



Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, Episode 1
The Power of Focusing on Strengths in the Workplace & Using the DISC Assessment --
Produced By Suzie Price

Transcript

www.pricelessprofessional.com/disc

Intro: Welcome to the Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, a show designed for leaders, trainers and consultants who are responsible for employee selection and professional development. Each episode is packed full with insider tips, best practices, expert interviews and inspiration. Please welcome the host who is helping leaders, trainers and consultants everywhere, Suzie Price.

Suzie Price: Hi there. This is Suzie Price and welcome to my very first podcast for Wake Up Eager Workforce. In this podcast, I bring you more than 20 years of experience in employee selection and professional development in my roles as a Professional Facilitator, Consultant, Trainer, Author, Leader and Human Resource Professional. So if you were looking to build a Wake Up Eager Workforce, you're in the right place and I'm glad you're here, really glad you're here. And I want to let you know that the show notes for today's broadcast can be found at pricelessprofessional.com/disc, D-I-S-C. The title for today's program is *The Power of Focusing on Strengths and Using the DISC Assessment in Professional Development*. So today we're going to talk about how focusing on strengths brings out the best in others and contributes to the bottom line. We're going to look at one of the assessment tools I use, the DISC assessment, and I'm going to tell you more about it and how it can help people better understand their strengths and how it helped me at one point in my life and continues to help me. I'm going to interview and share with you an interview I had with a consultant so you can see how she's using the DISC assessment to build teams. And then I'm going to close out this first episode, at the end, I'm going to go into more detail about what you can expect in future episodes. So I'm really glad you're here, so let's get started.

Suzie: What we're going to start out with is talking about the power of focusing on strengths. I'm going to start with telling you a little bit of a short story about how I first understood strengths in the workplace and then I'm going to go into some statistics around the power of focusing on strengths. So 20 years ago, I was working for an International company and I really enjoyed the job, I liked the work, I was learning about facilitation, it was internal consulting, it was professional development and human resource work, leadership. It was awesome. It was a wonderful experience, but I was having problems in the job, and the problem in my opinion at the time, was my boss Betty. She was just difficult. That's what I thought. And I thought that she wasn't very helpful. She didn't communicate a lot. She was somebody who critiqued and found what was wrong with things more than shared what was right. And so while I was excited about the job, I wasn't very excited about my boss and I was thinking about leaving and I was really torn. So in the midst of all of that internal turmoil that I was having, we had a group approach our department and ask us to do a pilot around an assessment called the DISC assessment. It's a communication style assessment that helps people figure out how, you know their preferences

around communicating. And they wanted us to try it out as a team, to test it before they considered rolling it out to the entire organization.

Suzie: So I took the assessment. It took about 15 minutes to complete it online. I got a very detailed report that looked like somebody had talked to my parents and my best friends to figure out, you know, describe me and show my strengths and show my blind spots. And I had a lot of strengths and I had a lot of blind spots. But guess what? So did my boss, Betty. And the other interesting thing that I saw, not only learning about my strengths, but I could see what her strengths were, and I could also see that we were very different. If you were going to use famous names that talk about the different DISC styles, my style would be kind of like a combination of Donald Trump and Dolly Parton, you know, very assertive, a risk taker, talks a lot, optimism, likes to cheerlead, encourage. And Betty's style, well, the best example I can think of was Spock, from Star Trek, a very serious, very reserved, not a lot of communication, very smart, very accurate, very analytical. So we were on opposite sides in regard to our communication style strengths and our blind spots. And the funny thing is is that we could really help each other. She could help me analyze and be more accurate in what I was moving forward with, I could help her not overanalyze. I mean there were so many ways we balanced each other out, but we kind of needed the assessment to realize that we had these differences and that because we were different, we weren't wrong, we just had differences, differences in our strengths and that there is diversity, in diversity there is strength. So before the assessment, what, neither one of us we're budging, we both thought we were right and we never said anything. It was all undercurrent vibe going on between us, we were both impatient with each other, and after the assessment, while everything wasn't rosy and perfect, I did put my resume away and stay much longer and we hammered out a good relationship with each other by adapting to each other and by appreciating our strengths.

Suzie: And so what I came to understand is people aren't always difficult, they're just different, and finding ways to find out what those differences are and looking for their strengths is very powerful. And the DISC assessment, which I'll tell you more about in a moment, is a one of those tools that can help you focus on strengths. And there is power in focusing on strengths, that's the title of the program today. And I want to read to you some statistics from the Gallup Organization, these have long been documented and continuously get updated and they have very valid research, Gallup does. They do Meta analytical research, which is basically says broad and deep, and so they can back up what they're sharing in their research. So based on the research around strengths, if you just learn about your strengths, your eight percent more productive than when you weren't aware of your strengths. So as soon as I got my assessment, we were focusing on my strengths and according to these statistics, I could say that that's true; I was eight percent more effective and productive. If you're using your strengths on the job, they've been able to determine that you're six times more likely to be engaged and committed to the work. It makes sense, doesn't it? We like to do it what we like to do, and we like to do our strengths and sometimes we don't really know what our strengths are and our boss, people around us, don't know what our strengths are, so we're not using them consciously and we're not leveraging them on the job. But people who do, are six times more likely to be engaged and committed to their job and they're three times more likely to say, "Hey, I have a high quality of

