



The difference between DISC and MBTI®

What's the difference? Do we need to use both? What is the Humantelligence strategy?

Straight talk about each instrument

Both the DISC instrument and the MBTI® (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) are widely used and accepted in thousands of organizations around the world. Since DISC has grown at an enormous pace over the past three decades, the two instruments may be tied for the number of instruments sold annually. Some DISC experts say that DISC now exceeds MBTI in sales, when combining all DISC vendors.

Brief history of four-dimensional models

Various types of four-dimensional models of behavior have been around since about 400 BC with Empodocles (air, earth, fire, and water), Hippocrates (sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, and melancholic), Galen in 170 AD, Carl Jung in 1921 (thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuiting), and William Marston in 1928 (Dominance, Inducement, Steadiness, and Compliance). Currently there are over a dozen DISC-type models in the marketplace, and since the DISC concept is in the public domain, other iterations may continue to emerge.

What each of the DISC models have in common is that they attempt to describe observable behavior, that is, **HOW** someone does what they do. If you are a salesperson, **how** do you sell? Do you sell as a high or low D, I, S, or C, or most likely, a combination of those traits? If you are a manager, **how** do you manage? As a D, I, S, or C, or a combination?

Both DISC and MBTI have a wide recognition and acceptance in the marketplace. MBTI gained initial recognition from the academic community and has maintained a presence both in academe and in the business arena. The DISC model has grown quickly over the past thirty-five years, and with current research projects, it is gaining attention in the academic community with a number of doctoral dissertations exploring the range of the model.

What's the basic the difference between DISC and MBTI?

When asked which one is best, the answer depends on the needs of the organization. When asked how they are different, the answer can be distilled to this: The MBTI illuminates ways of thinking and dealing with information internally. That is, how we think about the world around us. DISC illuminates one's observable behavioral style, that is, HOW we do what we do, i.e., our actions.

We could ask a sales or customer service manager: What is most important for you to know about your staff? What they think about, or how they behave when they sell or service your products?

The **DISC** model has been of enormous benefit in determining the ***HOW*** of our behavioral choices or style preferences. These uses include coaching, management, team-building, and numerous other practical uses. The DISC model is not a personality test. It explores four traits within our personality, but the term ‘personality’ goes far beyond the amplification of four behavioral traits. As a result, relatives of this four dimensional model have been called: Type, Style, Preference, and many other terms related to components of personality. However, most of the models avoid the use of the word ‘personality.’

How is Humantelligence different?

When we've asked people who have taken both DISC and MBTI to recall their style or type about six months after taking the instruments, responses differ. Those taking the DISC will usually say, "Oh, I'm a High D," or "Sure, I'm a High I." Many who have taken the MBTI six months ago will say, "I can't remember all of it, but I think its 'E-' something." Therein one difference: DISC terminology is a bit more memorable for many people.

With that said, there are also a large number of people who forget the DISC labeling, and still a large number of people who think that a ‘low’ score is unfavorable. While that’s a false conclusion, the team at Humantelligence thought there must be an easier way. Humantelligence uses the DISC model as one of the four facets of its lenses, and labels the terms in ways that describe each of the dimensions as opposites in a spectrum of behaviors: Decisive vs Deliberate, Outgoing vs Reserved, Steady vs Spontaneous, and Structured vs Freeform. Each term is one that is easily accepted and ‘owned’ by people who score in that range, and also easily memorable because the descriptor also defines the category. No ‘translation’ needed.

Humantelligence Work Behaviors:

Approach to Problems (D scale)

- **Decisive:** New problems solved quickly, assertively, actively. Gets to the bottom-line quickly.
- **Deliberate:** New problems solved in a controlled, organized way. Thinks before acting.

Approach to People (I Scale)

- **Outgoing:** Meets new people in an outgoing, talkative manner. Gregarious and emotional.
- **Reserved:** Meets new people in a quiet, controlled, reserved manner. Emotionally controlled.

Approach to Work Pace (S Scale)

- **Steady:** Prefers a controlled, deliberate work environment. Values security of situation.
- **Spontaneous:** Prefers a flexible, dynamic, changeable environment. Values freedom of expression.

Approach to Procedures (C Scale)

- **Structured:** Likes things done 'the right way,' and says, "Rules are made to be followed."
- **Freeform:** Works independently of the procedures and says, "Rules are made to be bent or broken."

In addition to the behavioral lens, there are three other lenses that Humantelligence uses within the same instrument and report. The Work Motivators lens explores the values, drives and motivators that propel a team member to bring their top effectiveness to the workplace. The Ideal Work culture portion of the instrument describes the environment in which the employee does their best work. The last of the four lenses is the Life Priorities list that allows the person to illuminate their top five priorities among an array of many choices. The strategy of Humantelligence is to provide one instrument covering a variety of dimensions into one report, and to present it in an on-line social technology platform.

This model is gaining rapid attention in the U.S., Middle East, and South America as a new and pro-active technology solution to help people in all organizations to work more effectively together. Humantelligence has conducted major studies, called Mega-Scans™ in Abu Dhabi, Colombia, and Dubai and these have revealed an enormous amount of valuable knowledge about the strengths, drives, priorities, and ideal work environments of populations. The research continues to bring new knowledge that can help people work more effectively together in all countries and all organizations around the world.

Finally, if you are interested in knowing the HOW (Work Behaviors), WHY (Motivators), WHAT (Ideal Work), and the Life Priorities of each member of your team, and how these dimensions can be easily used to help your team work more effectively together, then the Humantelligence online system is an important resource to explore. There is currently no other model that combines four lenses into one instrument, and presents a social technology platform in which to illuminate the strengths of each member of your teams. The unique model and unique presentation of the results will provide a pathway to success for your teams. Find out more at: <http://www.humantelligence.com>