Staff Retention in Child and Family Services

Working with Differences

Workbook 3

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Dedication

This workbook series is dedicated to child and family service supervisors everywhere who work tirelessly with their staff to make the world a better place for children and families at risk.

Acknowledgements

First, we gratefully acknowledge the authors, Judith McKenzie, John McKenzie and Rosemary Jackson, for their incredible commitment in developing this unique and useful workbook series. This inspired team brought years of child and family service experience and a sense of urgency to the work that comes from "knowing" that children and their families need a stable workforce to help them realize their potential and that effective child and family service supervisors hold the key to staff retention.

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Contents at a Glance

Introduction to Workbook Series

Purpose of this Series

The purpose of this training and series of workbooks is to increase child and family service agencies' effectiveness in developing and retaining their staff by applying information from research and best retention practices to their work.

The foundation for this material is the important mission of child and family service to provide safety, permanence and well being for children, within a context of family-centered practice. Underpinning this foundation is a heightened sensitivity to the potential impact of significant emotional events on child and family service professionals which can lead to excessive stress, burnout and, possibly, secondary trauma. Case materials, tools and skills integrated throughout this workbook series intend to honor and support leaders and supervisors as they cope with the value dilemmas and emotional content found in the "real world" of child and family services.

The ultimate goal of this curriculum is to improve retention practices and outcomes for child and family service agencies. With such an end in mind everybody wins: the staff, the agency, the families and children, and especially the supervisor, whose life is vastly improved by having a stable, loyal workforce.

This curriculum has been designed with a series of workbooks. A workbook is provided for each of the following subjects in the core curriculum series.

> **Workbook 1 – The Role of Leaders in Staff Retention:** provides information, tools and methods for leaders to use to support supervisors in creating and sustaining a positive culture for staff retention.

> **Workbook 2 – The Practice of Retention-Focused Supervision:** provides research information and supervisory competencies for retaining effective staff, including self-assessment and planning tools. It includes methods and tools for setting objectives, structuring the supervisory process and managing stress in the workplace.

> **Workbook 3 – Working with Differences**: provides understanding, methods and tools for tailoring supervision to the diverse characteristics, learning and behavioral styles and professional development needs of staff.

> **Workbook 4 – Communications Skills**: provides specific information, tools and activities to adapt communication skills to the supervisory relationship.

> **Workbook 5 – The First Six Months:** provides a structure, methods and tools for orienting, supporting and training new staff during their first six months on the job, with particular attention to helping staff cope with and manage the stressors of the job.

> **Workbook 6 – Recruiting and Selecting the Right Staff in Child and Family Service**: provides information on promising practices and tools for recruiting and selecting front line staff; includes profiles of desirable qualities needed in front-line supervisors and staff and methods for developing effective collaborations with universities.

> *Child Welfare is not rocket science. It's harder than rocket science.*
>
> *- David Liederman, former CWLA CEO*

The Underlying Principles of this Training Curriculum

The *Staff Retention in Child and Family Service* workbook series is based on a review of research literature in child and family service, human services and business. The research focused on the many studies that have to do with staff turnover and retention. Additionally, resilient workers and supervisors who stayed with their current agencies for at least two years were interviewed and surveyed in public and private agencies throughout Michigan to determine what underpins their commitment to the field. There was a strong consensus about what was learned about workplace retention across business, human service work and child and family service, but there were also some significant differences. Understanding the differences between child and family service and business is critical to retaining and developing staff in human service. Those differences are fundamental to the approach that is expressed in this training program and are summarized as follows:

Child and family service is challenging and life-changing work

Child and family service staff, many of whom are young and inexperienced, often make "god-like" decisions every day that have profound effects on the lives and destinies of children and their families. They see and experience the most tragic human conditions, extreme poverty, child neglect and abuse, inter-generational violence and substance abuse. Yet, they have to find a way to assure safety of children while working toward permanence and well being for both children and their families. Child and family service staff do this in a system that is under-funded, under-staffed, and sometimes chaotic and hardened to the plight of the people who are served by it and those who work in it.

This curriculum does not minimize the difficulties of the work (the reality of low pay, high workloads, and high turnover) but it doesn't belabor these issues either. It recognizes that these issues need to be addressed, especially when an agency is not competitive with other similar agencies offering the same service. This curriculum stresses that child and family service retention rates can be improved by understanding and building upon those resilient factors that attract people to and keep them in the profession.

Child and family service is mission and values centered

Those who enter the profession of child and family service are not motivated by profit. They are mission-driven. They are usually motivated by "doing good and making a difference" for others, particularly children who have been victimized. They come to accept that child and family service work is mainly about working with and through parents.

This curriculum offers an understanding of the mission and value-centered nature of this work as a context for all of the materials developed. To undervalue the significance of idealism and a need to help others in the motivation of staff would be wrong. The concept of mission is what energizes child and family service people and needs to be reinforced at every step of the retention process. Attention

to feelings, showing appreciation and strengthening resiliency are essential for prevention of burnout and achieving good outcomes for children and families.

