



# **DISC behavior styles: facilitating communication between health care providers**

Center for Procedural Skills and Simulation

# Introductions

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No relevant financial relationships

# Objectives

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- Identify personal communication style using the DISC framework
- Apply communication style knowledge during workshop activities
- Integrate communication style understanding into existing simulation scenarios

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# What is DISC?



# What is DISC?

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- Measures observable behavior and communication
  - Not measuring ‘personality’
- Communication **Style**

“A person’s style is his or her **pattern** of assertive and responsive **behavior**. The pattern is useful in predicting how the person **prefers to work with others.**”

(Bolton & Bolton, 1984)

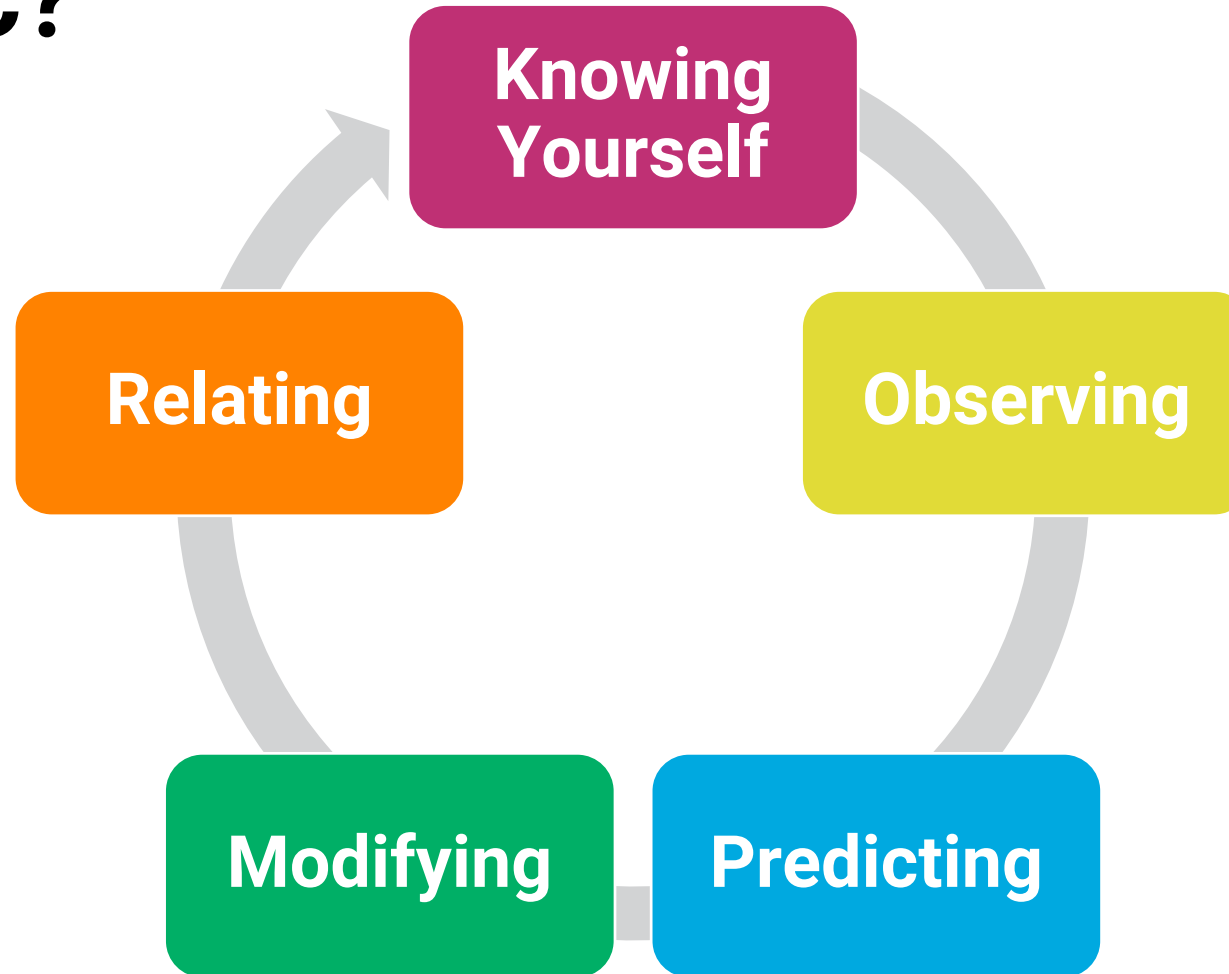
# Why focus on behaviors?

