

THE DiSC TEST AS A PREDICTOR OF CHURCH PLANTER SUCCESS

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CHAPTER ONE
THE IMPORTANCE OF CAREFUL LEAD PLANTER
SELECTION

The Issue

Lead planters of new churches experience various levels of ministry success and satisfaction based on multiple factors, including how well suited they are to the specific church planting environment of North America¹.

Until the work of C. Peter Wagner and the Charles Fuller Institute in the 1980s, church planting in the United States did not have a high profile within the evangelical community. Those selecting church planters had a limited pool of leaders from which to draw. Many church planting organizations had limited success, with new churches reaching their apex with 75 to 100 members. With the increasing popularity of church planting, however, more and more potential planters were drawn to consider the possibility of planting a new church. While this was a positive turn of events for those overseeing the establishment of new churches, it also created an ongoing problem. With an expanded pool of candidates, how could it be determined which potential planters would be the most successful in planting a new church?

This study will assist church planting supervisors and potential church planters in determining their aptitude for church planting. The project surveyed practicing church

¹ Paul S Williams, *Leadership and the Church Planter*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Cincinnati Bible Seminary, 1990.

planters who completed an assessment through the Church Planting Assessment Center, to determine any correlation between the size and per capita giving of the new church and the church planter's personality profile on the Personal Profile System DiSC 2800 test.

The project participants were also retested with the DiSC to see what changes, if any, have occurred since the time of initial assessment for church planting, and what implications that might have for other church planters.

As a result the Church Planting Assessment Center will be able to better direct participants toward a course of action to increase effectiveness in ministry and inform sponsoring agencies of a candidate's likely effectiveness as a lead church planter.

The First Aspect Of The Study - Securing Participants

Lead church planters in North America are critically important in the growth and development of a new church. A 2008 study conducted by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research and the Leadership Network determined that senior pastors were among the most important factors in drawing people to a church and the decision to remain at that church. "What first attracted attenders were the worship style, the senior pastor, and the church's reputation. These same factors also influenced long-term attendance.²" Identifying individuals who will be effective leaders in growing churches is critical to the growth and health of new churches.

In order to identify leaders likely to be effective in a new church, the researcher worked with the Church Planting Assessment Center (CPAC) to jointly approach all lead

² Hartford Institute for Religion Research, "People Who Attend America's Megachurches"; available from <http://hrr.hartsem.edu/>; Internet; accessed June 9, 2009.

church planters who completed their evaluation through CPAC between 1992 and 2007 to request their participation in this study. Only lead church planters who remained in the churches they planted through at least the third anniversary of the church were sought. Every attempt was made to enroll at least 50 church planters. CPAC personnel estimated that between 50 and 75 of those assessed between 1992 and 2007 fit the criteria for the study.

The researcher worked with CPAC to secure the highest number of qualifying participants who could be a part of the study.

The Second Aspect of the Study - Church Attendance and Giving

The researcher determined the success of the church planted by each study participant. Success was measured by attendance and per capita giving of the church at the time of its third anniversary. These are the two most significant indicators of church health as measured by church planting ministries, church planting churches, and denominational church planting departments.

In 1984, Rick Warren, speaking at the Charles E Fuller Institute "How To Plant A Church Seminar," stated that attendance and per capita giving were the key markers for success being used by Saddleback Valley Community Church when evaluating their church plants. At the same event the Texas director of church planting for the Southern Baptist Convention indicated that his organization was also using those two criteria. At the same event, Carl George, of the Fuller Institute, affirmed that per capita giving had been added to the attendance marker of success in several denominations, since self-

support was a key indicator of long-term viability for a new church.³ The third anniversary was selected because within Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, the primary group considered in this study, the third anniversary is the year in which most churches become financially independent from their sponsoring entities. According to Dr. Tom Jones, the Managing Director of the largest Christian Church planting agency, Stadia Church Planting, their ministry has had this approach to financial independence since 2005. The second largest Christian Church planting organization, Orchard Group, Inc., has had this timeline for all suburban and most urban plants since 2000. When asked at the Church Planting Executives Retreat in September 2010, 80 percent of the 16 agencies represented also marked the third anniversary as the year for financial independence.

The researcher requested and tabulated church documentation indicating average total weekend attendance and total per capita giving to all fund accounts of the church.

The Third Aspect of the Study - Comparing DiSC Scores With Attendance and Giving

The researcher compared DiSC scores completed at the time of assessment with current church attendance and per capita giving. Results were tabulated, comparing new church growth and per capita giving with specific DiSC profiles.

³ *"How To Plant A Church" Seminar Handbook, "How To Plant A Church" Seminar*, Charles E. Fuller Institute, (Pasadena, California, 1984.)

The Fourth Aspect of the Study - Securing Current DiSC Scores

The researcher had new DiSC tests completed for 19 of the 50 participants. The test scores were very similar or identical to those completed at the time of assessment, indicating no significant change in leadership style since the launch of the new church.

Delimitations - What The Study Did Not Include

The research surveyed only lead church planters who were qualified through the Church Planting Assessment Center and subsequently planted a church within an evangelical denomination or as an independent evangelical church. The congregations were between three and eighteen years of age. This study did not survey ministers of previously existing congregations.

This study did not survey church planters of Roman Catholic churches, Mainline Protestant churches, or religious congregations of any other non-evangelical affiliation. This research did not survey ministers in associate ministry positions within new churches, nor did it survey spouses of ministers in any church planting position.

Success was exclusively determined by total weekend worship attendance and per capita giving to all fund accounts of the church. This study did not determine success through quality of relationships, satisfaction of attendees, or any other evaluative data.

This study did not control for other life experiences related to the church planting experience. Beyond discovering results of the DiSC test, the study did not consider any other relevant variables related to the senior minister's life or personality that might impact ministry success.

This study did not control for variations in outside funding for new churches, nor consider the sources of funding or the length of funding.

Beyond the requirement that all churches were planted in North America, this study did not control for any other variations based on location of the new church, such as whether the church was in a rural, suburban or urban location. It also did not control for the socio-economic environment in which the church was planted. This study did not control for variations based on numbers of professional or support staff in the new churches surveyed.

Definition of Terms

Church Planting refers to the process of starting and bringing a Christian congregation to financial self-support and independent governance.

Church Planting Assessment Center refers to the corporation created by Orchard Group, Inc. to qualify candidates for church planting ministry positions. The Assessment Center is now an independent corporation, serving Orchard Group, Inc., Stadia Church Planting, and other church planting entities.

Daughter Church Plant refers to a church that is begun with a nucleus of members from one or more existing congregations.

Evangelical Churches are Christian congregations that focus on the need for personal conversion, consider the Bible inspired by God and authoritative as a rule of faith and practice, that Christ is both divine and messiah, as indicated in Matthew 16:18, and consider belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as essential to Christian faith.

Lead Church Planters are ordained ministers serving as team leaders of new churches, most often begun with a multiple staff.

Parachute Drop refers to a new church that is begun without a nucleus of believers from an existing congregation or congregations.

Personal Profile System DiSC Test refers to the personality test established in 1972 by Carlson Learning Systems (now Inscape Publishing) and based on the work of William Moulton Marston.

Restoration Movement is the religious movement established in the 19th century through the work of such leaders as Barton W. Stone, Alexander Campbell, and Thomas Campbell. Churches affiliated with the movement are generally called “Church of Christ” or “Christian Church.” They are also collectively referred to as "independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ" and as the "Christian Church movement."

Success in ministry is determined by weekend total worship service attendance and weekly per capita contributions to all fund accounts of the church at the anniversary on which the church reached one or three years of age.

Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that the new church had only one individual serving as the lead church planter. It assumed that all lead church planters were ordained by an official body as determined by their denomination or church.

The study assumed lead church planters subscribed to the doctrines of their specific congregations and/or denominations. This study assumed that factors not substantially addressed in this study, including project funding, project oversight, population receptivity, project plan, church location, and other factors contribute to overall success in church planting ministry. This study limited itself to identifying attendance and per capita giving of the church.

The Organization and Remainder of the Study

The ministers who were surveyed and studied for this project were lead church planting ministers of new churches planted in North America between 1992 and 2007.

The participants successfully completed an assessment through the Church Planting Assessment Center between the years 1992 and 2007. The congregations served by project participants were no older than eighteen years of age, and no younger than three years of age. The project participants reflected the overall demographic profile of those completing the Church Planting Assessment Center process. Therefore 96 percent of the participants were church planters from within the independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ. The remaining subjects were church planters from independent evangelical congregations. There were no church planters from mainline Protestant denominations, nor any church planters from the Roman Catholic Church. All of the church planters were natives of North America.

Since its beginning in 1992, the Church Planting Assessment Center has conducted no studies among those who have completed its four-day assessment of potential church planters. As an affiliate of Orchard Group, Inc. and Stadia Church Planting, the Church Planting Assessment Center (CPAC) granted permission for the project and approved the involvement of CPAC personnel in the project. CPAC also agreed in principle to participate in any subsequent publication of the results of this ministry project. Final approval of the project did not necessitate board approval of the Church Planting Assessment Center or the Board of Directors of Orchard Group, Inc., or the Board of Directors of the Provision Ministry Group, the parent organization of Stadia Church Planting.

Importance of the Project
To The Ministry Context

Previous research has indicated a direct correlation between particular personality types and church planting success.⁴ Utilizing the DiSC profile, individuals with a high Dominant personality or a high Influencing personality planted significantly larger congregations than those with high Steadiness or high Competency personalities.

Additional work done by Dr. Charles Riddley at Indiana University indicated thirteen critical areas of ministry function for the typical North American church planting lead minister, with five factors considered to be non-negotiables for church planters. The five "knockout factors" included the following: visionizing capacity; intrinsic motivation; the ability to relate well to the unchurched; the ability to motivate others to become involved in the new church; and the cooperativeness of a spouse.⁵

While both the results of the DiSC test and the Riddley "knockout factors" have become standard screening tools in church planting, there are many other factors that impact church planting effectiveness. The DiSC test does not screen for these factors, including maturational level, relational or emotional intelligence, or spiritual maturity. The test only identifies vocational functioning preferences. The Riddley "knockout factors" show corporate skills and give some indication of maturational level and relational intelligence, but show nothing of one's spiritual maturity.⁶

⁴ Charles Riddley, *How To Select Church Planters - A Self-Study Manual*. (Pasadena, CA. Fuller Evangelistic Association, 1988.)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

This project will help churches, church planters, church planting assessors, and church planting associations find greater predictive effectiveness in church planting staff selection, primarily through identifying what DiSC classic patterns are the most effective for the lead pastor of a new church. It will also assist church planting overseers in matching potential church planters with the best new church environments for their personality types.

In terms of attendance and per capita giving, this project will help potential church planters compare their own personality types with others who have been in similar church planting roles within the past 18 years. The information will assist them in seeking out mentors and coaches with similar perspectives in ministry. Those individuals should be able to provide valuable insight about how church planting might be approached in their own environments. It will also guide them to other practitioners with similar personality types so that best practices can be compared and adopted.

By comparing their own personality profiles with those of church planters in the study, this project should help church planting candidates assess their own potential as senior pastors of new churches in North America. It should also assist them in determining the types of new church environments in which they are most likely to thrive as pastors. Some will do better in mother/daughter plants, while others will do better in "parachute drop" church plants.

Importance of the Project To The Researcher

As a church planting practitioner, the researcher is focused on the establishment of successful new churches with staff leaders who are deeply satisfied in their ministries. With each successful and effective church plant the environment is set for strong fund raising and recruiting. It also helps establish a strong church planting culture within the ministry of Orchard Group, and creates an ongoing synergy helpful in planting thriving new churches in every region. It also focuses resources on the best church planting opportunities.

It has already been determined that after the blessings of God, the choice of the lead church planter is the single most important factor in the effectiveness of a new church.⁷ Every new finding that better enables the researcher in the selection of lead church planters has a great impact on the continued establishment of healthy churches.

Importance of the Project To The Church At Large

Healthy new churches create healthy denominations and fellowships and growing church planting movements. It is assumed the church of Christ is to be a growing body. This project should impact healthy church growth at a seminal level.

The project will assist church planting ministries by encouraging careful staff recruitment, education, selection, coaching and mentoring. It will help place pastors in environments most conducive for their giftedness, which should be helpful to the church at large.

⁷ Tom Jones, ed. *Church Planting from the Ground Up*. (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2004), 135.

CHAPTER TWO
THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF
CHURCH PLANTER SELECTION

In the gospels Jesus was quite specific in his choice of the twelve disciples. Each gospel contains stories of individual men who were carefully selected to be among the twelve disciples. Luke 6:13 speaks of choosing 12 from among his disciples, and designating them as apostles, calling them (*kaloumenos*) to a particular rank⁸. It is clear from this passage that Jesus had many disciples, but 12 were chosen for a more specialized task. The specific reasons for the choice of the 12 are not given in scripture. Full lists of the 12 are in Matthew 10: 1-5, Mark 3: 13-19, and Luke 6: 12-16. John 1: 35-50 speaks of the specific selection of Peter, Andrew, Philip, and Nathaniel.

The personalities of a number of the disciples remains a mystery, since little more than their names are mentioned in scripture. In other situations, however, there is an abundance of information about the personalities of specific disciples.

Peter's natural impulsiveness was noted in Matthew 14:28 when Jesus walked on the water and the disciples were terrified.⁹ Upon hearing Jesus tell them he was the one walking on the water and calling on them to take courage, Peter's first response was to ask Jesus to tell him to walk on the water, an apparently impulsive response.

⁸ Colin Brown, Ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1967) 274.

⁹ Matthew 14: 28, *Holy Bible, New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: International Bible Society and Zondervan, 1984.)

In Matthew 17: 1-6, Peter, James and John went to the top of the mountain with Jesus where Jesus was transfigured and Moses and Elijah appeared.¹⁰ In the midst of such a momentous occasion, when silence would have been appropriate, Peter spoke and suggested building three shelters. God spoke aloud and told Peter it was time to listen rather than speak.

When the authorities came to the garden to take Jesus away, Peter took his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. If Peter was planning on resorting to violence, Malchus would not have been a well chosen target.¹¹ The high priest himself would have been a better choice. These immediate and impulsive responses would have been no surprise to Jesus. On the first day Jesus met Peter and Andrew and invited them to follow him, immediately they left their fishing nets and followed him. There had been no hesitancy. Peter's tendency to make quick decisions had already made itself known.¹²

Peter's devotion to Jesus was noted in John 13:9, when Peter asked Jesus if he was going to wash Peter's feet. When Jesus told him that Peter would have no part with him unless he allowed Jesus to wash his feet, Peter responded, "Then, Lord, not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"¹³ He again showed great devotion in John 6:68-69 when great numbers of followers left after Jesus' sermon on the bread of life.¹⁴ When the disciples were asked if they would also leave, it was Peter who answered and said he

¹⁰ Matthew 17: 1-6.

¹¹ John 18: 10.

¹² Mark 1: 16-18.

¹³ John 13: 6-9.

¹⁴ John 6: 68-69.

knew Jesus was the holy one of God, the one with words of eternal life. Peter's extraordinary influence in the early church is very apparent in the first 12 chapters of Acts. He is mentioned a total of 56 times in those 12 chapters.

From knowledge of the DiSC test, the researcher would infer that if Peter had taken the exam he would have scored with a high Dominant and high Influencing personality. According to the DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800, people with a high Dominant personality prefer causing action, getting immediate results, accepting challenges, solving problems, and making quick decisions.¹⁵ People with a high Influencing personality like to participate in a group, are articulate, popular, enthusiastic, and impulsive. All are accurate descriptions of Peter.

Scripture does not indicate whether Peter was more or less mature than the rest of the disciples, yet he was chosen by Jesus to be the first apostle to preach the Gospel.¹⁶ That decision may show Jesus' awareness of the importance of placing individuals with certain personalities in positions that would make the best use of their personality traits.

Peter was one of three in Jesus' inner circle, named first in every list of the apostles. The brothers James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were the other two members of that triumvirate. They also showed the ambition that was present in Peter's personality. In Mark 10:37, they asked to sit at the right and left hand of Jesus in glory.¹⁷ Jesus' reply indicated their ambition had been duly noted.

¹⁵ DiSC Classic Personal Profile System (Inscape Publishing, 2001), 7.

¹⁶ Matthew 16: 13-20.

¹⁷ Mark 10:37.

In his gospel John referred to himself as the “disciple whom Jesus loved.”¹⁸ His epistles have at least 25 references to love, none more powerful than I John 4: 7-11.¹⁹ In John 19:26 we find that Jesus entrusted him with the care of Mary after Jesus departed. From knowledge of the DiSC test, the researcher would infer that if John had taken the exam he would have scored with a high Steadiness personality. According to the DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800, people with a Steadiness personality tend to perform in a consistent, predictable manner. They demonstrate patience, are good listeners, and create stable harmonious work environments.²⁰ People with a Steadiness personality focus more on relationships than results. John's personality complemented Peter's, allowing a synergy to develop within the inner circle of Jesus' disciples.

Outside of the inner three, the remaining disciples also exhibited specific personality traits that were helpful in the group environment. Thomas showed great commitment to Christ on the occasion of the death of Lazarus. Even though he expected to die if he accompanied Jesus into Judea, he was willing to do so as long as he was in the company of Jesus.²¹ Later, in the 14th chapter of John, Jesus was explaining to all of the disciples that he was going to leave and return in the form of the Holy Spirit. The disciples were confused, but Thomas was the first to speak, telling Jesus that he had no

¹⁸ John 13:23.

¹⁹ I John 4: 7-11.

²⁰ DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800 (Inscape Publishing, 2001), 7.

²¹ John 11:16.

idea what Jesus was saying. Jesus replied with a beautiful statement in which he told the disciples he was the way, the truth, and the life.²²

Later on, after the death of Jesus, Thomas was nowhere to be found. The rest of the disciples sought him out and told him Jesus had been raised from the dead. Thomas doubted. Still, a few days later he returned to his friends and met the risen Lord. He fell at Jesus' feet and cried out, "My lord and my God." It was the first time scripture records Jesus being called lord and God.²³

From knowledge of the DiSC test, the researcher would infer that if Thomas had taken the exam he would have scored with a high Dominant and high Conscientiousness personality. People with high Dominance make quick decisions and accept challenges, both readily apparent in John 11. People with high Conscientiousness think analytically, weighing pros and cons. They check for accuracy and analyze performance critically. They are very formal and structured, with a forceful and blunt style. They are not very forthcoming in personal and emotional matters. Those elements are consistent with Thomas' response in John 14 and John 20.²⁴

Judas was the disciple who handled the finances. From knowledge of the DiSC test, the researcher would infer Judas would have scored with high Conscientiousness on the test. People with high Conscientiousness think analytically and check for accuracy. They also feel inferior to what they perceive as an antagonistic force, which frequently causes them to be critical and conflicted with their environment. That was certainly the

²² John 14: 1-7.

²³ John 20: 24-29.

²⁴ DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800 (Inscape Publishing, 2001), 7.

case with Judas.²⁵ All these serve as examples of Jesus' awareness of the value of having a variety of personalities among those who would get the church underway. Choosing one to care for his mother and another to preach the first Gospel message are an indication of his understanding that some personalities accomplish certain tasks more effectively than others.

Awareness of different personality types and their value in the church continues throughout the remainder of the New Testament.

In the sixth chapter of Acts the apostles identified a need for individuals who would make sure widows received food. They chose seven individuals who were, "full of the Spirit and wisdom." Stephen, the first of the seven mentioned by Luke, was described as being, "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit."²⁶ It can be assumed that all seven were not only chosen because they were filled with the Holy Spirit and had faith and wisdom, but also because of their personalities. From the researcher's knowledge of the DiSC test, those who could be trusted to care for widows and orphans would probably be individuals who would score with high Steadiness on the test.²⁷ Individuals with high Steadiness are other-focused, prefer interacting in small groups, and are often excellent caregivers for others.

In his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul wrote of the need for unity. He wrote of the church as the body of Christ and indicated that every part of the body of Christ performs for the good of the whole. His call was for unity in Christ, not

²⁵ Matthew 26: 14-16.

²⁶ Acts 6: 1-6.