The supervisor in child and family service is the most influential person in staff retention
The research shows that having a good relationship with the front line "boss" or supervisor is one of the most important factors in retention. This is even more essential in child and family service due to the stressful nature of the work. Managing one's own feelings and learning effective relationship skills to help others manage their feelings and assumptions are a big part of the work that has to be done. The inadequacies of the system, along with the multiple demands and challenging relationships, can cause stress, burnout and result in "secondary trauma" for child and family service staff. An effective supervisor will facilitate professional development of his/her staff by consistently modeling effective relationship and strengths-oriented behaviors that help staff grow through their most difficult and/or emotionally charged times and events. An effective supervisor will pay attention to the personal and professional growth needs of their staff and offer recognition, encouragement and support. To do this well, supervisors have to be aware of their own vulnerabilities, while building on their personal style and strengths.

What a new staff person experiences within the first year is crucial to retention
An experienced supervisor recognizes that over half of turnover occurs in a staff person's first year on the job. What a staff person first experiences, especially with their supervisor, will determine whether he/she will stay with the agency and ultimately build a career in child and family service.

Respect for a person's strengths, uniqueness, and rights are the primary elements in the success of all staff retention efforts
How a staff person is treated by the agency and, in particular, by his/her supervisor will become a mirror for how clients will be treated by staff. Honoring and building on staff strengths, including the individual's capacity to cope with stress, learn and change, is key to successful retention in child and family service. Preserving the dignity of the individual is not only important in staff retention. It is a principle that is essential to achieving positive outcomes with families. A fundamental belief in the resiliency of people provides a reservoir of hope in child and family service.

This training curriculum takes the view that all participants: agency leaders, supervisors and staff, are partners in improving retention of staff in child and family service. The agency's culture for retention will be continuously improved only to the extent that people share and learn from one another. Training materials, language and case examples are designed to be strengths-based and respectful of public and private agencies, supervisors, staff and families.

How to Use this Workbook

This training curriculum uses a workbook format for the following reasons:

- Participants who attend a training session have the information and tools at their fingertips to use as reference long after they attend the training
- Individuals can benefit from the program by using the workbooks as self-study tools, if they cannot attend a group training
- Learning activities appear throughout each workbook to encourage agencies and staff to use the materials in small groups during formal staff training or more informal sessions
- Participants attending the training can share the materials and coach others through the program
- Agencies can use the units within workbooks to review and build specific competencies e.g., when a supervisor is new to the position, following a performance review and/or when a need specific to the agency has been identified

Icon	Description
	Activity – this icon represents an activity that can be used by an individual for self-reflection and/or for small group discussions.
	Small Group Activity – this icon represents an activity that is best done in small groups where individuals can share insights and learn from each other.
	Quotes – this icon is to represent words of wisdom that are meant to be inspirational or to bring home an important point to the user.
	Case Study – this icon represents a case study where content from the workbook is applied to typical supervisor/staff situations and interactions.
	Important Points to remember – this icon represents a summary of the key points contained in the workbook unit.
	Tools – this icon represents a tool that can be adapted and used in the workplace to further enhance the supervisor's repertoire. All tools are provided in the appendix of each workbook for duplication and use in quantity.

Debriefing Small Group Activities

When discussion questions and/or other activities are used in a small group, it is helpful for someone to act as a facilitator and recorder of notes to engage the group in responding to at least two additional questions:

- What lessons did we learn from this experience?

- What implications does this have for what we will continue to do, start or stop doing in the future?

Sequence of Workbooks

All the workbooks were designed to stand-alone and can be used in any sequence based on the organization's and/or an individual's needs and priorities.

Each workbook has numbered units. For example Unit 3 in Workbook 3 will be numbered Unit 3.3. Units extracted from a workbook can be used in management and supervisory staff meetings, brief "Lunch and Learn" sessions, or in supervisor support groups. Using this material in the workplace is highly recommended because the sharing of ideas and synergy among like-minded people can aid and support individual growth and/or agency-wide culture change.

Participants can feel free to duplicate and share all activities and tools contained in these workbooks. Please acknowledge the source of the information when reproducing the materials.

Workbook 3 Table of Contents

3.0 Managing Diversity in the Workplace

Learning Objectives for Workbook 3

- Understand the need to work with diversity to be an effective supervisor

- Increase skill in working with staff diversity in race, culture and ethnicity

- Learn techniques to challenge assumptions

- Increase the ability to work effectively with staff who have a variety of learning and behavioral styles

- Increase ability to manage emotions in the work place

Child and family service agencies continue to move toward developing diverse staffing as they seek to be more responsive to the needs and representative of the children and families they serve. Being able to appreciate and work with diversity and individual differences is important to the supervisor's success in retaining good staff. Diversity in child and family services encompasses not only the children and families receiving agency services, but also the staff that serve them.

