

## Topic 9: Personalities

Farm families will have a range of different personalities and behaviours. It can be helpful to gain a better understanding of the different personalities and behaviours and how they typically interact.

Often, during the transition process, new relationships within the family are established as the younger generation gets married.

Both are reasons why you might want to work through an exercise (an audit) that provides you with information about the different personalities and behaviours.

People are the way they are. There is no right or wrong — or good or bad — about family members' personalities.

Can the different personalities involved work together effectively to develop and implement a transition plan? This is a question many families need to answer.

### Why is this relevant?

Working and living together in a family business can be challenging. As people enter into relationships, additional personalities and behaviours are introduced into the mix. Having a better understanding of the different personalities and behaviours of the people working together helps to promote communication and minimize conflict.

### Instructions

1. Have a discussion with family members about differing personalities and behaviours.
2. Decide if you want to work through an exercise that helps you to understand the different personalities and behaviours that exist within the family.
3. If you decide that you'd like to work through an exercise, you have three options.
  - a. Option One:
    - i. Work through the exercise as shown below.
  - b. Option Two
    - i. Give someone the responsibility to research different processes that you can use to help you work through the exercise. There are numerous resources available.
    - ii. Check with a MAFRD Business Development Specialist - Farm Management for a list of available resources if you are having trouble.
  - c. Option Three:
    - i. Contact an external facilitator who has expertise in this area to help you work through an exercise.
4. If you chose Option One:
  - a. Family members actively involved in the business should complete the exercise.
  - b. Family members who may become involved in the business should complete the exercise.

- c. Have each family member read through the information below. The exercise has adapted a widely used tool known as the DISC Profile. A more detailed version is available for purchase. Search the internet for more information.
- d. Using the table in the exercise, enter the appropriate letter ('D', 'i', 'S', 'C') that each member thinks best describes their personality.
- e. Compare and contrast each individual's answers.
- f. Use the information to try and understand how family members can work together, sometimes with different personalities.
- g. Store the documents for future reference.



### EXAMPLE: Personalities

| Personality Style   | PERSONALITIES - Check which best reflects your Style below |
|---------------------|--|
| 'D' - Dominant      |  |
| 'i' - Influence     |  |
| 'S' - Steady        | <b>'S' - Steady</b>  |
| 'C' - Conscientious |  |

### DiSC Profile (excerpts of information taken from the website)

DiSC is one of many tools available that are used to help families and businesses work through an exercise that looks at the behaviours of individuals.

It is a personal assessment tool used to improve work productivity, teamwork and communication. DiSC is non-judgmental and helps people discuss their behavioral differences.

DiSC profiles help you and your family (could also include non-family members involved in management):

- Increase your self-knowledge
  - how you respond to conflict, what motivates you, what causes you stress and how you solve problems
- Learn how to adapt your own style to get along better with others
- Promote positive communication

*Online DISC Profile. Personality Profile Solutions, Inc. Minneapolis, Minnesota*

- Create better teamwork and minimize conflict
- Manage more effectively by understanding each other's behaviours.

DiSC is described as – 'D', 'i', 'S', 'C' – in more detail below.

## **'D' is for Dominance**

*You place emphasis on shaping your situation by overcoming opposition to accomplish results.*

A person with a 'D' style:

- is motivated by winning, competition and success.
- prioritizes accepting challenge, taking action and achieving immediate results.
- is described as direct, demanding, forceful, strong willed, driven, and determined, fast-paced, and self-confident.
- may be limited by lack of concern for others, impatience and open skepticism.
- may fear being seen as vulnerable or being taken advantage of.
- values competency, action, concrete results, personal freedom, challenges.

Goals:

- unique accomplishments
- new opportunities
- control of audience
- independence

Needs others who:

- weigh pros and cons
- calculate risks
- use caution
- study facts
- think before deciding
- recognize the needs of others

When communicating with the D style individuals, give them the bottom line, be brief, focus your discussion, avoid making generalizations, keep from repeating yourself, and concentrate on solutions rather than problems.