²⁷ DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800 (Inscape Publishing, 2001), 7.

uniformity in Christ.²⁸ “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.”²⁹

Paul illustratively showed various gifts people have received through the Spirit, including the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, discernment, speaking in tongues, and interpreting tongues.³⁰ The list began with gifts particularly prized by the Corinthians, wisdom and knowledge.³¹ The list seems by no means exhaustive, apparent in the fact that additional gifts were mentioned in Paul’s other writings, in I Corinthians 12:28 – 13:3, Romans 12: 6-8, and in Ephesians 4:11.³² While Paul’s clear purpose in this text was to express the need for unity in the church, his respect for differing gifts is clear. It should be noted these are gifts specifically given by the Spirit as indicated in I Corinthians 12: 7-8. The text indicates they are also given for the common good.³³

It would go beyond the teaching of scripture to specifically equate these Spirit-given gifts with genetically and environmentally determined personality traits. While parallels may exist between Spirit-given gifts and personality traits, scripture nowhere ties the two together.

²⁸ William Barclay. *The Letters to the Corinthians*. (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Westminster Press, 1975), 108.

²⁹ I Corinthians 12: 4-6.

³⁰ I Corinthians 12: 7-11.

³¹ I Corinthians 1:5-6; 1:18-2:16.

³² Eugene M. Boring, and Fred B. Craddock, *The People’s New Testament Commentary*. (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 536.

³³ I Corinthians 12: 7.

It should also be noted that scripture nowhere specifically states that Spirit-given gifts are separate from and unrelated to genetically and environmentally determined personality traits. In fact, scripture rarely speaks of genetically and environmentally determined personality traits unless you consider the numerous times that Murray Bowen's eight different areas of worldview processes are identified in Scripture.³⁴ Multi-generational transmission process is found in a number of Old Testament passages similar to II Kings, in which there are six kings in 20 years, four of whom assassinated their predecessors.³⁵ In both the Old and New Testaments there are examples of Bowen's eighth worldview process, societal emotional processes. One example would be when Jesus encountered the Samaritan woman at the well. Her response to Jesus indicated her awareness of the common response of Jews to Samaritans.³⁶ Therefore, it should be noted that in this passage and others on spiritual gifts, there is neither positive nor negative commentary on genetically and environmentally determined personality traits, as psychologically defined in the twenty-first century.

During the modern age there has been an appropriate desire to place scripture in its historical context. There was even a strong movement to restore the elusive New Testament church. During the same time frame, however, less emphasis was placed on integrating our understanding of scripture into our twentieth century experience. Such a view caused the church to focus less attention on integration and implementation of new technologies or scientific understandings into its scripture-based faith journey.

³⁴ Murray Bowen. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Arunson and Company, 1978..

³⁵ II Kings 14:1 - 17:2.

³⁶ John 4: 1-40.

One of the areas completely unstudied is how personality testing tools like the *DiSC* test might uncover areas of spiritual giftedness. What are the special gifts of the Spirit, unrelated to genetic and environmental aspects of personality, and what gifts of the Spirit are intended to build upon these?

I. Howard Marshall writes in *Beyond the Bible, Moving from Scripture to Theology*, “There is an incompleteness in scripture, seen in factors such as the diversity, the occasional nature of the teaching, and the impossibility of dealing with later questions and problems, all of which mean that doctrine can and must develop beyond scriptural statements.”³⁷

Marshall’s approach is compatible with the historical position taken by independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ. One of the early slogans of the Restoration Movement was the phrase, “Where the scriptures speak, we speak. Where the scriptures are silent, we are silent.” It was first used in Thomas Campbell’s *Declaration and Address* in 1809, and thereafter became a central theme in his son, Alexander’s writings in opposition to credalism.³⁸ While the silence of scripture has sometimes been considered a prohibition against religious practices, the Campbell’s understanding was that scriptural silence indicated an area of liberty, where differing opinions could be tolerated.³⁹ That understanding is compatible with Marshall’s comments in *Beyond the Bible*.

³⁷ I. Howard Marshall, *Beyond the Bible, Moving from Scripture to Theology*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2004), 78.

³⁸ Leroy Garrett, *The Stone Campbell Movement*. (Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1981), 196.

³⁹ I. Howard Marshall, *Beyond the Bible, Moving from Scripture to Theology*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2004), 5.

One can see how genetically and environmentally determined personality traits can be enhanced and expanded by one's pursuit of and submission to the Spirit. To tie personality traits with gifts of the Spirit would fit with what Marshall calls a "redemptive trajectory."⁴⁰

While the Corinthian passage clearly points out that these gifts are from the Spirit, in his letter to the church at Rome Paul's language seems more compatible with gifts derived from personality traits.

Paul begins Romans with clear instruction on how one is to live in light of the work Christ has done, elucidated in the first eleven chapters of the letter. He begins the twelfth chapter by encouraging the reader to "think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you."⁴¹ He speaks of gifts and introspection not for its own sake, but as a part of the body of Christ, much as he does in his first letter to the Corinthians. He speaks of the existence of gifts as "grace given."⁴²

Paul uses a term specific to himself, *charisma*, from the word *charis*, or grace. He uses the same term in the I Corinthians passage. Some even believe the word was invented by Paul.⁴³ He then lists a sampling of gifts, including serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing to other's needs, giving, leadership and mercy. From this passage alone it would be difficult to ascertain a difference between gifts given only to

⁴⁰ Ibid., 90.

⁴¹ Romans 12:3.

⁴² Romans 12:6.

⁴³ Boring and Craddock, *The People's New Testament Commentary*, 536.

those in whom the Spirit dwells, and gifts given by God to all who are created in his image.

In his letter to the church at Ephesus Paul again identifies spiritual gifts and their importance in Christian ministry. In his exhortation on Christian living, in Ephesians 4:11 and following, Paul writes, “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”⁴⁴ All were contemporaries in Paul’s time. Nothing here is mentioned of ordained leaders, but all of these could be defined as responsibilities of leaders. Again, Paul indicates these are gifts to be utilized within the body of Christ.

In none of these passages is there a clear connection between one’s genetic and environmentally determined giftedness and the gifts administered by the Spirit. It is conversely true that nowhere does scripture state that the gifts of the Spirit are not an extension of genetically and environmentally determined gifts. Only through inference can the two be tied together.

The DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800 test identifies personality types. Scripture could not endorse a science that did not exist at the time it was written. Therefore, it is obvious the DiSC test does not directly correlate to any scriptural passages related to gifts of the Spirit, though as previously noted, parallels between the two may be inferred.

⁴⁴ Ephesians 4: 11-13.

Scripture does clearly teach that people have different types of giftedness that come into play in the life of the church. Scripture nowhere advises against assigning differing responsibilities to people based on gifts or abilities. In fact the opposite is true. Jesus made assignments based on giftedness. Through the Romans, Corinthians, and Ephesians passages, Paul encourages the church to recognize differences in giftedness, and to utilize them to the benefit of the body of Christ.

In summary, to utilize personality type indicators like the DiSC test in the life of the church is compatible with scripture, though it is not directly endorsed by scripture. In today's environment, however, it is critical to look at personality type within the larger context of how the church exists within and interacts with the larger culture of which it is a part. The church does not exist in a vacuum, and is always interacting with and being impacted by contemporary culture.

Grounding of Project in Ministry Theory

The church has always adapted itself to secular culture. Some adaptations are positive, some are damaging to the church and some are benign. The North American church in the 21st century is not immune to the kinds of cultural adaptation the church has known for twenty centuries.

The latter portion of the twentieth century brought a new age of capitalism, one driven by information and communications in a global market. It ushered in an age of corporate-driven worldviews. It is no longer sovereign states or the church that determines culture. It is the multi-national corporation that determines culture⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ Thomas L. Friedman, *The World Is Flat* (New York, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2004), 87.

Global industries are attempting to define self and communal perceptions in ways that will be financially profitable and predictable. No longer are their efforts limited to the Western world, but the corporate struggle for identity is global, in which cultural resources and practices are restructured to fit the needs of transnational corporations.

In this new contemporary world, marketing and advertising exert great influence, attempting behavior modification that stretches to the individual consumer. As Michael Budde writes in *The Magic Kingdom of God*, “It is a new phenomenon in the capitalist world economy – a macro-micro, transnational link with individuals around the world, relatively unmediated by sovereign states. The link intends to affect the attitudes, behaviors, ideologies, and nonconscious dispositions of its objects.”⁴⁶

This new global economy has found its way into the area of church leadership, including the development of a profile of the effective lead pastor. The effective lead pastor now looks increasingly like the effective corporate chief executive⁴⁷.

In the previously mentioned 1990 thesis project entitled *Leadership and the Church Planter*, senior ministers of churches were surveyed with results showing a direct correlation between the four personality types of the DiSC test and growth in attendance of the churches served.⁴⁸

Work has also been done related to the writings of business author Jim Collins, applying his principles to ministry. In many informal settings the book *From Good To*

⁴⁶ Michael Budde, *The Magic Kingdom of God*. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Publishing, 1997), 39.

⁴⁷ Philip Kenneson and James Street, *Selling out the Church, The Dangers of Church Marketing*. (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1997), 57.

⁴⁸ Paul S Williams and Rick Rusaw, *Leadership and the Church Planter*. (Cincinnati, Ohio: Cincinnati Bible Seminary, 1990.)

Great has been used to compare successful corporate chief executives with successful lead pastors.⁴⁹ Rarely is there any outcry against such comparisons.

There are several potential problems attending the use of tools of corporate psychology to identify senior ministry candidates. The most obvious problem is that these tests are designed primarily to identify corporate leadership potential. They have no capacity to identify a healthy follower of Christ as described in the New Testament, except in those areas where the two might overlap.

The tests are utilized to identify and hire a single personality type – the lead pastor who most closely resembles the profile of a successful corporate executive. It is unusual for a candidate to be chosen for the lead ministry position who does not score within a predictably narrow window on the DiSC test.

The Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator is another tool commonly used to identify candidates for ministry, though it is not as commonly used as the DiSC test among Christian Churches in the North American church planting environment.⁵⁰ In his book, *Clergy Burnout: Recovering From The 70-Hour Work Week*, Fred Lehr indicates that similar selection criteria exist for pastors of mainline Protestant churches. He writes that only 12 percent of the population is made up of intuitive/feeling individuals, but 50 percent of clergy fall into that category. He further states that 68 percent of pastors are feeling individuals, while only 32 percent are thinking individuals.⁵¹ In their book, *Personality Type and Religious Leadership*, Roy M. Oswald and Otto Kroeger identify

⁴⁹ Jim Collins, *Good to Great*. (New York, New York: HarperCollins, 2001.) 12-14.

⁵⁰ Informal Survey, Church Planting Executives Retreat, Estes Park Colorado, 2010.

⁵¹ Fred Lehr, *Clergy Burnout: Recovering From the 70 Hour Work Week*. (Minneapolis, Minnesota, Fortress Press, 2006.)

areas of potential difficulty and conflict for ministers based on types, but they do not find any type better or worse than any other in ministry. They also do not identify percentages of ministers with particular Myers-Briggs types.⁵²

This use of these principles of industry functionally excludes many ministry candidates from leadership positions in new churches. While the predictability for numerical success has apparently increased in new and growing churches, the pool of potential leaders has decreased. Furthermore, unless great care is taken to discern the spiritual maturity of candidates, it is quite possible to hire a ministry candidate with extraordinary corporate leadership skills but a woefully inadequate theological foundation and unacceptable spiritual and moral character.

While there is adequate reason to be concerned about this corporate drift in church staff leadership, it is also fair to note that scripture consistently confirms that not all individuals are ideally suited for all positions of religious leadership. As previously mentioned, among his twelve disciples Jesus chose an inner circle of three with the unique giftedness to provide leadership after his ascension. Additional disciples were chosen for other specific roles based on their giftedness.

One of the most vocal critics of the modern church growth movement is Christian A. Schwarz. In his book, *Natural Church Development – A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*, Schwarz says many of today's church growth methods are inconsistent with God's plan. He calls for what he identifies as "natural" or "biotic"

⁵² Otto Kroeger and Roy M Oswald, *Personality Type and Religious Leadership*. (Herndon, VA, Alban Institute, 1988.)

church development.⁵³ Schwarz rejects pragmatic approaches and replaces them with what he calls a principle-oriented point of departure. He also refuses to take a quantitative approach to church life, but focuses instead on quality. He also focuses on releasing what he calls the “growth automatism” by which God builds his church.⁵⁴

An examination of Schwarz’ eight quality characteristics of healthy churches does find compatibility with utilization of the DiSC test in identifying qualified leaders.

The first quality characteristic is empowering leadership. To be able to do so, Schwarz says the church leader needs to be both goal and relationship oriented.⁵⁵ The person he describes would be considered a combination of high Dominant and high Influencing on a DiSC test. Such an individual will be visionary and motivational, working well with people, while also focused on accomplishing measurable goals.

The second quality characteristic is gift-oriented ministry. Schwarz says, “When Christians serve in their area of giftedness, they generally function less in their own strength and more in the power of the Holy Spirit.”⁵⁶ Again, the DiSC test helps a ministry leader discover his or her natural gifts, which according to Schwarz are those most likely to be “more in the power of the Holy Spirit.”⁵⁷

⁵³ Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Growth*. (St. Charles, Illinois: Church Smart Resources, 1996), 7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 24.

The third quality characteristic is passionate spirituality. Schwarz notes that healthy churches virtually always have spiritually passionate leaders.⁵⁸ In the preaching environment, a high Dominant or high Influencing individual is likely to express spiritual passion through charisma and force of character. On the other hand, a high Steadiness individual might best exhibit spiritual passion in the smaller environment of staff and key volunteers. A quiet and even spirit might indicate spiritual passion in a high Steadiness leader. Schwarz does not acknowledge that different people with differing personality types express passion in very different ways, some more motivational to a crowd than others. Even in this area utilization of the DiSC can be helpful in identifying those who can elicit passion in a North American audience.

The fourth quality characteristic is functional structures. Church structure has an impact on church health. For instance, churches that do not develop structures that promote ongoing ministry multiplication will limit their growth.⁵⁹ The previous study of senior pastors and the DiSC test showed that a high number of senior pastors were high Dominant and high Influencing individuals. Those are personalities not inclined to develop functional structures. Over the past two decades many larger congregations have therefore created a new ministry role, that of executive pastor. The executive pastor usually has more responsibility than the church administrator. Often all staff members except the senior pastor report to the executive pastor. Often a church member from the corporate sector, the executive pastor is usually an individual with a high Conscientiousness component, ideal for developing functional structures.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 26.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 28.

The fifth quality characteristic of healthy churches is an inspirational worship service. Christian Schwarz defines inspiring worship as an “inspiring experience.”⁶⁰ He notes that people attending inspired services usually indicate that going to church is fun.⁶¹ Ministers with high Influencing personalities are consistently motivational and inspiring. In fact, that may be the single most defining element of the high Influencing personality.

The sixth characteristic is holistic small groups. The research done by Schwarz and his colleagues found that a vibrant small group program was more important in a high quality index than weekend worship.⁶² It is rare for a senior pastor in a new church or an existing church to head the small group program of the church. It is common, however, for small group pastors to have high Steadiness and Conscientiousness personalities. These individuals prefer to perform in a consistent, predictable manner, while adhering to key directives and standards. They think analytically, but also enjoy helping others. They are patient, good listeners, and diplomatic with people.⁶³ Those two types are ideal for the development of a holistic small group program.

The seventh characteristic of a healthy church is need-oriented evangelism. Schwarz states that only ten percent of Christians are natural evangelists.⁶⁴ In the healthy church, Schwarz says the leaders identify those with a natural predisposition to evangelism and place them in a corresponding area of ministry. Again, this is quite

⁶⁰ Ibid., 30.

⁶¹ Ibid., 31.

⁶² Ibid., 33.

⁶³ DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800 (Inscape Publishing, 2001), 7.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 34.

compatible with the utilization of the DiSC test, insofar as the DiSC test is able to identify natural personality traits that might be a precursor to similar spiritual gifts.

According to Christian Schwarz, the last characteristic of a healthy church is that it will be marked by loving relationships. The researchers asked how often church members got together with one another, and what those encounters were like.⁶⁵ The culture of a church is determined by its leadership. High Influencing leaders tend to generate a community of healthy relationships that begins with the church staff and volunteer leaders. High Dominant leaders who do not have a secondary Influencing leadership ability have difficulty creating that relational environment. Their focus is more often on results than on people. Once again, the eighth quality characteristic of a healthy church or church leader can be enhanced by utilization of the DiSC test.

Christian Schwarz is interested in following a purely scriptural paradigm in creating healthy churches. We can see, however, that the utilization of tools like the DiSC test are compatible with scripture and can in fact enhance the ability of leaders to identify those who are most likely to create an environment where all eight quality characteristics are in evidence.

In his chapter on symbiosis Schwarz says, “We were able to observe the fruitfulness of symbiotic cooperation in many different areas of church life. Probably the best example is the gift-oriented approach to ministry. Instead of producing carbon-copy Christian workers, the church encourages the interplay of widely diverse gifts and personality types, all benefiting one another.”⁶⁶ Even in his appeal to a pre-modern

⁶⁵ Ibid., 36.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 74.

mindset, Schwarz utilizes terms of social psychology in his arguments, yet another example that the Schwarz view of natural church development is compatible with tools like the DiSC test.

In summary, utilization of the DiSC test is neither encouraged nor discouraged in scripture. It is extra-scriptural. However, based on the many passages on spiritual gifts and leadership, it can be inferred that it is compatible with the teachings of scripture.

CHAPTER THREE
REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH ON THE DISC TEST
AND CHURCH PLANTER SELECTION

History and Validity of the DiSC Test

The Personal Profile System DiSC test is based on the work of William Moulton Marston's two-axis, four-dimensional model, described in his 1928 book, *The Emotions of Normal People*.⁶⁷

Marston offered a theory of how people relate to each other, rather than a description of core traits.⁶⁸ Marston focused his study on human emotions and human behavior. His primary method of study was to interview clinical psychologists and observe behavior. At the time major psychological research was based on physiological measurements and clinical research through direct observation of human subjects. Marston attempted to bridge physiological measurements with direct observation of humans through a process he called "motor consciousness." By that he meant an individual's awareness that he or she is reacting pleasantly or unpleasantly to a stimulus, and how the individual attempts to explain or control those reactions.⁶⁹ Marston considered human emotion to be a reaction to other people, situations, and events in the

⁶⁷ William Moulton Marston. *The Emotions of Normal People*. (London, England: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928.)

⁶⁸ *The Personal Profile System and Models of Personality Research Report*, (Inscape Publishing, 1996), 1.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

person's environment. He felt that personality could not be separated from environment.⁷⁰ The two functioned in lockstep.

Many other researchers of the day had identified up to six different types of what Marston called "feeling tone," including pleasantness and unpleasantness, excitement and depression, and tension and relaxation.⁷¹ Marston and others felt the later four feelings were complex affective experiences rather than primary emotions, leaving only two primary emotions, pleasantness and unpleasantness.⁷²

In addition to the two primary feelings, Marston identified two kinds of environment, consensual reality and personal reality. Consensual reality is shared with others. Personal reality is the individual's own history. Marston attempted to integrate the two, showing how one's personal reality or internal experience of feelings and emotions relates to one's experience in an environment shared with others.⁷³

Marston defined environments by their favorability. Favorable environments are supportive of the individual. Unfavorable environments are antagonistic. The individual's behavioral response to a situation depends on his or her perception of the power they wield in relation to the favorable or unfavorable environment. An internal locus of control describes the perception that the individual is more powerful than the forces in the environment. An external locus of control describes the perception that the

⁷⁰ Ibid., 2.

⁷¹ William Moulton Marsdon. *The Emotions of Normal People*. (London, England: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928), 69.

⁷² Ibid., 70.

⁷³ Ibid., 70.

environmental forces are more powerful than the person.⁷⁴ Marston suggested that the environment and people's response to the environment produce four emotion-directed responses. Those responses are alliance, antagonism, superiority and inferiority.