Issues that arise due to staff diversity can be out in the open or subtle in nature. Being responsive to these issues is a critical role of retention focused supervisors. Supervisors who do not address issues arising from diversity will find that issues will begin to leak into services to children and families with potentially destructive results. Ongoing attention to issues of diversity will help staff gain a deeper understanding of how best to work with colleagues and children and families alike and can create a stronger sense of unity and cooperation among staff.

There are several factors that are universal to people that make it difficult for staff from diverse backgrounds to build strong cohesive teams. Supervisors will find themselves working with teams who are composed of staff who[2]:

- Come from a variety of backgrounds (race, culture, ethnicity, gender, personality, age politics etc.) and have their own way of looking at the world which is influenced by their specific background

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[2] HUD Youthbuild Management Institute, *Cultural Bridges: Defusing the Diversity Powder Keg*, July 2001

- Have conscious and unconscious stereotypes and prejudices regarding people who they perceive as different from them

- Come from both good and bad relationships with past authority figures that they unconsciously attempt to recreate on the job

- When under stress can experience distrust, defensiveness, hostility and insecurity when working closely with individuals that they see as different from themselves

- Have different styles of learning, behaving and managing emotions that are shaped by past experiences and have served them well in most circumstances

Most supervisors have a natural way of working with their staff. It is intended that the competencies addressed in this workbook will help the supervisor build on his/her strengths. The supervisor's own style may be very effective, but he/she may find difficulties working with certain personalities or cultural groups. Diversity is an issue that retention focused supervisors need to understand to effectively work with the staff they supervise.

Working with differences in staff requires self-awareness, flexibility, and broadening one's repertoire of responses to ever-changing situations and people coming from a wide variety of cultural contexts.

Effectively working with staff that have diverse backgrounds and perspectives is the focus of this workbook. It is designed to help supervisors look at their own factors of diversity as well as that of their staff. Acknowledging ones own diversity helps to lay the groundwork for understanding and working effectively with staff diversity. This is very challenging, but it is necessary to becoming an effective retention focused supervisor.

The following competencies will be addressed in Workbook 3:

Working with Differences: I respect and build on each individual's strengths and what makes each of them unique. If asked my staff would say that I…
Model respect for differences and diversity
Understand my assumptions about individual staff and work to value his/her unique differences
Treat staff respectfully and preserve their dignity
Understand how my personal learning style impacts my interaction with staff
Understand staff's learning styles and employ techniques that are designed to aid in their learning
Understand how my behavioral style impacts my interaction with staff
Understand my staff's behavioral style and maintain flexibility in working with staff whose styles differ from my own
Understand and manage my emotions and those of staff

3.1 The Scope of Diversity

All Things to All People

Alice, a foster care supervisor in a large child and family service agency, is meeting with a group of supervisors for their informal quarterly "Lunch and Learn" meeting. She looks forward to these meetings as it gives her a chance to talk with supervisors who are doing jobs that are similar to hers. There are usually five or six first line supervisors from several child welfare agencies in town who attend the brown bag lunch meetings to exchange ideas and resources. Over the last year they have gotten pretty close.

Today Ann, a foster care supervisor, is talking about a run-in she had with one of her workers. "I'm telling you, I don't know if it's the age thing or because he's a man, but I swear he doesn't seem to want to take direction from me. It's not just him either. I have seven other staff and they can all be challenging."

Alice chimes in: "I know what you mean. If I have three people in the room, sometimes they will come out of the meeting with three different interpretations of what was discussed. I really think that having such a diverse staff means that our working assumptions are not always the same. Before I know it, simple discussions can end up in misunderstandings and disagreements. To make matters worse, my staff are not always open about how they perceive things. There is so much that happens under the table. I know everyone brings their own unique set of strengths to the mix, but sometimes it feels like I've stepped into quick sand!"

There are many dimensions of diversity including, but not limited to age, ethnicity/race, gender, geography, socioeconomic conditions, language, sexual orientation, religion, learning, behavioral and emotional management styles.

The Diversity Kaleidoscope, pictured below, illustrates the multiplicity of factors that can make up the uniqueness of all individuals.

Figure 3.1 The Diversity Kaleidoscope

Self

Physical Ability · Childhood History · Gender · Race & Ethnicity · Age · Sexual Orientation

Geographic Location · Marital Parenting Status · Social Class · Life Experience · Grooming & Presence · Spiritual Religious Beliefs · Politics · Management / Status · Seniority

Job Classification · Work Unit Department · Work Content · Work Load · Educational Background · Resources Time Constraints · Work Location

1. Work Factors

2. Cultural Factors

3. Personal Factors

4. Core Personality

The Diversity Kaleidoscope (Figure 3.1) depicts four layers that contribute to forming our diversity and the way we perceive and react to the world around us.