## **'i' is for Influence**

*You place emphasis on shaping your situation by influencing or persuading others.*

A person with an 'i' style:

- is motivated by social recognition, group activities, and relationships
- prioritizes taking action, teamwork, and being positive and having energy

- is described as convincing, enthusiastic, warm, trusting and optimistic
- may be limited by being impulsive and disorganized and having lack of follow-through.
- may fear loss of influence, disapproval and being ignored
- values freedom of expression

Goals:

- victory with flair
- friendship and happiness
- authority and prestige status symbols
- popularity

Needs others who:

- concentrate on the task
- seek facts
- speak directly
- develop systematic approaches
- prefer to deal with things instead of people
- take a logical approach
- demonstrate follow-through

When communicating with the 'i' style individual, share your experiences, allow the 'i' style person time to ask questions and talk themselves, focus on the positives, avoid overloading them with details, and don't interrupt them.

## **'S' is for Steadiness**

*You place emphasis on cooperating with others within existing circumstances to carry out the task.*

A person with a 'S' Style:

- is motivated by cooperation and opportunities to help
- prioritizes giving support, teamwork and maintaining stability
- is described as calm, patient, predictable, deliberate, stable and consistent.
- may be limited by being indecisive and by a tendency to avoid change
- may fear change, loss of stability and offending others.
- values loyalty, helping others and security

Goals:

- personal accomplishments
- group acceptance
- power through formal roles and positions of authority
- maintenance of status quo and controlled situations

Needs others who:

- react quickly to unexpected change
- become involved in more than one thing
- are self-promoting
- apply pressure on others
- work comfortably in an unpredictable environment
- help to prioritize work
- are flexible in work procedures

When communicating with the 'S' Style individuals, be personal and friendly, express your interest in them and what you expect from them, take time to provide clarification, be polite, and avoid being confrontational, overly aggressive or rude.

### **'C' is for Conscientious**

*You place emphasis on working conscientiously within existing circumstances to ensure quality and accuracy.*

A person with a 'C' style:

- is motivated by opportunities to gain knowledge, showing their expertise, and quality work.
- prioritizes ensuring accuracy, maintaining stability, and challenging assumptions.
- is described as careful, cautious, systematic, diplomatic, accurate and tactful.
- may be limited by being overcritical and overanalyzing.
- may fear criticism and being wrong.
- values quality and accuracy

Goals:

- unique accomplishments
- correctness
- stability
- predictable accomplishments
- personal growth

Needs others who:

- delegate important tasks
- make quick decisions
- use policies only as guidelines
- compromise with the opposition
- state unpopular positions
- encourage teamwork
- initiate and facilitate discussions

When communicating with the C style individual, focus on facts and details; minimize “pep talk” or emotional language; be patient, persistent and sensitive.

### How does this apply?

- Understanding the different personalities and behaviours helps people who work together.
- A better understanding helps to recognize differences and to potentially to avoid conflict.
- A better understanding helps to achieve a successful transition.



#### PLANNING POINTERS:

- If you are using an advisor for this step, consider referring to the document *How to Choose and Work with an Advisor* that is found in the appendix (pages 305-308).



#### WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

- Consider using an external facilitator if you are having trouble with this exercise.
- Consider using an external facilitator if you are concerned about the potential for conflict.
- Some family members may think the exercise is pointless and may not want to work through the exercise. It's okay for them not to be included. They may decide to participate after they see what the family members who have completed the exercise have learned and how the information helps.

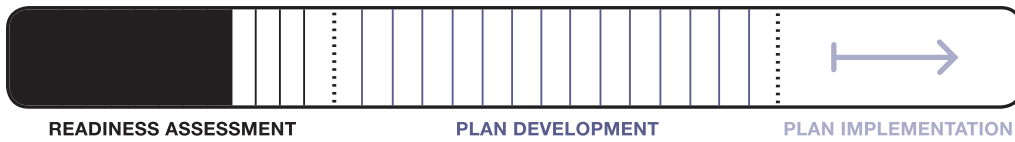


**EXERCISE:** Go to the forms appendix page 233 (at the back of this guide) for a copy of the Personalities exercise.

## Next steps

Congratulations on completing this topic. You are now a step closer to having a transition plan for your farm. Please proceed to the next topic area on your Transition Plan, but don't forget to add any assigned tasks that were generated by working through this topic.

## Planning progress



## Personalities

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