

# MaxImizing Insights

Workforce Trends, Forecasts and Solutions from Maximizing Insights

July 2003 ▶ Volume 2 Issue 7

## Competitive Spirit: How much is enough?

**D**o you get more enjoyment out of winning even if it is beating your seven year old son at checkers or out of watching the joy of your son's celebration of beating you? Do you believe that your children should learn how to be good losers or that second place is the first place for losers? How far do you go to win or does the fact that there has to be winners and losers just drive you crazy?

Whether or not you personally play sports or even board games, most people understand the dynamics of winning and losing and playing on individual and team sports. That is why sports analogies are one of the best tools at learning how to observe and interpret human behavior.

These "real" personalities often times don't come out until competing. These traits show up at home and in the workplace when the going gets tough - or right after the honeymoon.

Using a golf analogy, can you recognize these competitive or cooperative personality traits in yourself and others? How would these show up in the workplace?



Maximizing Insights is written, edited and published monthly by Ira S. Wolfe for:

### MaxImize

*Companies hire for skill, but fire for attitude.....we measure attitude.*

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### Would you and others who know you describe you as competitive?

- You live and die by "winning is everything, it's the only thing."
- You compete with everyone in your foursome and the foursome in front of them, in back of you and in the clubhouse.
- Your biggest competitor (and threat) is yourself.
- You begin placing bets on the way to the first tee - you bet on individual scores, lengths of drives, number of putts, team scores - you name it and you'll bet on it.
- You count your strokes as well as everyone you play with.
- You purchase and play with only the best equipment.
- If you are losing, you offer new bets on new games with new rules and new conditions and offer to play double or nothing on the original bets.
- If you lose, you immediately ask for a re-match.
- If other try and console you, you tell them "I just stink and might as well quit" - then you walk right into the clubhouse and sign up for a golf lesson, begin looking at new equipment, and pick up a bucket of balls and head off to the driving range. Competitors NEVER quit!
- If you lose - it's always the equipment, course conditions or pace of play, never your fault.

### .....Or more cooperative?

- Cooperatives believe that golf "is only a game".
- You don't even pick up a scorecard before you start - keeping score just ruins the game.
- Coming home with more balls and tees than you started with is equivalent to winning the Super Bowl.
- Just finishing a complete round and reaching the eighteenth green before sunset is good enough, too.
- If you are not playing well, you offer to just sit out a few holes not to hold others back.
- If others have a bad shot, you tell them "I didn't see that one, you can take it over".
- If others are having a rough day, you suggest "we just set a limit of seven on any hole".
- If you win, you refuse to accept other's money from the bet - "just keep it for next time" or "you drove - use it for gas".
- If your partner is upset that he or she is losing, you may let him/her win by missing a few putts or intentionally hitting your ball out of bounds.
- You apologize for their mistakes with "I apologize for making you have a bad day."

*Building high performing teams must start with understanding the skills and behaviors brought to work by each employee. To build high performing teams in your organization, call us today.*

## Behaviors are only skin deep

Effective interpersonal skills depend on your ability to understand what drives others' behaviors, not just recognizing and adapting to his/her behavioral style. You may be an outstanding communicator but your endorsement with others will be shallow and weak if you don't understand what is in it for them. To turn effective communication into productive and rewarding relationships, you need to learn what drives behaviors.

Values drive behaviors. Values are shaped by our beliefs. Not all beliefs turn out to be true. So we fight the parental tapes even as adults but they just won't go away.

We've all heard statements like *knowledge is power, a penny saved is a penny earned, beauty is only skin deep, it is better to give than receive, work before pleasure, only quitters give up* in helping us define how we ought or ought not to act. Some of us love them. Others hate them. Regardless we still hear them. These tapes are indelibly recorded in our brains and all we can do is choose to follow or ignore the advice.

Don't believe me? Finish these statements:

If all your friends jumped off the bridge, \_\_\_\_\_.

Make sure you have clean underwear, just in case \_\_\_\_\_.

A little power is a \_\_\_\_\_.

Money is the root \_\_\_\_\_.

If you don't toot your own horn, \_\_\_\_\_.

It's better to \_\_\_\_\_ than \_\_\_\_\_.

To learn more about values and how they drive behaviors, contact us today by calling **512.278.1200**.

## What is the best way to use a personality report for performance management?

No computerized assessment or performance management tool is perfect but many are very, very accurate and reliable. Occasionally there may be one or more statements in a report that does not exactly reflect an individual's behavior.

Below are a few proven recommendations on how to read, interpret and apply the results of your reports like Managing for Success and Personal Interests, Attitudes, and Values.

1. Share your report with others. If you disagree with a statement, ask their permission to remove it. If they agree, the statement is not correct, cross it out. (Warning: Good luck getting someone to agree with you!)

2. Inaccurate statements may have been accurate at another time in your life. Since then you learned from your mistakes and developed compensatory skills and improved your emotional intelligence. But beware: under stress or fatigue the skills may give way to emotion and these hidden behaviors may surface again.

3. If you dislike what the report says about you, don't worry. With practice and coaching, behaviors can be adapted to different situations and to different people. Adapting behaviors in the right way at the right time builds success and reduces conflicts.

These reports also do not judge right and wrong behaviors or identify good or bad people. They just evaluate how your style, values and personality compare to other people and helps assess the long-term fit for a job.

For a comprehensive personal or professional evaluation or help in understanding your individual or team behavioral reports and to create an action plan for improvement, call today.

## Setting A Hire Standard

*This is the 1st of 5 Tips to Setting "A Hire Standard". Watch for Tips 2, 3, 4 and 5 in coming issues.*

While there is nothing to prevent workers from filing discrimination claims, there are mechanisms in the law for weeding out claims that have no chance of succeeding. Summary judgment is the primary weeding-out mechanism employers can use to bring an end to such claims early in litigation.

Employers usually win summary judgment when plaintiffs cannot prove they were qualified for a position or that they even applied for a job.

However, there are exceptions. Recently in *Lockridge v. Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas*, (2002), the Eight Circuit expanded direct evidence to include situations where an employer fails to establish "clear" (i.e. "fixed or reasonably objective") standards and procedures for promoting or hiring. The court found that the employer's most significant problems were its failure to show what its hiring and promotion procedures actually were or that they were applied consistently. The court held that the "random and subjective" promotion process used by the university constituted direct evidence of a discriminatory practice.

(In this case, Lockridge didn't even have to prove he even applied for the job to file a suit!)

Based on *Lockridge* and similar cases, it is clear that employers that fail to structure their employment selection systems may unnecessarily open themselves to costly litigation not only from employees and applicants, but also from individuals who never even applied for a job.

*Source: A Hire Standard, HR Magazine, July 2003*

# Stormy Labor Forecast Facts

## Hot Jobs in manufacturing

Manufacturing job in the U.S. may change but they won't fade away anytime soon. The pattern of recent years will continue, a shift from low-skilled jobs making low-value, mass quantities to high skilled jobs creating value-added products and highly automated systems. Many of these jobs are higher margin but technology-intensive production. The jobs will be in communication, medical instruments, food processing, and heavy, expensive to import products like appliances and cabinets.

So where are the positions of the future? Computer and mathematical occupations are expected to increase 29 percent by 2010.

Other hot jobs include robotics, toys and sporting goods, drugs, garden machinery, motor vehicles, metal coating and screw machine products, bolts and rivets. All of these jobs are in the top 25 percent according the U.S. Labor Department for both productivity growth and job growth. Source: WSJ, July 3, 2003

## What's wrong with this?

Compromises are good - except when it comes to ethics. What's next?

The Navy (June 2003) reported that they punished more than 40 chaplains for offenses ranging from sexual abuse to fraud. One chaplain was punished for indecent acts, another was charged with murder, and still others for selling drugs, molesting children as well as adults and for downloading pornography.

Then we read about the sexual antics of Pennsylvania State Police. In records recently made public by the U.S. District Court (where several misconduct cases are being tried), allegations ranged from watching pornography in the barracks, having sex in patrol cars, and photographing female cadets while doing "topless push-ups" – even while on duty.

(Source: Associated Press)

## Health Illiteracy Costs Billions

Studies show as many as half of all adults in all socio-economic levels struggle with health literacy, defined as the ability to read, understand and act on the spoken and written health information from medical professional.

According to a health literacy coalition that includes the American Medical Association Foundation, the American Public Health Association, the National Coalition for Literacy and Pfizer, 80 percent of patients forget what doctors tell them as soon as they leave the office – an half of what they do recall they remember incorrectly.

Patients who don't understand doctors' orders make more medication mistakes, comply with treatment less often and are more likely to suffer from chronic, untreated illnesses, increasing costs in the long run. Patients who barely understand what the doctor is telling them are unlikely to ask if they are following best practice recommendations and may be intimidated or embarrassed to boot. **By one estimate, low health literacy costs the U.S. health system \$73 billion a year.**

Combine this with the July 2003 New England Journal of Medicine report that Americans get the recommended care for their diseases and conditions only about half the time because doctors aren't adhering to well-known guidelines,

*"I'm not so concerned with what I say to my players as much as I am concerned with what they heard me say."*

Red Auerbach, former GM and coach of the Boston Celtics

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*You may have your preferences for drum or violin or piano; no harm in these, for a preference does not damage your capacity to hear and enjoy other instruments. But the moment your preference turns into an attachment, it hardens you to other sounds, you suddenly undervalue them. And it blinds you to a particular instrument, for you give it a value out of all proportion to its merit.*

Anthony DeMello

## The Cost of Spam

- One estimate shows that businesses lose about \$10 billion a year to spam because of lost productivity, bandwidth costs and money spent on anti-spam tools.
- Putting the cost even higher might be the deletion of legitimate emails and the lost opportunities or customer service problems that causes.
- Figuring it takes 4.4 seconds on average to deal with a message, that's \$4 billion in just lost time.

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## What is DISC?

DISC is an acronym for Direct, Influencing, Steady and Compliant behaviors.

DISC identifies how people respond to problems, people, pace and procedures.

DISC is a Universal Language - behavioral styles show no preferences by gender, race, ethnicity, or religious affiliation.

There are no right or wrong DISC styles - just different styles.

DISC is the first step in understanding yourself and improving your performance.

To receive your complimentary personalized DISC report, contact us today at one 512.278.1200 or email at [Barbara@maxproductivity.com](mailto:Barbara@maxproductivity.com)

**Maximizing Insights**  
has arrived!

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