1. **Work factors** – this is the outermost layer. These are influences that are determined by job conditions such as the work location, a boss, peers, clients, workload, etc. This outermost layer can be seen as dominant but in actuality contains factors that are most controllable. These factors could all change with a job change.

2. **Cultural factors** – this inner layer reflects one's values, how they were raised and the personal choices that are made during a lifetime. These include political leanings, faith, education, marital status, where a person lives, how spare time is spent, etc. Changing these factors is more difficult, generally requiring some significant emotional event.

3. **Personal factors** – this third layer has great influence on a person's identity. It includes our gender, race, age, childhood history, etc. Changing these factors is extremely difficult, as most of them are determined at birth.

4. **Core personality** – the fourth layer is the self or unique individual who interacts with others and the world. It includes innate learning styles, patterns of behavior (for example DISC and Myers-Briggs personality types), communication skills and how one expresses and manages emotions. All of the other layers influence the development of the unique self, but it is important to understand that core personality can change over time, as circumstances, influences and motivations evolve.

Think of these layers and factors as lenses and elements of our personality kaleidoscope. Day-to-day events that happen are like light entering the kaleidoscope. The way one interprets or sees the light is determined by how each of the various layers and elements align. In other words, the way a person relates to others and reacts to situations is determined largely by these ever changing alignments.

When supervising individuals, it is important to understand that all of the factors and characteristics listed in the kaleidoscope prism impact how staff will see the world and how the world sees them. Turn the kaleidoscope slightly and perceptions can change.

The first step in working effectively with staff requires supervisors to understand their own uniqueness and how it affects the way they see and work in the world. The second step is to understand and value diversity in others. An appreciative and inquiring attitude is basic to respecting and recognizing the unique contributions that individual staff with many different qualities and life experiences can make. This sets the stage for creating an environment that maximizes the potential of all staff while modeling how to work with children and families from diverse backgrounds.

A Word about Gender and Age

Gender and age are two additional areas that can impact the child and family services supervisor's role. It is a helping profession similar to many female dominated fields, including teaching and nursing, which have traditionally been made up of a larger percentage of women. There are many reasons for this, including the fact that this is a profession that does not pay salaries that attract men.

Retention focused supervisors will want to be aware of any biases they may have about gender when it comes to recruiting and retaining child and family service staff. These biases can cause male applicants to be overlooked when they may have a lot to contribute to the agency and the field. As agencies work with more and more fathers and adolescent males, having diversity in gender is an asset that needs to be recognized and valued.
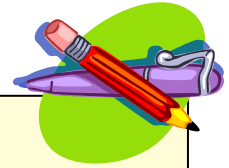
The issue of age as a diversity factor is also important for supervisors to consider. Workbook 1, *The Role of Leaders in Staff Retention*, introduces the concept of the emerging workforce. Part of this workforce is comprised of people who are having their first work experience following college. This population often makes up a significant portion of the workforce in child and family service agencies.

Supervisors will want to think about how they respond to staff when age is a factor. A majority of newly hired staff are from a younger generation than their supervisors. Younger staff may appear to have different priorities when it comes to work. They may also respond to different incentives than a supervisor from another generation is used to considering. They may have trouble understanding the values of families when it comes to child-rearing, or have trouble with the etiquette of respect and deference for older clients.

In other scenarios, staff may be older than their supervisors. They may be reluctant to take advice and/or guidance, and may behave as if they were unappreciative of the skills their younger supervisor possesses. At the same time, younger supervisors may feel intimidated by older staff and may be more hesitant to give the feedback and guidance they are comfortable providing to their younger staff members.

Being aware of age and gender as diversity factors will help retention focused supervisors monitor their own values and provide supervisory services that benefit all of their staff.

Activity: Identifying Differences

Step 1: List of diversity factors that have had significant impact on my life	Step 2: More detail about a selected factor

Important points to remember

- The factors that make up diversity are multidimensional, dynamic and ever changing and include work, cultural, environmental, personal and core personality.

- All diversity factors impact how people will see the world and how the world will see them.

- Effective supervisors need to understand their own uniqueness before they can understand diversity in their staff.

- Understanding how staff see themselves and valuing their differences is the job of every supervisor who works to respect the unique contributions that individual staff can make.

- Supervisors who understand the impact of diversity on their relationship with staff are modeling how to work more effectively with children and families from diverse backgrounds.

3.2 Racial, Cultural, Ethnic and Social Class Diversity

Dealing with Diversity

As the "Lunch and Learn" meeting continues, Alice and the other supervisors begin to talk about some of the issues they are dealing with when it comes to working with diverse staff. They talk for some time about the challenges of working with people who come from a kaleidoscope of differing backgrounds.