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- Be an objective observer
- Use model to 'de-personalize' stress and conflict
- Give yourself freedom to build your repertoire of responses
- Apply understanding to facilitate cohesive, productive teams



# Why DISC?



Not right or wrong, just different



**How do I figure out my DISC style?**



# DISC Card Game (part 1)

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- Distribute 'DISC card decks'
  - Goal: Acquire 5 cards that most describe you
  - Rules: Draw 6 cards randomly, discard one, barter with others
- Great for interactions in large groups
- Provides a general sense of DISC style
- Cards can be reused for new groups
- Challenging to do virtually/socially distanced

# Virtual DISC Card Game (part 1)

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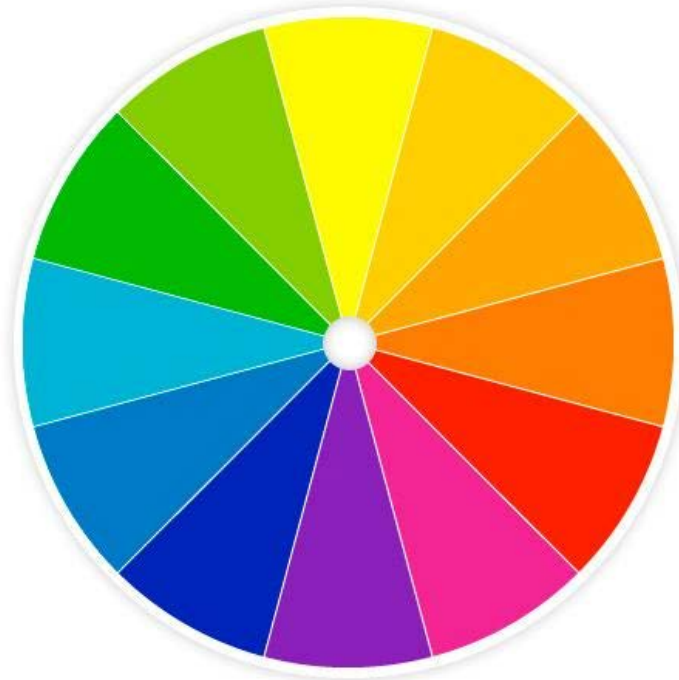
- Select 5 words that best describe you
  - Shown on next slide
  - Write them down so you don't forget!
- Set timer/be brief
  - Don't over think

<b>Accurate</b>	<b>Daring</b>	<b>Inspiring</b>	<b>Relaxed</b>
<b>Adventuresome</b>	<b>Decisive</b>	<b>Mature</b>	<b>Result-oriented</b>
<b>Amiable</b>	<b>Diplomatic</b>	<b>Optimistic</b>	<b>Self-starter</b>
<b>Analytical</b>	<b>Direct</b>	<b>Patient</b>	<b>Sincere</b>
<b>Charming</b>	<b>Enthusiastic</b>	<b>Persistent</b>	<b>Sociable</b>
<b>Competitive</b>	<b>Fact-finding</b>	<b>Persuasive</b>	<b>Stable</b>
<b>Confident</b>	<b>Friendly</b>	<b>Popular</b>	<b>Steady</b>
<b>Conscientious</b>	<b>Good listener</b>	<b>Precise</b>	<b>Team player</b>
<b>Convincing</b>	<b>High standards</b>	<b>Problem-solver</b>	<b>Trusting</b>
<b>Courteous</b>	<b>Innovative</b>	<b>Quality-focused</b>	<b>Understanding</b>