Marston said that, "An emotion is a complex unit of motor consciousness, composed of psychonic (nerve energy) impulses representing the motor self, and of psychonic impulses representing a motor stimulus; these two psychonic energies being related to one another by allegiance or antagonism; and by reciprocal superiority and inferiority of strength."⁷⁵

He went on to say, "A primary emotion may be designated as an emotion which contains the maximal amount of alliance, antagonism, superiority of strength of the motor self in respect to the motor stimulus, or inferiority of strength of the motor self in respect to the motor stimulus."⁷⁶

Marston created four different words for the four primary emotions that resulted from alliance or antagonism, and superiority or inferiority. The words he chose for the four primary emotions were based on three criteria. First the commonly understood meaning of the word had to describe the objective relationship between motor self and motor stimulus. Second, the word chosen had to express the experience in question. Third, the word chosen needed to be clear, avoiding terms with multiple meanings in their common usage.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 106.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 106.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 107.

The first primary emotion he called *Compliance*, meaning to act in conformity with or to be complacent and courteous. This term was used to define those circumstances in which the motor stimulus was antagonistic to the motor self and of perceived superior strength to the motor self. The reaction of the motor self was antagonistic to the motor stimulus and marked by a decrease of strength, resulting in compliance.⁷⁸ Compliance indicated “the subject is moving himself at the dictates of a superior force.”⁷⁹ “When compliant individuals respond to antagonistic forces stronger than themselves by decreasing their own strength in the particular wherein it is opposed, it is seen as passive compliance. If the stronger force compels the latter to move in a new direction, it can be termed active compliance.”⁸⁰ Marston stated that over-compliance tends to result in fear.⁸¹ The term “compliance” was replaced by the term *Conscientiousness* in the Personal Profile System DiSC 2800. No explanation was given by the publisher, Inscape Publishing, for the change. The researcher assumes the decision was made in part because when used to identify the personality of an individual, the term *compliant* may have a more negative connotation in current American usage than the term *conscientiousness*.

Dominance was the name chosen for the second primary emotion. It identified circumstances in which the motor stimulus was antagonistic to the motor self, but perceived to be of inferior strength to the motor self. The reaction of the motor self was

⁷⁸ Ibid., 105.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 108.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 175.

⁸¹ Ibid., 366.

antagonistic to the motor stimulus and marked by an increase of strength, resulting in dominance. Dominance was defined as exercising control over, prevailing, and predominating. Dominance indicated a superiority of self over some sort of antagonist.⁸²

Marston did extensive study of the behavior of persons with primarily dominant emotions, “and detected in every instance an antagonistic motor stimulus of less intensity than the motor self, and an increase in the strength of the motor self equal to the intensity of the opposition stimulus dominated.”⁸³ The dominance emotion is a mixture of pleasant and unpleasant emotions throughout the dominant response. Marston noted that if the dominance response is successful, it will contain more pleasantness in the face of antagonism than it did in the beginning.⁸⁴ Marston stated that over-dominance tends to create rage.⁸⁵

Marston’s third primary emotion he named *Inducement*. Inducement occurs when the motor stimulus is allied with the motor self and perceived to be of inferior strength to the motor self. The reaction of the motor self was allied with the motor stimulus, resulting in an increase in strength in response to the motor stimulus. Marston defined inducement as, “to influence to act; prevail upon; to lead to.”⁸⁶ Inducement was defined as persuading someone in a friendly way to perform an act suggested by the subject.⁸⁷ Marston noted that a lesser degree of alliance is required to evoke inducement response

⁸² Ibid., 108.

⁸³ Ibid., 125.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 139.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 364.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 109.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 109.

than is required to evoke submission. It was Marston's conclusion that inducement behavior is more pleasant from beginning to end than submission, dominance or compliance.⁸⁸ "Inducement consists of an increase of the self, and making of the self more completely allied with the stimulus person, for the purpose of establishing control over that person's behavior."⁸⁹ According to Marston, over-inducement results in hate.⁹⁰

The term "inducement" was changed to *Influencing* on the Personal Profile System DiSC 2600 series. Again, the publisher gave no explanation for the change. This researcher assumes it is because the term *inducement* has fallen out of common usage in America, unlike the term *influencing*.

Submission was the term chosen for the primary emotion in which the motor stimulus was allied with the motor self and perceived to be of superior strength to the motor self. The reaction of the motor self was allied with the motor stimulus and marked by a decrease of strength, resulting in submission. He defined submission as, "to give up to another; to yield authority or power; to surrender; to be submissive."⁹¹ Submission was defined as voluntary obedience to the commands of the person in authority.⁹²

Marston stated that the submissive response is primarily pleasant. In every case it is a decrease of the self to permit an allied person to direct at will, not only the organism

⁸⁸ Ibid., 271.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 273.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 377.

⁹¹ Ibid., 110.

⁹² Ibid., 110.

apart from the motor self, but the motor self also.⁹³ Over-submission, according to Marston, resulted in jealousy.⁹⁴ The term *Submission* was changed to *Steadiness* in the Personal Profile System DiSC 2600 series. Yet again the publisher gave no explanation for the change. The researcher assumes it was because the term *submission* carried a more pejorative meaning in common American usage when defining the personality of an individual than did the term *Steadiness*.

In 1948, Walter V. Clarke, an industrial psychologist, was the first to build an assessment instrument using Marston's theories. In 1956 he published the *Activity Vector Analysis*, a checklist using adjectives on which he asked people to mark descriptors they identified as true of themselves. He did not use Marston's terms but replaced them with the terms, *Aggressive*, *Sociable*, *Stable*, and *Avoidant*. In 1966 he created a new instrument called *Self Description* (sic.) that included two or more terms instead of the previous single term test. The *Self Description* test was used by John Geier of Performax Systems International (now Inscape Publishing) to create the Personal Profile System in the 1970s. The researcher was able to find no source indicating the exact year in which the DiSC Personal Profile System came into existence.

Geier used the terms *Dominance*, *Influencing*, *Steadiness*, and *Compliance* in the first version of the test. In 1994 the Personal Profile System DiSC Classic 2800 was first introduced. As previously noted, in that version the term *Compliance* was replaced with *Conscientiousness*.⁹⁵

⁹³ Ibid., 244.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 375.

⁹⁵ *The History of the DiSC Model of Behavior*. (www.discprofile.com/historyofdisc.htm.)

The DiSC test focuses on behaviors that can be observed and labeled, or surface traits. Surface traits describe behavior and evolve as new behaviors emerge and old behaviors are left behind.

It is far more difficult to accurately identify internal characteristics that direct behavior, or source traits. They can only be inferred from observed or reported behavior, and attempt to explain a person's behavior. Because of the difficulty of achieving meaningful measurement of source traits, the creators of the Personal Profile System confined their work to measuring surface traits, those behaviors readily seen and reported.⁹⁶

The basic emotions of dominance, influence, steadiness, and conscientiousness are not viewed as internal dispositions but as semantic labels for patterns of behavior. Those patterns may vary from situation to situation. The test infers the presence of a trait by noting that the same behavior occurs consistently across times and situations. Traits and situations are interactive.⁹⁷

The human ability to adapt is an assumption of the DiSC test. Survival depends on the adaptability. We follow cues that show how to behave in particular situations. We therefore develop a set of behaviors from which we can draw the emotions most appropriate to any situation.⁹⁸

Most people learn to recognize the environments in which they feel the most comfortable. To the extent possible they place themselves in these situations and avoid

⁹⁶ *The Personal Profile System and Models of Personality Research Report*. (Inscape Publishing, 1996), 7.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

less comfortable ones. People also try to modify an uncomfortable environment actively or passively to make it an environment in which they can succeed. Therefore people will tend to exhibit certain behaviors more often than others because they have succeeded in finding opportunities to do so.⁹⁹

The DiSC test is reported to be somewhat situation specific. Those taking the test focus on a specific environment. The most common use of the test is in the workplace. Results sometimes change slightly from circumstance to circumstance, as people respond to favorable or unfavorable conditions in ways that enhance their experience in relation to each environment. To see slight adaptation and change in DiSC scores over time and under different circumstances, is therefore not unusual. However, the changes do tend to be small. While no exhaustive study has been completed to determine DiSC results based on situational differences, it is generally thought the vast majority of profile outcomes will remain the same regardless of response focus.¹⁰⁰

The DiSC test does not provide clinical insights into personality. It identifies how people relate to each other. It is self-scored and self-interpreted. The individual is regarded as the expert on himself or herself. As a self-scoring and self-interpreting test it helps people understand themselves in relation to others and to their environment. It assists the individual in understanding what type of interaction is likely to elicit the preferred response in coworkers. It will help the individual understand his or her value to a team, and which personal characteristics might be most valuable in each specific environment.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 6

¹⁰⁰ *Everything DiSC Facilitation System*, (Inscape Publishing, 2005), 2.

All psychological instruments measure abstract qualities, such as intelligence, dominance, or honesty. Establishing their validity is never easy. Over the years standards have been established by the scientific community and researchers test the various tools against these standards. Validation asks two basic questions. First, how reliable is the tool? Second, how valid is the tool? Reliability is determined by finding if a tool measures in a way that is consistent and dependable. Validity is determined by how accurately a tool measures what it proposes to measure.¹⁰¹

Reliability is determined by stability and internal consistency. Stability refers to a tool's ability to yield the same measurements over a period of time. This is usually done by having a group of people fill out the questionnaire twice, with a suitable time interval between the two testing periods. A stable tool will show similar results in the retesting.

"The stability can be quantified in the form of a reliability coefficient, which is a statistic that is generated by looking at the mathematical relationship between a group's initial scores on an instrument and its subsequent scores. Reliability coefficients range between -1 and +1. The closer that a correlation coefficient is to +1 the more stable the instrument is considered to be. Coefficients above .70 are considered acceptable, and coefficients above .80 are considered very good.¹⁰²

The four scales of the DiSC Classic 2800 series have been assessed for their test-retest reliability over varying periods of time, and the following coefficients were found:

¹⁰¹ *DiSC Validation Research Report*. (Inscape Publishing, 2005), 1.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 2.

1 week	5-7 months	1 year
(N=142)	(N=174)	(N=138)
D: .89	D: .84	D: .79
i: .87	i: .82	i: .80
S: .89	S: .77	S: .76
C: .89	C: .73	C: .71 ¹⁰³

Table 1: Test and Retest Reliability of the DiSC

The scores are well above those necessary to show the stability of the DiSC Classic 2800 series.

The second element of reliability is internal consistency. Internal consistency evaluates the degree of correlation among questions that profess to measure the same thing. Each of the four scales in the DiSC Classic 2800 is measured using questions in the form of adjectives. If all the items on a given scale are measuring the same thing, they should all correlate with one another to some degree. A statistic called *Cronbach's Alpha* is usually regarded by statisticians as the best method of evaluating internal consistency.¹⁰⁴

"Cronbach's Alpha expresses the degree of correlation as a specific number which varies between 0.0 and 1.0. If the value of Alpha is 0.0, then there is no relationship among the statements on a given scale. On the other hand if all the statements are

¹⁰³ Ibid., 2.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 3.

identical, then the value of Alpha will be a theoretical 1.0, which indicates absolute internal consistency."¹⁰⁵

Alpha values above .70 are satisfactory, while values above .80 are considered very good, and values above .90 reflect exceptional internal consistency. The DiSC Classic 2800 series shows the following Alphas: D: .92; i.: .87; S: .88; C: .85¹⁰⁶

The internal consistency and stability of the DiSC Classic 2800 has been well established, with all values above the satisfactory level, most values above the good level, and some values above the exceptional level of internal consistency.

The second area for evaluation is the validity of the test, the degree to which the test measures what it has been designed to measure. There are a number of strategies used to answer that question. Those used to ascertain the validity of the DiSC Classic 2800 fall under the heading of construct validity.

A construct is an abstract idea that is used to make sense of our experience. For instance, the D scale of DiSC measures the construct of dominance. Dominance is related to a variety of other constructs, such as aggressiveness, which then links the two. Therefore if the measure of dominance has high validity, it should correlate with measured ratings of aggressiveness. To examine construct validity researchers specify a series of theoretical relationships and test these to see if the relationships actually exist in a real environment.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 4.

Validity is also determined by scale inter-correlations, which are first examined as a whole. Instruments like the DiSC test propose an underlying model in which the scales have specific relationships to one another. Researchers examine the relationship among the scales to see if it reflects the relationship proposed by the model.¹⁰⁸

The DiSC model proposes that adjacent scales (C/S or C/D) will have weak to moderate correlations. A study of 7,038 respondents who took the DiSC in 2002 supported that hypothesis. There are strong negative correlations between C and i, and strong correlations between S and D.

	D	i	S	C
D	.87			
i	-.11	.81		
S	-.82	-.22	.82	
C	-.37	-.71	.30	.77 ¹⁰⁹

Table 2: Inter-correlations among the DiSC Classic 2800 scales

Validity is also determined by multidimensional scaling. It allows for a visual inspection of relationships among the four scales. It also allows researchers to look at all the scales simultaneously. The multidimensional scaling was done with 45,588 respondents who had taken the DiSC test online. Scales closer together showed a stronger positive relationship, while those farther apart were more dissimilar. "The scales in Table 3 are closest to the scales that are theoretically adjacent to them in the DiSC

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 4.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 5.

model. Consequently, this analysis adds strong support for the DiSC model and the ability of the DiSC Classic 2800 to measure that model."¹¹⁰

					I	
	D					
				S		
		C				

Table 3: Multidimensional Scaling Solution for the DiSC Classic 2800 scales

The DiSC Classic 2800 test has been "norm-referenced," which means a person's raw scores (ranging from -28 to +28) are interpreted relative to how everyone else scores on that scale. If the average person in a population receives a raw score of -6 on a scale, a raw score of +5 would be considered high. Because DiSC scores are norm-referenced, it is important that test results are compared with the appropriate population. Behaviors that are seen as dominant in one culture may be viewed differently in another culture. Furthermore, the words we use to measure dominance may be more desirable in one country than in another. Each language version of the DiSC has been validated using a sample from a given country or region using that language. Raw scores are different for each language on Graph III in the DiSC Classic 2800 series.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 5.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 11.

While different languages require different graphs with the DiSC, comparisons made among cultural groups within the same larger population show no meaningful differences. For instance, there are no meaningful differences among various ethnic groups within the United States. Variance accounted for race or ethnicity is well below one percent. Similarly DiSC patterns do not appear to be significantly related to age. In the United States age differences appear to be largest on the "i" scale, but those differences are small, again with variance for age well below one percent.¹¹²

Gender related differences on the DiSC Classic 2800 have been explored and show slightly higher differences from those based on race, ethnicity, or age. Women tend to score higher than men on the S scale, and men scored higher than women on the D scale. In both cases, however, the gender differences accounted for less than three percent of the variation in DiSC scores.¹¹³

DiSC Classic uses a forced choice test, meaning respondents are presented with four adjectives and asked to choose one that is most like them and one that is least like them. Since most people will respond to tests in ways that make them look good, the forced choice limits people to respond to one of four socially desirable choices. By having to choose one quality that is most like them and one that is least like them, the respondent cannot choose every positive quality.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Ibid., 11.

¹¹³ Ibid., 12.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 12.

After respondents have completed the 28 forced choice boxes, their "most" responses are charted on Graph I. If the person has a high score on a given scale, this means they endorsed many adjectives that belonged to that scale as being most like them.

The person's 28 "least" responses are inverted and charted on Graph II. If a person has a high score on Graph II, this means they did not endorse many items that belong to that scale as least like the person. The results of the two methods are combined to form Graph III, which is the most reliable measurement of the DiSC test.¹¹⁵ "N" responses in the DiSC are words that have a strong meaning when used to define a "most" category or a "least" category, but are not strong enough when identified with the opposite category. For instance, a "most" response to the word *observant* was consistent with the C scale. However a "least" response to the same word was not a good enough measure to rate a score, hence the "N".

Evaluation of the DiSC Classic 2800 indicates strong support for the reliability and validity of the tool. The scales reliabilities are in the good to excellent range, with a median coefficient Alpha of .85. Analyses of the validity were also very favorable. "The relationships among the eight scales are highly supportive of the circumplex structure, and strongly reflect the expected pattern of correlations hypothesized under the DiSC model."¹¹⁶

The DiSC Test in the Ministry Environment

Only one other study was found relating DiSC scores to effectiveness in ministry. In 1990 a study was completed of 50 ministers who were in lead ministry positions in

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 13.

¹¹⁶ *Everything DiSC Assessment Research Report*, (Inscape Publishing, 2007), 12.

churches in the United States.¹¹⁷ The ministers self-reported answers to questions related to the thirteen critical areas of leadership identified by Dr. Charles Ridley in his manual, *How To Select Church Planters – A Self-Study Manual*.¹¹⁸ Ridley identified 13 areas of ministry and five areas he considered to be “knockout factors,” meaning that a leader had to be proficient in all five areas to effectively lead a new church. Among the five “knockout factors” a total of 79 percent of the ministers considered themselves to be very visionary. Another 71 percent scored themselves as very intrinsically motivated. A lower 57 percent felt they were very effective in creating ownership of ministry among church members. A total of 79 percent of the ministers said they were very good at relating well to the unchurched, and 100 percent said that when it came to their church planting work, they had a very cooperative spouse.¹¹⁹

When the results in each of the five areas were compared to the DiSC test results, there were significant differences in how the pastors scored themselves. A total of 94 percent of the primarily Dominant leaders considered themselves to be very visionary. Second were Influencing leaders. A total of 79 percent of those individuals considered themselves to be very visionary. Only 60 percent of the Compliant individuals thought themselves very visionary, and only 33 percent of the Steadiness leaders considered themselves to be very visionary.

¹¹⁷ Paul Williams and Rick Rusaw. *Leadership and the Church Planter*. (Cincinnati Bible Seminary, 1990.)

¹¹⁸ Charles R. Ridley. *How To Select Church Planters – A Self-Study Manual*. (Pasadena, CA, Fuller Evangelistic Association, 1988.)

¹¹⁹ Paul Williams and Rick Rusaw. *Leadership and the Church Planter*. (Cincinnati Bible Seminary, 1990.), 49.

Since Ridley considered vision to be the single-most important element in the church planting task, it is interesting to note that only one in three leaders with a Steadiness personality would count themselves as visionaries.

Ridley's second "knockout factor" was intrinsic motivation. Again, the Dominant leaders who scored at 88 percent, and Influencing leaders at 71 percent scored highest in their self-evaluation of their motivation for ministry. The Compliant leaders scored third, at 70 percent, only slightly behind the Influencing leaders. Finally, it was the Steadiness leaders who scored themselves lowest in this category. Only 22 percent felt they were intrinsically motivated.

In the third critical area of ministry, creating ownership of ministry among church members, it was again the Dominant leaders who scored themselves highest, at 64 percent. Influencing leaders followed at 57 percent. In this category the Steadiness leaders scored higher than the Compliance leaders, but still far below the other two personality types. The Steadiness leaders scored themselves at 33 percent, while the Compliant leaders scored themselves at 30 percent. It should be noted that this third category was the lowest scoring of all five "knockout factors."

It should be no surprise that in relating well to the unchurched it was the Influencing leaders who scored themselves the highest, at 79 percent. A total of 58 percent of the Dominant leaders felt they related well to the unchurched, while 44 percent of the Steadiness leaders considered themselves strong in this area. Only 30 percent of the Compliant leaders felt they related well to the unchurched.

In the fifth and final area, cooperativeness of the church planter's spouse, 100 percent of the Dominant and Influencing leaders felt their wives were very committed to

the church planting task. A lower 77 percent of the Steadiness leaders saw their wives as equally devoted to the new church, and 60 percent of the Compliant leaders felt their wives were highly committed to the new church.¹²⁰

One of the flaws of the 1990 study was that results were based on self-reporting, and validity and reliability were not established. Based on the previous data about the four categories of the DiSC test, it might be assumed that high Dominant leaders and high Influencing leaders would be more optimistic in reporting the level of their abilities. Both are inclined to seek out environments in which they perceive themselves to be active and superior to others. Conversely, the Steadiness and Compliant personalities tend to seek out environments in which they perceive themselves to be passive and inferior to others. Therefore, it might be assumed that the self-reporting process was less than accurate in truly assessing skill sets in Ridley's five "knockout factors."