Alice says: "I don't know about if any of you have had a similar problem, but my team is struggling with an issue that is really starting to have a negative impact on the team dynamics." She then explains that the agency assigned to her unit a family who has requested a caseworker of the same race. "Our agency doesn't have a policy on this type of request, and even though I am inclined to respect the family's wishes, I feel like my role as a supervisor is being usurped," Alice explains. "Sure, I'm assuming that having a worker from the same race is best, but the real problem is that when the request came up in the team meeting, many of my staff thought the request shouldn't be honored on the basis of race alone, while others believed that it should. People really got their noses out of joint over this one."

Alice goes on to explain how the family's needs required infant mental health expertise that one of her team members was most qualified to provide, but this staff person was not the same race as the family. "Some staff feel that, since they are a team, they should be assigned to cases based on who is available to take the case as well as who would be the best fit for the case. Others thought that family wishes need to be considered." Alice looks around the table and says: "In reality, there is something to be said about having the ability to assign workers with the most appropriate expertise, what do you guys think?"

This generates quite a bit of discussion among the "Lunch and Learn" group. Many feel that the request needs to be honored and that the agency needs to have a policy that addresses this issue, while others feel that families can't have an expectation that race will be a factor in who is assigned to their case.

"This is the same argument my staff is having," Alice says in an exasperated voice. "I am really concerned that this issue will divide my team and undermine my ability to make decisions based on my expertise and the expertise of my staff. I really can't afford to have that happen right now, not when I finally have a team with some experience and whose members work well together. I really wish our agency had a policy about this issue!"

Today, child welfare has a serious issue in the disproportionate representation of children of color in out-of-home care, particularly in urban areas of the country. Being able to attract and work effectively with staff who come from the racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds representative of the children and families served is a critical factor in an agency's success.

A first step is to acknowledge real differences that affect child welfare decisions, such as someone's experience of institutionalized racism, different modes of communication and different values and styles of parenting.

The more attuned supervisors and staff are to understanding and building on the strengths that people use to cope with social inequality and injustice, the more resourceful and effective they will be with children and families. Retention focused supervisors must have a good understanding and level of comfort with racial, cultural and ethnic diversity to be effective in their interactions with staff and to model how best to work effectively with children and families who come from backgrounds and experiences that differ from their own.

One of the critical issues in supervision is that the same approach may have different effects on people from varying cultural backgrounds. The supervisor may want to tailor his/her approach depending on the way staff view parenting as well as their willingness to disclose personal information and venture opinions. He/she may also need to consider acceptable body language, i.e. eye contact and issues related to personal space and boundaries.

Being in an agency where staff are able to be authentic can enhance multicultural participation in the workplace. Cultural differences need to be celebrated by everyone in the organization. When all staff feel safe to discuss and examine their assumptions about cultural differences, then real progress can be made in building a multicultural agency and community.

Race & Culture

There are many ways in which people characterize themselves or are characterized by others. For the purpose of this workbook, the following definitions will be used to serve as a point of discussion:

Race: This term is often used when talking about biological characteristics that can be attributed to descendents of a common ancestor. It is important to remember that an individual's racial as well as ethnic identification can come from self-identification and/or from identification from others.

Ethnicity: The terms race and ethnicity are often used interchangeably, but the concept of ethnicity goes beyond biological characteristics. It includes the idea that people with similar origins may share a common history, identify themselves as a group and share roots that can include geography, religion, race and culture.

Culture: Culture generally refers to the learned behaviors, values, rituals, stories and customs that are passed from one generation to the next. Culture is constantly evolving and individuals and groups adapt aspects of their behaviors to accommodate changes in circumstances and life experiences.

Social Class: This is an attempt to rank people in groups that possess certain common social characteristics such as wealth, education, position within the community, property ownership, family influence etc.

Race, ethnicity, culture and social class are rich characteristics of diversity, but not the only ones. Unfortunately, when these and/or other diversity characteristics are used to label or stereotype individuals, misunderstandings and lack of appreciation for the uniqueness of the individual and his/her life experiences can result. No one is immune from the effects of labeling. The activity, *Dealing with Labels*, illustrates the personal impact of labeling oneself and others. Please take some time to participate in the following activity.[3]

Activity: Dealing with Labels

Instruction:

Fill in the *Labels Worksheet* that follows.

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[3] Adapted from: *For Questions Exercise*, Victory over Violence, http://www.vov.com.

Labels Worksheet

Think about the *Diversity Kaleidoscope* especially as it applies to race, culture, ethnicity and class and answer the following questions:

1. Four words that I would use to describe my race, culture, ethnicity and class:

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. One experience that helped me to form this description of myself was:

   _____

   _____

3. One thing I like about being (include the four words from question #1) is:

   _____

   _____

4. One thing that I find difficult about being (include the four words from question #1) is:

   _____

   _____

5. How did it feel to be required to label yourself in terms of your race, culture, ethnicity and class?

   Was it hard to do?