# Virtual DISC Card Game (part 1)

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- Note the color of the words
  - The color you have most will be the color of your DISC style



Accurate	Daring	Inspiring	Relaxed
Adventuresome	Decisive	Mature	Result-oriented
Amiable	Diplomatic	Optimistic	Self-starter
Analytical	Direct	Patient	Sincere
Charming	Enthusiastic	Persistent	Sociable
Competitive	Fact-finding	Persuasive	Stable
Confident	Friendly	Popular	Steady
Conscientious	Good listener	Precise	Team player
Convincing	High standards	Problem-solver	Trusting
Courteous	Innovative	Quality-focused	Understanding

# DISC Card Game (part 2)

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- Form groups based on colors from Part 1
  - In person
  - Zoom
    - Breakout rooms
    - Chat
    - Asynchronous
- Discussion
  - Your preferred way to communicate with others
  - How you prefer others **NOT** communicate with you



# The 4 Factors of DISC

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**Problems**



**People**



**Pace**



**Procedures**

- We are a combination of all 4 factors
- We 'flex' depending on scenario

# Handling Problems

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- Your preferred way to communicate with others
- How you prefer others **NOT** communicate with you



# General Characteristics - Dominance

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## DESCRIPTORS:

- Adventuresome
- Competitive
- Daring
- Decisive
- Direct
- Innovative
- Persistent
- Problem-solver
- Results-oriented
- Self-starter



## HOW TO MANAGE:

- Give challenging work and authority where appropriate
- Succinct expectations and feedback

# General Characteristics - Dominance

## VALUE TO THE TEAM:

- Bottom-line organizer
- Initiates activity
- Challenge-oriented

## IDEAL ENVIRONMENT:

- Innovative and futuristic environment
- Challenging, non-routine work
- Forum for expressing ideas



## TENDENCY UNDER STRESS:

- Demanding
- Aggressive
- Egotistical

## POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS:

- Set standards too high
- Lack tact and diplomacy
- Take on too much, too soon, too fast

# Handling People

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- Your preferred way to communicate with others
- How you prefer others **NOT** communicate with you

# General Characteristics - Influence

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## DESCRIPTORS:

- Charming
- Confident
- Convincing
- Enthusiastic
- Inspiring
- Optimistic
- Persuasive
- Popular
- Sociable
- Trusting



## HOW TO MANAGE:

- Give frequent recognition and forum for sharing views
- Emphasize “why” and provide deadlines

# General Characteristics - Influence

## VALUE TO THE TEAM:

- Optimism and enthusiasm
- Creative problem solving
- Motivates others

## IDEAL ENVIRONMENT:

- Freedom from control and detail
- Forum for ideas to be heard
- High degree of people contacts



## TENDENCY UNDER STRESS:

- Overly optimistic
- Gabby
- Unrealistic

## POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS:

- Inattentive to details
- Trust people indiscriminately
- Situational listener

# Handling Pace

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- Your preferred way to communicate with others
- How you prefer others **NOT** communicate with you

# General Characteristics - Steadiness

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## DESCRIPTORS:

- Amiable
- Friendly
- Good listener
- Patient
- Relaxed
- Sincere
- Stable
- Steady
- Team player
- Understanding



## HOW TO MANAGE:

- Listen and ask them “how”
- Private appreciation and coaching
- Time to adjust to changes

# General Characteristics - Steadiness

## VALUE TO THE TEAM:

- Dependable team player
- Patient and empathetic
- Logical step-wise thinkers

## IDEAL ENVIRONMENT:

- Stable and predictable
- Long-term relationships
- Little conflict between people



## TENDENCY UNDER STRESS:

- Unconcerned
- Hesitant
- Inflexible

## POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS:

- Yield to avoid controversy
- Dislike unwanted change
- Difficulty in establishing priorities



# Handling Procedures

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- Your preferred way to communicate with others
- How you prefer others **NOT** communicate with you

