

**An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Three Popular
Training Programs to Improve Interpersonal Skills**

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Executive Summary

Understanding and responding to the unique social or interpersonal styles of others is an important skill for working professionals. As part of their talent development efforts, organizations implement training and development programs that often include some form of interpersonal and/or behavioral assessment. Along with the assessment itself, this type of training typically includes education about the accompanying theoretical model and information on how to use this information to work more effectively with others. The current study is the first to compare three popular interpersonal skills training programs for measuring, understanding, and applying one's social or interpersonal style; these programs are based on Inscape's DiSC[®] model, TRACOM Group's SOCIAL STYLE MODEL[™], and CPP's Myers-Briggs Type Indicator[®] (MBTI).

A total of 213 participants were trained on one of the three interpersonal skills training programs by a facilitator certified to deliver training on that specific program. The results showed that: 1) Participants in all three training programs held very positive reactions to the training; 2) participants in the SOCIAL STYLEsm training scored significantly higher than did participants in the DiSC and MBTI programs on a measure of retention of key knowledge covered in training; and 3) participants in the SOCIAL STYLE training scored significantly higher than did participants in the DiSC and MBTI programs on two measures of participants' skill at analyzing and responding to the interpersonal behaviors of others.

Thus, in terms of the effectiveness of the three programs for changing the knowledge and behavioral skills of participants, an independent evaluation of the three revealed a clear advantage for SOCIAL STYLE training. Specifically, training supporting the SOCIAL STYLE MODEL was found to be the most effective for improving interpersonal skills related to analyzing and responding to the behaviors of others.

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Overview

Understanding and responding to the unique social or interpersonal styles of others is an important skill for working professionals. Extensive lines of workplace research establish that interpersonal skills are strong predictors of business and professional success in addition to cognitive ability and technical knowledge. (Goleman, 1998; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2006). In an analysis of job competencies at 286 organizations worldwide, it was found that 18 of the 21 competencies for distinguishing superior from average performers were interpersonal in nature (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). In a recent survey of 726 Human Resource (HR) and performance professionals, the top three most valued competencies in organizations were management leadership, technical knowledge, and people skills (BPM Forum & Success Factors, 2007). Intelligence rated near the bottom of the value scale.

As part of their talent-development efforts, organizations implement training and development programs that often include some form of interpersonal and/or behavioral assessment. Along with the assessment itself, this type of training typically includes education about the accompanying theoretical model and information on how to use this information to work more effectively with others. The American Society for Training and Development estimates that U.S. organizations spend almost \$110 billion on employee learning and development annually, with an average expenditure of over \$1,400 per employee (Rivera & Paradise, 2006). According to a 2006 forecast and analysis, soft skills training is expected to post the largest change in market share over the next few years, overtaking the IT market for the first time in terms of both size and share (Simba Information, 2006). This same analysis also reported that soft skills training grew 32.6% from 2005 to 2006 and the compound annual growth rate from 2004 to 2006 was 26.1%. With so much emphasis on social and interpersonal skills, and so much money being invested in training and development programs, it is important to understand what these programs are teaching, and how well they work.

The analysis of and response to the social or interpersonal behaviors of others can be a challenging task for many of us. Accordingly, this process can be aided by both an understanding of our personal behavioral styles and training in assessing and interpreting the interpersonal styles of others. Supported by this knowledge, we can then better adapt to others' styles, improving relationship management, teamwork, and productivity.

In the marketplace, there are multiple measurement tools available to working professionals to assist them in understanding their own styles and those of others. Even when a subject is assessed on one of these measures, understanding his or her personal profile and, more importantly, knowing how to use that information in interpersonal situations can be difficult without proper support. Thus, in choosing a behavioral model or assessment program to use personally or for a company's workforce, it is important to select one that: a) has scientific evidence of the validity (or accuracy) of the specific measurement instrument that is used in the program; and b) has scientific evidence of the effectiveness of the training based on application of the model.