If the self-reports did have some accuracy, the study would indicate that Dominant leaders and Influencing leaders would be significantly more effective in the critical areas of church planting ministry than steadiness and compliance leaders.

Ridley's study indicates a total of 13 areas of ministry importance in the new church. After the five "knockout factors," he adds 8 other skills. The sixth is the ability to effectively build relationships. The seventh is a commitment to church growth. The eighth is responsiveness to the community. The ninth is the ability to utilize the giftedness of others. Ridley's tenth skill is flexibility and adaptability. His eleventh is building group cohesiveness. The final two skills are resilience and exercising faith.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Ibid., 62.

¹²¹ Ibid., 63.

It is worth noting that in the additional eight areas of Ridley's thirteen factors related to ministry success, the Dominant and Influencing leaders continued to score themselves higher than the Steadiness and Compliant leaders. The high Dominant personalities were first or second in 9 of the 13 categories. The high Influencing personalities were first or second in 12 of the 13 areas. The Steadiness leaders were first or second in four of the 13, while the Compliant leaders were not first or second in any of Ridley's 13 areas.¹²²

The conclusion of the 1990 study was that Influencing leaders were the most likely to have long-term success in the new church. Dominant leaders were expected to be effective leaders in the first three years of the life of the new church, but then drop off in effectiveness as the church grew. Compliant leaders were expected to be the third most effective in lead ministry in a new church, but far behind the Dominant and Influencing leaders. The Steadiness leaders were expected to be the least likely to find success in the lead position in a new church.

In 1996, William D. Haan completed a Doctor of Ministry project entitled, *Case Studies Of Pastoral Leadership In The Church, 17*. The project was completed through Dallas Theological Seminary. In looking at the question of what makes a Christian leader effective, Haan studied two Christian pastors in growing churches in metropolitan areas of the western United States. In addition to studying church archives, congregational questionnaires, and personal observations, the researcher also utilized the

¹²² Ibid., 64

DiSC test with both participants. The project concluded that there is a strong need to consider culture and character in defining effective Christian leadership.¹²³

As a personality test, the DiSC does not have the capacity to consider character, though it does show that some style preferences will have a far greater negative impact than other style preferences when character is in question. A high Dominant individual who is immature will have a greater negative impact on a church than a high Steadiness individual who is immature. Conversely, a highly mature Dominant individual may be a better church leader than a highly mature Steadiness leader.

Culture can impact the effectiveness of particular style preferences. A more paternalistic culture may respond more favorably to a very strong Dominant leader, while a more democratic culture may respond more favorably to the motivating leadership of a high Inspirational leader. A smaller church that is a part of a highly structured denomination may respond well to a high Conscientiousness leader, while a small missional church may have a culture most conducive to a high Steadiness leader.

Related Research On How Family Processes Impact The Church Planter

Additional research was conducted on how family processes impact the life of the senior pastor of a church.

Organizations and corporations tend to behave like families when their basic business is life. Churches, doctor's offices, or family owned businesses are examples of family-like organizations. They all behave in similar ways to nuclear families, with the attendant relational challenges. Of those examples, the church resembles a family more

¹²³ William D. Haan. *Case Studies Of Pastoral Leadership In The Church*, 17, (Dallas, Texas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1996.)

than any other entity. Not only does it operate like an extended family, it is made up of individual family members who are all a part of their own nuclear and extended families. Often these extended families attend the same church. When it is a smaller congregation, one or two extended families can be the driving force behind a church. Whether it is a new church or old, large or small, it is inevitable that one's family experience will make its way into the life of the church.¹²⁴

A family shapes our thoughts about what is normal and healthy in the world, and sets expectations about how the world will work. One's nuclear family experience creates the roadmap from which he or she navigates through life. If the individual is healthy, as he or she grows and gains insight into the family of origin, the roadmap from which the person operates is also shifting accordingly. Conflict occurs when various family members shift roadmaps at different times or do not shift them at all. It is not unusual for the person who has grown the most to be the one ostracized. The rest of the members demand a family system that is uniform and unchanging, and the shifting roadmap of one family member is more than the system can bear.

If Edwin Friedman is right and churches do operate as families, the same dynamics occur at a magnified level in the local church. Individuals bring not only their own nuclear family dynamics into the church their family shares, the church itself also has its own family dynamics, with members working from differing roadmaps depending on their maturational level and life experience.

New churches are particularly prone to receiving disenchanting members from existing churches in which they no longer feel comfortable. Sometimes they have grown

¹²⁴Friedman, *Generation to Generation*, 195.

beyond the previous church. Sometimes the church has grown beyond them. Whatever the case, new churches serve as magnets for those disenchanted with their existing congregations.

New churches also receive a high number of disenchanted members from particular nuclear families. The rest of the family members attend one church, but the ostracized family member makes his or her way into the new church.

There is a phrase commonly used to identify this phenomenon in the new church. The phrase traces back to the 1980s, and the Charles Fuller Institute in Pasadena, California. The term is *the clash of the dream*. An equally interesting phrase, whose source is difficult to locate is, *Beware the first who greet the bus!*

The first phrase acknowledges that new churches have attendees coming for a plethora of reasons. They all bring their nuclear family experience with them and some bring a previous church family experience with them. They have a preconceived idea about what the new church should be, which often clashes with the dream of those leading the new church. Senior pastors often speak of these individuals as being the people who are initially the most enthusiastic about the new church, but fairly quickly become disenchanted and move on. Because of the family dynamics evident in all churches, it is important for senior pastors of new churches to be aware of and understand the dynamics of the nuclear family unit.

Murray Bowen, the founder of Family Systems Theory, identified eight different areas in which these worldview processes are at work.¹²⁵ All have an impact on the life

¹²⁵ Murray Bowen. *Family Therapy in Critical Practice*. (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson & Company, 1978.) 307-308.

of a new church and challenge the leadership abilities of the senior pastor of a new church.

The first Bowen calls *differentiation of self*. By that phrase he means our ability to be objective and separate our feelings from our thoughts. When confronted the strong Dominant senior pastor may say, "I'm the man in charge. Who are you to challenge me?" He cannot see himself except as a part of the family system, and its king at that. It is a problem for a variety of complex reasons. The first is that the senior pastor has been impacted by his or her own family of origin, and how well he understands that experience will often determine how he responds in the new church environment. A leader with a high awareness of his or her own issues related to the family of origin, and who is working from a roadmap reflective of that self-discovery, will have an advantage in the new church environment.

When considering differentiation of self, Dominant individuals may also have a difficult time differentiating their personal lives from their ministries. If a person finds his or her primary identity through the position held in the church, it is not a good sign. They will not be able to separate their own life from the church they serve. Many new church pastors are inclined to see their ministry position as more than a job. Sometimes they have wise supervisors who teach, "This is your job - it is not your life." More often, however, management team oversight is sporadic and superficial, and the senior pastor becomes far too invested in his or her position and success in that position. Though it has not been scientifically established, this may be more of an issue for Dominant and Influencing church planters than it is for the other two personality types.

High Influencing individuals might see the church as an extension of themselves. Success in that environment is likely to be centered around the personality of the senior pastor. The church does not develop an infrastructure to sustain long-term growth. It is entirely focused on the weekend worship experience, and the leadership provided by the charismatic pastor. In those situations it is difficult for any success to extend past the reign of the charismatic founding pastor.

Senior pastors with a Steadiness or Conscientiousness personality will also struggle with differentiation, but in different ways from the Influencing or Dominant leader.

Individuals with high Dominance and high Influence will often lead with a strong hand. Steadiness and Conscientiousness senior pastors, however, will generally lead from consensus. Unfortunately, consensus leadership creates less imaginative environments, because groups of equals tend to stifle imagination. Another problem of consensus leadership is that the group can be controlled by those at the extremes, who exhibit passive-aggressive behavior as a way to manipulate the group.¹²⁶

A differentiated pastor will lead by neither a strong hand nor consensus. He or she will lead from a balanced perspective. Often individuals with a D/S combination or an I/C combination of DiSC strengths will have the better chance of leading from the middle, between dictatorship and democracy.

The differentiated pastor takes clearly and non-reactively defined positions. He works from the position that he or she has been called to do a job, not from the position

¹²⁶ Edwin H. Friedman. *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. (New York, New York: The Guilford Press, 1985.), 227.

that his or her life depends on being successful in this particular instance.¹²⁷ The differentiated leader also stays in touch with his staff and volunteer leaders, as well as dealing with the sabotage that is inevitable in a family-like environment. Again, cross patterns like D/S and I/C are likely to have an easier time with differentiation than those with only one area of strength on the DiSC test. That is because they have areas of strength across all four of Marston's emotions. With the D they feel superior to an antagonistic force, while with the S they feel inferior to a force with which they are allied.

Bowen's second area of family systems concern is *triangulation*, in which a third person is brought into a two-person interaction. In the church, triangulation may be the single biggest cause of dissent.¹²⁸ Instead of a conversation remaining between the two members in conflict, one or both may appeal to family members, church members, or church staff to support their respective positions. Those who do are likely to exacerbate the problem rather than resolve it.

High Influencing leaders may be the most prone to triangulation. Influencers are usually articulate communicators. The shadow side of that speaking ability is an equal ability to be manipulative. Many Machiavellian senior pastors are constantly putting out fires they themselves have lit through careless communication and inappropriate involvement in the problems of others.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 228.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 229.

High Conscientiousness leaders who are not very mature are also prone to triangulation. Their strong desire for an environment without conflict may draw them into a conflict that is not theirs to resolve.¹²⁹

Ultimately, triangulation can occur with any of the four personality types. Dealing successfully with triangulation may be more a matter of personal maturity than it is of personality type.

The third area of concern expressed in Bowen's Family Systems Theory is what he calls *emotional process*. Entire congregations can operate with outdated maps. The church may have come into existence as a result of a church split. If that is the case they may tend to look at most interactions with other churches as a threat. When a new pastor arrives, he needs to help the congregation go through the emotional process of changing its map to no longer define itself by "the church we are not," and become a church identified with a more positive purpose.¹³⁰

A new congregation is often populated by young families who are still primarily identified by their desire to be different from their families of origin. As they search for individuation they may prematurely adopt new beliefs or practices that a church of more seasoned members would successfully avoid. The senior pastor must avoid being drawn into the subconscious agenda of these young families, and assure that the decisions made by the leadership of the church are well thought out.

New churches also appeal to the unchurched who bring with them the prevailing worldview of the culture of which they are a part. In postmodern times, that is often

¹²⁹Murray Bowen. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson and Company, 1978.), 373-376.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 376-378.

reflected in church members who replace the concept of truth with the phrase, "What's true for you is not necessarily true for me." In that environment a senior pastor will be challenged to help the congregants develop a Christian perspective of truth.

All churches will have emotional processes through which they have to work. Edwin Friedman said, "Every church has background radiation from the big bang of the congregation's creation."¹³¹

Most churches have their own myths about who they are and how well they will function. One church might say, "We are a neighborhood church, and that is all we will ever be." This is a result of the *multi-generational transmission process*, Bowen's fourth area of family concern.¹³² Older congregations have generations of issues that all build on top of each other. Helping a church to see itself in a new light is a difficult proposition. It is one of the reasons C. Peter Wagner was fond of saying, "It is easier to give birth than it is to raise the dead."¹³³ High Dominant leaders rarely have the patience for this type of environment, one of the reasons they so often are drawn to the new church environment.

New churches rarely deal in any significant way with the multi-generational transmission process, other than as it is received through their respective individual members.

¹³¹ Edwin H. Friedman. *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. (New York, New York: The Guilford Press, 1985.) 196.

¹³² Ibid., 379-380.

¹³³ C. Peter Wagner. *How To Plant A Church Seminar*. (Charles Fuller Institute, Pasadena, California, 1985.)

All families are guilty of the *family projection process*, the fifth area of Bowen's Family Systems Theory. A leader suddenly unhappy with a pastor's performance is often a leader projecting onto the church from his or her own family.¹³⁴ It is difficult for young senior pastors to identify family projection process, both in themselves and in members within the new church. Most new church senior pastors are in their thirties. The tendency in one's younger years is to be self-referential. "If things go well it is because I made it happen. If things go poorly it is my fault." Such an approach makes it difficult to identify a problem that is external to one's circumstances. When a person who has been very supportive suddenly becomes an adversary, it is often due to family projection process, not to anything that has or has not happened within the church.

It is also difficult for young pastors to identify their own family projection process. It is not common to see a high degree of interiority in high Dominant and high Influencing leaders. They tend to focus more on externals and be less aware of the subconscious factors impacting their decision making process. High Steadiness and high Conscientiousness leaders, on the other hand, are more likely to be more in touch with their internal motivations.¹³⁵

The sixth area of family concern is *sibling position*. In the church setting firstborn children in leadership will tend to be the most conservative. Middle children

¹³⁴ Edwin H. Friedman. *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. (New York, New York: The Guilford Press, 1985.), 208.

¹³⁵ Murray Bowen. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson and Company, 1978.), 379-382.

will often be the most relationally savvy, while the youngest will be the most revolutionary and open to change.¹³⁶

The study completed by Williams and Rusaw in 1990 found that the majority of high achieving church planters were first-born children, though the methodology of the research on that issue was not a part of the final report.¹³⁷ Over one half of United States presidents have been first-born children, as were 21 of the first 23 astronauts.¹³⁸ While the researcher assumed that a higher number of first-born children would score Dominant on the DiSC test, a higher number of youngest children would score as Influencing on the DiSC, and a higher number of middle children would score as Steadiness on the DiSC test, the researcher was not able to identify any statistical study that compares the results of the DiSC test to birth order. A project worthy of future research would be to determine birth order of the 50 participants in this study, and compare birth order to DiSC score. From this researcher's knowledge, it might be expected that high Steadiness individuals would be middle children, accustomed to accommodating themselves to the oldest and youngest siblings. It might be expected that high Dominant individuals would be first-born children, with a strong desire to control their environment and treat siblings from a position of superiority. Additional correlations could likely be made between the DiSC test and birth order.¹³⁹

¹³⁶Edwin H. Friedman. *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. (New York, New York: The Guilford Press, 1985.), 220.

¹³⁷ Paul Williams and Rick Rusaw. *Leadership and the Church Planter*. (Cincinnati Bible Seminary, 1990.), 49.

¹³⁸ Samantha Murray. *Birth Order and Personality.com*. (Internet web site, 2005.)

¹³⁹ Lucille K Forer & Henry Still. *The Birth Order Factor: How Your Personality Is Influenced By Your Place In The Family*. (New York, New York: Pocket Books, 1977.)

The seventh area mentioned by Bowen is *emotional cutoff*, in which family members separate themselves from all involvement with the family. Ironically those individuals find themselves actually being controlled by the family in their extreme attempts to be different from their family of origin. Their primary identity is based on what they are not. In the church environment they bring their problems with them.

New churches that result from a contentious split from an existing congregation often exhibit the signs of emotional cutoff as an entire congregation. Their identity as a church is tied up in being different from the church of which they once were a part, rather than finding their own positive identity. It is a widely held assumption that church plants that result from splits do not have a good track record for either growth or longevity. Unfortunately, however, the researcher was not able to find any published data to confirm that common assumption.

If a new church is the result of a split, it is better if the senior pastor has a high Steadiness personality. He or she would be more inclined to draw the congregants out of their emotional cutoff than a high Dominant leader. The researcher's personal experience is that most new churches resulting from a church split are led by high Dominant leaders unaware of their own issues related to emotional cutoff. Alas, it was also not possible to find published data to either confirm or deny that assumption.

Societal emotional processes are Bowen's last area of concern. As societies we develop expectations as to how certain classes of people, or races, or genders are to function. Anyone who functions outside of our expectations will be viewed as deviant.

As it relates to DiSC scores, all four types may help or hinder this process, depending on maturational level, something not scored by the DiSC Classic 2800.¹⁴⁰

Edwin Friedman goes beyond Bowen's Family Systems Theory to write about churches or synagogues that tend to burn out their senior pastors. He finds they have seven elements in common. First, there will be great isolation between the church and other churches in its own faith community and local community. Unfortunately, this is a common element with high Dominant and Conscientiousness senior pastors. They may not see the value of cross pollination as much as the other two types.

The second burnout indicator is the degree of distance between the lay leadership and the general membership. The greater the distance the higher the likelihood of burnout. Again, this is an area where Influencing and Steadiness leaders have a greater natural ability to keep a church healthy than the other types.

Two additional signals of burnout are the extent to which the lay leadership allows the church to dominate their lives, and the degree to which they have intense interdependent relationships, such as being related through blood, marriage, or business. Both of those problems are related to inability to differentiate and emotional processes, two of Bowen's eight family systems issues.

One of the biggest signs of an unhealthy volunteer church leadership is when the chairman of the church leadership is unable or unwilling to take a well-defined position, independent of the complainers.¹⁴¹ In the new church environment it means one of the

¹⁴⁰ Murray Bowen. *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. (Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson and Company, 1978.) 379-382.

¹⁴¹ Edwin H. Friedman. *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. (New York, New York: The Guilford Press, 1985.), 195-230.

most important early responsibilities of the senior pastor is to carefully choose the internal members of the church management team, and to be particularly careful in choosing the chairman of that team.

Friedman not only works from a family systems approach to identify unhealthy churches, he works from the same approach to ascertain the signs of a healthy new church family. First, the church will be balanced between separateness and togetherness. It has differentiated itself. It can say, "We are a part of the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, but we are an independent church." Second, the church will show a connectedness across generations. This is difficult to achieve in a new church since most of its members will be younger families. The degree to which the leadership of the new church can create a multi-generational church, however, will help create congregational maturity.

A healthy new church will have volunteer leaders and professional leaders who show little enmeshment or fusion. They might say, "We are all crazy around here. Most of the time we recognize it." The church will also create a grace-filled environment appropriate in an age in which people are often converted to community before they are converted to Christ. There will be respect and support for those with different values and feelings, and the congregation will be aware of both the inside and outside influences on their family. The church will therefore have little distance or emotional cutoff.

Healthy new churches will also avoid triangulation at all levels. Any two people will not feel the need to pull a third into a conversation.

In a healthy church family there will also be room for people to experience pain without the leaders of the church rushing in to save them. The leaders might say, "She's

really struggling with her faith, but giving her answers is not going to help right now. We'll just have to do the believing for her for a while."

Healthy new churches will believe in their family and see its positives. They might say, "Of course we are messed up. But on our better days we manage to reflect just a little bit the image of Jesus."¹⁴²

Finally, from the work of Friedman and Bowen it is obvious that a healthy congregation will have members who utilize each other for genuine feedback, not as crutches. This will be far easier for the Steadiness and Conscientiousness leader than it will for the Dominant or Influencing leader.¹⁴³

Of all the ways in which a new church behaves like a family, the most critical of all is in differentiation of self. When seeing the church as a family, the single most important element in the senior pastor is the ability to differentiate himself or herself. That leader will stay in touch with his or her professional and lay leaders, and be willing to hear bad news without retaliation. He or she will take clearly and non-reactively defined positions, and will understand there are many who will sabotage the growth of a new church. Understanding that people will say they do want change when in fact the opposite is true, will allow the senior pastor to separate himself from the task he has undertaken, to establish a healthy and mature new church.

¹⁴²Edwin H. Friedman. *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. (New York, New York: The Guilford Press, 1985.), 195-230.

¹⁴³Ibid., 220.

Such differentiation will often determine the length of time a senior pastor is able to serve as the founding pastor of a new congregation.¹⁴⁴ It might also be the reason most church planting agencies would prefer to hire a senior pastor who has one or two ministry experiences under his or her belt. First of all, the person has served on the staff of congregation in an associate pastor position. In that environment the person is able to understand a little about leadership from the perspective of a subordinate. Second, the senior pastor has already planted one congregation and has learned much about what to do and what not to do from that initial church planting experience. It is this researcher's experience that most church planters, when reflecting on the differences between their actions in their first church plant and second church plant, will acknowledge that the most important differences between the two were relational, not procedural.

The information provided by Bowen and Friedman can be of significant assistance to the church planter who is aware of his or her DiSC score. The presentation created for church planting executives in this area will also be given to senior pastors of new churches at Orchard Group, Inc.