life.” They tend to laugh more, they have a greater, higher sense of well being, they have a lot more self-respect and more confidence. There's a lot of power in using strengths. In addition, when managers get really good at focusing on strengths, those managers who focus on strengths within their team, helping their team members, use their strengths more on the job, everyday are 86 percent more effective than managers who don't focus on strengths and don't help their people leverage and use their strengths. Another “Wow” statistic is Gallup interviewed millions and millions of employees and all over the world in different industries and they took 25 person teams, and they found that the teams that we're able to say that I use my strengths on the job everyday, they were 44 percent more likely to excel in customer service and 38 percent more productive. So every team was 44 percent more likely to excel in customer service and 38 percent more productive. That's, those are huge gains just based on people focusing on strength. So there's a bottom line impact to this power of getting managers to focus on strengths. And focusing on strengths is actually more important, in my view, than focusing on development opportunities, or weaknesses, because oftentimes when we understand our strengths, our strengths are something we can overdo when we're not aware, so they, that actually becomes our development opportunity and most people are not aware of their strengths. More Gallup research is, three out of four adults cannot name their strengths and they're not using them on the job. So no wonder we have this challenge with engagement and commitment on the job. Every year they roll out new numbers, large numbers of the workforce population is not engaged in their work. Many of us have seen that if we're in the development world, we see that on a regular basis, people don't know what their strengths are and they're not making choices based on them, the managers aren't managing based on strengths. And so you have this conundrum about, “Okay, I not getting to do what I naturally do best on the job, so I'm not as committed.” So strengths matter and are very important. And I had actually written an article, *19 Little Known Reasons Why Your Strengths Matter*, that acts as a recap, what I've just talked about, plus, it adds some other statistics in there and it gives you some tips around as an individual, how to use your strengths more and you can find that article in the show notes and the show notes can be found at pricelessprofessional.com/disc, d-i-s-c, and the DISC is lowercase. And in addition, I didn't know this until recently, I listened to a lot of podcasts and I don't know how I missed this, but if you're on your iPhone and you're listening to this and you're curious about that article that I just mentioned, all you do is you put, click on our cover art, they call it album art, where you see my picture and you see Wake Up Eager Workforce, click on that, it will slide back and there are the show notes right there. So you'll see the link to the article, *19 Little Known Reasons Why Your Strengths Matter*, if you wanted to click on that and you'll see all the show notes there.

Suzie: Okay, so, now, what I want to mention to you, we're going to move on next to more about the tools that I use to help leaders focus on their strengths. I'm going to go into a little bit more information around exactly what is the DISC assessment for those of you who are not familiar with it, but I want to just share with you an offer and that is that, you know, strengths do matter and I have a complimentary consultation. So if you've just heard those statistics and you're thinking about, “Okay, I want to be a manager or I want my managers on my team or I want the teams that I support to do a better job of managing based on strengths,” give me a call and I'll give you a link and we'll do a complimentary consultation. We'll talk about what you're

thinking about, we'll look at some of the tools that I'm aware of, either stuff I do or that other people do that might be a match for you, and it's a phone call, it's complimentary and there's no obligation. But you can contact me, go to pricelessprofessional.com/suzie, s-u-z-i-e, and that's all lower case and there's a form there, you can fill that out, send me a note and we'll schedule some time to talk. Okay?

Suzie: So now let's go into the tools that I use to help leaders focus on and build strengths on their teams. There's the DISC assessment, which I'm going to go into detail about. I also will use DISC with another assessment called Workplace Motivators. So, and the DISC assessment is externally seeing how people behave. And I use a lot of car analogies in my work. So the DISC assessment would be, if you're using a car analogy, how people would describe how you drive, okay, so you're in the car, if you're certain DISC styles, you drive fast, if you are another DISC style, you're very cautious. So it's how you tend to drive, it's not all of you, it is just what people see and how they would describe you. The DISC with the Motivators gives you how people describe you and how you drive, plus it tells you what the motivators, what puts gas in your tank, so the Workplace Motivators is not visible by others, but it really does help people understand, "Okay, these are the things that give me energy, is the things I'm interested in personally and professionally," and if you, your motivators actually drive your behavior. So that is an assessment we'll talk about in I think the next podcast so you can learn more about it. And then the third tool is a combination of the DISC, the Motivators and another assessment called the Acumen. And sticking with my car analogy, the Acumen measures what's under the hood, so it gives you insight into intangible skills, personal skills, competencies, and you can see things that you can't see visibly, like you can with the DISC, and it's not about like putting gas in your car, it's more about how some people are thinking and making decisions. So those are the three tools that I use for hiring and then I'll also use it for coaching and team development.

Suzie: Another tool that can be powerful is to do a team survey and I have a lot of tools about that and articles about that on my website and I'll do a future podcasts around the best way to do a team survey, how to use it as a leader or a trainer or a consultant, so look forward to that.

Suzie: But I chose, let's go back to the DISC assessment first since that's what we're covering today. I chose the DISC assessment over the Birkman Myers Briggs HBDI StrengthFinder assessment, there's all kinds of assessments out there that are behavioral and they're great at, all those are good assessments, but what I found with the DISC is, it was the quickest for people to understand because they, almost everybody likes to read an assessment about themselves, is always interesting, tell me more about me, please, let's talk about me. So we all like that, but the goal is how can I enjoy getting the feedback and then do something with it? So with the DISC, it seemed like the best combination, people can understand the basic premise of it quickly, they tend to not resist their results, most people say, I've done thousands of DISC assessments and I would say 85 percent say, "Okay, that is like me, or pretty much like me," and the people who disagree, they still say, "Well, you know, there's a lot of parts that are like me." So that is important in training and development that people aren't resisting what you're doing. And so DISC is, the DISC assessment helps in that way and plus it's very applicable. You can actually begin using it right away to adapt your style to start understanding, like I did



with Betty, what does Betty need from me, and what am I going to do differently, do some things differently. I must not be my style when I'm interacting with her and I'm going to go towards her and do some things that work for her. And so that's what DISC does. It's very popular. Many people use it. It's a simple and smart way to understand human behavior and it really does help improve communication effectiveness with you, with others, personally and professionally. So it measures a communication style. It tells you a little bit about how someone's going to respond to problems or challenges. You're going to see how they influence others, how they tend to do that. You're going to see what kind of pace they tend to keep and you're going to see how they tend to respond to rules and procedures and it starts to give you a picture of how they're going to interact and what they, what their preferences are, and some of their strengths.

Suzie: The DISC assessment doesn't measure education, experience, values or intelligence. So it's, while it's a really cool tool, sometimes it does get over applied when people don't keep this in mind, you know, it only measures behavior, what people see and there's power in that, but it's not enough power to make a hiring decision around it or it alone or you know, a promotion decision based on style. It's just not enough of a view of a person. That's why I used the other assessments added onto the DISC, the Motivators and the Acumen for the TriMetrix to help get a fuller picture of an individual because the Department of Labor says if you're going to use an assessment to make any kind of decisions for hiring or for development, you want to get at least three views of a person, so the DISC is just one view, it's what people see.

Suzie: So you want at least three views and then when you are using the assessment to make any decisions, make sure it's less than 30 percent of any decision that you make, so you have to, the Department of Labor wants you to make sure you're including experience and intuition and interviews and other things, not just, don't make decisions based on assessments. So I did a video a while back about my what I thought are the top 10 uses for the DISC assessment and I will share that link on the show notes to the video, but I'm going to run through the top 10 uses for the DISC assessment right now, just to give you an idea of how it can be used. So we've talked about strengths, how important it is to use your strengths. We've talked about what the DISC assessment is and how I first learned about it and how it can help people.

Suzie: Now let's look at how you as a leader of an organization or a team or as a trainer or consultant, could potentially use the DISC assessment in your work. So number 10, team building, so you can have the entire team take the DISC assessment, you can create the summary report that shows where everybody is on the DISC style, there's a wheel there that you can use to demonstrate that, it's a nicer visual, people immediately get where the differences are. You, for my case, would see me on one side and you'd see Betty on the other, so it's very clear that we're very different and those differences can either hinder our dialogue or really we can work to help work together, but the team building. And another thing is you, there's a tool that I use called Talent Tracker, and you basically, individuals get a sheet with their graphs on it and they fill it out and they say, "Okay, here's how I add value to the organization, here's how I do want you to communicate with me, here's how I don't want you to communicate with me, here's what I'm going to work on, what are my development opportunities, here's my greatest strengths." So it's a little worksheet that all that information

comes from the assessment, people fill it out and then they share it with each other on a team and have a dialogue and it's so valuable to have a team to be talking about behaviors. So behavior is getting away on a team, when people aren't willing to talk about their behaviors and how they're interacting, then it just becomes an undercurrent on a team, so the DISC just brings it all to light, there's all kinds of cool exercises you can do around that to build the team, with the DISC assessment is just the tool, and all of these assessments are basically tools to facilitate awareness and to facilitate dialogue.

Suzie: So number 10, teambuilding. Number 9 out of the top 10 uses for the DISC assessment is skill building, can use it in leadership, customer service, sales, and help people understand perceptions of others, build their own self-awareness of how they come across to others and you can use it to help them figure out, "Okay, how do I need to adapt my style to this boss, to this client, to this employee?" Number 8, coaching and mentoring. So in one on one conversations, it helps me when I'm coaching, if I better understand another style, how I need to adapt how I'm communicating, helps me be more objective so I don't try to coach them to be like me because we all think our style is the smart way to go. It's natural to own your style, so it just helps me be more objective, helps me appreciate where they are, appreciate, something helps me understand some of their natural tendencies based on their style, helps me tune into their needs, helps make tune into their strengths. If they're talking about a particular goal or problem, sometimes it can be a style problem and it's about overuse of one of their styles. So coaching and mentoring becomes faster, easier, more effective. Number 7, you can use it to activate your own motivators and strengths. So as you better understand what your strengths are, you can do more of them and embrace them more. And number 6, if you can't do the helping us until you know your own, so you need to do number 7 first, and that is understanding how to activate your own strengths, but number 6 is help others activate their own strengths and motivators, we can't give what we don't already have. So once we get good at it, we can get really good at helping others get good at seeing their strengths and helping them use them more. So you can be one of those managers who is 86 percent more effective than managers who don't help others lead based on strengths or based on their strengths. It can help you manage your blind spots. Blind spots, if you think about driving, what's a blind spot in the car? It is something everybody else sees, but your driver and you don't see it. Well, the DISC assessment is perfect for that because it's usually a strength that we're doing too much of. So it can help you manage your blind spots. It can help you look at, laugh at and help others manage their blind spots. That's number 4, so you can help others quickly see it, kind of ties with the coaching and mentoring because you can help friends, colleagues, understand filling their blind spots because maybe you have a strength, like with Betty and I, I had a strength that she didn't have, she had a strength that I didn't necessarily have and we could cover each other. Number 3, facilitate and manage conflict. It makes it so much easier when you understand another person's style and how two people are trying to interact. You can very quickly facilitate a conversation around conflict and help them better understand each other and that makes that a whole lot easier than if you're just trying to have a blank conversation with no tool, like the DISC assessment, talking about differences and similarities. Number 2, increase self-confidence. So as you become aware of your strengths and other's strengths, what you start to see is, "Okay, I'm pretty special the way I am and I'm not going to judge myself for not having a strength over there in that category

