

How a Behavioural report could have saved a costly HR mistake

How often do we encounter the problems caused through a managerial decision involving the promotion of a team member into a role that just doesn't suit the individual's behavioural style?

This example was recounted to me by one of our Australian affiliates. He was consulted by the Managing Director of a medium sized company that was having motivational and performance problems with an area manager, one of their top executives. Let's call him John.

John has been with the organisation since graduating from university with a commerce degree and had completed his accountancy qualifications soon after joining the firm. That was some ten years ago and he was identified as a diligent and efficient operator leading to his promotion from an accounting position to head office manager some three years ago.

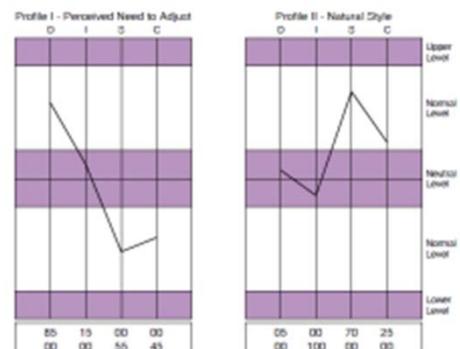
His management style was focused on helping and guiding his office team which largely involved repetitious routines and the exact following of instructions. He excelled with his systematic planning and his reports to his immediate manager were precise, practical and meaningful with suggestions and advice where needed. He was well liked and respected by his team.

The management reports, which John prepared, were always made available to the monthly directors' meetings and John was often invited to attend these meetings. His ability to identify performance issues of the various departments and areas impressed the directors and he gained their respect to the extent that they earmarked him as a prospective "trouble-shooter".

John's big opportunity came through the resignation of an area manager of a troubled region. Because of his ability to recognise and often pre-empt possible challenges, the directors offered him the area manager role.

Because there was a significant increase in salary that went with the appointment, he accepted the position and relocated with his young family, from his home city to another state centre several hundred miles away from the company's head office.

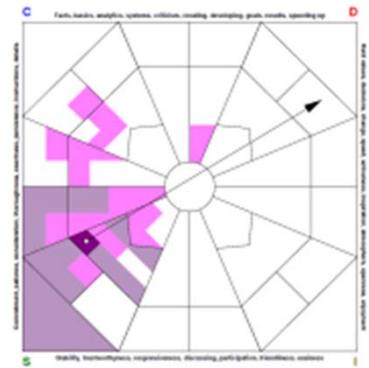
His wife and family were not keen on the move and this put some pressure on John. But worse was to come!



His new role meant that he had to deal with some “tough” employees and long standing ineffective staff members. He thought that this meant he had to adopt a demanding attitude, and to be effective, a sometimes blunt and almost seemingly aggressive approach (his translation). He had to become strong-willed and uncompromising and this began to have a significant effect on him.

Worse still, he wasn't achieving the targets that had been set by head office (some of which he had established himself!) as he encountered resistance from his staff who saw him as a “head office boffin”!

Our consultant friend was called in by the managing director to try and figure out why John wasn't meeting the performance targets. And it didn't take too long after an interview with John to understand the main reason. The consultant immediately suggested John complete an online Personal Analysis Report and the Flexibility Zones of the report are shown opposite.



John's Profiles are shown on the previous page and those who understand Extended DISC Personal Analysis Reports will have identified the real issue from the Profiles.

The reality is that John should never have been selected for the area manager role. His behavioural style simply did not suit the job requirements. He felt enormous pressure (as identified by his elevated Profile II) and although we can all do anything we set our minds to achieve, John was arriving home late at night completely exhausted, putting more pressure on the relationship with his wife and family and leaving him wondering what he was doing wrong.

The outcome is not surprising. Immediately he received his Personal Analysis Report he realised what it was telling him. He simply wasn't suited to the role and he resigned from the firm. This meant that the organisation lost a valuable and efficient employee who had been so effective in his original role and should never have been appointed to a job that demanded an uncompromising and somewhat inflexible approach.

The cost to the organisation? No one wants to talk about that!