

Understanding Your Students Through The DISC Model of Human Behavior

Have you been confused or frustrated with a student's behavior in the classroom? When I began to understand predictable patterns in personalities or behavior traits it all made sense as to why students would act or respond the way they did. How can we interact or work with those behavior traits in a way that will reduce the stress and conflict in our relationship in the classroom? By understanding the DISC Model of Human Behavior, you will begin to see not only your student's behavior traits but understand the emotional/internal needs that if left unmet will result in out of control behaviors.

The DISC Model of Human Behavior builds its foundation on two observations in behavior.

1. **Observation #1 – Pace** in life or how your internal motor runs.

Some people are “**outgoing**” or fast paced. Everything they do is fast, and they always seem to be in a hurry.

Others people are more “**reserved**”. They prefer a slower pace to take their time and think things through.

What is your pace? What is your student's pace?

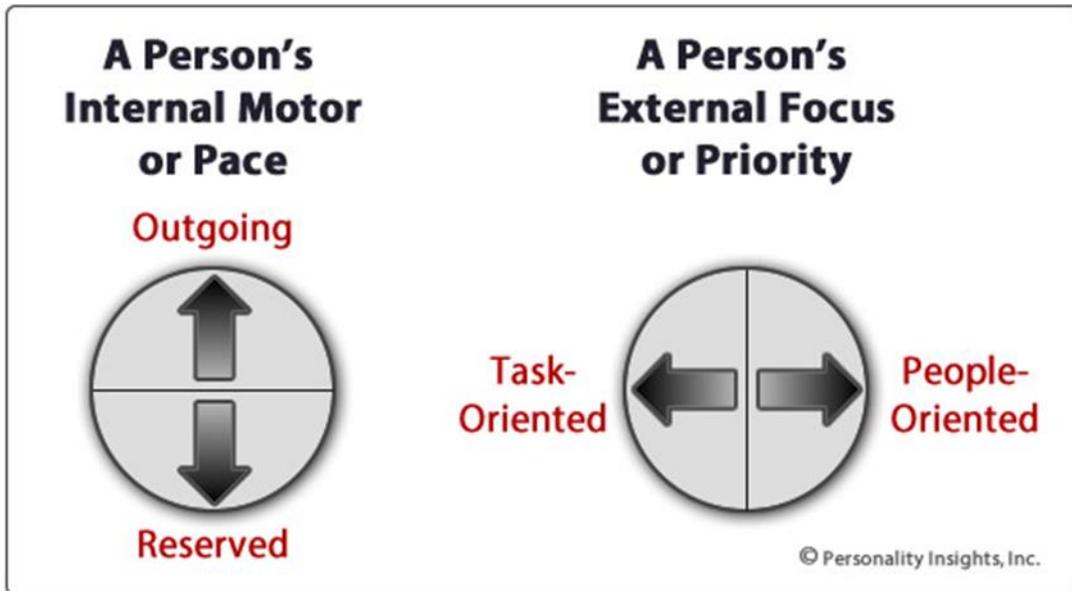
It's not right or wrong, it's just different.

2. **Observation #2 – Priority** in life or external focus. How we spend our time usually shows our priority.

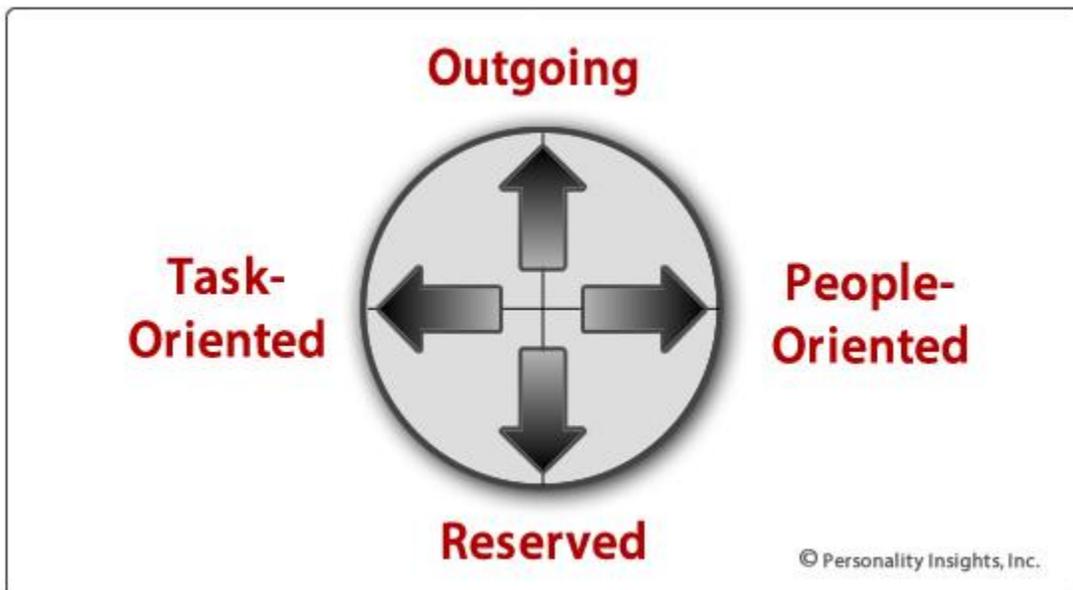
Some people are “**task**” driven. They focus on accomplishing task and getting things done.