because I have these strengths over here,” and I think people sometimes their lack of, a lower confidence, some of it relates to judging their style and judging how they communicate or having in the past because they haven't managed their style, they overused it, having been judged for that, and so it just takes all of that away and can help people increase their self-confidence. And the last out of the top 10 is, increase unconditional love. So when you're looking at the world through the lens of strengths, blind spots, through tools like the DISC and the Workplace Motivators and the Acumen, mostly the DISC is what we're talking about here, you really begin to just feel such appreciation for all the diversity in the world and how much value people who are doing things differently from you add to the picture and it just, the judgment goes away. I have become a better person in my life based on these tools, I'm more understanding, I'm less impatient, I feel loving towards people in a way that I don't think I easily got to before because I would either judge or I was judging myself. So it just is, over time it can become a very powerful tool in that way. So those are my top 10 and again, there's a video length that I will make available to you.

Suzie: So we've talked about the top 10 uses for DISC. We've talked about why strengths matter, we've talked about what the DISC assessment is. And again, I want to just mention here that I do do complimentary consultations. If any of this is of interest to you, there's no obligation, give me a call, we'll talk by phone, we'll figure out if anything of any of this would be a match or not match. And, or like I said, if I have other information that could help you or maybe I have some tools that you could use right now, I'd be happy to share them with you. So you go to, to reach me, there's a form pricelessprofessional.com/Suzie, s-u-z-i-e, and that Suzie is lowercase, you can reach me there or you can just send me a note and if you have questions or anything like that.

Suzie: So now we're going to go to an interview that I did with Sandie Peterson, and she's gonna introduce herself and we'll talk through her background, but she did go through the TTI, which is my vendor who I use for assessments, she went through the TTI Self-Study DISC Certification with me and so she got certified in DISC and she uses it to help teams. So we'll go to that interview now and then we'll be back.

Suzie: Okay, Sandie, I'm so glad you're here, appreciate you dialing in today to talk about you. And why don't we start with, tell me a little bit about you and where you work, what you do, and anything else that you were willing to tell us about you that's interesting and fun.

Sandie: Sure. I'm happy to do that. I am the HR manager and an HR consultant with a CPA and business-consulting firm Malcolm Norton Marsteller Right, which I know is quite a lengthy name, but it's the names of the four partners and we are, have offices in Fort Myers, Florida and Naples as well. I have been in it for..

Sandie: Oh, go ahead.

Suzie: I was gonna say, how long have you been there? You were right there.



Sandie: I've been with them for going onto 14 years.

Suzie: Wow.

Sandie: Yeah. So, yeah, it's, it's been great. Fabulous firm, we have won best places to work for four years in a row, just a tremendous culture and I think a big piece of that does have to do with what, we're talking about the DISC today, but it does talk about delving into that side of it and understanding how we work together, it's totally a team environment and so that's a huge piece of it. My background, I have a BA in Psychology from the University of Missouri in St. Louis and I'm also, I'm an SPHR, which is a Senior Professional in Human Resources and also a SHRM, Society of Human Resource Management, Senior Certified Professional, I'm certified in Myers Briggs as well as in the DISC and also in the Activity Vector Analysis, which was around quite a while ago. So I've been doing HR for 20 years.

Suzie: Awesome. So that's neat that your company is one of the great place to work companies.

Sandie: Yeah, it really is, it's a great place to work. Yeah.

Suzie: And how many employees approximately are there, in that company?

Sandie: We, right now we have 40, during tax season of course as a CPA we bring in a couple seasonal people, and it's great to have those people. But you know, a certified public accounting firm is no longer just tax season anymore, we are busy year round with a variety of things, financial planning and of course the consulting side. We work with a lot of, medical clients, there are quite a few practices that we kind of specialize in, helping guide them through how to be successful and, and that is everything from the financial side to the people side of their business, which is where I got involved. So about 7-8 years ago, I guess, I'm HR, a lot of times people call their CPA because that's who they trust, and so they would call in and say, "You know, what should I do about such and such?" Well, the CPAs know the CPA side of things, not HR. And so, those calls kept being forwarded to me for response and it just seemed like a natural progression to kind of develop this consulting a niche for HR. So I work with many of our small business clients who sometimes they have an HR person, many times they don't because they're smaller and they just need guidance. I, so I do everything from writing policy manuals, to answering those questions, to helping them hire the right people. And then team building too, which is again, where the DISC has a big place. So it's been very helpful.

Suzie: Wow. It sounds like your role there is very exciting and the way it's expanded has to be fulfilling.

Sandie: It is, it's really fun. I'm one of those people who needs constant change and constant challenge. So consulting is always challenging. Because no two days are the same, so that makes it really fun. Yeah.

Suzie: It's a real good fit, it sounds like it, you can hear it in your voice. Well, we're talking today, earlier on I had talked to, on the, on this episode about the power of knowing what your strengths are and that one of those tools that can help people better understand their strengths and figuring out how not to overuse them is the DISC assessment. And I've already gone into an overview of what it is and how it can be used a little bit, but I'd love to go into more detail around it with you since you're using it and since you got certified in it, talk to me a little bit about why you decided to start using that particular assessment because it sounds like you're familiar with other assessments, maybe you use those with it, just tell us a little bit about why you decided to use it, how you found it, a little bit of that.

Sandie: Well, actually kind of fell into the DISC about 20 years ago, at the time I was working with an outplacement firm in St. Louis and back in the 90's, there were a lot of executives who were being downsized and as one of the things they would get with their severance package would be executive secretarial and services, as well as help through the job search process. And so we did everything and there were people there who typed their letters, we went through a lot of things as far as skills assessments and evaluating what next steps they would want to take, interview skills, helping them coach through that, we would record them as they interviewed and they would get that practice, which is really helpful, especially at that point. Well, we were using the DISC to help them understand how to better communicate with the people that they were interviewing with. A lot of times those people are those higher "D" personalities and so we coached them on how to match and communicate well with somebody who was that profile. It was very, very helpful and that was when I became a real believer because I saw how it helped people really connect. So, that was how we used it there. And then I, when I came to my current firm, I found that they were using it as a hiring tool. So I took it when I was going through the hiring process, no surprises, I came out just as I expected I would, but, we use it very much so in finding out how people will fit in specific departments, are departments, you can just see the profiles depending upon what people are doing and how they fit into that profile. So for example, all of the people in the tax department fall into that S and C range. The people in our litigation and mediation departments fall into that stronger D profile. Our front office and our marketing people tend to be I's and S's, and so you could just see how that fit worked. But sometimes when you have strong differences between departments, it can be a challenge to communicate. And so we have used it extensively in helping understand how to talk to each other, and sometimes you know, we think one way and another person thinks another and it can be easy to almost feel offended and think, "Why did they say it that way or what were they thinking?" And when you understand where they're coming from and what their thought process is, it really helps you kind of step back and go, "Oh yeah, they're not doing this to be irritating or anything else along those lines, it really is the way they're processing." When you've got a grasp of that and get that big picture, communication is a wonderful thing and that's how you develop a team, is by understanding each other much better.

Suzie: Oh, that's great. And then let me just jump in regarding the how you use it for hiring. It's just one piece of the puzzle, right? When you're hiring the....

Sandie: Oh absolutely, yes, we use it...



Suzie: Just want to clarify that.

Sandie: Oh yeah. We don't use it just for that. We really use it to find out if they're detail-oriented, how we are going to communicate with them, how we're going to train them, because different people learn differently and so that makes a difference, you know, on how we do that. But no, there's an entire process, this is one piece of the puzzle.

Suzie: Right, okay. Just want to clarify that because that's always something that I'm always telling people because people love DISC, because people gravitate to it and they can see it and it's obvious, just like you said, but sometimes it can get a little too much weight. And that's always what I caution folks about, which is exactly what you're doing. You're heeding that caution.

Sandie: Gotcha.

Suzie: So it sounds like internally it's been a powerful tool to help the different departments figure out how to communicate with each other. And then now it sounds like you're using it with outside teams that are getting their accounting work done through your firm.

Sandie: I am a, I do a fair amount of team development for some of the companies that are a little bit bigger and have budgets and have the thought process to go that far and it's a great way to bring the people together and again, help them understand where they're coming from, how to communicate better. So I've done it with a number of teams and I think the thing that's really important about it is that it can be such a fun process. Sometimes people are a little bit nervous and they think, "I don't want you to get into my head," or, "I'm not going to let you know who I am," or they don't give it any credibility. And it's always so much fun to have them take the assessment and then see the results and you know, almost always you get this, "How do you know that about me?"

Suzie: Oh yeah, the resistance fades away because it's so accurate.

Sandie: It's like, "Whoa, how could, this is right on? How can that possibly be from just this limited amount of information that I gave you? How does that all come together?" And then the other thing that's interesting too is that as you explained it to the entire group and they start to understand all the different components of each of the different letters, we'll call them...

Suzie: Yup.

Sandie: They get really good at saying, "Oh yeah, and so and so is this," and you know, they start to put all those pieces together and then you can do a lot of fun activities to just draw them into it. And so I love it just because it's a fun process and it's a real, it just brings a great awareness to them, you know, as to how they can work better together.



Suzie: Isn't it awesome how quickly people get it too? Like you said, very quickly they'll say, "Oh this style does this." And that's one of the reasons I like it is, it's people can grasp it very quickly, start using it almost immediately.

Sandie: Oh yeah. And the more you use it, of course the easier it is. Then you can be in just about any party or any room and you and you're going, "Oh, well they're a whatever," you know, not that you want to stereotype people, but you start to pick up on those things really quickly and I think it's helpful when you're in those situations to help you know how to interact with people because many of us aren't super comfortable with getting to know new people, and I think it's a great tool to help people increase that comfort level.

