

# Job Profiling: Building a Winning Team Using Behavioral Assessment

Leslie Furlow, Ph.D., R.N., MHP, C-FNP

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In the shrinking labor market, hiring the right person takes on great importance. Hospitals are spending more time recruiting as the interview process has become longer and more arduous, often due to more team interviews. In “Building a Winning Team,” Plotkin<sup>1</sup> points out:

- More than 90 percent of all hiring decisions are made by an interview.
- Most selection decisions are made in less than an hour.
- Interviewing is only 14 percent accurate in predicting performance.
- Turnover cost can be as high as 100 percent of annual salary.
- Many organizations do not track actual turnover cost.
- Thirty million people secured employment by lying on their résumés.

In addition to the human and fiscal costs, poor hire decisions often lead to discipline problems at best and labor and customer problems at their worse.

Hospitals must consider their human resources the same way they do all other capital expenditures. When purchasing a \$50,000 piece equipment, a stringent process is implemented to ensure that the best machine for the best price is obtained. Yet most health care systems still depend on a “gut reaction” in face-to-face interviews to hire resources that are expected to outlast equipment and perform under more stressful situations.

Many of today’s candidates can predict what the answer should be to an interviewer’s questions. With so many courses and training seminars on how to interview, prepare a résumé, and “dress for success,” it is more difficult to recognize a counterfeit.

Substantive references are more difficult to obtain, as most facilities will state only that the former employee was employed from one date to

another and is or is not eligible for rehire, if that much.

W. Edwards Deming, as quoted by Plotkin said, “If a person is not performing as expected, it is probably because they have been miscast for the job.”<sup>1 (p128)</sup>

This was reiterated by Barbara Lazaroff of Spago and other restaurants who said “I am better off hiring a waiter who has a great attitude toward people and not skills, than hiring a waiter who has great skills, but a bad attitude toward people.”<sup>2</sup>

As health care continues to have changes in job responsibilities, the attitudes of job candidates become almost as important as their skills. Whereas skills can be taught, it is much more difficult to change attitude. It is much more cost-effective to hire a person with good attitude than to develop one Bill Bonnstetter, president of Target Training International has observed that “Corporate America would rather have someone with a good attitude and no skills than someone with great skill and a bad attitude.”<sup>3</sup>

## Job Profiling

Job profiling is the answer to many issues associated with hiring the right person. A job profile is an analysis of criteria that define top performers in a specific job, thus allowing the hospital to prescreen applicants for their “fit” to the job. By identifying the criteria that define top performers, a profile is developed that signals behaviors and values that make them a success.

## The DISC Model

The basic tool used for job profiling is the DISC model. This model is the oldest and most researched of the behavioral models. Four distinct behavioral types were first identified by Hippocrates: sanguine, melancholic,

choleric and phlegmatic. This model continued to be used from a strictly observational perspective until William Marston, who is best known for his success in the detection, described the DISC theory that is used today. Galen, AD 130–200 spoke of the four body fluids—blood, yellow bile, black bile and phlegm—and their effect on behavior and

temperament.

William Moulton Marston, 1893–1947, developed the

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DISC model as we know it today, in his 1928 book, *The Emotions of Normal People*.<sup>4</sup> He created four quadrants that were at right angles to each other and labeled them:

- D-Dominance
- I-Influence
- S-Steadiness
- C-Compliance

The DISC instrument has been used by many different

companies and can be purchased from Target Training International Distributors, as well as other companies.

Dominance looks at how an individual deals with problems. The higher the D factor, the more aggressive and determined an individual will be in seeking solutions. This can be identified by the descriptors in Table 1. The line across the center is referred to as the “energy line”; it determines the intensity of the factor. Above the energy line is indicative of that factor being very influential in the