   Did you experience any resistance to putting labels on yourself?

   Do you think that others label you in the way you label yourself?

6. As a supervisor, do you sometimes apply labels to your staff?

   Are these labels that serve you and the staff person well?

   How might these labels limit or increase your expectations for the staff person?

Becoming a supervisor with a multi-cultural perspective takes time and unwavering commitment. Ongoing reaching out is required while personal growth, compassion and understanding are integral to the process. There will be a need for honest efforts to recognize that sometimes, competing values and interests are legitimate and important. This effort will require that supervisors be able to challenge both their own assumptions and those of their staff.

Challenging Assumptions

So What's So Important about Assumptions?

Alice is having a meeting with her program manager, Vivian. She is telling her about the discussion that happened at the last "Lunch and Learn" she attended. She explains that her issue generated a great deal of discussion, but that the group never came close to an agreement about whether or not race should be the sole consideration in assigning a staff person to a case.

Alice says: "It got pretty hot in the room. I'm glad we all know each other pretty well. We feel comfortable talking to one another about anything, though I thought this discussion got pretty pointed. I hate to say it, but I felt that some people's opinions seemed to break down along racial lines."

Vivian asks Alice to elaborate, and Alice explains how initially the group only seemed to be looking at the issues of whether or not race should be the sole determinate in assigning staff to a family's case. "At one point Michael said that he wondered if I was having difficulty dealing with the issue because the family who had made the request belonged to a different race. He implied that I might be having difficulty dealing with the issue of race with my staff. Well that opened Pandora's box because the discussion got decidedly more heated after that," Alice commented. "Good thing I like all of these people, because I could have taken this personally."

"I'm glad you didn't because you might have missed a golden opportunity to think about the impact of assumptions when it comes to working with race and culture," Vivian responds.

"Leave it up to you to turn this into a learning experience for me," Alice says with a laugh.

"OK, you can laugh, but I think assumptions are a big part of what is happening here," Vivian replies.

"Well, you are right in the sense that I think my staff have mixed emotions. Mixed emotions regarding the family that assumed the best caseworker for them was someone of the same race. It seems to me that this type of logic is one-dimensional. It is really hard for me to think that some of my workers are making the same assumptions," Alice volunteered.

Vivian responded: "Aw yes, making assumptions. This seems like something we all do. But how we, as supervisors, deal with assumptions might really make a difference in whether or not we can help our diverse staff grow and develop as they deal with people from a variety of racial, ethnic and social classes."

Alice concedes that she is not immune to making assumptions when dealing with her staff so Vivian volunteers to give her some information on managing diverse staff. They agree to make this the topic of their next discussion.

When working with differences, it is important to think about and deal with one's own conscious and unconscious assumptions. Assumptions are based on stereotypes that are learned over a lifetime. They can cloud work interactions and impact the supervisor's ability to understand his/her staff. They can be negative or positive, and are often based on superficial assessments rather than facts. If supervisors are not careful, assumptions can sidetrack their efforts to understand how to motivate and support the development of each individual staff person. This becomes an issue when supervisors make the mistake of focusing largely on the differences of an individual, whether they are presumed or obvious (i.e. age, gender, race). It is more productive to look at each staff member as a unique person, influenced by his/her personality, cultural background, personal values and current situation.

Effective supervisors strive to understand that we are all cultural beings. They pay special attention to developing awareness of those personal preferences and biases that might enhance as well as impede the work they do with their staff and clients.[4]

What we see depends mainly on what we look for.

— John Lubbock

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[4] Ivey, Allen, and Ivey Mary. "Intentional Interviewing and Counseling: Facilitating Client Development in a Multicultural Society. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thompson Learning. 2003

Activity – Challenging Assumptions and Valuing Diversity

Instructions:

Refer to the Alice scenarios *Dealing with Diversity* and *What's So Important about Assumptions.*

1. In the left hand column of the table below, list the assumptions that you think Alice may have made about the family she is describing, her staff and the supervisors who challenged her at the "Lunch and Learn" meeting.

2. For each assumption, list corresponding implications and resolutions.

Alice might have assumed	How these assumptions can impact her work	What she can do to challenge the assumption
About the family in her example:		
About her staff when reacting to the family's request:		
Regarding the "Lunch and Learn" supervisors:		

Supervisors who check themselves about the assumptions they are making about staff and others are ahead of the game. Once assumptions are challenged, supervisors are free to focus on the staff person's potential and strengths. Acknowledging a staff person's areas of proven ability and commitment to the work can serve as the basis to help him/her grow.

The following tool is designed to help supervisors look at what they are doing to challenge their assumptions and those of their staff. Supervisors who want to make diversity an integral part of their everyday practice will want to look at expanding what they are currently doing to challenge assumptions and add new ideas to their practice.