Suzie: Yeah. They start to understand where people are coming from and what their preferences are and how to communicate with them. Yep, that is a good point about if you're uncomfortable in crowds or in groups; this is a tool that can help you with that too.

Sandie: Definitely. And just last week I had the opportunity; I was working with a supervisor and employee who were having some struggles. They just, they were not sure if they really trusted each other and it came down to communication in a very big way. And so they have each taken the DISC profile and then I sat down with them and we actually went through each dimension and compared them and we talked about this is what's important to this person and this is what's important to the other and now you can see, you know, why they're looking for this from you and something that maybe you don't put that high on your priority list, but it's incredibly important to them. And it was great to just kind of see the light bulbs go off. And I really felt that we made a lot of progress in what was becoming a very tense situation. And it was great to get feedback after the fact to say thank you, and that really did help me a lot. So that's encouraging too. It's always nice to know that you're helping people through that process.

Suzie: And it sounds like it helped them understand each other so much better, so much more quickly than just conversation. It's like, to me, I see the assessments is just a tool to focus and get information a lot more quickly than if you had had 10 conversations.

Sandie: Right, right. Yeah. It allowed us to just get right to the heart of the matter, really. They had that visual, you know, they could look at their graph and I could compare them and say, "You know, here's where you're high, here's where you're low. Do you see why that could be a little bit of an issue." And then we would talk about the components, each of those pieces. So it worked really, really well.

Suzie: Congratulations. That's good. That's real good. So that was an example. It was fun to see them reduce some of their tension with each other and then get a plan to, you know, how they can kind of interact in a different way, that works. So when you use this with teams, do you have everybody on the team take it? Do they get the report in advance? How do you do that?

Sandie: You know, I prefer not to give them their report in advance, mainly because I want to start with an introduction and help them get an overview and that's the, we play a little game. "So what do you think you are?"

Suzie: Ah...perfect.

Sandie: What do you think the person next to you is?

Suzie: You give them the descriptions and then have them guess? Okay.

Sandie: Exactly, and right away, of course that engages them, because, game playing in many ways that then you find out if they understood what you said based on whether they're putting people in the right groups, very seldom are people surprised? They can peg people pretty quickly once they understand what it all stands for. So that's really fun in that way. It's a great tool. I've done everything from just a quick two hour to half a day workshops. It just depends on how much time they have and how big of a group it is. But you can do a lot of fun things to get people engaged and understand the DISC.

Suzie: Yeah. And put it into place. So it actually makes a difference.

Sandie: Right.

Suzie: That's wonderful. Yeah. So now you were using the DISC earlier on in your career and then you and I met online, because you were looking at getting certified and I was curious about what you thought of that you, you did a self-study certification through the vendor that I use and through some tools that I shared with you through my vendor. What did you think about the DISC certification? Do you think it was worth doing? How hard was it? Why did you do it? Just kind of a little bit about getting certified, how it helped you or if it, if it hasn't helped you, just honestly what your take is on that.

Sandie: Sure. Well, I think that there's always a certain credibility that goes along with the certification that shows that you have studied this, that you're not just picking up an instrument and guessing, but that you have studied it and I'm a student at heart and I've worked in an environment and that really values education and being an expert in an area, so that was really one of the big motivators. I've used it for a long time and understood it, but the self-study process really brought me to a deeper understanding, you know, I was very focused as I prepared to take the exam and read through all the study materials and found them very helpful. I really did. So I learned in that process as well. The exam was not difficult. I probably over studied a little bit, but I would rather do that and make sure that I passed.

Suzie: Right, than go to I take it and not do well, no. Good for you.

Sandie: You're never sure exactly what it's gonna look like and so, but that was all okay. And then the, and then I do feel good about having that certification behind my name and saying I've

made the effort to become somewhat of an expert in this area and feel comfortable sharing my insights too if I'm looking at people's profiles and just kind of guiding them through the process, understanding what the instrument's saying and you know, that interpretation, which I think, you know, they probably wouldn't, I just wouldn't be able to do it as well, I guess if I didn't have that behind me.

Suzie: That extra time you did the self-study and the research and reading and learning and preparing pays off, doesn't it?

Sandie: It really does. It really does.

Suzie: And how long? I can't remember what your timeframe was. It seems like you move through it pretty quickly once you get to self-study material. Our deal is you, you take it when you're ready and it's an online exam, but I can't remember. What, did it take you three months or something?

Sandie: I don't think so.

Suzie: I don't think it was very long.

Sandie: I'm a pretty self-motivated person, when I decided that that's what I was going to do, that's what I did.

Suzie: Did it maybe in a month, was it that quick?

Sandie: I, it probably was that quick, but I have a huge advantage in that I had been using the instrument for quite a while and so this was really just providing some more in depth background for me. I definitely knew what a D, I, S, and C, were and what they stood for and how they interacted with each other. So I did come in with a bit of an advantage that having back background.

Suzie: Yup. Yup.

Sandie: So yeah, I did it quickly.