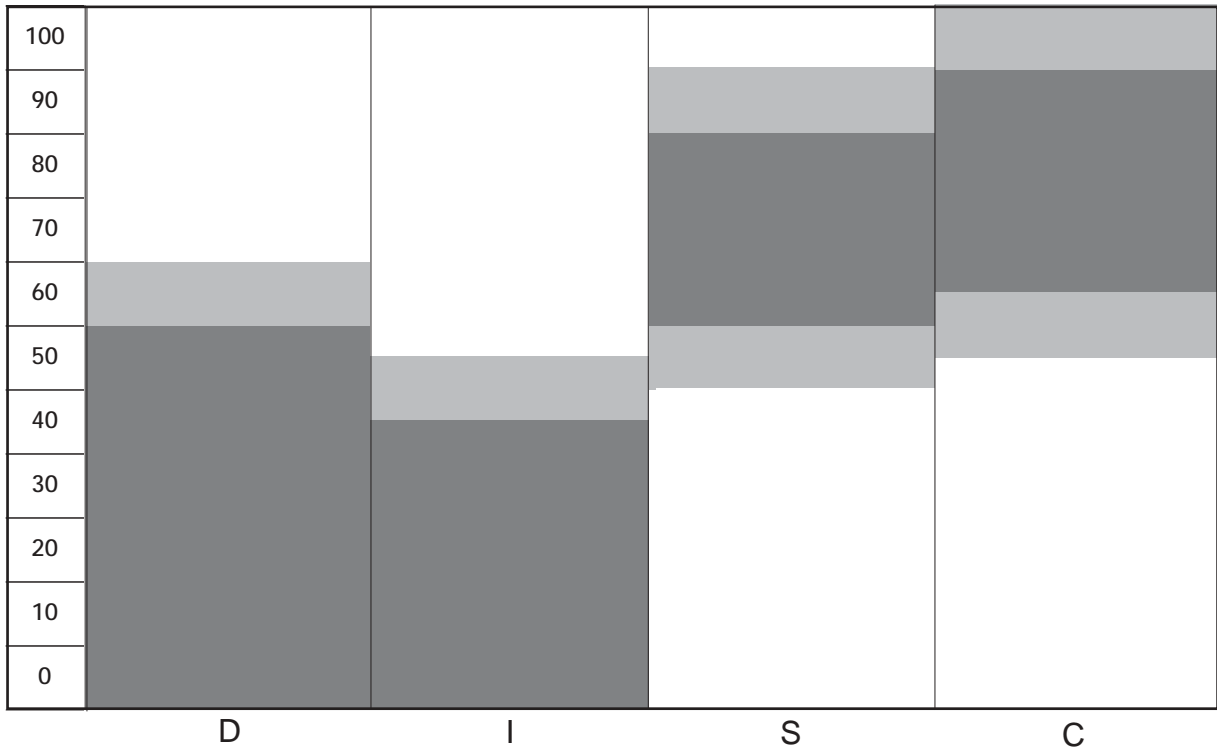
Table 1  
**Descriptors for Successful Hiring Based on Graph**

D	I	S	C
Demanding	Effusive	Phlegmatic	<i>Evasive</i>
Egocentric	Convincing	<i>Relaxed</i>	<b>Worrisome</b>
Driving	Superficial	<i>Resistant to change</i>	<b>Careful</b>
Ambitious	Magnetic	<i>Non-demonstrative</i>	<b>Dependent</b>
Pioneering	Political	<b>Passive</b>	<b>Cautious</b>
Strong-willed	Enthusiastic	<b>Patient</b>	<b>Conventional</b>
Forceful	Demonstrative	<b>Possessive</b>	<b>Exacting</b>
Determined	Persuasive	<b>Predictable</b>	<b>Neat</b>
Aggressive	Warm	<b>Consistent</b>	<b>Systematic</b>
Competitive	Convincing	<b>Deliberate</b>	<b>Diplomatic</b>
Decisive	Polished	<b>Steady</b>	<b>Accurate</b>
Venturesome	Poised	<b>Stable</b>	<i>Tactful</i>
<i>Inquisitive</i>	Optimistic	<b>Mobile</b>	<i>Open minded</i>
<i>Responsible</i>	Trusting	<i>Active</i>	Balanced judgment
<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Sociable</b>	<i>Restless</i>	<i>Firm</i>
<b>Calculating</b>	Reflective	<i>Alert</i>	Independent
<b>Cooperative</b>	Factual	Variety-oriented	Self-willed
<b>Hesitant</b>	Calculating	Demonstrative	Stubborn
<b>Low keyed</b>	Skeptical	Impatient	Obstinate
<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Logical</b>	Pressure-oriented	Opinionated
<b>Un-demanding</b>	<b>Undemonstrative</b>	Eager	Un-systematic
<b>Cautious</b>	<b>Suspicious</b>	Flexible	Self-righteous
<b>Mild</b>	<b>Matter-of-fact</b>	Impulsive	Uninhibited
<b>Agreeable</b>	<b>Incisive</b>	Impetuous	Arbitrary
<b>Modest</b>	<b>Pessimistic</b>	Hyper tense	Unbending
Peaceful	<b>Moody</b>		Careless with details
Un-obtrusive	<b>Critical</b>		