In 2010, Bruce M. Dykstra completed a Doctor of Ministry project at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. The title of the project was, *A Successful Plant - Discovering Church Planting Movements In Southern Worcester County*.¹⁴⁵ Dykstra studied 10 new churches in Worcester County, Massachusetts. The congregations were between 3 months and 25 years of age. Dykstra found that the majority of the church

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 221.

¹⁴⁵ Bruce M. Dykstra. *A Successful Plant - Discovering Church Planting Movements In Southern Worcester County*. (South Hamilton, Massachusetts: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2010.)

senior pastors were aligned with the philosophy of Christian Schwarz.¹⁴⁶ He also discovered that the majority of the congregations considered the leadership of the senior pastor to be critical to the growth and development of the congregation. Typical leadership abilities consistent with high Dominant and high Influencing individuals were repeatedly identified as factors in successful church growth.¹⁴⁷

Dykstra concluded that the key to regional church planting growth in Worcester County, Massachusetts was the ability of the senior pastors to guide their churches in the development of church planting movements as defined by David Garrison.¹⁴⁸

David Garrison identified 10 critical factors in churches that were able to create and sustain church planting movements. He said the churches began with a dual focus on extraordinary prayer and abundant evangelism. Third, they began with a strong belief in the authority of God's word. Fourth, their local pastoral leadership was extraordinarily capable. He also found the lay leadership to be extraordinarily capable. They continued with intentional planting of reproducing churches. Seventh, they planted house churches that required lower levels of funding and part-time leadership. Eighth, the churches were planted by other churches, not by denominations. The last two critical factors were defined by Garrison as rapid reproduction and healthy churches.¹⁴⁹

While Garrison noted that local leadership was paramount, he did not define the leadership in terms directly related to the patterns of the DiSC test. On the whole,

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 41.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 96-100.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 100-118

¹⁴⁹ David Garrison. *Church Planting Movements*. (Richmond, Virginia: IMB of SBC, 1999.)
172.

however, his descriptions of effective local leaders were consistent with the leadership style found in mature high Dominant and mature high Influencing leaders. His focus on leadership with house churches was compatible with spiritually mature high Steadiness and high Conscientiousness leaders.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 72-90.

CHAPTER FOUR

GATHERING THE INFORMATION

Research Methodology

The project was implemented with the assistance of the Church Planting Assessment Center and its principal owners, Stadia Church Planting and Orchard Group, Inc. The Church Planting Assessment Center provided data on 133 church planters who were assessed between 1992 and 2007 and subsequently planted churches. Only 55 of the individuals were the lead planters in their respective churches and remained in that position through at least the third anniversary of the church.

Fifty of the 55 qualifying church planters agreed to participate in the study. The participants consisted of lead church planters, otherwise known as senior ministers or pastors of individual new congregations. All participants took part in a four-day Church Planting Assessment Center program between 1992 and 2007, before planting their respective churches. All agreed in writing or via telephone to participate in the study.

The participants were exclusively male, a limitation determined solely by the history of participants in the CPAC assessment.

Reflecting the theological and denominational background of those who have completed an assessment through CPAC, 96 percent of the participants were from the independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ. The remaining 4 percent were from independent evangelical churches not affiliated with any fellowship or

denomination. There were no participants from any of the official Christian denominations.

Primary Data

Since the program began in 1992, the Church Planting Assessment Center has completed a DiSC test on each of the participants as a part of the assessment process. All participants were asked to take the test from the perspective of their work environment. The test used was the DiSC 2800 paper booklet test.¹⁵¹ Those tests were scored by the various licensed psychologists who oversaw each assessment. Scores were recorded by high plotting point, secondary high plotting point, and pattern name on graph three of the DiSC. All scores were kept in the CPAC archives and made available by the CPAC secretary to the researcher upon CPAC approval of participation in the project on May 10, 2011.

The primary data requested for the study was a completed current DiSC test for each senior pastor enrolled in the project. The scoring page from the DiSC 2800 paper booklet test¹⁵² was sent by mail to each participant, with instructions to complete the test from the perspective of the work environment. All participants were given a postage paid reply envelope in which to return the completed scoring page. Each returned test was scored by the researcher, using a DiSC 2800 paper booklet tabulation sheet.

¹⁵¹ DiSC 2800 Series, Inscape Publishing.

¹⁵² *DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800 Series* (Inscape Publishing, 2001.)

Secondary Data

Two types of secondary data included church attendance for each participant's church at the first anniversary of the church and third anniversary of the church, and weekly per capita giving to all church accounts on the first and third anniversaries of the church.

Enrolling Participants and Securing Original DiSC Scores

The 55 names qualifying for the study were contacted by letter in June of 2011 to request their participation in the study.¹⁵³ The respondents were asked to complete forms with the information requested and return them to the researcher.¹⁵⁴ A total of 19 senior pastors responded to the first written request for participation (38 percent.) Those who did not respond to the initial letter were e-mailed in August of 2011, and again in October of 2011. Those who still had not responded were then called to request their participation. All participants had been secured by November 30, 2011. Of the CPAC graduates who qualified for the study, only five people chose not to participate.

All of the participants provided the statistical information requested, either through written form, e-mail, or telephone. All original CPAC DiSC scores were secured by September 30, 2011. All church attendance and per capita giving statistics were secured by November 30, 2011. The majority were secured through e-mail or telephone calls to the administrative staff of the respective churches.

¹⁵³ Appendix A.

¹⁵⁴ Appendix B.

CHAPTER FIVE

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

Analysis of CPAC DiSC Scores

The Church planting Assessment Center provided DiSC scores on 133 individuals who were recommended for church planting between 1992 and 2007. Scores were not included for those who were not recommended for church planting. CPAC personnel reported that fewer than five percent (six people) of those attending CPAC were not approved for church planting. The 133 individuals had the following DiSC scores:

Inspirational Pattern D	62	46.7 percent of participants
Persuader Pattern I	13	9.8 percent of participants
Creative Pattern D	11	8.3 percent of participants
Promoter Pattern I	10	7.5 percent of participants
Perfectionist Pattern C	6	4.5 percent of participants
Results-Oriented Pattern D	6	4.5 percent of participants
Developer Pattern D	6	4.5 percent of participants
Appraiser Pattern I	5	3.7 percent of participants
Counselor Pattern I	3	2.2 percent of participants
Objective Thinker Pattern C	3	2.2 percent of participants
Tight Pattern	3	2.2 percent of participants
Specialist Pattern S	2	1.7 percent of participants

Practitioner Pattern C	2	1.5 percent of participants
Agent Pattern S	1	0.7 percent of participants

Table 4: CPAC Senior Pastor DiSC Scores

Of the 133 CPAC participants who completed DiSC tests and were recommended for church planting, there were none who scored with the Achiever Pattern, the Investigator Pattern, the Overshift Pattern, or the Undershift Pattern.

A total of 96 (86 percent) of CPAC participants scored with a high D or I. Of the 133 CPAC participants who completed DiSC tests and were recommended for church planting, only 55 (47 percent) qualified for the study, and only 50 (43 percent) chose to participate in the study. Those 50 original CPAC scores are as follows:

Inspirational Pattern D	26	52 percent of participants
Results-Oriented Pattern D	6	12 percent of participants
Promoter Pattern I	4	8 percent of participants
Creative Pattern D	3	6 percent of participants
Perfectionist Pattern C	3	6 percent of participants
Persuader Pattern I	3	6 percent of participants
Appraiser Pattern I	2	4 percent of participants
Specialist Pattern S	2	4 percent of participants
Objective Thinker Pattern C	1	2 percent of participants
Nine Total DiSC Patterns	50 participants	100 percent of participants

Table 5: DiSC Pattern Scores of Project Participants

Analysis of Participant DiSC Scores

This section will contain the analysis of DiSC scores of the 50 participants in the project. Unfortunately, the clustering of DiSC scores around the Inspirational Pattern made any significant quantitative analysis difficult. After the 26 Inspirational Pattern participants, the next highest cluster was the six participants with the Results-Oriented Pattern. Therefore quantitative analysis between the various pattern types was not possible.

It was possible, however, to do a quantitative analysis comparing the 50 project participants to the 133 CPAC attendees who were recommended for the senior pastor position in a new church. There were 62 CPAC attendees with the Inspirational pattern (46.7 percent of participants) and 26 project participants with the Inspirational Pattern (52 percent.)

The pattern names of the 50 project participants paralleled the pattern names of the 133 approved by CPAC for the lead church planting position. The top six pattern names in the CPAC list were identical with the top six pattern names in the project participant list, though in a different order. A total of 96 (86 percent) of approved CPAC participants had a pattern with either a high D or a high I. A total of 42 (84 percent) of project participants had a pattern with either a high D or a high I, only two percentage points less than the CPAC attendees.

After the Inspirational Pattern, the next five patterns comprised 34.6 percent of CPAC participants. Those same five patterns comprised 36 percent of project participants, a difference of only 1.4 percent.

With a small sample and two groups, a Spearman Rho correlation was run on the first six types in both groups. While the Inspirational Pattern was first for both groups,

the correlation for the first six project participant types and the first six CPAC attendee types was $r = .03$. With 1.0 indicating a strong positive correlation and -1.0 indicating a strong negative correlation, .03 would indicate that the rank order had almost no relationship even though the first six factors were the same.

Pattern	CPAC	Study
Inspirational Pattern	62	26
Persuader Pattern	13	3
Creative Pattern	11	3
Promoter Pattern	10	3
Perfectionist Pattern	6	3
Results-Oriented Pattern	6	6
Pattern	CPAC	Study
Inspirational Pattern	1	1
Persuader Pattern	2	2
Creative Pattern	3	2
Promoter Pattern	4	2
Perfectionist Pattern	5	2
Results-Oriented Pattern	6	3
Spearman Rho Correlation	$r = 0.0341$	Virtually no relationship in rank order

Table 6: Spearman Rho Correlation of Project and CPAC Planters

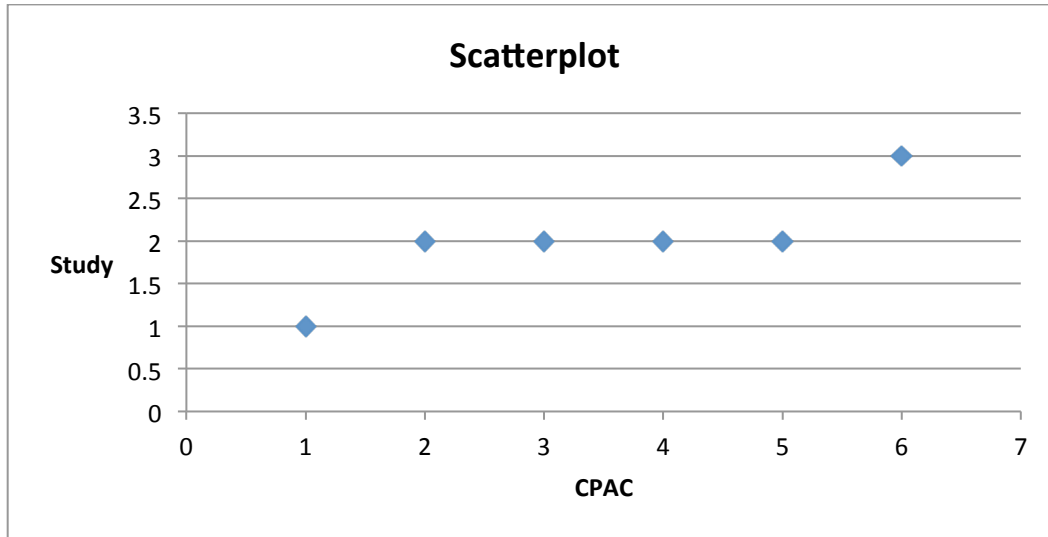


Figure 1: Spearman Rho Scatterplot

A total of 18.7 percent of approved CPAC participants had the remaining 14 pattern profiles that were recorded by CPAC. As previously stated, four of the 18 patterns did not have any matches with CPAC approved participants. A total of 12 percent of project participants had one of the remaining four profile patterns, also a difference of only 6.7 percent from the total CPAC participants. In addition to the absence of any CPAC participant scoring the Achiever Pattern, Investigator Pattern, Overshift Pattern, or Undershift Pattern, among project participants there were also none with the Agent Pattern, Counselor Pattern, Practitioner Pattern, or Tight Pattern. Therefore only 9 of the 18 DiSC patterns were represented in the study.

From the above information it is evident that the 50 project participants are an accurate sampling of the 133 individuals approved for church planting through CPAC.

Analysis of DiSC Scores and Church Attendance and Offerings

This section will contain the analysis of DiSC scores and compare them with church attendance and per capita giving for the churches planted by the project participants.

The 50 churches reported a total cumulative attendance of 8433 at the end of year one, for an average attendance of 169 per church. The lowest first year average attendance was 35 and the highest was 558. The church with 558 was the only congregation in the study that was a daughter church of another congregation. The second highest attendance average at the end of year one was 397.

The 50 churches reported a total cumulative attendance of 12,750 at the end of the third year, for an average attendance of 255 per church. That was an average attendance increase of 51 percent from year one to year three for the 50 churches studied. The smallest attendance average at the end of year three was 52 and the largest was 751. The church reporting the smallest year three attendance was the same church that reported the smallest year one attendance. The church reporting the largest three year attendance was the church reporting the second highest attendance in year one.

The 50 churches reported an average per capita giving to all church accounts of \$18.32 at the end of year one and \$22.27 at the end of year three, an increase of \$3.95, or 22 percent. The lowest per capita giving at the end of year one was \$8.00 and the largest per capita giving at the end of year one was \$30.00. The lowest giving at the end of year three was \$9.76 and the largest giving at the end of year three was \$44.67.

	Attendance	Per Capita Giving
Total Year One	8,433	916.10

Average Year One	169	18.32
Total Year Three	12,750	1,113.73
Average Year Three	255 - 51% growth	22.27 - 22% growth

Table 7: 50 Participating Churches Attendance and Per Capita Giving

All but one of the 50 churches surveyed were parachute drop church plants begun without a nucleus of believers. The churches grew from an average of zero to 169 in attendance in the first year of their existence. Between the end of year one and the end of year three they grew an additional 51 percent to an average attendance of 255. Those growth averages would be consistent with the growth of new evangelical churches over the past two decades.

During the 1980s and 1990s there was a surge in attendance growth in new churches in the United States. Some of the growth can be attributed to the Charles E. Fuller Institute and its willingness to serve as an aggregator of information about evangelical church plants. Through their efforts many denominations and church planting organizations came together to share best practices to increase church planting effectiveness. As these groups shared information, the emergence of the senior pastor as critical to the success of the new church became readily apparent. Through the previously referenced work of Dr. Charles Riddley¹⁵⁵, a template was established to assist church planting executives in hiring the most effective senior pastors for new churches.

The results of the broad cooperation brought about the significant numerical growth of new churches evidenced in the 50 churches participating in this study. All but

¹⁵⁵ Charles Riddley, *How To Select Church Planters - A Self-Study Manual*. (Pasadena, CA. Fuller Evangelistic Association, 1988).

one of the churches was begun as a parachute drop church plant, yet they averaged 169 in total attendance at the end of year one and 255 attendance at the end of year three. At least 10 of the participating churches are averaging over 1,000 in attendance at the time of the completion of this study.

Not only have the participating churches grown numerically, they have also grown in giving. Giving growth over the three year period was 22 percent. With attendance growth at 51 percent, one might expect a higher per capita giving increase. Most likely the 22 percent per capita increase is a result of the fact that over half of the churches were led by senior pastors with the Inspirational Pattern, and those churches actually declined in giving by 13 percent from year one to year three. Another reason for the lower income growth may be the relatively high number of converts in new churches. The period of time before those converts become tithers is significant. Therefore giving increases usually lag behind attendance increases. Nevertheless, a 22 percent giving increase in two years could be considered a sign of good church health.

Attendance and giving averages at the end of year one were based on average attendance and giving in each Sunday in the twelfth month of the new church. Attendance and giving averages at the end of year three were based on average attendance and giving in each Sunday in the thirty-sixth month of the new church.

There were a total of nine different DiSC patterns represented in the 50 participants in the study. The results of growth and giving in the churches led by those individuals is indicated in table seven.

Pattern Name & Number of Participants	Year 1 Average Attendance	Year 3 Average Attendance Growth %	Year 1 Per Capita Giving	Year 3 Per Capita Giving Growth %
Inspirational 26	178	282 58%	25.89	22.58 -13%
Results Orient. 6	145	231 59%	19.27	25.89 34%
Promoter 4	160	252 58%	11.66	18.37 58%
Creative 3	100	114 14%	20.55	26.92 31%
Perfectionist 3	209	268 28%	17.77	18.48 4%
Persuader 3	109	231 112%	16.37	17.25 5%
Appraiser 2	151	180 19%	20.21	25.82 28%
Specialist 2	87	82 -6%	15.48	16.40 6%
Objective Thinker - 1	558	677 22%	20.21	25.48 26%

Table 8: Participant Patterns and Averages

Among the project participants, the highest percentage attendance growth (112 percent) came in the churches led by senior pastors with the Persuader Pattern. Since there were only three individuals in that category, however, the statistical significance of that growth is limited.

The Inspirational, Results-Oriented and Promoter patterns, the top three in terms of numbers of participants, shared almost identical numerical growth percentages, between 58 and 59 percent. With the exception of the Persuader Pattern, the percentage growth of the remaining patterns was less than half the growth of those three patterns.

While the three top patterns in terms of numbers of participants had almost identical attendance growth percentages, they differed significantly in per capita giving growth. The Promoter Pattern leaders had a 58 percent increase in giving. The Results-Oriented Pattern leaders had a 34 percent increase in giving. The Inspirational Pattern

leaders had a 13 percent decline in giving. The reasons for those differences are unclear. It is possible that churches led by Inspiration Pattern leaders have more convert growth, which generally results in lower per capita giving. It is also possible that Inspirational leaders are not as effective in motivating members to give than leaders from the other two patterns. Further study is warranted in this area.

Regardless of the reason, it is clear that Inspirational Pattern leaders are among the most effective in creating an environment of numerical growth, and among the least effective in creating an environment of financial growth.

While a total of nine different patterns were represented in the study, the top four patterns (Persuader, Inspirational, Results-Oriented, Promoter) experienced numerical growth that was at least double that of the other five patterns. It is important to note, however, that in all but one pattern represented in the study, the Specialist Pattern, there was at least one church that experienced growth equal to or greater than the average growth of the top four patterns. There are many factors other than personality type that impact the growth of new churches.

While numerical growth was clearly clustered in four of the nine pattern types represented in the study, per capita offering growth was more varied. There were five patterns that had giving growth above 20 percent. The Promoter Pattern was highest at 58 percent, an identical number to the numerical growth of the Promoter leaders. Second highest was the Results Oriented Pattern, with 34 percent giving growth. The Creative Pattern followed with 31 percent, the Appraiser Pattern with 28 percent, and the Objective Thinker Pattern (with only one project participant) at 26 percent.

With the exception of the Promoter Pattern, the other four patterns reflect a high C element on the DiSC test. This might be an indication that leaders of these pattern types are more inclined than the other types to develop detailed plans and strategies for increasing giving in the new church. This would appear to be particularly true in comparison to the Inspirational Pattern leaders, who had an actual drop of 13 percent in giving from year one to year three.

The reason the Promoter Pattern leaders excelled at giving growth may be due to the specific situations of the four project participants with the Promoter Pattern. If there were more Promoter Pattern project participants, the growth percentages might change significantly.

Only the Inspirational Pattern leaders appeared in numbers sufficient to assure a more reliable measure of new church growth. With 26 project participants (52 percent), the Inspirational Pattern provided more trustworthy data than any other pattern type. The numerically second highest pattern, the Results Oriented Pattern, had only six participants. The lack of comparable groups made it impossible to do any meaningful quantitative analysis. Therefore the analysis done was qualitative, identifying observable adjustments and changes among the various patterns and the churches they represented.

Analysis of Current DiSC Scores

This section will contain the analysis of current DiSC scores and compare them to DiSC scores received at the time of assessment by the Church Planting Assessment Center.

All 50 participants received an updated DiSC test via mail between May 15 and July 15, 2011. They were asked to return the completed test to the researcher.