The current study compares three popular interpersonal skills training programs for measuring, understanding, and applying one's social or interpersonal style. These programs are based on the DiSC model from Inscape Publishing, the SOCIAL STYLE MODEL™ from the TRACOM Group, and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator model from CPP, Incorporated. All three of these programs claim to develop interpersonal skills related to greater workplace effectiveness, such as communication, teambuilding, and leadership development. A recent survey of HR executives found that 86% of the organizations studied use one of these three programs, and at least 60% of their companies' additional training programs incorporate an interpersonal skills component (Leflein Associates, 2005). In addition, 73% of these professionals believe that interpersonal skills training is effective, despite the lack of empirical evidence for such a claim. When asked how they decided on a program, these professionals stated that they rely on personal experience (71%) and general research (53%). To our knowledge, no previous study has compared the effectiveness of these three programs.

The purpose of the present study is to compare and evaluate training programs conducted to support the analysis and application of each program. This study was conducted independently by the Center for Organizational Excellence (COE) at Colorado State University and by Regis Learning Solutions, a Regis University affiliate, in order to provide an assessment of the benefits of training using each program.

A total of 213 participants were trained on one of the three interpersonal skills training programs by a facilitator certified to deliver training on that specific program. All training evaluation measures were designed and analyzed by COE staff. The results showed:

- There were no differences among the three training programs in terms of participants' satisfaction with training or their perceived usefulness of the training.
- Participants in the SOCIAL STYLE training scored significantly higher than did participants in the DiSC and MBTI programs on a measure of retention of key knowledge based on the joint training objectives.
- Participants in the SOCIAL STYLE training scored significantly higher than did participants in the DiSC and MBTI programs on two measures of participants' skill at analyzing and responding to the interpersonal behaviors of others.

Additional details of the three training programs, the study participants, the evaluation measures, and results are provided below. The implications of these results for choosing a measure of interpersonal styles are discussed at the end of the report.

Methods

Training Programs

Regis Learning Solutions was responsible for the recruitment and scheduling of training participants, as well as for the recruitment, orientation, and assignment of training facilitators to training sessions.¹ All training participants were working adults, who were typically recruited through the training or human resource director at their place of employment. When all participants were from a single organization, the training sessions were held at their place of business (e.g., a seminar room); otherwise, when participants were from multiple organizations, the training sessions were held at a classroom at one of multiple locations of Regis University.

All facilitators were certified by the test publishers to train on the particular program and assessment tool to which they were assigned. The facilitators were informed that they were taking part in a research study. For scheduling purposes, each training program utilized multiple facilitators. Publishers of each interpersonal styles program provided training

¹ For each program, facilitators were independent contractors with past experience delivering similar training programs who were hired for this particular project.

materials that facilitators used when conducting training. The specific interpersonal assessment profiles used were: DiSC Personal Profile System, SOCIAL STYLE Profilesm Multi-Rater, and MBTI Form Q. Because individual facilitators may sometimes vary in the extent to which they follow the planned training material, efforts were made to standardize the training as much as possible within training programs for a single instrument (e.g., the MBTI) and across training programs for the three different measurement tools. To do this, Regis Learning Solutions reviewed the training materials for each program and derived a set of terminal training objectives that facilitators were to follow when conducting training. In other words, facilitators were not hired to train on the measurement tool as they saw fit, but were hired to train on a specific set of training objectives related to the interpretation and use of scores generated by the measurement instrument. The terminal objectives are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Terminal Training Objectives for Three Half-Day Training Programs

Training Program	Terminal Objectives
DiSC Model from Inscape Publishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain the behavior patterns characteristic of each of the four DiSC model primary behavior styles. ▪ Recall that DiSC Profiles are not predictive of workplace success or likelihood of success in any position, role, or task. ▪ Describe the strongest motivators, worst fears, favorite questions, and developmental challenges each primary style exhibits in workplace relationships. ▪ Read, interpret, and explain the learner's own, personal DiSC Personal Profile System report. ▪ Describe and explain how persons with different DiSC Profiles can best adapt their behavior styles to the styles of others in the workplace. ▪ Describe how different DiSC Profiles prefer to contribute to a team in the workplace. ▪ Recognize the indicators of another person's DiSC Profile in the workplace based upon observations of his or her behavior.