Tool: Checklist for Valuing Diversity

Some strategies supervisors can employ to increase multicultural competencies for themselves and their staff include:

- □ Treat everyone with respect without exception

- □ Make a personal commitment to study, learn and understand cultural differences and nuances to inform and continuously improve effectiveness (See the appendix for a list of helpful publications and web sites on this subject)

- □ Create a plan to eliminate personal fears and concerns about dealing with diversity including finding a personal cultural guide or mentor to assist in developing cultural awareness and competencies. Share this information with colleagues and staff

- □ Be open and available to staff to discuss issues related to working with diversity

- □ Make it clear to staff what the agency policy and program goals are regarding working with diversity

- □ Lead by example by cultivating personal and working relationships that cross racial and cultural lines

- □ Actively recruit and commit to developing and retaining a diverse and culturally competent work force in relative proportion to the population served

- □ Participate in developing and participating in ongoing staff training and support systems to assure cultural awareness and competence at all levels of the organization

- □ Attend functions within the cultural communities served

- □ Recognize and celebrate cultural traditions and holidays within the work unit (e.g. hosting an agency wide food fair that asks staff to bring in food that represents their culture or ethnicity)

- □ Assure that the office and workspaces honor cultural preservation and celebration

- □ Assure that culturally competent services are accessible in the communities served

- □ Assure that language translation services are provided, particularly in assisting and advocating for families who do not speak English

- □ Assure that program policies and procedures are developed in the cultural context of the populations served (i.e. value systems, family definitions and traditions, gender and age, etc.)

- □ Make sure that services and outcomes honor the cultural needs and heritage of the children served

In the short run, commitment to diversity can make the supervisor's job more complex. With a greater pool of experience and knowledge comes more challenge and opportunities.

In the long run, building a multi-cultural work group is a very rich experience and of great benefit to the emotional health and sense of satisfaction of all concerned. In order to achieve this, it is important to guard against stereotyping. That includes supervisors being mindful of when they may be stereotyping as well as setting a policy of zero tolerance for comments and behaviors from others that promote stereotypes. This will require that a supervisor not get locked in to rigid assumptions about any one individual, based solely on his/her specific culture, race or any number of other characteristics.

In summary, people who identify with a specific culture will have a multitude of other characteristics such as age, personality, learning and behavioral styles as well as how they manage emotions that will make them unique individuals. The effective supervisor will want to have a wide repertoire of skills to attune his/her approach and responses to include all staff.

Note: There are many fine publications on racial, ethnic and cultural diversity. To find out more about working with this aspect of diversity, please review the extensive references provided in the appendix of this workbook.

Important points to remember

- The disproportionate representation of children of color served in child and family programs requires that organizations are able to attract and retain staff that will help to build a multicultural agency.

- Supervisors need to tailor their approach to working with staff from diverse cultural experiences to build on strengths and model how best to work with children and families who come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

- Supervisors need to understand the way in which staff define themselves or are defined by others including race, ethnicity, culture, social class, age and gender; while guarding against labeling and stereotyping.

- When working with differences, it is important to think about and deal with one's own conscious and unconscious assumptions and to actively challenge these assumptions.

- A commitment to diversity may make the supervisor's job more complex in the short run, but in the long run, diverse staff will enrich the agency and the level of service to children and families.

3.3 Introduction to Diverse Personalities at Work

> ### The More I Learn…
>
> Alice has just received the information on diversity from Vivian. She is pouring through a large stack of information. "Bibliographies, web sites, monographs…Vivian is going to have me on overload with all of this," she says out loud. As she leafs through the information she sees that it pertains to racial, cultural and ethnic diversity. It also includes information about learning and working styles and how people relate to each other in the work setting. Alice says to herself: "I guess I never really thought about diversity in such a broad way. Is all of this really necessary to be a good supervisor?"