Participants were given the option of returning the scoring page via mail, fax, or computer scan.

Fifteen respondents completed an updated DiSC scoring page and returned it to the researcher by August 15, 2011. None of the 15 attempted to score the test themselves. All were scored by the researcher. Another four DiSC tests were submitted between August 16 and September 15, 2011. None of the four attempted to score the test themselves. All four were received and scored by the researcher.

After the initial request, the remaining 30 participants were contacted via e-mail and telephone three times each between October 1 and November 1 to complete the DiSC test that had been sent to them, and return the scoring page to the researcher.¹⁵⁶ Despite these efforts no additional tests were returned.

The 19 current DiSC tests that were submitted scored as follows:

Inspirational Pattern D	11	57.9 percent of participants
Results-Oriented Pattern D	4	21.0 percent of participants
Creative Pattern D	2	10.5 percent of participants
Objective-Thinker Pattern C	1	05.3 percent of participants
Promoter Pattern I	1	05.3 percent of participants

Table 9: Current DiSC Patterns of Project Participants

Thirteen of the 19 tests (68.4 percent) showed no change in DiSC pattern from the time of the original CPAC administered test to the time of the current DiSC test. Of the approximately one third of participants remaining, there were few changes of significance. Six of the 19 tests (31.6 percent) showed a change in DiSC results from the time of assessment to the time of the current DiSC test. None of the six had identical pattern changes. Three of the participants did have a change from the Persuader Pattern

¹⁵⁶ Appendix C.

to a different DiSC pattern, though none of the three shared the same current DiSC pattern. The changed scores were as follows:

Persuader Pattern to Promoter Pattern	1 participant
Persuader Pattern to Results-Oriented	1 participant
Persuader Pattern to Inspirational Pattern	1 participant
Results-Oriented to Inspirational Pattern	1 participant
Inspirational Pattern to Creative Pattern	1 participant
Perfectionist Pattern to Objective Thinker	1 participant

Table 10: Changes in DiSC Score from CPAC to Current Test

It was significant that fewer than one-third (31.6 percent) of those who submitted current DiSC scores had any change from the time of the original DiSC test. Over two-thirds (68.4 percent) scored the same in the current test as in the original test. Those findings agree with the previously noted Inscape Publishing studies that relatively few changes occur in repeated administrations of the DiSC test.¹⁵⁷

It should also be noted that on a DiSC graph, the change from Perfectionist Pattern to Objective Thinker Pattern is relatively minor, with a drop in score in only one area, the "S" portion of the test. On a DiSC graph, the change from Results-Oriented Pattern to Inspirational Pattern is also relatively minor, with a slight increase in score in only one area, the "I" portion of the test. The change from Persuader Pattern to Inspirational Pattern is also minor, with a change in only one area, a slight increase on the "D" score. The change from Persuader Pattern to Results-Oriented Pattern is also minor, with only one change, a slight increase on the "D" score.

The only change among the six that involved a shift in more than one of the four areas of the test was the shift from Inspirational Pattern to Creative Pattern. That shift

¹⁵⁷ *DiSC Validation Research Report*. (Inscape Publishing, 2005), 11.

brought a significant drop in the "I" portion of the test and a significant increase in the "C" portion of the test.

Therefore, of the six who scored a different pattern in their current DiSC test, only one of the six involved a change in more than one of the four areas of the DiSC test. That one participant's score shift in two of the four areas.

A total of 68.4 percent of the repeated DiSC tests brought scores virtually identical to the original test. Of the 31.6 percent (six of 19) that had a shift in DiSC pattern, 83.3 percent (five out of six) had a shift in only one of the four areas of the test. Therefore, a total of 94.7 percent of those who submitted a current DiSC test had either the same pattern as in the original CPAC test, or a pattern that shifted in only one of the four areas scored by the DiSC test.

From those results it is evident that the participants in this study reinforce the repeated findings of Inscape Publishing that relatively few changes occur in repeated administrations of the DiSC test.¹⁵⁸

After numerous repeated promptings, the remaining 31 participants did not choose to submit a current DiSC test. The reasons for their lack of compliance after agreeing to be a part of the project study are unknown to the researcher. It is possible that providing attendance and offering numbers was seen as quick and simple, while taking another DiSC test was seen as too time consuming. With the results above, however, it can be fairly assumed that few changes would have been recorded in the current DiSC scores of those who did not submit a current test.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

CHAPTER SIX

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Reflections on the Research Methodology

The tool used, the DiSC test, has proven to be popular in the ministry environment. Unlike other psychological testing instruments that need to be evaluated by an individual certified in the test, the DiSC test is self-scoring and provides immediate useful data to the participant. In group settings in which the DiSC test is completed, this researcher has found that people begin to appreciate the test when they chart their own high plotting points and secondary high plotting points. From those plotting points the DiSC 2800 series provides a basic description of each of the four personality types - Dominant, Influencing, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness. As individuals begin to identify with the descriptions and calls for action presented within their highest scoring area or areas, spontaneous conversation among participants begins in earnest.

As individuals are directed to their specific profile pattern there is usually silence in the room, followed by nods of agreement and renewed conversation. This researcher has found the test to be almost universally enjoyed and appreciated in hundreds of group experiences. It is this researcher's opinion that the best way to take the DiSC test is in a group environment where self-scoring and analysis are all completed as a group. It enables the group to better understand how to interact with one another, based on the

results of the test. Therefore it is not only meaningful to the individual, but equally meaningful to the synergy of the group.

Unfortunately, bringing the 50 project participants together in a single location to take the test was not feasible. Additionally, the initial DiSC test completed by the Church Planting Assessment Center was done in an individual environment, not in the group CPAC environment.

An additional benefit of taking the test in a group environment is that this researcher's opinion is that there are a few weaknesses in the descriptions provided in the DiSC 2800 series. The group environment allows the participants to receive instruction that enhances the value of the test.

This researcher has discovered that two of the profile patterns, the Results-Oriented Pattern and the Inspirational Pattern, have descriptions that are experienced by participants as weighted toward the negative. The researcher has also experienced that the pattern names can be disconcerting to those taking the test, since they arrive with pre-conceived notions about the meaning of the terms used. For example, very few with the Perfectionist Pattern will acknowledge that they are perfectionists. Many may not, in fact, be perfectionists. This researcher has also discovered that most people do not define those with a Creative Pattern as being particularly creative. To ameliorate the scoring process, this researcher suggests that participants read the pattern descriptions, but not give as much weight to pattern names. The researcher also pre-emptively informs those with the Results-Oriented (high Dominance) and Inspirational Pattern (high Dominance) that those descriptions are perceived by many as weighted toward the negative.

Fortunately individuals with those two patterns have a high Dominance, and are rarely troubled by the negativity in the descriptions.

Although it is preferable to complete the DiSC in a group environment, as easy as the test is to score and with accurate and easy to understand descriptions, it is possible for individuals taking the test on their own to gain significant insight into their preferred operating style.

The researcher gave all participants the option of a half-hour telephone call to discuss the results of their DiSC tests. The researcher desired to provide an environment in which project participants could receive enhanced explanation of their test scores, including the findings mentioned above. Surprisingly only five (10 percent of the participants) opted for the telephone conversation. In those conversations the researcher was able to explain the deeper and more subtle meanings of the pattern descriptions, and the reasons for variations between graphs one, two, and three. The five individuals who did avail themselves of the opportunity to debrief the test scores expressed appreciation for the additional information. It also provided the researcher with the opportunity to see the DiSC patterns at work in the context of the debriefing conversations.

The researcher opted to have the participants return the entire graph page of their current DiSC scores. Not only did that assure accurate scoring, it also contributed to the researcher's growing knowledge of subtle differences between the three graphs. It would have been helpful if the original graph pages from the CPAC process had been available. The researcher was grateful that at least the pattern names, and the high and secondary high plotting points from graph three of the DiSC 2800 series, were included in the archival material made available by CPAC.

Via email all project participants received a two-page summary of the project findings.¹⁵⁹

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Project

The researcher was very pleased that 50 of the 55 individuals who qualified for the study chose to participate. That indicated a high level of interest in the findings. Many of those participating are now regularly involved in selecting future church planters to lead other new congregations. Many of those who are not currently involved in the selection process will be doing so within the next few years. All seem to be aware of the usefulness of the DiSC test in the ministry environment, and see it as a helpful pre-qualifying tool.

The researcher was disappointed that only 55 CPAC attendees qualified for the study. Over 200 people have been assessed by the Church Planting Assessment Center, and those who direct the program thought there might be as many as 133 who would qualify for the study, since that is how many were approved for church planting as senior pastors. In determining which candidates qualified for the study, however, it was determined that many did not go into church planting. Others became involved in church planting, but not in North America. Still others ended up taking associate positions in new churches as opposed to lead positions.

Though only 55 CPAC attendees qualified, the researcher was very pleased that 50 (90.9 percent) chose to participate in the study. The researcher expected to find many CPAC attendees who had served as senior pastors in new churches, but did not remain in the position for the requisite three years. There were in fact no CPAC lead planters who

¹⁵⁹ Appendix D.

did not remain in their churches for at least three years. This finding was surprising and welcome. Nevertheless, the researcher was disappointed that it was not possible to secure at least 75 participants for the study.

The most significant finding different from that expected when the project was undertaken was the clustering of the project participants in only one of the DiSC pattern types, the Inspirational Pattern. Twenty-six of the 50 participants scored with the Inspirational Pattern, 51 percent of the participants. The next highest pattern type was the Results-Oriented Pattern, with six participants. The total number of participants, coupled with the clustering in just one of the patterns, made any type of quantitative analysis difficult.

Another finding different from that expected was the return rate (38 percent) for current DiSCs. As previously noted, the researcher made multiple contacts via several avenues to prompt the participants to return a current DiSC test. That only 19 chose to do so was a disappointment. That disappointment was alleviated once the researcher scored the current DiSC tests. A total of 13 (68.4 percent) of those current DiSC tests scored identical pattern names as the original CPAC administered test. Of the six (31.6 percent) whose current DiSC pattern had changed from the CPAC administered test, five of those changes (83.3 percent) involved a test score that shifted in only one of the four areas scored on the DiSC test. Therefore 18 (94.7 percent) of those who returned current DiSC tests had either identical pattern names to the original CPAC administered test, or pattern names that shifted in only one of the four areas scored on the DiSC test. Again, however, the poor return rate made any quantitative analysis difficult.

The researcher recognized that the majority of the project participants would come from the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, because that is the Christian community that most utilizes the Church Planting Assessment Center. However, over the last three years CPAC attendees have been coming from a number of different denominations. None of those individuals qualified for the study because their churches are not at least three years of age. A study completed in the future will have better cross-denominational participation.

Another unexpected finding of the project was the reality that 49 of the 50 churches were parachute drop church plants. One plant, however, was a daughter church plant from a megachurch. The senior pastor of the daughter church was the only individual in the study with the Objective Thinker Pattern. That created a false finding that the Objective Thinker Pattern was one of the most effective patterns in terms of church growth.

Unexpected Positive and Negative Impacts

One of the unexpected positive impacts of the study was the specificity of the participants. All but two were Christian Church or Church of Christ senior pastors. For the researcher and those involved in the independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, that actually made the study more helpful than if it included participants from a number of other denominations. For those of other denominations, however, the results of the project will be less valuable.

Another unexpected positive impact was the above referenced uniformity of scores from the time of assessment to the time of this study. Though only 19 participants returned current DiSC tests, 18 of the 19 (94.7 percent) scored the two same high plotting

points as they did at the time of assessment, indicating that few changes can be expected in the operating style of church planters from the time of assessment through the third anniversary of the church.

There were some results of the study that were neither positive nor negative, but interesting nevertheless. The most interesting was the change in results from the study completed by this researcher and Rick Rusaw in 1990. Both studied 50 church planters. In that study the Persuader Pattern was presented in higher numbers than any other pattern type, with 17 participants. In this study there were only three project participants who scored with the Persuader Pattern. The Inspirational Pattern had the second highest number of participants in the 1990 study, with 14 participants.¹⁶⁰ In this study, there were 26 leaders with the Inspirational Pattern, 52 percent of the project participants. That shift from Persuader Pattern to Inspirational Pattern is significant for new churches.

According to the DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800, Persuader Pattern leaders push toward their own objectives while working with people to gain their respect and confidence. They demonstrate the ability to gain the confidence of a variety of different types of individuals. They have the ability to draw people to themselves, while keeping their own goals and objectives foremost on the agenda. Persuader Pattern individuals prefer environments in which they work with people, are challenged in their work, and are able to work in a variety of different environments. They enjoy work assignments in which they will look good to those with whom they work.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Paul Williams and Rick Rusaw. *Leadership and the Church Planter*. (Cincinnati Bible Seminary, 1990.), 48.

¹⁶¹ *DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800 Series* (Inscape Publishing, 2001), 17

Persuader Pattern individuals are naturally optimistic, and while that has positive elements, it can also have a negative impact. They tend to over-estimate other people's abilities. Unfortunately, they are particularly inclined to over-estimate their own ability to change the behavior of others.

Persuader Pattern individuals prefer to be free from routine and repetitive behaviors, which results in a need for them to work with individuals who will give great attention to details, systems, and management.¹⁶²

According to the DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800, Inspirational Pattern individuals are people who want to modify the thoughts and actions of others. Desiring to control their environment, they identify the motives of another and then work to manipulate that person's behavior toward their own identified ends. While Inspirational Pattern people know the results they desire, they do not always immediately verbalize them to others. They are excellent at providing friendship to those wanting acceptance, authority to those seeking power, and security to those desiring a predictable environment. Once those have been achieved, they then state their own goals and desires.

People often report being drawn toward, yet distanced by Inspirational Pattern individuals. If the Inspirational Pattern individual is less mature, others will tend to feel manipulated and used by these leaders. Less mature Inspirational Pattern individuals are also inclined to create an environment of fear and override the decisions of others. More

¹⁶² Ibid., 17.

mature Inspirational Pattern individuals, however, prefer to accomplish goals through cooperation and persuasion, not domination.¹⁶³

According to the DiSC Classic Personal Profile System 2800, while Persuader Pattern individuals trust others and are enthusiastic, Inspirational Pattern individuals accept aggression and downplay the need for affection. The goal of a Persuader is authority and prestige, while the goal of an Inspirational Pattern person is the control of their environment. Both influence others through their verbal skills. The Persuader does it in a friendly and open manner, while the Inspirational Pattern individual uses charm, direction, and the use of rewards. They will also occasionally use intimidation to achieve their goals.¹⁶⁴

Persuader Pattern leaders tend to judge others by their ability to express themselves and by their flexibility. Inspirational Pattern leaders judge others by their projection of personal strength, character and social power. In the organizational environment, Persuaders delegate responsibility, show poise and confidence, and close deals. Those with the Inspirational Pattern initiate new programs, get fellow-workers to achieve related goals, and discipline those who do not. Persuaders overuse enthusiasm and optimism. Inspirational Pattern people overuse the Machiavellian approach that the end justifies the means. Under pressure they can become manipulative, quarrelsome, and belligerent. Under pressure Persuaders, in their desire to look good, become indecisive and easily persuaded. Persuaders fear a fixed environment with complex relationships. Inspirational Pattern people fear weak behavior and loss of social status. Persuaders

¹⁶³ Ibid.,16.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.,16,17.

would increase their effectiveness through attention to details and objective data analysis. Inspirational Pattern people would increase their effectiveness through genuine sensitivity, and a willingness to help others succeed.¹⁶⁵

The differences between these two patterns are significant and considerable. Based on known personality characteristics, Persuader Pattern senior pastors could be expected to create a stronger team spirit than those with the Inspirational Pattern. They are also likely to retain staff for a longer period of time than those with the Inspirational Pattern. While Persuader senior pastors do not want to attend to details, they are generally open to accepting help from executive pastors or administrators who are attentive to details and day-to-day management concerns. Many Persuader Pattern leaders have long-term relationships with their key "detail people." Given these leadership gifts, it was no wonder that Persuader Pattern leaders scored highest in new church growth, and highest in total numbers of participants in the 1990 study completed by Williams and Rusaw.

In this study, however, it was the Inspirational Pattern leaders who were in the majority. These individuals are more likely to experience a high staff turnover than Persuaders. In the new church environment, the identity of the senior pastor is a stronger indicator of growth than his or her ability to create a stable staff environment.

An area of consideration for future study is to determine why this senior pastor pattern predominance has changed in the past 22 years. Is it a reflection of a broader cultural shift that has Inspirational Pattern leaders in more predominant leadership in the corporate environment? If that is true, then it is counter to Jim Collin's book *Good to*

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 16,17

Great, in which he identifies Level Four leaders as individuals who would likely score with a DiSC Inspirational Pattern. From this researcher's knowledge of the DiSC test, it would appear that Level Five leaders would likely score with one of the other strong church planting patterns. Persuader Pattern, Results-Oriented Pattern, and Creative Pattern leaders seem to have the strengths that appear in a Level Five leader.¹⁶⁶

One might also wonder what type of theological shift has taken place in the last 20 years that would cause a pattern shift in church planting leaders. In the 1990s many Christian Churches and Churches of Christ were elder led congregations. Over the past 20 years, however, more and more churches have adopted Carver Policy Governance as a governance model. In Carver Policy Governance, the CEO of a corporation is responsible for the means of the organization, while the board is responsible for the ends of the organization. Staff members report to the CEO, not the corporate board. The board does not interact with staff in any official capacity. All interaction with staff is done through the CEO. Much power is therefore concentrated in the CEO.¹⁶⁷ With more and more new churches adopting Carver Policy Governance, more power is concentrated in the senior pastor. This is particularly true in new churches. Since churches adopt Carver Policy Governance rather than adapt it to a more scripturally correct model, the amount of power placed in the hands of the senior pastor is often harmful to the health of the church.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ Jim Collins, *Good to Great*, 2001, 36.

¹⁶⁷ John Carver. *Boards That Make A Difference*, 1997.

¹⁶⁸ Don Green. *Adapting Policy Governance For Elder Governance*. (Cincinnati, Ohio: Christian Standard Magazine, 2012.)

The most concerning implication of this study is in the surprising discovery that of the 133 CPAC attendees approved for senior ministry positions between 1992 and 2007, a total of 62 (46.7 percent) were individuals who scored with the Inspirational Pattern. All the other patterns combined totaled only 71 people (53.3 percent). Only three other patterns had at least 10 people who scored with that pattern. Those were the Persuader Pattern, Creative Pattern and the Promoter Pattern. Therefore, a total of 96 people, (72 percent) scored with one of four DiSC patterns. With a total of 18 DiSC patterns, it was very surprising that over two thirds of CPAC senior minister candidates scored in only four of the 18 patterns.

When asked by the researcher how many candidates presented themselves for consideration as new church senior pastors, but were not recommended by CPAC for church planting, CPAC personnel informed the researcher that those statistics are not recorded. They did estimate, however, that over 90 percent of those who attend CPAC are recommended for the position for which they are being considered. The significance of that approval rate is that it can be fairly assumed that if those who did not receive approval for the lead position were included in the total count, the results would still be similar. In fact, when asked if those who did not receive a recommendation had a particular DiSC pattern, CPAC personnel indicated that the majority were individuals who had an Inspirational Pattern or Creative Pattern. Therefore it would be safe to estimate that close to 50 percent of those who attended CPAC with the desire to be approved as senior pastors of new churches were individuals with the Inspirational Pattern.

When the field was narrowed to the 50 participants, the percentages were still quite unbalanced. A total of 26 of the project participants (52 percent) scored with the Inspirational Pattern. A total of six (12 percent) scored with the Results-Oriented Pattern. The Promoter pattern had four participants (eight percent,) while the Creative Pattern, Perfectionist Pattern, and Persuader Pattern had three participants each (six percent.) A total of 88 percent of project participants scored with one of the top six patterns. A total of 81.3 percent of CPAC participants scored with one of the same six patterns.

This researcher was disturbed by the observed narrowing of the potential pool of church planting candidates for the senior pastor position. The Church Planting Assessment Center is one of only a few church planting assessment centers in North America, and certainly the center with the longest history and highest number of participants. The researcher was very surprised that 46.7 percent of CPAC approved senior pastor candidates scored with the Inspirational Pattern, and that 72 percent scored with either the Inspirational Pattern, Persuader Pattern, Promoter Pattern or Creative Pattern.