Training Program	Terminal Objectives
SOCIAL STYLE MODEL™ from The TRACOM GROUP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain the behavior patterns characteristic of each of the four SOCIAL STYLE model behavior styles. ▪ Explain the concept of tension in workplace relationships, and how tension impacts performance. ▪ Describe the strongest motivators, worst fears, and developmental challenges each primary style exhibits in workplace relationships. ▪ Recall that SOCIAL STYLE Profiles are not predictive of workplace success or likelihood of success in any position, role, or task. ▪ Explain the meaning of versatility and how it impacts individuals' ability to earn social endorsements from others in the workplace. ▪ Read, interpret, and explain the learner's own, personal multi-rater SOCIAL STYLE Profile report. ▪ Read, interpret, and explain the learner's own SOCIAL STYLE Versatility report. ▪ Describe how different SOCIAL STYLES prefer to contribute to a team in the workplace. ▪ Recognize the indicators of another person's SOCIAL STYLE Profile in the workplace based upon observations of his or her behavior.
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Model from CPP, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describe and explain the preferences represented by each of the four MBTI scales. ▪ Interpret the possible combinations of Types in terms of their indicators of workplace behavioral tendencies. ▪ Recall that Myers-Briggs Types® are not predictive of workplace success or likelihood of success in any position, role, or task. ▪ Read, interpret, and explain the learner's own, personal Myers-Briggs Type Indicator report. ▪ Describe and explain how persons with different Myers-Briggs Types can best adapt their preferences and styles to the preferences and styles of others in the workplace. ▪ Describe how different Myers-Briggs Types prefer to contribute to a team in the workplace. ▪ Recognize the indicators of another person's Myers-Briggs Type in the workplace based upon observations of his or her behavior.

Participants completed the profile instrument prior to attending the training program. The profiles were completed using the online systems from each publisher: EPIC online system (Inscape), LearningSurveys.com (TRACOM), and SkillsOne.com (CPP). Each training program was approximately four hours long; individual sessions ran a little shorter or longer depending on the number of questions, number of participants, or the pace of the facilitator. Regardless of the measurement instrument, each program had similar elements: 1) an

introduction to the instrument and the personality or social/behavioral theory and model underlying it; 2) coverage of the major dimensions or types measured by the instrument; 3) distribution of individual feedback reports (based on responses prior to training); 4) information relevant to interpreting participants' reports; and 5) information on using the instrument (and underlying theory) to interpret and respond to the behavior of others.

Facilitators in all programs used a combination of lecture, facilitated discussion, small group exercises and role-plays to convey the required information.

Following completion of the training program, a researcher from the Center for Organizational Excellence² was introduced and participants were given four evaluation forms to complete (measures are described below). Participants were told that the purpose of the evaluation was to evaluate the training program, both for purposes of formative evaluation (to recommend improvements in future training) and summative evaluation (to compare the effectiveness of different types of training programs). All responses were anonymous; participants were able to provide code names or numbers on the evaluation forms. The evaluation took approximately 45 minutes to complete. After completing all forms, participants were thanked and dismissed.

Participants

Data on all evaluation measures were available from the 213 participants who completed one of the three training programs (for SOCIAL STYLE, 74 participants; for DiSC³, 73 participants; for MBTI, 66 participants). Training participants, all working adults, were a diverse group in terms of gender, organizational level, work experience, and organizational setting, as indicated in Table 2. On average, participants were 43.4 years old ($SD = 10.8$). Participants reported working in 26 different industries, with the most frequently cited being Education or Adult Education (55), Government (37), and Manufacturing (28). Participants also reported a wide range of occupations, with the most common being Human Resources (34), Administration or Clerical (29), Information Services/Technology (16), Customer Service (13), Engineering (11), and General Manager (10).

² Due to scheduling conflicts, data from one training program were collected by a representative of Regis Learning Solutions.

