



The Dos & Don'ts of DiSC

Each Everything DiSC learning experience is designed to deepen the learner's understanding of themselves and others. Ultimately, this new level of understanding and self-awareness improves their relationships *and* their (workplace) performance in a variety of contexts.

It's true that Everything DiSC has the power to be a culture catalyst by starting each learner on the path from personalized insights to true behavior change. But achieving this powerful impact requires the appropriate use of DiSC in the workplace. **While DiSC is a tool that supports a variety of social and emotional contexts in the workplace, it's possible to misuse the tool.** This post is designed to summarize some of those potential misuses so you and your organization can get the most out of your experience.

Arguably the most-common misuse of DiSC is "pigeonholing" a person based on their DiSC style. Pigeonholing happens when a person is, or their abilities are limited or dismissed based on their DiSC style, resulting in unfair stereotypes or generalizations. For example, "You can't take an i-style seriously—the workplace is all fun and games!" or, "All C-styles get too bogged down in the details to see the big picture." Just because a person prioritizes a certain behavioral tendency doesn't mean they cannot stretch. It just may be more uncomfortable or take more of their energy.

There can also be a tendency to want to use DiSC as an *excuse* for poor behavior, and a reason *not to adapt*. If you're familiar with DiSC, it's possible you've heard comments like, "Kelly's a D-style, so you just have to deal with how blunt she is!" Or maybe, "It's my i-style...I just have to speak my mind." Unfortunately, these types of statements often wind up stunting development and encouraging

stereotypes, which is the antithesis of what Everything DiSC stands for.

The reality is that the behavior of people with the D, i, S, or C style does not all look the same across the board. There is a lot of variation, even within one DiSC style. That's why it's so important to use DiSC as a dialog tool to better understand how your DiSC style influences (or doesn't influence) the way you work.

So, how do we avoid some of these common pitfalls and ensure that we're getting the most out of a DiSC learning experience? What are the do's and don'ts around how people should use DiSC in their everyday work lives? To not only have a positive impact on their company culture, but simply experience a better day? There are many "rules" we could share, but for now, we've developed a short list of each below:

Everything DiSC Dos

Apply a framework for understanding behavioral tendencies: Learners have a new way to organize and think about their own behavior as well as that of others. DiSC can illuminate learners' patterns to help predict and navigate relationships more effectively.

Use as a conversation catalyst to get to know, adapt to, and value others: DiSC can be used as a jumping off point to build relationships and maximize each interaction. It builds empathy for others, knowing that the powerful insights learned about oneself are just as true and powerful for others—regardless of how different they might be from your own.

Instill a common language in an organization: DiSC gives common language to complex, sometimes sensitive topics. It's simple without being simplistic and offers pragmatic, actionable ways to better connect and collaborate.

Everything DiSC Don'ts

An excuse for poor behavior: It can be tempting to excuse bad habits or an unwillingness to stretch outside behavioral comfort zones by blaming one's DiSC style. But doing so results in missed opportunities to recognize destructive habits

or behaviors and work toward improvement and growth.

Categorizing people or making snap judgements on individuals: Once we learn about DiSC styles, it might be tempting to label (aka pigeonhole) our colleagues. But pigeonholing a person or their abilities based on DiSC style can cause unfair generalizations and stereotypes. As outlined earlier, just because a person prioritizes a certain behavioral tendency doesn't mean they cannot stretch—it just may take a little extra effort.

These are just some of the ways Everything DiSC should and shouldn't be used in the workplace (or in general). **DiSC gives us a framework for understanding behavior, but the real value of DiSC is not in simply knowing a person's DiSC style—it goes much deeper than that.**

The real magic happens when DiSC becomes part of an organizational culture where people have open dialogue about their priorities and preferences and use DiSC as a springboard for discussion. This dialogue is an opportunity to learn more about a person's style, and then figure out ways to adapt to their needs.

Since DiSC is used as a catalyst for conversation—versus a tool to categorize people—it becomes more about growing and building effective working relationships. Beyond this, learners are empowered to take what they learn from DiSC and stretch outside their comfort zone, manage their team more effectively, or actively improve their emotional intelligence, depending on which solution is being applied. And that's when we see real, lasting growth for organizations and individuals alike.

Source: Everything DiSC®: A Wiley Brand

Live to Learn is a Diamond Award winning Authorized Partner of Everything DiSC®, a global leader in delivering personalized, soft skills learning experiences that have an immediate and lasting impact on the performance of the people and cultures of organizations. [Contact us](#) to start a conversation on how we can assist you with your learning and development initiatives!