Suzie: And the letters, for those of you who aren't familiar with this DISC certification through the organization that I work with is a Certified Professional Behavioral Analyst, is a certification that Sandie has and that I have and it's a CPBA, just for information sake. And I tell you one other thing, I'll just throw in here as a tip if anybody is doing DISC certification, Sandie was already familiar with the letters that she just said and with the tool and had used it, but a great way to get up to speed more quickly is to sample people. So I give people the opportunity to use sample assessments and to sample your husband, anybody that I, when I first got certified, when I was working on this, if anybody was breathing around me, I asked him to take the DISC assessment because I wasn't familiar with it and it's, you know, that helped register it for me,

seeing the assessment and seeing the styles, it made it all very real and grounded kind of the information. So that's another, little tip around that on how to be ready for something like that, is having people you know, because you know how they act and when you interact with them every day and then when you see the assessment, it's kinda like being a student in one of your classes. Sandie, have you ever had anybody, so far, resist the results or not like them or be very defensive? Have you had any of that?

Sandie: I haven't, I've had some people a little bit resistant before taking the assessment, as I mentioned earlier, "You're not going to get into my head." But right now I have not had, I have not had anyone say, "Hey, this is not me."

Suzie: Yeah. Me neither. not at all. And you don't.

Sandie: Not at all, and you know, one of the things that I love is, of course, you know, for years I used the paper book and the soft score ball and then I would write my own feedback report and I just love now that they can take it online and it just pulls everything together and it's just, it's a beautiful report, it addresses so many things that I could not have taken care of in my report that I was giving. So much more in depth than what I was doing in the past. And the other thing that's great when you are working with a team, is the team wheel that kind of plops everybody into this wheel and the visuals are just always so helpful to people, to get it. As a matter of fact, I recently was working with one company and everybody was to the one side of the wheel.

Suzie: Were they a bunch of D's and I's?

Sandie: Are we missing anything? No, actually they were all C's and S's.

Suzie: Oh, they were on the other side. Okay. Gotcha.

Sandie: And so it was really interesting to have that interaction and based on their industry, it really, it kind of made sense. But at the same time we were looking for some leaders and that kind of thing. And it was just funny, we all had to laugh about it. Yeah.

Suzie: So those of you who are listening, who have not seen the DISC wheel, it's a wheel that's very colorful and there's four styles, D, I, S, C and the D and the I, the S and the C are around the wheel. And then you plot people based on how strong each one of their areas were, because we are usually a combination of the styles. And so what, and when you do a whole team, you can see where each person is on the wheel, which will give you an indication of, you know, if they are a D and an I or they are an S and an I, or you know, so you, and apparently this team was all S's and C's, which is the, "Think before you talk," kind of style, more conservative, analytical, likes to do things one at a time, accuracy. So that was interesting that they were all on that side of the wheel.

Sandie: Yeah, it was.

Suzie: And it helped them as a team to see it and have some discussions around, you know, how is that a strength and how is that a potential opportunity for us, kind of thing. Do they have those kinds of conversations?

Sandie: Absolutely. And I'm actually working with that company on some strategic planning and understanding some of the things that they need to go forward. All of the dimensions are important and if everybody is the same then we don't necessarily need everybody, you know, that's why we are all different and unique individuals, but you need to have that balance and so it was a great tool to help them understand that. And then, now to go forward, moving, knowing some of the things that we're looking for that we're missing.

Suzie: Yeah. Oh, that's really good. That's really good. So you have shared lots of good information and we've done it in a very quick order. I think my last question, and maybe we've already covered some practical tips, but didn't know if you had any practical tips around using the DISC, things that you like to do. You shared what about the exercise and having people guess their style, guess their neighbor style, which helps them get used to it and also tells you how much they've taken in, what you just shared. What are some other tips that you can think of? I think you said you like to give the assessment, that they have taken it in advance and give it to them in the class. Other things you can think of that would help people who are trainers and facilitators who are listening to this.

Sandie: I think the main thing is to help people feel comfortable and understand that there aren't rights and wrongs. That it has to do with preferences and the way we think and the way we process and we have the ability to adjust what we are in a certain dimension to match, not to mimic, not to be a copier, but to bring yourself closer to where that individual communicates, so that you communicate better. I always say communication is a two way street, but sometimes you have to be the person to move a little closer to what the other person is comfortable, in order for them to start moving to you. And so I think it is just a great, great tool to use in that regard because if I encounter somebody who is quite different from the person that I am, if I understand the things that they're looking for, then I can adjust the way I communicate to them so that they hear me and understand what I'm trying to say.

Suzie: Well said. That's awesome.

Sandie: Thank you.

Suzie: So if anybody is listening, now if somebody wanted to reach out to you to see if you could maybe do something with their team, is that something you do or do you always do it through your company? Could they contact you directly for a team building session?

Sandie: They would contact me through my company.



Suzie: Okay. So would it be okay to give that information? If somebody is listening and they're saying, "Well, I'd like to ask her some questions, or I might want to have Sandie come and do a team thing for me." How would they reach you, Sandie?

Sandie: The easiest way, I'm actually going to go ahead and give you my work phone number, if that's okay?

Suzie: Okay, great. And I'll put it in the show notes. There'll be shown notes for this. And I'll list it there as well.

Sandie: Perfect. All right. The name of the company is quite lengthy, so that's why I thought it would be easiest to give you my phone number. The phone number is, area code 2-3-9.

Suzie: Okay.

Sandine: 4-3-3-5-5-5-4

Suzie: 2-3-9-4-3-3-5-5-5-4

Sandie: Correct.