# General Characteristics - Compliance

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## DESCRIPTORS:

- Accurate
- Analytical
- Conscientious
- Courteous
- Diplomatic
- Fact-finding
- Higher standards
- Mature
- Precise
- Quality-focused



## HOW TO MANAGE:

- Give clear objective and deadlines in advance
- Validate their experience
- Allow for personal autonomy when possible

# General Characteristics - Compliance

## VALUE TO THE TEAM:

- Defines, clarifies, gets information and tests
- Objective – ‘Anchor of reality’
- Comprehensive problem solver



## IDEAL ENVIRONMENT:

- Technical work or specialized areas
- Close relationship with small group
- Private office or work area

## TENDENCY UNDER STRESS:

- Pessimistic
- Picky
- Overly critical

## POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS:

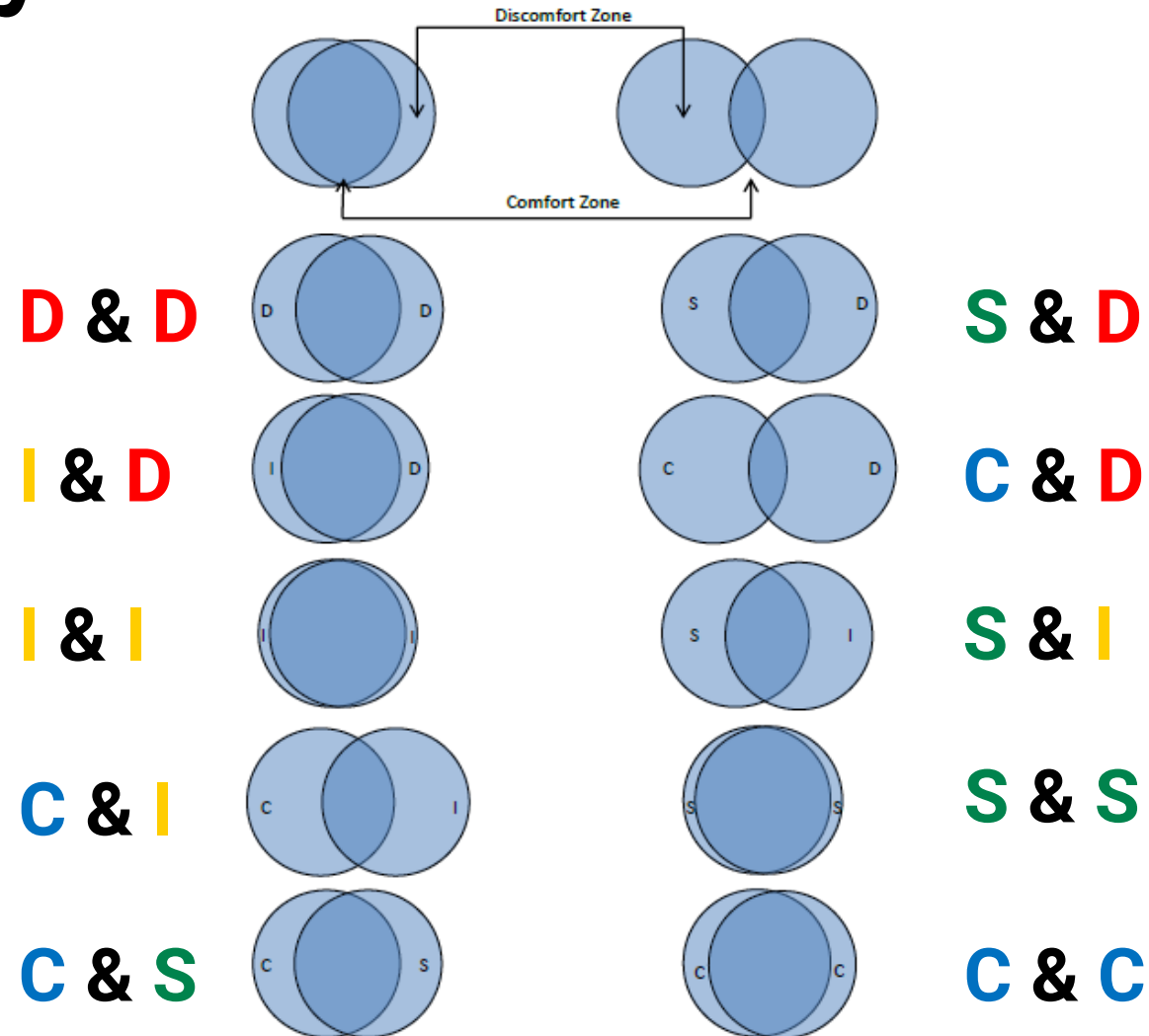
- Be defensive when criticized
- Get bogged down in details
- Overly intense for the situation

# Identifying other's DISC styles

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- Do you know someone who. . .
  - Is usually late for meetings?
  - Is almost always on time?
  - Tends to be very thorough?
  - Keeps touching base with people?
  - Has a story for nearly every occasion?
  - Is a no-nonsense, “just do it” person?
  - Can't make a decision on the spot?

# What does your team look like?



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# Now what?

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**How do I apply DISC style during communication?**

# 'Flexing' your style

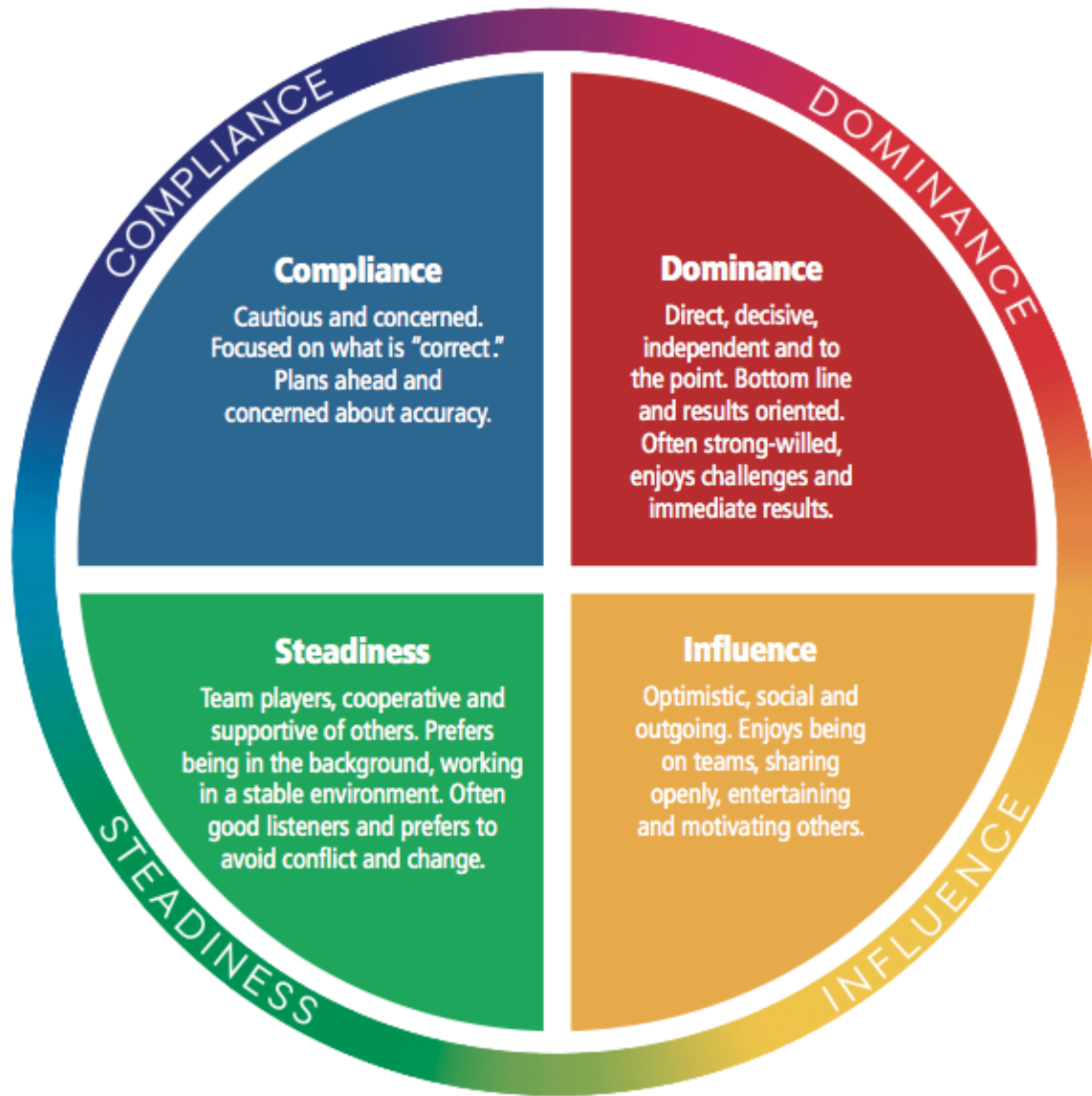
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- What it is:
  - Temporary adjustment of a few communication behaviors
    - Something important at stake
    - Other person is especially rigid
    - Other person seems to be under stress
  - Adapting yourself
  - Just-in-time
- What it isn't:
  - Manipulation (being nice to others at their expense)
  - Conforming (withholding your point of view)
  - Changing the other person
  - All-the-time