³ Partial data were collected from an additional 19 DiSC participants, but an equipment failure prevented collection of the behavioral measures. Therefore, all data for these participants were excluded from analyses.

Table 2: Sample Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	Breakdown
Gender	73 – M 132 – F
Education	10 – High School, GED or less 17 – Technical or 2 year college 50 – Some college/university 85 – College/university degree 44 – Post graduate degree 1 – Other
Current Organizational Level	7 – Not working 66 – Staff member, individual contributor 25 – First level supervisor 67 – Manager 18 – Department head 11 – Executive 13 – Other (usually self-employed)
Total Work Experience (across jobs)	1 – Less than 1 year 4 – 1 to 3 years 10 – 3 to 6 years 26 – 6 to 10 years 25 – 10 to 15 years 141 – More than 15 years
Total Experience in Current Job	27 – Less than 1 year 43 – 1 to 3 years 36 – 3 to 6 years 32 – 6 to 10 years 35 – 10 to 15 years 141 – More than 15 years

Evaluation Measures

Training programs can be evaluated on a number of different criteria including participants' satisfaction with training, learning during training, and skills at applying material covered in training (e.g., D. Kirkpatrick, 1994; Kraiger, 2002). What is most important to the design of training evaluation measures is that the content of the measures be logically linked to the training content (Kraiger, 2002; Kraiger, Ford, & Salas, 1993). To create measures of

learning during training and skills applying the training, the research team from the Center for Organizational Excellence reviewed course manuals and facilitator guides and developed content closely related to material covered in training. Efforts were made to ensure correspondence between evaluation content and training materials (addressing content validity) and to ensure correspondence between test items across training programs (addressing fairness in evaluation). For example, each training program related particular styles or profiles to a pattern of behavior. Also, each learning measure (by training program) had the same number of questions in which participants were given a style or profile and asked to identify the probable behaviors displayed by individuals with this style or profile.

Thus, the reaction form was identical across training programs (except for the first question that asked participants to indicate their style or profile provided to them during the training; this question was modified to fit the terminology of the particular training program).

Learning and behavior forms were customized to individual training programs, but the number and type of items were identical across programs. Descriptions of the measures follow.

Participant Reactions. Participant reactions to training were assessed using a 17-item rating form, administered at the end of training. Items assessed participants' satisfaction with or liking of the training program (six items; sample item: "The training program was enjoyable"), participants' evaluation of the trainer or training program (five items; sample items: "The trainer presented material clearly" and "I had the opportunity to ask questions during training"), and perceived usefulness of the training (six items; sample item: "The training provided specific methods that I can apply at work"). All items were rated on a five-point Likert-style scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

After all data were collected, the 17 items were submitted to a principal axis factor analysis to determine potential subgroupings of the items.⁴ Two factors were identified. The first reaction factor was labeled Positive Reactions (toward training), as it combined items written to elicit general satisfaction and evaluation of the trainer. This factor was comprised

⁴ Following recommended procedures, the number of factors was identified by looking at multiple criteria including a scree plot and percentage of variance accounted for by a set of factors. Both criteria led to the identification of a two factor solution.

of seven items (coefficient $\alpha = .87$). The second reaction factor was labeled Perceived Utility and consisted of four items assessing the perceived usefulness of the training (coefficient $\alpha = .81$). For evaluation analyses, items were averaged so that both scales had a potential maximum score of 5.0 (indicating high satisfaction or perceived utility).

Learning. Participants' retention of the key information covered in training was measured in a 16-item exam based on training content and administered at the end of training. The items were written to be as parallel as possible across training programs (e.g., form had questions that provided the name of an interpersonal style or personality type and asked what behaviors would be expected from a person displaying that style or type). Items were either multiple-choice (12 items) or checklists (four items) so they could be objectively scored. The exams were given to multiple facilitators delivering the training who provided keys for scoring answers. Multiple-choice questions had a single correct answer, but checklist questions had multiple possible answers. Multiple choice items were scored as correct or incorrect (worth one point each). For each checklist item, there were four primary answers and two to four secondary or acceptable answers. Trainees were given .2 points for each primary answer checked, and either .1 points (if there were two possible secondary answers) or .05 points (if there were four possible secondary answers) for other answers checked. Thus, each checklist item was worth up to one point, the same as the multiple-choice questions. Scores were totaled over 16 questions, divided by 16, and multiplied by 100 to place learning scores on a 100-point scale.