Others are “**people**” oriented. They focus more in interacting with people and their feelings.

What is your priority? What is your student's priority?
Again, it's not right or wrong, just different.

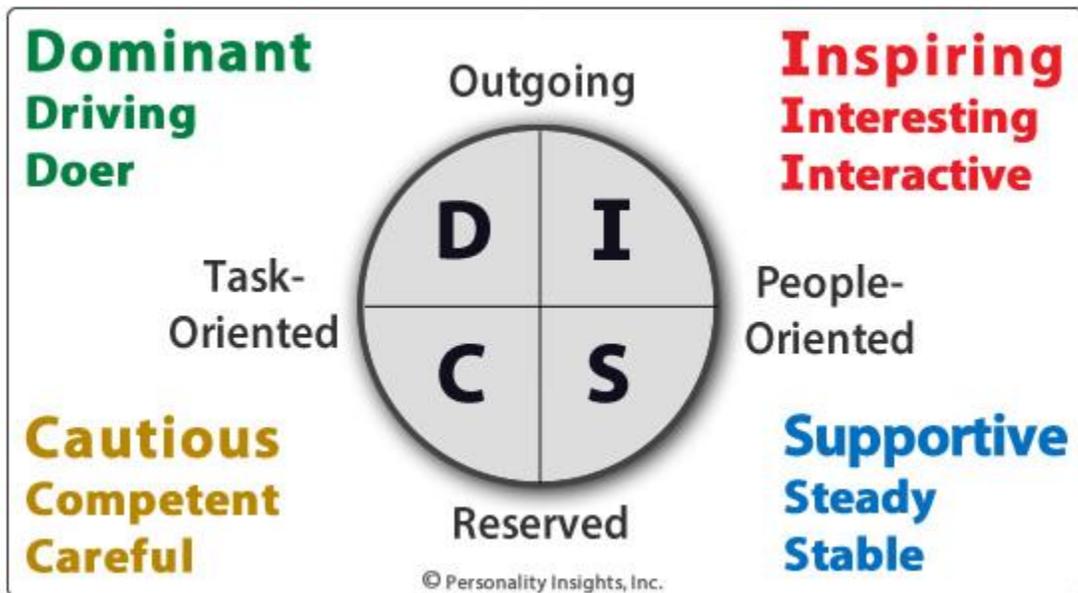


Everyone is a blend of all four of these tendencies, but most people will have two that seem to fit their style in their daily interactions.



When we put together Pace and Priority, we have the foundation of the DISC Model of Human Behavior.

We have added descriptive words to help you in understand some behavior traits you can identify with each style.



If you are experiencing “**Defiant**” behavior, you most likely have a “**Dominant**” student. The internal/emotional needs of the “**Dominant**” style are: **Challenge, Choice and Control**. When these needs are not being met you will experience **defiant behavior** to meet these emotional needs. How can you meet these needs in advance, before you experience the out of control behavior?

Tips:

- Give choices whenever possible. “Would you like the book report due on the 12th or the 13th??”
 - Allow the student some areas over which they can have control.
 - Don’t force issues. Don’t threaten or give ultimatums.
 - Establish and agree to class rules with consequences if violated.
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If you are experiencing “**Illogical or Impulsive**” behavior, you most likely have an “**Inspiring**” student. The internal/emotional needs of the “**Inspiring**” style are: **Recognition, Approval and Popularity**. When these needs are not being met you will experience **Illogical behavior** to meet these emotional needs. How can you meet these needs in advance, before you experience the out of control behavior?

Tips:

- Give lots of praise, and approval. “I like it when you_____.”
 - They love to talk. Listen to your student. Ask questions and listen.
 - They do not like details. Write down expectations. Make it fun by turning learning it into a game or contest.
 - Set limits and boundaries and follow through with discipline.
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If you are experiencing your student being “**Sucked In to Situations**” because they can’t say “No”, you most likely have a “**Supportive**” student. The internal/emotional needs of the “**Supportive**” style are: **Appreciation, Security and Assurance**. When these needs are not being met you will experience behavior the focuses on **overly pleasing others** to meet these emotional needs. How can you meet these needs in advance, before you experience the out of control behavior?

Tips:

- Watch how you say things, they are very sensitive and can be easily hurt.
- They need to feel close to their teachers. Make special effort to praise and affirm this student.
- Ask for their help in getting tasks accomplished. They love to serve and help others.

- Typically “S” students feel uncomfortable in front of the class. They are even uncomfortable when they are called on to answer questions.
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If you are experiencing your student being “**Cold or Withdrawn**”, you most likely have a “**Cautious**” student. The internal/emotional needs of the “**Cautious**” style are: ***Quality Answers, Excellence and Value***. When these needs are not being met you will experience a “**cold and withdrawn**” behavior until these emotional needs are met. How can you meet these needs in advance, before you experience the out of control behavior?

Tips:

- Be prepared to answer “why” questions and provide in-depth explanations.
 - Allow them time to do things “correctly”. They are perfectionists.
 - Give praise and descriptive appreciation for “good work”.
 - Listen to your student. Their reasons are thought out thoroughly.
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Remember: We are all a blend of each of these four styles, but most people will have two that seem to fit their style in their daily interactions. Based on your student’s blend you can adapt to meet their specific needs.

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