Suzie: Do you have any social media that you do? Do you do LinkedIn or anything?

Sandie: I do, you can find me on Sandie Peterson at LinkedIn.

Suzie: And then how do you spell Sandie on LinkedIn?

Sandie: It's S-A-N-D-I-E

Suzie: Okay, that's what I thought. And then Peterson, P-E-T-E-R-S-O-N.

Sandie: Correct.

Suzie: Okay, great. Well thank you Sandie. You have been awesome. This has been very helpful. I appreciate everything that you shared. I'm glad we've gotten to know each other, that we found each other online and that you're involved in this and it sounds like you're doing real good work with teams.

Sandie: Well, thank you. You've been very helpful as well. I truly appreciate all the insights you've given me, so thank you.

Suzie: We're all in this together, aren't we?

Sandie: We sure are.



Suzie: Okay. I hope you enjoyed that interview with Sandie. And if you have any interest in DISC certification, I have a self-pace classes, a classroom or virtual for groups of trainers and there's a link for that on the show notes, pricelessprofessional.com/disc, D-I-S-C, or you can actually move that little cover art on your iPhone and click on the link and it'll be there for the show notes and you can see the link about certifications.

Suzie: So as we go to close today, I want to just review with you about this podcast, things I'm going to cover. So the podcast Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast came about because I was a journalism major in college, I love anything to do with creation and interviewing and so what I ended up doing when I got out of college was I went straight to work for a corporation in a Human Resources, Operations, Community Service type things. And that's where my career took me and the Operations and Human Resource Training world. But I always watch and think, "Oh, I could have been an interviewer," so I'm not sure, you know, when I see the news and such. So I'm not sure that my skills are really up to snuff like the famous people on TV. But I have a passion for knowledge and knowing and getting to know people and understanding what they're doing. And I have a passion for Wake Up Eager, which is this thought that if we do these certain things or this idea of, if we do these certain things, and I've listed five habits, that if we do those things as leaders in our world, we will be a Wake Up Eager Leader. And so that's how this all came together. And so my love for interviewing, my interest in sharing knowledge, creating content and my interest in contributing to the world in a way that has to do with the workforce and has to do with this idea of helping people enjoy their life and be a good fit for their job and the Wake Up Eager.

Suzie: So there's going to be five content focuses of this podcast. There'll be a focus around what tools can we do that helps bring out the best in others. And that's one of the Wake Up Eager Habits; call it Activate Greatness, so how do we bring out the best in ourselves and in others? So we'll look at tools, and this podcast today is a bit like about that topic. The second topic is going to be around Growing Trust, that's one of the Wake Up Eager Habits. If leaders are good at growing trust they're gonna have a stronger workforce. We're going to talk about why trust is crucial to growth and how to build it in your company and in your relationships. So that'll be a focus. Employee selection is important to a Wake Up Eager Workforce and a Wake Up Eager Leader because you need to have the right people in the right jobs, and so one of the Wake Up Eager Habits is Evaluate Job Fit, so I've written a book, *How to Hire Superior Performers*, around that topic and I do workshops and talks around that. I'm very passionate about people knowing how to enter you for fit and finding the right people on the job. So we'll talk about employee selection. We'll talk about tools and tips for hiring the right people and putting them in the right seats so that you can have Wake Up Eager Workforce because that's the starting point usually, big part of it. We'll talk about the business of training, so I'm going to focus on resources and tools for talent development, so I'll be sharing them here. I'm very interested in ASTD, which is American Society of Training Development, which they just changed it, it's Association Training Development, is the new title now. And I'm involved in the Southeast Association of Facilitators, so I'll be on the hunt for tools and resources and people to interview around areas that can just improve talent development that will be helpful to you, the leader or the trainer, or the consultant. And then lastly, the fifth topic is going to be around



Training Effectiveness, so how do I make sure when I am taking the time to develop my talent that the work I do sticks, and so return on investment and how do I make sure that happens and how do I train and develop in a way that works long term. So I'll be doing all of that through expert interviews, sharing my experiences, sharing and revealing what I do and I've learned in my 10 years in business as an Independent Consultant and all attend conferences, that's the goal, and interview people there.

Suzie: So that's a little bit of what and why around the Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast and if you're interested in understanding more about the Wake Up Eager Habits, I'll have a link for that on the show notes. If you want to stay in touch via Twitter, I'm @wakeupeager on Twitter, on Facebook, I also have a page Wake Up Eager, and on LinkedIn you can look me up as Suzie Price, S-U-Z-I-E P-R-I-C-E. So don't forget if you want to reach out to me to send a note or do a complimentary consultation or just talk by email, it's pricelessprofessional.com/suzie, S-U-Z-I-E. And the show notes, pricelessprofessional.com/disc, D-I-S-C, all of that is lower case. And our next topic is going to be around the motivators, what is workplace motivators, the assessment? How can it be used? So I am going to be interviewing an expert, a colleague of mine, and so I'll be sharing that in the next episode. I look forward to our future programs and I really, really appreciate you being here today. So let's go out and have a great day and we'll talk soon. Take care.

Outro: This episode of the Wakeup Eager Workforce Podcast was brought to you by Priceless Professional Development. Thank you for tuning in. If you enjoyed today's show, head over to pricelessprofessional.com to gain access to more professional development resources.