Behavior. To assess participants' capacity to apply their learning to understand and react to the social and interpersonal styles of others, the behavior measure was administered at the end of training. After completing the learning measure, participants watched a 14-minute video segment from the movie *12 Angry Men*. Despite having a relatively small sample of behavior to observe, the video clip is useful in that it provides an opportunity for participants to demonstrate their ability to analyze and respond to the interpersonal behavior of others after a short time.

The video shows a panel of jurors debating the evidence used to prosecute someone accused of murder. Different jurors displayed different interpersonal styles during this discussion. Following the video, participants were presented with pictures and labels (e.g., juror #8) of

five jurors and were asked to identify the individual's behavioral style, social style, or type (depending on the training program). The same jurors were used for each training program, and participants were forewarned regarding who they would evaluate.

Facilitators for each training program provided the correct pattern, style, or type for each of the five participants. Participants received one point for each juror correctly labeled, so final scores on the first behavioral measure ranged from 0 to 5.0.

After providing these answers, participants were shown the picture and juror number of three other jurors seen in the video. They were told the individual's behavioral pattern, social style, or type (depending on the training program) and were asked: "If this person is not contributing to a successful outcome, what are some ways of dealing with this juror to get him to participate in a more appropriate manner?" Participants were instructed to write short answers answering the question. Training facilitators again provided the expert answers to each question. Since the last three questions were open-ended, they were scored subjectively by four COE researchers. Each response was scored by two researchers, with scores (for items) ranging from 0 (no overlap with expert answers) to 3 (close approximation of expert answers). There was relatively high agreement between raters across questions and training programs; Inter-rater correlations were .80, .80, and .72 for the SOCIAL STYLES, DiSC, and MBTI programs, and interclass coefficients (ICCs) were .58, .61, .61 respectively. When there were disagreements (rarely more than 1 point), ratings were averaged to produce a score for that item. Points were summed over the three items so that total scores for the second behavioral measure could range from 0 to 9.0.

Planned Analyses. An analysis of variance was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences across training programs on any of the dimensions. "Significant differences" based on a statistical analysis such as analysis of variance, means that differences in the mean scores between two programs are large enough that they are probably not due to random chance, and would probably be found in similar future studies with large enough samples.

When there were significant differences found among all three programs, Bonferroni post hoc comparisons were conducted to isolate specific, significant differences between any two programs (e.g., DiSC v. MBTI, or SOCIAL STYLE v. MBTI).

Results

The results section is organized based on the evaluation measures described above.

Participant Reactions

Separate analyses were conducted for the two reaction scales described above. The statistical results are summarized as follows:

- For the Positive Reaction scale, there was a significant difference among the three training programs ($F = 3.95, p < .05$), although this effect was relatively small (see the means in Table 3).
- Post hoc comparisons revealed that participants in both the MBTI program and the DiSC programs rated their training significantly more positively than did participants in the SOCIAL STYLE program. There were no significant differences between the MBTI and DiSC programs on this scale.
- For the Perceived Utility scale, there was again a significant difference among the three training programs ($F = 3.14, p < .05$), although this effect was again relatively small.
- Post hoc comparisons revealed that participants in the DiSC program perceived their training program to be significantly more useful than did participants in the SOCIAL STYLE program. There were no other significant differences between any other combination of groups.

Conclusion: There are some small differences in training reactions across programs, but no clear trend favoring one particular program over another.

Table 3. Mean Training Reactions by Training Program

Reaction Scale	Program	Mean	Std.
Positive Reactions	DiSC	4.39	.43
	SOCIAL STYLE	4.31	.46
	MBTI	4.52	.44
Perceived Utility	DiSC	4.16	.64
	SOCIAL STYLE	3.91	.66
	MBTI	4.06	.52

Learning

The statistical results are summarized as follows:

- There was a significant difference among the three training programs on the learning measure ($F = 32.01$, $p < .001$). This was a large effect, indicating sizable differences in mean scores across programs.
- Post hoc analyses revealed that the mean score on the learning measure was significantly higher for the SOCIAL STYLE program than for either the DiSC or the MBTI programs (see means in Table 4). Additionally, the mean score for the DiSC program was significantly higher than the mean for the MBTI program.

Conclusion: On a learning test tailored to the content of each individual training program, participants in the SOCIAL STYLE program showed greater retention of key knowledge than did participants in the DiSC or MBTI training programs.

Table 4. Mean Learning Scores by Training Program

Learning Scale	Program	Mean	Std.
Learning Test Scores	DiSC	67.62	13.95
	SOCIAL STYLE	80.09	15.40
	MBTI	59.86	16.10

Behavior

Separate analyses were conducted for both behavioral measures. Behavior 1 was the number (out of 5) of jurors that participants correctly labeled in terms of style or profile after watching the video. Behavior 2 was the rated score to three questions in which participants indicated what approach they would take to work with or include a juror seen in the video given their knowledge of that individual's style or profile. The statistical results are summarized as follows:

- There was a significant difference among the three training programs on the Behavior 1 measure ($F = 72.12, p < .001$). This was a large effect, indicating sizable differences in mean scores across programs. Differences of this magnitude are not only extremely strong in terms of statistical significance, in practical terms the likelihood of an impact on workplace behavior is potentially very noteworthy.
- Post hoc analyses revealed that the mean score on the Behavior 1 measure was significantly higher for the SOCIAL STYLE program than either the DiSC or the MBTI programs (see means in Table 5). Additionally, mean scores for the DiSC program were significantly higher than scores for the MBTI program.
- There was also a significant difference among the three training programs on the Behavior 2 measure ($F = 11.48, p < .001$). This was a relatively large effect, indicating relatively sizable differences in mean scores across programs.
- Post hoc analyses revealed that the mean score on the Behavior 2 measure was significantly higher for the SOCIAL STYLE program than either the DiSC or the

MBTI programs. There was no significant difference in mean scores between the DiSC and MBTI programs.

Conclusion: On two behavioral measures assessing trainees' skill at analyzing and responding to the interpersonal styles of others, participants in the SOCIAL STYLE program scored, on average, significantly higher than did participants in either other training program. Participants in the DiSC program performed, on average, better than did participants in the MBTI program, particularly on the analysis of behavior.

Table 5. Mean Behavior Scores by Training Program

Behavior Scales	Program	Mean	Std.
Behavior 1	DiSC	1.9	.9
	SOCIAL STYLE	2.8	1.2
	MBTI	.74	.9
Behavior 2	DiSC	2.12	1.2
	SOCIAL STYLE	2.63	1.3
	MBTI	1.66	1.1

Summary and Implications

There are multiple measures available to aid in the analysis, interpretation, and use of one's interpersonal style when interacting with others. To be maximally effective, these measures should be supported by effective training that provides not only information about the measurement instrument, but knowledge and skills associated with using the instrument effectively to analyze and respond to the behavior of others.

Effective training evaluation requires multiple measures conforming to the objectives of the training. The purpose of the present study was to conduct a thorough evaluation of three training programs based on three models that include measurement tools for understanding and working with the interpersonal behaviors or styles of others: Inscape's DiSC, TRACOM's SOCIAL STYLE, and CPP's Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

Evaluations were done in terms of:

- Trainee reactions, that is, the extent to which participants enjoyed the training and perceived the training as useful for diagnosing the behaviors of others and communicating effectively with them;
- Participant knowledge of key concepts covered in training; and
- Participants' skills at applying what they learned by watching a brief video and correctly analyzing the interpersonal styles of characters in the video and indicating how they would act toward other characters given knowledge of their styles or profiles.