D, Dominance  
 I, Influence  
 S, Steady  
 C, Compliance

**Behaviors PROVEN SUCCESSFUL** in this position. Hire in this range.  
*Behaviors that CAN BE ADAPTED* into the green success range.  
 Plain Type Behaviors NOT PROVEN SUCCESSFUL in this position. These behaviors can cause stress and present challenges.

Figure 1. DISC hiring template. (Courtesy of Target Training International®)



D = Dominance — This is how individuals deal with problems.  
 I = Influencing — This is how individuals deal with people.  
 S = Steadiness — This is how individuals deal with the pace of life (consistency).  
 C = Compliance — This is how individuals deal with procedures.

	Behaviors PROVEN SUCCESSFUL in this position. Hire in this range.
	Behaviors that CAN BE ADAPTED into the green success range.
	Behaviors NOT PROVEN SUCCESSFUL in this position. These Behaviors can cause stress and present challenges. <b>Inquire and ask questions.</b>

individual's behavior. The I factor, influence, addresses how individuals interact with people. The S, steadiness, refers to dealing with the pace of life, the higher the factor, the more sedate or easygoing a person will be. The C, consistency, factor is related to procedural issues. The higher the C-factored people will be more rigid in their approach, based on rules.

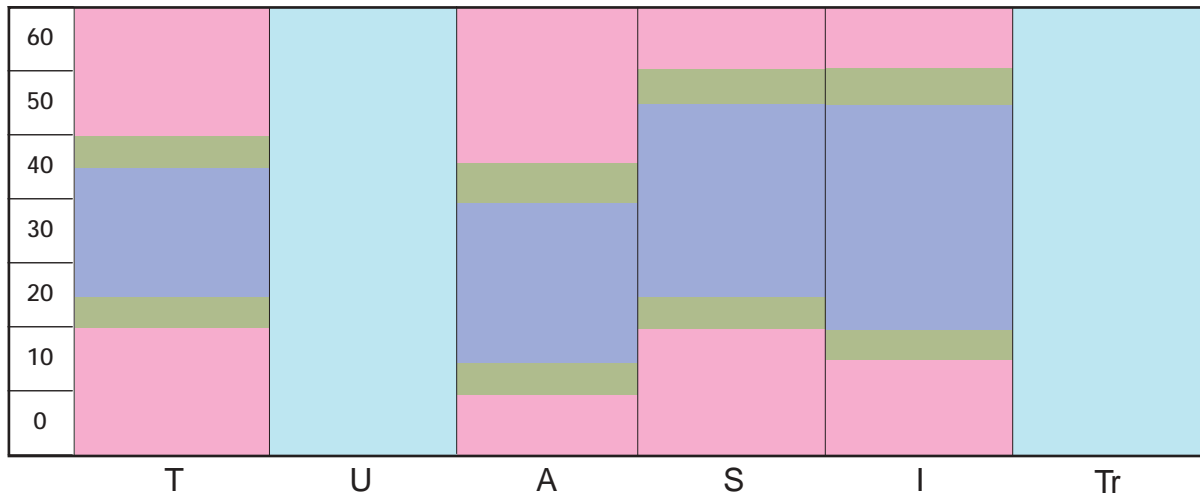
### PIAV Assessment

The second basic job-profiling tool is the personal interests, attitudes and values (PIAV) assessment. The elements of this tool were identified in Eduard Spranger's 1928 book, *Types of Men*.<sup>5</sup> The six basic motives are theoretical, utilitarian, aesthetic, social, individualistic and traditional. Gordon Allport and Philip Vernon developed a tool in 1931 based on Spranger's work. As with DISC instrument, this can be obtained through Target Training

International Distributors.