It is possible that those who are drawn to the rigors of church planting in the United States are individuals clustered in the Inspirational Pattern, and the next three top patterns. It is possible that current approaches to church planting are more appealing to individuals with this personality type than individuals with other types.

It is also possible that those who recruit church planters have shown a predisposition toward individuals with one of those four patterns, so that candidates with one of the other 11 patterns (not including the Tight, Undershift, or Overshift patterns) are simply not being recruited to church planting. If that is the case, is it because in the

past those individuals with the other 11 patterns have shown less competence as church planters? In this study eight of the nine pattern types showed at least one church that had growth in attendance and giving significantly above the average of all 50 churches. It would appear that it is possible for individuals with virtually any of the DiSC types to be successful in church planting.

Among the types that showed less numerical and giving growth, is the lack of growth a sign of basic personal incompatibility or is it a sign of inadequate education, preparation, coaching and mentoring of those who are not in one of the top growth patterns? The answers to these questions are important, and further research is needed to see what elements, if any, could increase effectiveness in church planting among all personality types.

As to the selection of Inspirational Pattern candidates, many of those who are church planting supervisors are themselves church planters or former church planters. Could it be that those who are recruiting church planters are showing a predisposition toward recruiting those who have personalities similar to their own? Again, the information behind the selection process is unknown and worthy of serious future study.

From the descriptions above it could be argued that many with the Inspirational Pattern can be more prone to abusing power than those with many of the other personality types. Desiring to control their environment, Inspirational Pattern individuals identify the motives of another and then work to manipulate that person's behavior toward their own identified ends. They tend to accept aggression and downplay the need

for affection. They often use intimidation and can be manipulative, quarrelsome, and belligerent.¹⁶⁹

With these potential characteristics, it is dangerous when immature Inspirational Pattern individuals gain too much control and do not have adequate supervision in the new church environment. A church may grow numerically and financially, but the infrastructure of the congregation could be spiritually and relationally unhealthy. This project only studied growth through the third anniversary of the new church. One wonders if the same growth patterns would be evident for Inspirational Pattern leaders if the study continued through the tenth or twentieth anniversary of the new church? Would they be able to sustain growth for a longer period of time? Again, this would be an area worthy of further study.

The clustering of church planters under the Inspirational Pattern may be a result of the push for new churches to grow rapidly. America continues to be enamored with the megachurch, and Inspirational Pattern leaders demonstrate an ability to see their churches grow quickly. However, Results-Oriented, Promoter, and Persuader pattern leaders also show a demonstrated ability to see their churches grow quickly, yet they appear in far fewer numbers in the current church planting environment.

As to the other types that do not show strong numerical growth, what changes might occur if the American church returns to a church size more reflective of the long history of the church in America. In that environment we would see more churches planted that do not intend to grow to megachurch status. With the growing focus on the missional church, it is possible we will see such a shift sooner rather than later. If that is

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 16-17.

the case, will we also begin recruiting more church planters from the other profile patterns? Only time will tell.

In the current environment in which new churches are expected to grow rapidly, this apparent focus on heavily recruiting Inspirational leaders into church planting could cause agencies hiring senior pastors to overlook candidates who may have one of the patterns that did not score highly in the test, but who would in fact be superb church planters. For instance, at the time of this writing, the ministry with which this researcher is affiliated, Orchard Group, Inc. has two senior pastors with the Perfectionist Pattern. Judged by attendance and per capita giving, both are quite successful and effective church planters, though they do not have the usual high Influencing and high Dominant personalities.

Any time psychological tests are used as a replacement for behaviorally based interviews there will be a tendency to exclude those who do not score within the narrow window that has been most successful in the new church environment. That is not healthy for the church at several levels. If churches are planted by those with only one personality type, then those churches will begin to show the limitations and weaknesses of that particular type. It could be argued that the megachurch in America is an example of the narrowing of the senior pastor selection process to only a few of the personality types. Megachurches tend to have similar strengths and weaknesses, often attributable to the personality of the senior pastor. If an inordinate number of those pastors are individuals with the Inspirational Pattern, the weaknesses of that pattern will become evident in the churches they serve.

One of the greatest concerns of the current fixation on those with the Inspirational Pattern is that many spiritually qualified ministers who feel called to church planting are denied the opportunities and resources to plant churches. Had they come into ministry in a different generation they would have had an easier time entering the type of ministry to which they felt called.

The church is always adapting and changing to the environment of which it is a part. The current focus of church planting on rapid growth and senior pastors who have the Inspirational Pattern is an adaptation with significant weaknesses. That the statistics presented in this study do not warrant such an extreme focus on recruiting and hiring Inspirational Pattern leaders is an indictment against the current recruiting and hiring practices. More must be done to broaden the pool of effective church planting senior pastors. ¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 72-90.

CHAPTER SEVEN
LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

Response of the Researcher

This researcher was significantly impacted through the process of completing this project. The researcher was first educated in the DiSC test in 1989. Since that time the researcher has completed thousands of DiSC tests in a plethora of environments. Never, however, was a study done to specifically tie the results of the DiSC test to successful growth in the new church. In the 1990 study completed by the researcher and Rick Rusaw, a correlation was found between church attendance and DiSC results, but the sample group was limited and the process and methodologies were inadequate.

In this study the researcher was again surprised by the accuracy of the DiSC test as a predictor of behavior. It was particularly helpful to the researcher to seriously study the historical background of the DiSC. It gave the researcher a much deeper understanding of the history of the test. That understanding has already paid significant benefits in recent environments in which the test has been given.

It was also helpful for the researcher to seriously study the theological implications of using personality tests in ministry. The researcher had never seriously considered whether or not tools like the DiSC test were compatible with scripture. The researcher was pleased to discover that while scripture certainly does not endorse the use of such tests, it does show a great compatibility with psychological testing.

The researcher was intrigued with and disturbed by the concentration of DiSC scores in the Inspirational Pattern. This brought several areas of personal concern. First, the researcher began to consider if he had shown a predisposition toward individuals with the Inspirational Pattern when pre-screening potential church planters for assessment center attendance. While the researcher realized he is personally most comfortable with church planting leaders who are Persuader Pattern or Appraiser Pattern individuals, he also realized he has intuitively known that Inspirational Pattern candidates have a high success rate and therefore should be seriously considered for church planting.

The researcher is not sure whether the findings of the project will help or hinder future pre-screening. The study showed that while recruiting and hiring are focused almost exclusively on Inspirational Pattern leaders, the statistics show that several of the pattern types can be very successful in church planting. The researcher is alarmed that the majority of church planting done within the largest Christian Church and Church of Christ church planting agencies is being done by team leaders with the Inspirational Pattern. The researcher has a strong desire to see the pool of potential lead candidates broadened, and to provide the support and assistance that would allow candidates from all of the patterns to achieve greater success as church planting senior ministers.

As a Persuader Pattern leader, the researcher also began to question if he was showing a predisposition to candidates with his personality type. The Persuader Pattern is close to the Inspirational Pattern, both showing high "D" and high "I" personalities, though the Persuader Pattern has a higher "I" than "D", and the Inspirational Pattern has a higher "D" than "I". The majority of church planting supervisors are former church planters or current senior pastors. It would be understandable if they show a

predisposition toward those with their own leadership style. However, this researcher realizes that doing so unnecessarily limits the pool of potential church planting senior pastors. The researcher sees the need to broaden the selection process to a larger group of supervising leaders, preferably those with a variety of personality types. Church planting executives might consider changing the planter selection process from an individual to a group selection process. The group could be controlled for a variety of personality types, allowing greater objectivity in planter selection.

The researcher experienced an ongoing personal tension with the results of the study. The researcher's experience with Inspirational Pattern leaders has not always been positive. The researcher has experienced some as Machiavellian and one-dimensional, almost exclusively focused on church growth. The researcher has carried a predisposition toward seeing those individuals as not being well-rounded or balanced. The researcher is fully cognizant of the subjectivity of those observations, and desires to avoid any pejorative descriptions of church planters.

Through the process of the study and particularly through the personal debriefings with study participants, the researcher was reminded that there are great variations within the Inspirational Pattern. While those who are less mature are more likely to reinforce previous prejudices, mature Inspirational Pattern individuals challenged the stereotype of the controlling and egotistical pastor. The researcher was grateful for the balance.

Broader Applications

In addition to those elements already identified, the researcher recognizes the need for significant assistance to be created for church planters of all personality types,

and particularly for those who do not have the types that showed the greatest numerical success.

The researcher suggests that the first need is for coaches who are educated in providing specific instruction for church planters, based on personality type. For instance, a Perfectionist Pattern leader might be encouraged to be bolder in leadership and more outgoing in community life. A Creative Pattern leader would be encouraged to think less about the immediate accomplishment of well-executed plans, and focus more on people, both at the staff level and within the congregation. A Promoter Pattern senior pastor would be encouraged to be hesitant in verbally stating goals and objectives before they have been well thought out. He or she would also be directed to focus on details, or be willing to delegate that responsibility to a qualified associate.

It is also apparent that church planting mentors need to be secured from every area of new church ministry. Mentors should be matched with church planters based on leadership style. While specific pattern names would not be necessary, primary and secondary graph scores should be considered when suggesting or assigning mentors. For instance, a church planter with both a "D" and an "I" above the mid-line of graph three could be paired with a mentor who has one or both of those high plotting points on his or her own DiSC graph. This assumes that mentors would also be taking the DiSC test, another recommendation in light of the findings of this study.

Beyond coaching and mentoring, the researcher believes church planters would be well served by shadowing a recent planter of their personality type before they plant a church. Again, the specific profile would not be as important as similarity in high plotting points on graph three of the DiSC test. Too often church planters with a high "S"

or "C" are directed to take their cues from a church planter who is a high "D" or high "I". The results are often not helpful.

The researcher also recognizes the importance of placement of church planters based on DiSC test results. A high "I" or high "D" church planter will probably do well in a "parachute drop" church plant, or a church plant that is attractional. On the other hand, a high "S" or "C" church planter will have high success in a mother-daughter plant, or a church that begins missionally.

An "S" or "C" church planter would probably be comfortable in an urban church plant that is not expected to grow rapidly, while an "I" or "D" church planter is probably best suited for a high growth suburban area.

Possibilities for Further Research

In addition to the suggestions already made for further research, the researcher believes further study should be undertaken on the reason or reasons for narrowing of the field of potential recruits to just a handful of DiSC personality types. As detailed in chapter six, is it a self-selection process or does it show a prejudice of those doing the recruiting and hiring of church planters?

This researcher's experience is that the staff turnover in growing churches led by Inspirational Pattern leaders is higher than those led by leaders with other patterns. The results of this research project show the need for a future study to be done on staff retention and effectiveness based on personality type of the senior minister, and the personality types of the support staff who stay with or who leave Inspirational Pattern leaders, as opposed to the other pattern types.

It also might be argued that more Inspirational Pattern leaders are found in corporate leadership positions than those with the other pattern types. Additional study could be done comparing DiSC scores of corporate leaders with DiSC scores of new church senior ministers. If there is a clear correlation between the two, it should raise concerns that new churches are being unduly influenced by the American corporate environment. Such influence would be at the expense of following scriptural leadership principles.

Through the study the researcher began to note subtle trends in graph two of the DiSC test that appear to be predictors of how one changes behavior in a stressful environment. The researcher discovered that a majority of those taking the test for the project and in the practicum had differences in graph two that indicated the individual would increase or decrease dominance when in a stressful environment. The researcher began asking the participants how they viewed their behavior in stressful environments, and the vast majority indicated a behavior in agreement with graph two, not graph three.

Since the new church environment is indeed quite stressful, it seems possible that graph two could have more significance in behavior than graph three. That possibility would also be a worthy subject for future research.

Another area worthy of future research would be a project seeking the same information from new church plants of various Protestant denominations. Would the findings be similar in Evangelical denominations, but different in mainline denominations? Would the findings be different in denominations that hire women as church planting senior pastors? Would the findings be different in denominations exercising far greater control over the church planting process than is typically found in

Christian Churches and Churches of Christ? All of these are important questions worthy of future study.

Another suggestion for future study would be to determine whether or not existing churches also have disproportionate numbers of senior pastors with the Inspirational Pattern. Are Inspirational leaders drawn to the church planting environment because of its relative freedom from outside control? Are Inspirational leaders more successful in the new church environment than in existing churches? Again, these are important questions worthy of future study.

Finally, the scope of this project was limited to measuring new church growth by weekend attendance and per capita giving to all accounts of the new church. Many other measurements of health were not considered. If new church health were measured by the health of relationships rather than by attendance, there would probably be significantly different results. While measuring the health of relationships would be difficult, it would be helpful if additional research were done on finding other ways to measure church health.

New churches continue to be the most effective way to evangelize in the twenty-first century. Planting churches well is critical to the health of Christ's church. It is the researcher's hope that this study will aid in planting healthy churches in North America. It is the researcher's hope that those churches will not be a reflection of Western corporate governance, but will instead be true to the Spirit of Christ, and the church as envisioned by Christ and the apostles.

It is this researcher's hope that this project will help new churches reflect Christ and play an important part in the reconciliation of all things to the creator.

APPENDIX A

CPAC APPROVED CANDIDATES FOR LEAD PASTOR

List of Candidates, Date of Assessment, and DiSC Information

Year	Month	Candidate Name	Primary	Secondary	Pattern		
1999	October	LH	i	D	Inspirational		
		RY	D	i	Appraiser		
		SC	i	D	Inspirational		
		TL	i	S	Promoter		
2000	February	BE	i	D	Inspirational		
		GG	D	i	Result-Oriented		
		MM	i	D	Inspirational		
		CS	i	D	Inspirational		
2000	October	TB	D	i	Inspirational		
		MD	D	i	Inspirational		
		CD	i	None	Promoter		
		TK	i	C	Appraiser		
		GP	i	D	Inspirational		
		RW	C	S	Perfectionist		
		2001	May	MW	i	D	Inspirational
		2001	October	RG	D	i	Result-Oriented
2002	February	RB	i	D	Persuader		
		BB	D	C	Developer		
		WD	i	D	Inspirational		
		MG	D	i	Inspirational		
		TS	D	i	Inspirational		
		ST	i	D	Inspirational		
		2002	April	GL	i	D	Inspirational
		FT	C	D	Tight		
2002	November	JB	D	C	Developer		
		CD	i	D	Inspirational		
		BG	i	D	Promoter		
2003	August	DD	i	D	Inspirational		
		MJ	D	i	Result-Oriented		
		BA	i	None	Promoter		
		DM	D	i	Inspirational		
		EJ	i	D	Inspirational		
		EM	i	D	Promoter		
		KW	S	C	Perfectionist		
		LL	I	D	Inspirational		
		MM	SC	iD	Tight		
		2003	October	BC	D	i	Inspirational
BB	D			C	Creative		

		CS	i	D	Persuader
		JB	i	D	Inspirational
		DR	D	i	Result-Oriented
		JI	i	C	Appraiser
2004	February	RK	D	i	Inspirational
		DD	i	D	Inspirational
		BM	i	D	Appraiser
	June	MM	i	D	Inspirational
		RM	D	i	Inspirational
	August	JH	i	D	Inspirational
		SS	i	D	Inspirational
		DS	i	D	Inspirational
	October	BC	i	D	Inspirational
		KF	D	i	Inspirational
		MG	i	D	Inspirational
					Objective
		DH	C	i	Thinker
		DL	D	i	Inspirational
		CM	D	i	Inspirational
2005	February	MB	S	i/D	Specialist
		JK	i	D	Persuader
		SM	i	D	Persuader
		GM	D	C	Developer
		DR	C	S	Perfectionist
		JS	C	S	Perfectionist
		HW	D	i	Inspirational
	May	RF	C	S	Perfectionist
		NH	i	D	Inspirational
					Objective
		JS	C	S	Thinker
		BS	i	D	Persuader
		SW	i	D	Inspirational
	November	RA	D	C	Developer
					Objective
		JD	C	S	Thinker
		SH	C	D	Creative
		DW	i	D	Inspirational
2006	January	KH	D	C	Creative
		KR	C	S	Perfectionist
		BS	D	i	Inspirational
		SD	i	D	Persuader
		KC	i	S	Promoter
	February	AM	i	C	Promoter
		JN	i	C	Practitioner
		BL	i	D	Inspirational
	May	BC	i	D	Persuader

		GC	i	S	Counselor
		CH	D	i	Inspirational
		MM	i	D	Inspirational
		MR	i	D	Inspirational
	June	JL	i	D	Persuader
		SA	i	D	Inspirational
		MN	D	i	Result-Oriented
		TT	i	D	Inspirational
	August	TH	D	C	Creative
		NB	D	i	Developer
		DS	i	D	Inspirational
		JJ	i	D	Inspirational
	November	DF	C	D	Creative
		MC	i	D	Inspirational
		MM	D	C	Creative
		HT	i	D	Inspirational
2007	February	JN	i	D	Inspirational
		CK	D	C	Creative
		JN	i	D	Persuader
		DS	i	C	Appraiser
	March	TM	i	D	Inspirational
		CH	i	D	Promoter
		AC	D	i	Inspirational
		AM	i	D	Inspirational
		NE	D	C	Creative
		ME	C	D	Creative
	May	NC	i	D	Inspirational
		CM	C	S	Tight
		DK	i	D	Inspirational
	June	JB	S	i	Agent
		MC	i	D	Promoter
		BD	D	S	Developer
	August	RK	i	D	Inspirational
		SP	i	D	Inspirational
		RS	i	D	Persuader
		KH	D	i	Inspirational
	September	AL	i	D	Promoter
		BP	D	i	Inspirational
		PW	i	S	Counselor
		CP	i	S	Counselor
		JK	i	D	Persuader
	October	LD	i	C	Practitioner
		RA	D	C	Creative
Misc.					
Years		GM	D	I	Inspirational
		DL			Specialist

BF	I	D	Persuader
TJ	D		Results-Oriented
CD	I	D	Persuader
BJ	D	I	Inspirational
JH	D	I	Inspirational
TD	D	I	Inspirational
BS	D	C	Creative

APPENDIX B

PROJECT PARTICIPANT STATISTICS

Participant Name	Profile	Year	Year	Year	Year
		1	1	3	3
		Att.	Per	Att.	Per
		Avg.	Cap.	Avg.	Cap.
1. Greg	1	179	23.50	378	27.77
2. Michael	1	90	16.70	120	20.83
3. Dave	8	140	15.10	106	18.51
4. Chris	1	140	19.00	420	22.00
5. Paul	8	34	15.85	57	14.29
6. Jason	1	80	25.00	120	33.34
7. Mark	1	125	14.40	160	21.88
8. David	1	135	14.81	180	22.22
9. Aaron	1	59	16.62	71	26.02
10. Dan	1	150	16.67	200	20.00
11. Carl	6	75	17.33	100	18.00
12. Tim	1	300	23.33	320	25.00
13. Bart	3	188	21.00	338	22.32
14. Danny	1	120	19.80	217	16.46
15. Tony	2	219	11.82	341	17.87
16. Scott	1	180	23.20	220	26.36
17. Hank	1	259	17.10	319	20.63
18. Shann	2	230	19.81	369	20.60
19. Rick	1	125	18.00	275	18.91
20. Bert	1	322	10.65	594	14.89
21. Brad	2	35	30.00	52	30.00
22. Bill	1	193	27.00	426	25.50
23. Troy	1	397	18.05	751	21.70
24. Chad	3	85	8.00	110	13.66
25. Carl	4	111	22.50	181	40.93
26. David	9	558	20.21	677	25.48
27. Brent	4	108	20.41	141	21.33
28. Jerry	1	47	28.70	131	27.37
29. Brian	2	166	22.80	257	44.57
30. Kevin	1	150	19.00	300	19.00
31. Mark	3	220	11.00	380	22.00
32. Brent	6	131	9.79	234	9.76

Participant Name	Profile	Year 1 Att. Avg.	Year 1 Per Cap.	Year 3 Att. Avg.	Year 3 Per Cap.
33. John	5	214	15.28	357	14.43
34. Brian	1	253	8.38	452	14.25
35. Jeff	5	122	16.65	153	15.36
36. Claudio	6	120	22.00	360	24.00
37. David	1	310	15.38	390	16.31
38. Russ	7	144	16.28	243	17.00
39. Tom	3	145	9.65	180	15.48
40. Brian	1	167	23.67	205	18.78
41. Greg	2	77	15.40	166	20.03
42. Chris	1	222	17.12	315	24.30
43. Tracy	1	75	18.67	100	20.00
44. Dwight	1	137	22.00	75	24.50
45. Sean	1	124	15.00	130	25.75
46. Derek	7	158	24.25	117	34.64
47. Jeff	5	292	21.37	294	25.66
48. Donnie	1	300	23.30	450	33.30
49. Matt	4	80	18.75	20	18.50
50. Tom	2	142	15.80	198	22.24
Total		8433	916.10	12750	1113.73
Average		169	18.32	255	22.27

APPENDIX C

PROJECT PARTICIPANT PATTERN STATISTICS

Pattern Name	Att.	Per Avg Yr. 1	Att. Cap. Yr. 1	Per Avg. Yr. 3	1-3 Cap. Yr. 3	% 1-3 Attendance Change	% 1-3 Per Cap. Change		
All Patterns	Total	8433	916.10	12750	1113.73				
	Average	169	18.32	255	22.27	4317	51%	3.95	22%
1. Inspirational	Total	4639	673.25	7319	587.07				
26	Average	178	25.89	282	22.58	104	58%	-3.31	-13%
2. Results	Total	869	115.63	1383	155.31				
Oriented -6	Average	145	19.27	231	25.89	86	59%	6.62	34%
3. Promoter	Total	638	46.65	1008	73.46				
4	Average	160	11.66	252	18.37	92	58%	6.71	58%
4. Creative	Total	299	61.66	342	80.76				
3	Average	100	20.55	114	26.92	14	14%	6.37	31%
5. Perfectionist	Total	628	53.30	804	55.45				
3	Average	209	17.77	268	18.48	59	28%	0.71	4%
6. Persuader	Total	326	49.12	694	51.76				
3	Average	109	16.37	231	17.25	122	112%	0.88	5%
7. Appraiser	Total	302	40.53	360	51.64				
2	Average	151	20.21	180	25.82	29	19%	5.61	28%
8. Specialist	Total	174	30.95	163	32.80				
2	Average	87	15.48	82	16.40	-11	-6%	0.92	6%
9. Objective	Total	558	20.21	677	25.48				
Thinker - 1	Average	558	20.21	677	25.48	120	22%	5.27	26%

APPENDIX D

Understanding Your Church Family

Organizations and corporations tend to behave like families when their basic business is “life.” Churches, doctor’s offices, and family owned businesses are examples of these family-like organizations. Of those examples, the church is the most difficult. Not only does it operate like an extended family, it is made up of members who are all a part of their own families. That family experience finds its way into the church.