The results reveal clear differences among the three programs. Participants in all three training programs held very positive reactions to the training. Nearly all were satisfied with the training and nearly all perceived the training they received as useful and easy to apply.

On measures of learning, participants in the SOCIAL STYLE training scored significantly higher (80% on average) than did either participants in the DiSC training (67%) or MBTI training (60%). Since different facilitators were used for each training type, it could be that some facilitators stuck closer to the training objectives than did others, or explained material in a way that is easier to understand. Alternatively, there could be differences among measurement instruments in the extent to which supporting material is easy to grasp intuitively and encode to memory. If so, there is a clear advantage to participants receiving SOCIAL STYLE training. Participants receiving MBTI training typically accurately remembered their own profile, but struggled remembering many other key concepts covered in training.

Regardless of what participants remember from the training, it is important that they be able to use the training to analyze and respond to the interpersonal behaviors of others. Recall that participants in all programs rated their respective programs highly in this regard. Ideally, we would have waited for weeks or months after training and measured participants' post-training skills in their everyday life. However, such an effort would be beyond the scope of this project. Instead, we showed the same video to participants in each training program and measured their skill at labeling the interpersonal style or profile of characters in the video, and also their written answers as to how they would apply what they learned in training to work with other characters in the video given knowledge of their styles.

Again, there was a clear advantage on both measures to participants receiving the SOCIAL STYLE training. Participants in this program could identify more characters correctly (on average 2.8 of 5) than could participants in either the DiSC (1.9) or MBTI (.74) programs. Participants in this program also responded more accurately than participants in the other two programs when asked their strategies for working with other characters in the video knowing the characters style.

Since application of the instrument and interpersonal styles is a primary objective of all three training programs, it would be difficult to argue that differences between programs were due to some facilitators not emphasizing this skill. Rather, it appears that, at least for a half-day training program, the SOCIAL STYLE program affects immediate skill development much more so than do the other two programs. It could be argued that applying the skills learned in the DiSC or MBTI programs are more complex and require greater processing time (post-training) before they are employed correctly. However, in general, research on skill acquisition shows that without regular everyday practice, skills acquired in training are more likely to atrophy than improve (Arthur, Bennett, Stanush, & McNelly, 1998), and that the gap in initial post-training skill differences (e.g., between participants in the SOCIAL STYLE v. DiSC or MBTI programs) are more likely to increase rather than decrease over time. Accordingly, the results of this study suggest that the training supporting the SOCIAL STYLE MODEL is the most effective for improving interpersonal skills related to analyzing and responding to the behaviors of others.

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Participating Research Organizations

The Center for Organizational Excellence is a research-based outreach institution within the Division of Continuing Education at Colorado State University. The Center engages in a number of activities to forge strategic alliances with external organizations and agencies, and build upon the talent and unique capabilities of CSU's faculty and students.

Representative projects include: Providing support for strategic planning by organizations and by departments within organizations; building assessment tools and training programs to support leadership development efforts; and conducting needs assessments to prioritize training solutions.

Colorado State University is a land-grant institution located in Fort Collins, Colorado, with over 25,000 students; 1,400 faculty, eight colleges, and 55 academic departments. Since

1879, Colorado State has been fulfilling the needs of citizens through its land-grant mission of teaching, research and service. Colorado State University has been recognized as one of the top universities in the nation by both the 2007 Princeton Review's College Guide and the 2007 *U.S. News and World Report* list of best colleges.

Regis Learning Solutions, a Regis University affiliated company, provides strategic learning solutions to corporations and organizations around the world. Founded in 2003, RLS has a growing client list of more than 60 organizations. RLS provides a variety of services and solutions, including assessments, simulations, e-learning, workshops, and Work Tank™ accelerated performance solutions. Visit <http://regislearning.com>.

Regis University is the 128 year-old Jesuit institution headquartered in Denver. Regis University enrolls more than 13,000 students in a wide variety of accredited undergraduate and graduate programs, both on its seven campuses and online from around the world. Regis University is often cited by *US News and World Report* as a leading value in higher education.