The six basic motives define how an individual will be motivated to interact with others and with the environment. The interrelationship of the six motives and the four DISC factors paints a clear picture of the individual and how that person will respond in different situations. The six motives are defined as follows: Theoretical, the value that drives an individual to seek to discover truth. Utilitarian, which deals with the interest in money and the usefulness of people or items. Aesthetic, the need for harmony and beauty of form, although this usually high in artists, it is also high in those who appreciate art in many forms. Social, addresses the inherent love of people and the need to help. Individualistic, drives the desire for personal power and control. Traditional values order and tradition, and is often associated with the culture of religious affiliations.

Figure 2. PIAV hiring template. (Courtesy of Target Training International®)



- T = Theoretical — The primary drive with this value is the discovery of truth.
- U = Utilitarian — This shows a characteristic interest in money and what is useful.
- A = Aesthetic — This indicates a relative interest in form and harmony.
- S = Social — This value shows an inherent love of people.
- I = Individualistic — The primary interest for this value is personal power.
- Tr = Traditional — The highest interest for this value is order and tradition.

	PIAV range displayed in sample group.
	Variance that would indicate ability to adapt to required role.
	Variance beyond what would be expected to be able to adapt, without considerable stress. <b>Inquire and ask questions.</b>
	No clear range displayed in sample group.

Both instruments have been validated internationally and have proved reliable. The instruments have now been computerized, making analysis more exact and simple. The validation of the DISC is provided in *The Universal Language DISC*<sup>6</sup> by Bonnstetter *et al.* The PIAV information is contained in *Personal Interests, Attitudes and Values, Understanding and Applying*<sup>7</sup> from Value Research Associates.

### Using the Tools

Using the DISC (Table 1 and Figure 1) and PIAV (Figure 2) models to develop the job profile, criteria are identified based on the behaviors and attitudes that management has identified as important to the hospital or unit. For example, a need may be seen to have self-directed, team-oriented individuals, who are customer service aware, friendly, and efficient in an emergency department. By identifying existing staff nurses who display these characteristics and applying the tool to them, a template can be developed to use with candidates. There are usually five to 10 characteristics that management wishes to duplicate. If no star performers are on staff or the position is

bank or by developing criteria for the ideal candidate.

The behavioral and attitudinal assessment tools consist of simply written surveys that require approximately 10 minutes each to complete. The information is then entered into a computer program that produces approximately 19,000 graph possibilities for the four factors: dominance, influence, steadiness and compliance. The results are compared with the DISC template created from information on existing staff, a data bank or an ideal candidate profile.

The PIAV instrument looks at six basic motives described as theoretical, utilitarian, aesthetic, social, individualistic and traditional. The DISC instrument looks at how people behave; the PIAV at why they behave in certain ways. The two together paint a portrait of the individual that can be compared with the templates.

The job profile is a template that highlights the most likely candidates for the position. It will outline dark gray, light gray and white areas on graphs, which can be followed when the same assessment tools are used with candidates. Table 1 displays the graph in verbal descriptor format. Figure 1 shows a sample hiring template of

the DISC for housekeeping personnel. Figure 2 outlines a sample hiring template of the PIAV profile for housekeeping personal.

If the profile is developed using existing staff or the data bank, it is validated for this population by assessing a random sample of staff in the job category. This will determine if they would have been screened in or out of the position. The same sample is compared with the previously developed criteria.

## Outcomes of Job Profiling

Job profiling is an adjunct to the regular hiring process. It adds an objective methodology for selecting candidates who display the necessary attitudes and behaviors that have been shown in successful practitioners.

Dr. A. Louise Hart (*Operating Room Nurses' Personality Profiles as Related to Job Satisfaction* [unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Indianapolis: Indiana University School of Nursing; 1986) found that personality and job satisfaction were significantly correlated in intensive care, non-intensive care and perioperative nurses. She researched this because of the high turnover rate among OR nurses, and the educational costs associated with educational development of a competent replacement.<sup>8</sup> Low job satisfaction has been correlated with high turnover.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the outcome of using a profiling system can significantly reduce the costs of replacing and further educating nursing personnel.

Although the number of RNs is increasing, the demand for RNs may outstrip the supply; many hospitals are will-

ing to hire new graduates or inexperienced personnel to train, either on the job or through off-site training programs. Getting the right person becomes doubly important when the size of the training investment is considered. Just how much is it worth to get the right person in the right job the first time?

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