# Keep it simple



Move to 'opposite'

- **D** – Listen & explain
- **I** – Step back & organize
- **S** – Reach out & share
- **C** – Make decisions & talk openly

# DISC Speed Communication Activity

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- Goal is to resolve problem in scenario
  - In person
    - Sit in pairs
    - Rotate through scenarios—different people
    - Share scenarios on screen
  - Zoom
    - Breakout rooms for pairs
    - Share scenarios through messages—different styles
- Remember Platinum Rule
- Use handout as guide and/or take notes
- Share experience at end of activity

# Scenario #1

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- Problem scenario:
  - Your favorite hand sanitizer is on sale for \$1.99. When you check out, you notice the hand sanitizer rings up at \$8.99.
    - Role A: You
    - Role B: Store manager
  - Goal: Resolve Problem

# Scenario #2

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- Problem scenario:
  - The teacher says a child did not complete an assignment. The parent has documentation showing the assignment was completed.
    - Role A: Parent
    - Role B: Teacher
  - Goal: Resolve Problem

# Scenario #3

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- Problem scenario:
  - Mr. Smith lives in an assisted living facility. His children are concerned that he isn't getting proper care and they have not been able to visit due to COVID-19 restrictions.
    - Role A: Mr. Smith's adult son/daughter
    - Role B: Assisted living facility manager
  - Goal: Resolve Problem

# Scenario #4

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- Problem scenario:
  - You submit your vacation requests per the company policy but you never seem to get the days off you want. Your co-worker always seems to get their requested days off.
    - Role A: Scheduling manager
    - Role B: You
  - Goal: Resolve Problem

# Scenario #5

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- Problem scenario:
  - A parent and their child have been waiting over an hour to be seen in the Emergency Department. The child is not feeling well and the parent asks a staff member when they will be seen.
    - Role A: ED Staff
    - Role B: Parent
  - Goal: Resolve Problem

# Scenario #6

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- Problem scenario:
  - During a routine surgery in the OR a nurse notices that the surgeon missed a step during a procedure. The nurse stops the procedure and tells the surgeon about the missed step. The surgeon insists they did nothing wrong.
    - Role A: Nurse
    - Role B: Surgeon
  - Goal: Resolve Problem



# Debriefing

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- Initial impression?
- What was most challenging?
- What are your thoughts on 'flexing'?
- How can you apply this?
- DISC styles you think will be challenging for you?



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# Thank you

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