren't sure about.

**How You Manage When Directing People**

- You prefer to give specific assignments with clearly defined procedures
- You tend to delegate or assign specific tasks to experienced people and holding them accountable for performance
- You tend to be directive, precise, and focused in directing people, by focusing on what needs to be done, why, by when, and where
- You may prefer to give assignments in written, formal communications, regarding specific methods to implement the work products of the assignment, checking on quality by frequently monitoring people
- You may have difficulty with people who need close supervision

**How You Manage When Developing People**

- The best of people to whom you may be best to help to help them
- You use a structured approach to learning, when you can
- You provide feedback and respond to requests with patience, care, and understanding
- You maintain an approach to learning that focuses on the needs, abilities, and style of the learner
- You provide a practical, experiential approach to learning with continuous learning
- You provide feedback and encouragement
- You set high standards for performance and may become critical, impatient, and demanding
- You tend to provide resources for ongoing learning and development

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**Participant Workbook**

**SAY:**

[☺] Your communication and delegation styles both come into play when you are directing people and helping to develop them to achieve their full potential.

**INSTRUCT:**

- Read your individualized feedback about how you manage when directing and developing people.
- Again, personalize the descriptions by putting a checkmark next to things that are like you, an "X" by things that are not like you, and a question mark next to things that you aren't sure about.

*Give participants a minute to read and personalize their feedback.*

**Action Plan**

**Qualities of your "ideal"**

- Identify a **challenge** or **overused** strength
- Create an **action plan** for using a **strength** to overcome the challenge



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**Leader's Guide**

Becoming the Manager You Want to Be

WEEK 6 GOALS  
Create an action plan to begin leveraging your management strengths.

**Action Plan**

Turn back to the "Manager You Want to Be" on page 5 and write the qualities that you write down.

Challenge or overused strength	Strength to leverage better
Specific goal to use a strength to improve with this challenge	Specific goal to take better advantage of this strength
What actions will you take?	What actions will you take?
What are your resources?	What are your resources?
How and when can you practice?	How and when can you practice?
Who can support or mentor you?	Who can support or mentor you?
Timing	Timing

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**Participant Workbook**

## Becoming the Manager You Want to Be

**INSTRUCT:**

- [🕒] Return to the "Manager You Want to Be" on **page 5** of your workbook and review [🕒] the qualities that you wrote down.
- Then, considering what you have learned, write down a challenge or an overuse of your strengths that might get in your way.
- Consider how you could use one of your strengths to help you in this area.
- [🕒] Write a specific goal statement for this area and create an action plan for improvement. As you develop your plans, consider:
  - Specific actions to take
  - Your resources
  - How and when to practice
  - Who can support or mentor you
  - Timing for implementing your plan

*Give participants five minutes to complete their challenge action plan.*

**INSTRUCT:**

- [🕒] OK, now let's do the same thing with your strengths. Identify a strength that you can leverage as you work on becoming the manager you want to be.
- [🕒] Then, write down what you can do to be sure that you take advantage of these strengths, using the same action-plan considerations as before.

*Give participants five minutes to complete their strength action plan.*

**INSTRUCT:**

- [🕒] Now I'd like you to find a partner and share your action plans.
- Discuss resources or steps your partner may not have considered.

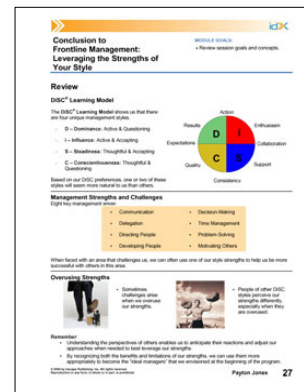
*Give participants five minutes to share their action plans.*

**TRANSITION:**

By leveraging our strengths, we can become highly effective managers while still focusing on the qualities that come to us most naturally. Now let's review what we've learned in this program.



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Participant Workbook

## Conclusion to Frontline Management: Leveraging the Strengths of Your Style

**SAY:**

- [C] Our goal in this program was to understand and maximize our strengths in order to become better, more effective managers.
- We started by envisioning the kinds of managers we want to be.
- [C] Then we used the DiSC<sup>®</sup> Learning Model to discover four unique management styles.
- [C] Based on our DiSC preferences, one or two of these styles will seem more natural to us than others.

**SAY:**

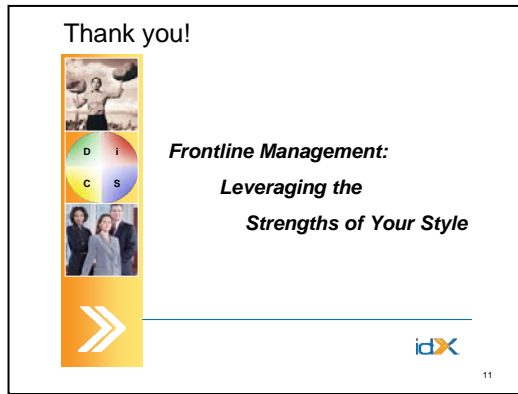
- [C] Next we explored our strengths and challenges in eight key management areas.
- With this insight, we considered specific behaviors we may want to improve.

**SAY:**

- Next we discovered that sometimes challenges arise when we overuse our strengths.
- [C] We discussed how people of each DiSC style perceive our strengths and which we are likely to overuse.
- Understanding the perspectives of others enables us to anticipate their reactions and adjust our approaches when needed to best leverage our strengths.

**SAY:**

[C] Finally, we created action plans for honing our strengths and using them to improve our skills in challenging areas to become the managers we want to be.



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**Participant Workbook**

**SAY:**

- [~] By recognizing both the benefits and limitations of our strengths, we can use them more appropriately to become the ideal managers that we envisioned at the beginning of the program.
- Thank you for a dynamic and engaging session.