

## Establishing an Encouraging Environment Using DiSC®

### Company

- A high school
- Staff of five teachers, including the principal
- Student body of 40

### Products Used

- *DiSC® Classic 2.0*
- *I-Sight®*

### Challenge

The high school serves students who are working, parenting, or unable to succeed in a more structured school environment. To succeed, they need to have positive and realistic assessment of themselves in the world and be able to observe constructive communication between adults.

Cooperation is a key dynamic at this school – both for effective delivery of education and for fostering positive relationships among the staff and between students and staff.

The previous year, a staff member had sabotaged relationships and soured the principal on his staff, adding tension to the entire school experience. She departed at the end of the year. However, the ill effects lingered – there was a lack of trust, guarded communication, and residual resentment. With a new school year coming, the principal wanted to re-establish a constructive and encouraging environment.

### Solution

#### *Staff*

Before the new school year began, the *DiSC® Classic 2.0* was administered to the staff in a four-hour training session. I focused on helping the team of teachers understand one another's motivations. Each teacher began to see their teammates in a new light. The principal scored high on the D and C scales. A Creative profile, he needed coaching to adjust his language to accommodate those teachers who were slower-paced. During the course of the training, each teacher got to air concerns that had previously impeded effective communication.

#### *Students*

One month later, after the staff had a chance to absorb and work with these new insights, I led a four-hour training for the students using *I-Sight®* (a modified DiSC for youth, delivered in paper format). Normally rambunctious and quick to lose focus, the students stayed attentive during most of the session.

After administering the *I-Sight*, I asked each style group to design an advertisement for their dimension of behavior. Their active participation produced great insight as well as lots of laughter.

### Results

After the staff training, the principal said, "I obtained insights regarding personal aptitudes and motivations. Gaining a glimpse into those aspects of my employees will allow for a more productive and cohesive team." One teacher who admittedly didn't easily make connections with others remarked, "I learned reasons to appreciate my colleagues."

After the student training, the Career Counselor affirmed the program, saying, "We'll definitely be following up on this. We want to reinforce the insights they got today."

## CASE STUDY



Another powerful experience emerged after the student training and our focus on career goals. Many of these young people had not envisioned much of a future for themselves. One young man, who had spent much time in drug rehab and originally aspired only to be a drug dealer, began to envision himself working with other youth to help them transform their lives

From staff to student body, the DiSC training cleared away tensions, resolved old conflicts, improved communication, fostered self-understanding, and offered each person a positive vision of their fellows. With the help of DiSC, the school has stepped into a new and positive learning environment.