At the heart of diversity in the workplace is the fact that each person has his/her own unique personality that includes how they learn, work and relate to others. To work effectively with staff, supervisors must have an understanding of how they (and their staff) approach life and how their individual traits affect working with each other and with children and families.
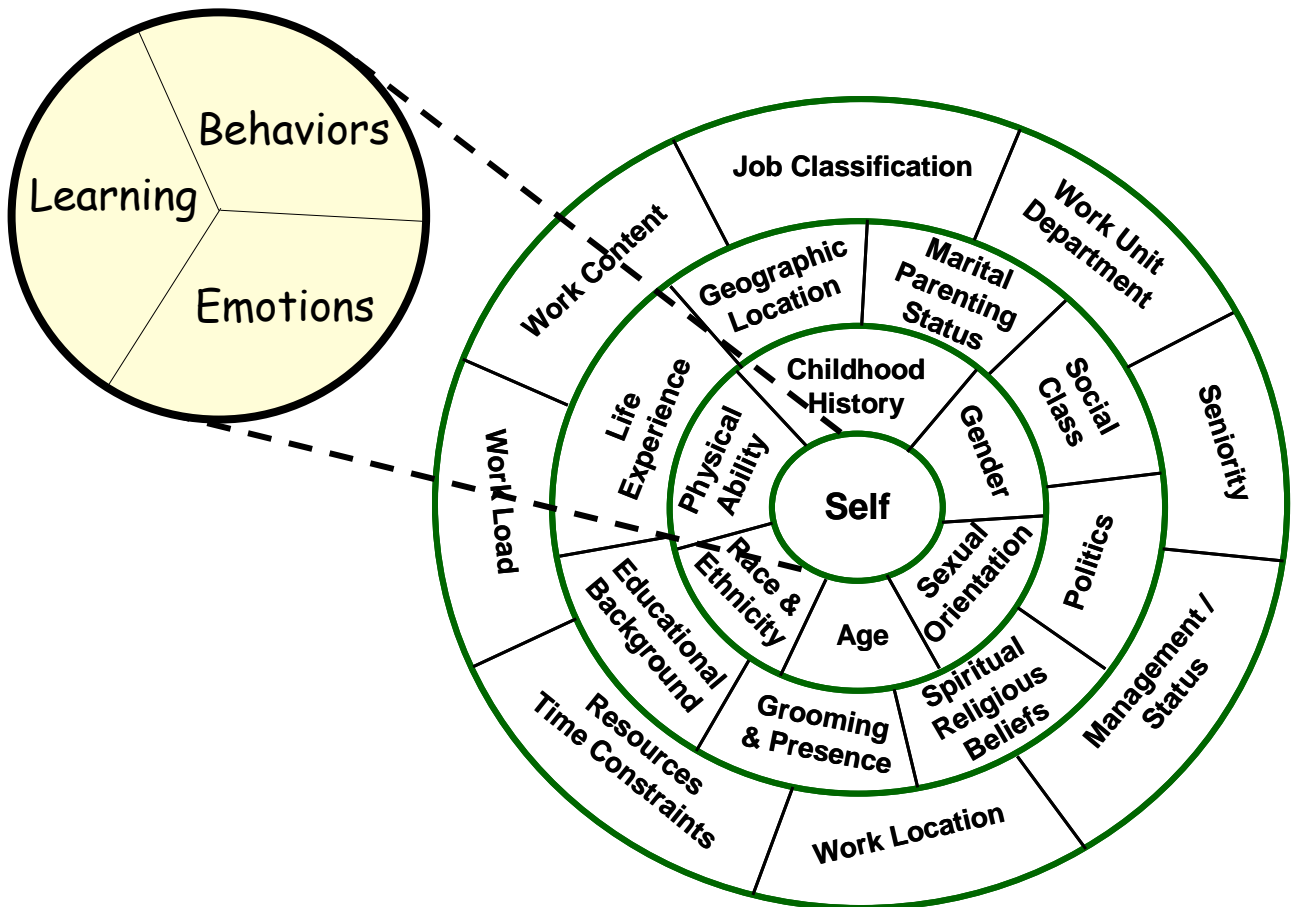

Figure 3.2 Personality

Many agencies have used instruments such as the Meyers-Briggs Personality Inventory in management training. Supervisors are encouraged to continue using tools such as this, as they may be helpful understanding and working with differences in personality types.

The material in the following units addresses personality differences on the *Diversity Kaleidoscope*. It explores differences in preferred styles of learning and behaving and how staff form relationships with others. These differences have implications for how supervisors see themselves and how they will work to bring out the best in the individuals within their teams. The assessment tools provided are not all encompassing or the only tools available on the subject. They are simple tools to help the supervisor think about how he/she can consciously utilize his/her own personality and skills to tailor supervision to the strengths and style of each individual staff person.


Obviously, understanding another person's style doesn't tell us all there is to know about that person. Never forget that every person you meet is far more than his or her style.

- Robert Bolton

3.4 Diverse Learning Styles

What is known about adult learners is that they come to any situation with life experiences that give them a history of problem solving. They learn best when the focus of the learning experience is on process first and content second. Individuals also have a variety of learning styles that impact how supervisors approach them with information.
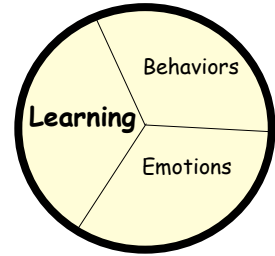
Much has been written about learning styles and there are many models to choose from when discussing them. This workbook will take a look at three types of learning styles. It is important to note that these styles contain generalities. Most people have a tendency toward one style or another, but may exhibit traits in several styles. The most helpful way to look at this information is to look for patterns that show more traits in one area then another.

The three learning types include people who:
- Learn through seeing
- Learn through hearing/talk
- Learn through touching/doing

The following tool: *Assessing My Learning Style* is designed to help supervisors determine their learning styles.

Activity: Assessing Your Learning Style

Instructions:

1. