

Mini-White Paper:

How Everything DiSC 363® for Leaders Fits into Contemporary Leadership Theory

(Created by Inscape Publishing;
Edited for CAPE by Perry Resources, Inc.)

INTRODUCTION

The Everything DiSC® Leadership model, which combines the simplicity of DiSC® with the collective wisdom of some of the most respected leadership experts of our time.

It is a simple yet comprehensive construct to help leaders become more effective in the interpersonal aspects of leadership. Everything DiSC 363® for Leaders, is an innovative learning experience that is tailored to the individual leader. 363 for Leaders tells leaders something Exactly what their managers, peers, and direct reports think will make them more effective to give leaders an accurate picture of their performance in the interpersonal realm of leadership.

In this paper, we'll explain how this model fits into the broader context of leadership theory, referencing the work of more than two dozen thought leaders to create a rich conversation around each of eight approaches and 24 practices.

#1. - THE PIONEERING APPROACH

Leaders who typify the Pioneering Approach encourage the group to think creatively about its options and take chances on new opportunities. In *The Handbook for Leaders*, Jack Zenger and Joe Folkman describe this leadership approach. They write, "One measure of a leader's effectiveness is the number of initiatives he or she personally champions." (p. 81). Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner also describe pioneering leaders. In *The Leadership Challenge*, they write, "Leaders are pioneers— people who are willing to step out into the unknown. They search for opportunities to innovate, grow, and improve" (p. 17). The three practices are:

a.) Finding Opportunities

Pioneering leaders are often great at finding new opportunities and directions for the group, and others may admire their ability to envision new possibilities.

b.) Stretching the Boundaries

Pioneering leaders challenge the group to push beyond its comfort zones and help the group envision a new way of doing things. John Kotter, the writing team at Personnel Decisions International (PDI) led by Susan Gebelein, and Peter Drucker have all written about this ability to Stretch the Boundaries.

c.) Promoting Bold Action

Pioneering leaders encourage people to take bold action, and they're willing to take chances that could broaden the group's horizons.

- In *Winning*, Jack Welch writes, "Leaders inspire risk taking and learning by setting the example" (p. 76)... not letting fear of making a mistake paralyze the leader.
- In his highly influential book *Servant Leadership*, Robert Greenleaf writes, "Not much happens without a dream. And for something great to happen, there must be a great dream." (p. 30).
- In *The Leadership Challenge*, Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner write, "Leaders know well that innovation and change all involve experimentation, risk, and failure. They proceed anyway" (p. 17).

#2. - THE ENERGIZING APPROACH

Leaders who exemplify the Energizing Approach build enthusiasm for the group's goals and develop a wide network of social connections. In the article "What Leaders Really Do," John Kotter writes, "Motivation and inspiration energize people, not by pushing them in the right direction as control mechanisms do but by satisfying basic human needs for achievement, a sense of belonging, recognition, self-esteem, a feeling of control over one's life, and the ability to live up to one's ideals." (p. 48).

a.) Showing Enthusiasm

Energizing leaders often have a contagious sense of enthusiasm, and others may appreciate that they create a fun, lively environment.

b.) Building Professional Networks

Energizing leaders create a large, influential social network, and others may admire their knack for connecting the group to resources and opportunities.

c.) Rallying People to Achieve Goals

Energizing leaders rally people around new goals, and others may appreciate their ability to bring the group together around a vision for the future.

- In "*Creating Organizations with Many Leaders*," Gifford Pinchot writes, "Effective leaders... contribute inspiring descriptions of a shared vision to align everyone's energies" (p. 27).
- In "*Three Roles of the Leader in the New Paradigm*," Stephen Covey writes, "The essence and power of path finding are found in a compelling vision and mission." (p. 152).
- In *The Art of War*, Sun Tzu writes, "He will win whose army (business team) is animated by the same spirit throughout its ranks" (p. 9).
- In *Winning*, Jack Welch writes, "Leaders make sure people not only see the vision, they live and breathe it." He says, "As a leader, you have to make the vision come alive" (p. 67).

#3. - THE AFFIRMING APPROACH

Leaders who use the Affirming Approach are approachable and help people feel good about their environment and their contributions.

a.) Being Approachable

Affirming leaders often come across as approachable, and others may feel comfortable going to them for help or advice.

b.) Acknowledging Contributions

Affirming leaders tend to focus on acknowledging the contributions of others, and this makes people feel that their efforts are valued.

- In "*What Leaders Really Do*," John Kotter writes, "Finally, good leaders recognize and reward success, which not only gives people a sense of accomplishment but also makes them feel like they belong to an organization that cares about them. " (p. 48).
- In *The Leadership Challenge*, Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner write, "It's part of the leader's job to show appreciation for people's contributions and to create a culture of celebration" (p. 19).
- In *Winning*, Jack Welch's Rule #8 is simply stated, "**Leaders celebrate**" (p. 78).

c.) Creating a Positive Environment

Affirming leaders tend to be hopeful, and others probably appreciate that they create an encouraging, positive environment around them.

#4. - THE INCLUSIVE APPROACH

Leaders who typify the Inclusive Approach get a variety of people involved in the decision-making process and show concern for their opinions and feelings. In *The Psychology of Leadership*, David Messick explains that humans are an extremely social species. He writes, "Allowing people to be a member of a group is to permit them to share vicarious pleasures of others' successes." (p. 86).

a.) Staying Open to Input

Inclusive leaders show that they're open to input, so people may appreciate that their opinions are taken seriously.

- In *On Becoming a Leader*, Warren Bennis writes, "Leaders need people around them who have contrary views, who are devil's advocates, 'variance sensors' who can tell them the difference between what is expected and what is really going on" (Bennis, pp. 188-189).

- In Diane Coutu's Harvard Business Review interview with Abraham Lincoln historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, the biographer describes how "...Lincoln surrounded himself with people, including his rivals, who had strong egos and high ambitions; who felt free to question his authority; and who were unafraid to argue with him" (p. 44).

- In *Winning*, Jack Welch says, "I'm not saying that everyone's opinions should be put into practice or every single complaint needs to be satisfied. That's what management judgment is all about... But everyone should be heard and respected. They want it and you need it" (p. 57).

b.) Showing Diplomacy

Inclusive leaders show diplomacy when communicating, and others may appreciate that they show concern for people's feelings.

c.) Facilitating Dialogue

Since Inclusive leaders tend to create open dialogue, others may admire their ability to help people find common ground.

- In *The Leadership Challenge*, Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner write, "Leadership is a dialogue, not a monologue. To enlist support, leaders must have intimate knowledge of people's dreams, hopes, aspirations, visions, and values" (p. 15).

- In *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter Senge writes, "The discipline of team learning starts with 'dialogue,' the capacity of members of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine 'thinking together.' To the Greeks dia-logos meant a free-flowing of meaning through a group, allowing the group to discover insights not attainable individually" (p. 10).

#5. - THE HUMBLE APPROACH

Leaders who model the Humble Approach maintain a modest, composed demeanor and can be relied upon to make decisions fairly. In *Good to Great*, Jim Collins writes, "...leaders are a study in duality: modest and willful, humble and fearless" (p. 22).

a.) Maintaining Composure

Since Humble leaders tend to maintain composure during stressful situations, people may be less worried about delivering bad news or unfavorable feedback.

b.) Showing Modesty

Humble leaders are usually quite modest, and people may appreciate that these leaders recognize their limitations and put others needs above their own.

- In *Good to Great*, Jim Collins writes, "...leaders channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great company... but their ambition is first and foremost for the institution, not themselves" (p. 21).

- In *Winning*, Jack Welch writes, "Leaders also establish trust by giving credit where credit is due. In bad times, leaders take responsibility for what's gone wrong. In good times, they generously pass around the praise" (p. 71).

- In *Execution*, Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan write, "The more you contain your ego, the more realistic you are about your problems. You learn how to listen and admit that you don't know all the answers. You exhibit the attitude that you can learn from anyone at any time. Your pride doesn't get in the way of gathering the information you need to achieve the best results. It doesn't keep you from sharing the credit that needs to be shared." (p. 83).

- In *The Handbook for Leaders*, Jack Zenger and Joe Folkman discuss humility in the context of character and leadership. They write, "Be willing to laugh at yourself. Don't flaunt your authority. Humility will make you approachable. It opens the door to

building relationships" (p. 23). Share your pain, and the problem can begin to be solved. Be sure to inform those who will be affected by the mistake!" (p. 67).

c.) Being Fair-Minded

Humble leaders strive to be fair in their decisions, and people may appreciate that these leaders don't let their biases or emotions sway them.

#6. THE DELIBERATE APPROACH

Leaders who demonstrate the Deliberate Approach provide a sense of stability for the group by communicating clearly and ensuring that decisions are made carefully. In *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, Peter Drucker writes, "Only when people with proven performance capacity have been assigned to a project, supplied with the tools, the money, and the information they need to do the work, and given clear and unambiguous deadlines—only then do we have a plan." (p. 155).

a.) Communicating with Clarity

Since Deliberate leaders make a point of communicating with clarity, people don't have to worry about ambiguous or unclear messages.

- In *Execution*, Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan write, "Leaders who execute focus on a very few clear priorities that everyone can grasp." They go on to say, "You've got to have these few, clearly realistic goals and priorities, which will influence the overall performance of the company" (p. 69).

b.) Promoting Disciplined Analysis

Deliberate leaders insist on conducting disciplined analyses before choosing a direction, so people often see them as good decision makers.

- In *What Leaders Really Do*, John Kotter writes, "But developing good business direction isn't magic. It is a tough, sometimes exhausting process of gathering and analyzing information. People who articulate such visions aren't magicians but broad based strategic thinkers who are willing to take risks" (p. 42).

c.) Providing a Sense of Stability

Deliberate leaders strive to create a sense of stability for themselves and the people around them, and others may appreciate having a structure to follow.

- In *The Leadership Challenge*, Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner write, "The issue isn't whether to have routines but which routines to have." (p. 190).
- In *Management Challenges for the 21st Century*, Peter Drucker writes, "People need to know where they stand. They need to know the people with whom they work. They need to know what they can expect. They need to know the values and the rules of the organization. They do not function if the environment is not predictable, not understandable, not known" (p. 90).

#7. - THE RESOLUTE APPROACH

Leaders who model the Resolute Approach create high standards for the group and insist on using methods that maximize efficiency. In *Good to Great*, Jim Collins writes, "... leadership is not just about humility and modesty. It is equally about ferocious resolve, an almost stoic determination to do whatever needs to be done to make the company great" (p. 30).

a.) Setting High Expectations

Since Resolute leaders tend to set high expectations, others are likely to have confidence that the group will deliver top results.

b.) Speaking Up About Problems

Resolute leaders speak up when the group's processes aren't working, and others may appreciate that they don't let problems slip through the cracks.

c.) Improving Methods

Resolute leaders find ways to improve the group's methods, and others may appreciate how their practical, common-sense approach leads to greater efficiency.

- In *The Successful Executives Handbook*, Susan Gebelein et al suggest, "Champion and guide innovative efforts that stem from perceived problems, expressed customer needs, and research findings (research is often ignored)." (p. 343).

#8. - THE COMMANDING APPROACH

Commanding leaders take charge of situations with confidence and urge others to get results. In PDI's *The Successful Executive's Handbook*, Susan Gebelein et al write, "The primary purpose of a driving, demanding leadership style is to set the expectation that individuals and teams should achieve critical organizational goals in an

efficient, effective, and timely manner" (p. 224).

a.) Showing Confidence

Commanding leaders speak and act with conviction, so others are likely to feel assured and confident in these leaders' abilities.

- In "Peacetime Management and Wartime Leadership" Judith Bardwick writes, "Psychologically, leaders lead because they convince others that they understand the issues better than anyone else. People follow them because they speak about solutions with persuasive conviction, project confidence when others are uncertain, and act decisively" (p. 138).

b.) Taking Charge

Commanding leaders tend to step up and take charge when necessary, and people appreciate that they provide direction for the group.

- In *The Handbook of Leaders*, Jack Zenger and Joe Folkman write, "The best leaders see when something is falling through the cracks and immediately step in to make certain it is handled" (p. 26). They go on to say, "Extraordinary leaders wake up in the morning with a plan and put it into effect" (p. 31).

- In *Winning*, Jack Welch writes, "Leaders have the courage to make unpopular decisions and gut calls" (p. 72).

c.) Focusing on Results

Since Commanding leaders focus on results, people on their teams may see themselves as part of a productive, goal-oriented group.

- In *The Handbook for Leaders*, Zenger & Folkman write, "Leaders who tend to focus on results are 'in the driver's seat, with a foot on the accelerator—pressed to the floorboard most of the time" (p. 29).

- In *Execution*, Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan write, "You need accountability for results—discussed openly and agreed to by those responsible—to get things done and reward the best performers" (p. 23).

- In *Good to Great*, when defining the "professional will" of leaders, Jim Collins notes that a leader "Demonstrates an unwavering resolve to do whatever must be done to produce the best long-term results, no matter how difficult" (p. 36).

- In Peter Drucker's forward to *Leader of the Future*, edited by Frances Hesselbein et al, he writes, "An effective leader is not someone who is loved or admired. He or she is someone whose followers do the right things. Popularity is not leadership. Results are" (p. xii).