A “family” shapes our thoughts about what is normal and healthy in the world, and sets our expectations about how the world will work. It is the roadmap from which we operate. If church leaders work from one map, while members of the congregation possess a different map, conflict is inevitable.

Murray Bowen, the founder of Family Systems Theory, identified eight different areas in which these worldview processes are at work. Edwin Friedman in *Generation to Generation-Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, shows how these impact the church.

1. “Let Me Step Outside The Tent And Look Back In.” (Differentiation of self)

Differentiation of self is our ability to be objective and separate our feelings from our thoughts. When confronted, the father/boss/senior minister may say, “I’m the man in charge. Who are you to challenge me?” He cannot see himself except as a part of the family system – and its king at that!

1.1 How do you know if you are not differentiated?

- 1.1.1 If your father was strong-willed and “ruled” the family, then you have a higher likelihood of doing the same. The family (or work family) will just be an extension of your own being.
- 1.1.2 Anytime a boss hires a lot of family and it is not a family-run business, it is not a good sign of differentiation.
- 1.1.3 If a boss/senior minister designates an heir who is a family member, it is rarely a sign of differentiation.
- 1.1.4 If a person finds his or her primary identity through their position in the church, it is not a sign of differentiation. It is good to remember, “This is a job. This is a calling. This is not my life.”
- 1.1.5 Extremely charismatic leaders are often undifferentiated and narcissistic. The church is seen as an extension of themselves. Therefore, success in the church is likely to die with the charismatic leader, since loyalty is to him, not the church.

1.2 How do you know if you are differentiated?

- 1.2.1 When confronted, you set aside your positional power and truly listen to the other person. You do not say, “Who are you to challenge me?”
- 1.2.2 You lead by neither a strong hand nor consensus. Consensus leadership creates less imaginative environments because groups tend to stifle imagination. Also, the group tends to be controlled by those at the extremes.
- 1.2.3 The differentiated leader operates in the middle, between dictatorship and democracy.
- 1.2.4 He stays in touch with his professional and lay leaders, and is willing to hear bad news from them without retaliation.
- 1.2.5 He takes clearly and non-reactively defined positions. He works from the position, “I have been called to this job.” He does not work from the position, “My life depends on being successful here.”
- 1.2.6 He deals with the sabotage that is inevitable in any congregation. People lie. They say they want to change, when in reality they will do everything they can to undermine change.

2. Why Are You Getting Me Involved In This?” (Triangulation)

Triangulation occurs when a third person is brought into a two-person interaction. A person who is not very differentiated, when confronted by someone disagreeing with him or her, will often pull a third person into the conversation to back them up. The “third person” should go to each individual and say, “The issue is between the two of you. You need to work it out.”

- 2.1 In the church, triangulation is the single biggest cause of dissent. The problem is with the “conversation” that takes place after the official conversation. Too often everyone leaves a meeting and all is fine. The next day it is not. You can be sure triangulation took place after the meeting.
- 2.2 Often, the wives of staff members or elders are the worst offenders. That is why interviewing wives is so critical when hiring or appointing elders.

3 What map are you using? (Emotional Processes)

Worldviews (or maps) are passed on from one generation to the next. If a grandmother grew up in the Great Depression, her thriftiness may carry on to her daughter, who may impart the same fearful thriftiness to the granddaughter, though it is no longer appropriate. The result is an outdated map.

- 3.1 Families create maps in which particular people play particular roles:
 - Enabler* – “Was it really all that bad?” Some staff tend to enable senior pastors, creating an “Emperor’s New Clothes” environment.
 - Scapegoat* – “Everything fell apart in the family when he left the faith.” You see this often in Roman Catholic families or fundamentalist families.
 - Family Hero* – “Somebody has to save this family.” Often this is the senior pastor who can’t let go of anything.
 - Lost Child* – “My e-mail address is my last name with ‘un’ in front of it.” This can be an entire department in the church – often youth ministry.

Rescuer – “We simply can’t allow conflict.” This is the person with the least ego strength. Often undifferentiated strong-willed senior pastors will stack the eldership/management team with these types of individuals.

Mascot – “He’s a great storyteller, but he can’t hold a job.” Senior pastors tend to hang on to one mascot who should have been let go a long time ago.

4 “This Map Is Old, But It Still Works.” (Multi-Generational Transmission Process)

Families create myths about who they are and how they will function. So do entire ethnic groups. The Irish were told they were drinkers, so often they were. The Scots-Irish were told they were fighters, so they were. They have been the majority of fighting soldiers in all American wars.

4.1 A church will also have its own myth – its own understanding of why it exists. “We are just a neighborhood church and always will be.” Edwin Friedman says churches will have “background radiation from the big bang of the congregation’s creation.” That is why there is a saying of new churches – “It is easier to give birth than raise the dead.”

5 “He’ll Never Amount to Anything.” (Family Projection Process)

Suppose a son scores low on an IQ test in the second grade. From that day forward both parents project onto that child (the child is the screen in the projection) that he is not college material. Either the child will become what his parents expect him to be, or he will fight against it. Either way, the child’s identity will often be defined by that family projection.

5.1 In the church, the “screen” may be an inaccurate understanding the senior pastor has of the congregation, based on previous experience: “All churches are out to get me.” It may be an unhealthy view the church takes of the minister: “Senior pastors are always narcissists and egotistical, you know.

5.2 One of Freud’s disciples said we equate God with father and Church with mother. If that is true, then the senior pastor is in trouble on both counts!

5.3 A leader suddenly unhappy with the minister’s “performance” is often a leader projecting onto the church from his or her own family.

6 “I Am The Firstborn Here!” (Sibling Position)

While not set in stone, sibling position will often determine one’s approach to life. Firstborn children are often overachievers. Most American presidents have been first-born children. Youngest children will often be seen as irresponsible family.

6.1 In the church setting, firstborn children in church leadership will be the most conservative. Middle children will be the most relationally savvy. Youngest will be the most revolutionary and open to change.

6.2 In the church *as* a family, the oldest do not want change. The youngest do. Those in-between want to keep the peace.

7 “My Name Is Not Williams. It Is Unwilliams.” (Emotional Cutoff)

When a family member is having a difficult time separating from their family, he or she will often cut themselves off from all involvement with the family. Ironically, in that cutoff the family continues to control them “in absentia.”

- 7.1 In the life of the church, this is why church splits almost never survive. They bring their problems with them. In a new church, “Beware those who greet the bus.”

8 “Your People Are Not Usually Leaders, Are They?” (Societal Emotional Processes)

As societies, we develop expectations as to how certain classes of people, or races, or genders are to function. Anyone who functions outside of our expectations will be viewed as deviant. The church will always have problems in this area. Consider divorce and remarriage in the 60s, or women in leadership today.

Signs of a Church That Will Burn out Its Senior Minister

1. The degree of isolation between the church and other churches in its own faith community or in its local community.
2. The degree of distance between the lay leadership and the general membership.
3. The extent to which the lay leadership allows the church to dominate their lives.
4. The degree to which the lay leadership has intense interdependent relationships, such as being related through blood, marriage, or business.
5. The inability of the lay leadership, and particularly the chairman, to take well-defined positions, independent of the complainers.
6. The previous minister’s departure was always described as due to “pilot error.”
7. Previous minister’s say there was a high performance demand with little control.

Signs of a Healthy Church Family

1. The congregation is balanced between separateness and togetherness. It has “differentiated itself.” “We’re a part of the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, but we are an independent church.”
2. There is a connectedness across generations. “I appreciate your old map, but how about we take your route this week and mine next week?”
3. There is little enmeshment/fusion. “We’re all crazy around here. Most of the time we recognize it.”
4. There is little distance/emotional cutoff. “He’s not sure he believes in God right now, but that’s okay for awhile, we’ll do the believing for him.”

5. Any two people do not feel the need to pull a third into a conversation. “So why are you so needy of my support of your position in this conflict?”
6. There is respect and support for those with different values and feelings. “He believes we should have women elders, but I like him anyway.”
7. The congregation is aware of both the inside and outside influences on the family. “We are in Ohio, you know. We tend to listen to the Tea Party Republicans around here. Maybe we do need another perspective.”
8. People are allowed to experience pain without rushing to save them. “She’s really struggling with her faith, but giving her answers is not going to help.”
9. The congregation believes in the family and sees its “positives.” “Of course we’re messed up. But somehow we manage to reflect the image of Jesus.”
10. The members utilize each other for genuine feedback, not as crutches. “I’ve always thought communion every Sunday is essential for a Christian Church? How did we come to that conclusion?”

APPENDIX E

PRESENTATION FOR CHURCH PLANTING EXECUTIVES

The Value of the DiSC Test in Hiring Senior Pastors for New Churches

Introduction

Those who hire church planters are always striving to utilize resources wisely so that the healthiest churches possible are planted. For over 20 years we have been utilizing the DiSC test by Inscape Publishing as a pre-screening tool and/or an assessment tool. I recently completed a study on CPAC attendees who were approved for the senior pastor position of a new church. Between 1992 and 2007 the assessment center approved 133 individuals for the senior pastor position. For the study I was sought senior pastors who had remained with their new churches through at least the third anniversary of the new church.

A total of 55 of the 133 CPAC approved candidates qualified for the study, and 50 agreed to participate. We secured the original DiSC score for each of the 50 project participants. Then we asked each participant to take a current DiSC test so that we could compare the scores. Only 19 chose to take a second DiSC test, but those results showed very little change from the original test.

We then secured the average attendance of each new church at the end of year one, and again at the end of year three. We also secured the average per capita giving to all accounts of each new church at the end of year one and again at the end of year three. We then compared the results of the growth of each new church with the DiSC profile of the senior pastor.

Attendance and Giving Averages of all 50 Participants

The average attendance at the end of year one was 169. The average attendance at the end of year three was 255, an increase of 51 percent. Forty-nine of the 50 churches were parachute drop church plants. Only one was a mother/daughter plant.

The average per capita giving at the end of year one was 18.32. The average per capita giving at the end of year three was 22.27, an increase of 22 percent.

Part I. Completion of the DiSC Test

The DiSC test has been used for over three decades in church planting, as well as in a plethora of other environments. The test is based on the work of William Moulton Marston in his book, *The Emotions of Normal People*, published in 1928. It is based on Marston's four-dimensional model, based on the four primary emotions of alliance or antagonism, and superiority or inferiority. Through the years the model has evolved until it resulted in the Personal Profile System in the 1970s, and the Personal Profile System DiSC 2800 Series test used today.

1. To better understand the DiSC test, we will take the next couple of hours to take the test, score it, and explain the different personality types.

- 1.1 Give DiSC 2800 test
- 1.2 Score test and explain four basic areas - D - i - S - C.
- 1.3 Continue test and identify pattern types.
- 1.4 Continue the test and work through page 8, basic type descriptions.

2. Sharpening Your People Skills

Sharpening Your People Skills Understanding The Four Types

 Purpose **Oriented**

 C

 D

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Key Word <u> </u> <i>CONSCIENTIOUSNESS</i> | 1. Key Word <u> </u> <i>DOMINANCE</i> |
| 2. Phrase – Do it the <u> </u> <i>RIGHT WAY</i> | 2. Phrase – Do it the <u> </u> <i>ONLY WAY MY Way</i> |
| 3. Questions <u> </u> <i>HOW</i> | 3. Questions <u> </u> <i>WHAT</i> |
| 4. Focus <u> </u> <i>PAST</i> | 4. Focus <u> </u> <i>NOW</i> |
| 5. Motivated by – being <u> </u> <i>RIGHT</i> | 5. Motivated by <u> </u> <i>GETTING THINGS DONE</i> |
| 6. Communication <u> </u> <i>GOOD LISTENER</i> | 6. Communication <u> </u> <i>ONE WAY</i> |
| 7. Decision Making <u> </u> <i>RELUCTANT</i> | 7. Decision Making <u> </u> <i>IMPULSIVE</i> |
| 8. Under Tension <u> </u> <i>AVOIDS</i> | 8. Under Tension <u> </u> <i>AUTOCRATIC</i> |
| 9. Team – Focuses on <u> </u> <i>DETAILS</i> | 9. Team – Focuses on <u> </u> <i>RESULTS</i> |
| 10. Tends to be too <u> </u> <i>PICKY</i> | 10. Tends to be too <u> </u> <i>AGGRESSIVE</i> |

 Past **Oriented**

 Future **Oriented**

S

1. Key Word **STEADINESS**
2. Phrase – Do it the **PEACEFUL WAY**
3. Questions **WHY**
4. Focus **PRESENT**
5. Motivated by – being **RELATIONAL**
6. Communication **2 WAY – SMALL GROUP**
7. Decision Making **GROUP CONSENSUS**
8. Under Tension **AGREEABLE**
9. Team – Focuses on **RELATIONSHIPS**
10. Tends to be too **INDECISIVE**

I

1. Key Word **INFLUENCING**
2. Phrase – Do it the **FUN WAY**
3. Questions **WHO**
4. Focus **FUTURE**
5. Motivated by – being **RECOGNIZED**
6. Communication **1 WAY - ENTERTAIN**
7. Decision Making **INTUITIVE**
8. Under Tension **ATTACKS VERBALLY**
9. Team – Focuses on **MOTIVATION.**
10. Tends to be too **MANIPULATIVE**

 People **Oriented**

3. Question and answer session on DiSC.

Part II. Results of the Study of DiSC Scores and New Church Growth

1. Specifics and Limitations of the study.
 - 1.1 The study was only done on CPAC approved candidates.
 - 1.2 96% of participants planted churches in the Restoration Movement.
 - 1.3 Forty-nine of the 50 churches were parachute drop church plants.
 - 1.4 The churches were from various environments across the United States.
 - 1.5 All planted new churches between 1992 and 2007.
 - 1.6 All senior pastors remained with their churches for at least three years.
 - 1.7 Only attendance and per capita giving were studied.
2. CPAC Results
 - 2.1 Profile types of all 133 approved CPAC senior pastor candidates.

Inspirational Pattern	62	(46.7% of approved candidates)
Persuader Pattern	13	
Creative Pattern	11	
Promoter Pattern	10	
Perfectionist Pattern	6	
Results-Oriented	6	
Developer Pattern	6	
Appraiser Pattern	6	
Counselor Pattern	3	
Objective Thinker	3	
Tight Pattern	3	
Specialist Pattern	2	

Practitioner Pattern 2
Agent Pattern 1

3. Study Participant Results

	# Proj. Part.	Att. Avg Yr. 1	Per Cap. Yr. 1	Att. Avg. Yr. 3	Per Cap. Yr. 3	1-3 Attendance Change	% 1-3	Per Cap. Change	% 1-3
All Patterns		169	18.32	255	22.27	4317	51%	3.95	22%
1. Inspirational	26	178	25.89	282	22.58	104	58%	-3.31	-13%
2. Results-Oriented	6	145	19.27	231	25.89	86	59%	6.62	34%
3. Promoter	4	160	11.66	252	18.37	92	58%	6.71	58%
4. Creative	3	100	20.55	114	26.92	14	14%	6.37	31%
5. Perfectionist	3	209	17.77	268	18.48	59	28%	0.71	4%
6. Persuader	3	109	16.37	231	17.25	122	112%	0.88	5%
7. Appraiser	2	151	20.21	180	25.82	29	19%	5.61	28%
8. Specialist	2	87	15.48	82	16.40	-11	-6%	0.92	6%
9. Objective Thinker	1	558	20.21	677	25.48	120	22%	5.27	26%

4. Interpretation of Results

4.1 The lowest 1 year attendance - 35

4.2 Highest 1 year attendance - 558

4.3 The Persuader Pattern had the highest growth - 112% - but number of participants was small

4.4 Inspirational/Results-Oriented/Promoter - 58%-59% numerical growth

4.5 Giving - Promoter Pattern - 58% Results-Oriented Pattern - 34%

4.6 Giving - Inspirational Pattern - negative 13%

4.6.1 - Conversion growth?

4.6.2 - Lack of ability to get people to buy into vision?

4.7 Attendance clustered in four profiles, while giving is spread equally across patterns.

4.8 While half of participants were Inspirational Pattern, there were successful plants in all nine pattern categories. There were three other patterns - Results-Oriented/Promoter/Persuader, that were equally successful.

5. Implications for Church Planting.

5.1 Inspirational clustering in CPAC- 46.7% - Project - 52%

- 5.1.1 Is that who is drawn to the challenges of church planting?
- 5.1.2 Is that who we are recruiting into church planting?
- 5.1.3 Is that a reflection of our own pattern types?
- 5.1.4 Is that a reflection of who is doing the hiring?
- 5.1.5 Should hiring be done with a broader group of representatives?
- 5.2 Differences between this study and 1990 Williams/Rusaw study?
 - 5.2.1 Differences between Persuader Pattern and Inspirational Pattern
 - 5.2.2 Inspirational Pattern reflecting current corporate environment?
 - 5.2.3 What does this say about the likely long-term health of the church?
- 5.3 Many feel called to church planting, but do not have one of the established successful pattern types. What can we do to hire more of these people?
 - 5.2.1 Provide coaches for up to 3 years who understand the pattern.
 - 5.2.2 Provide long-term mentors with the same pattern who planted successfully themselves.
 - 5.2.3 Broaden the group that does actual hiring.

6. Reaction of Attendees to Findings of Study.

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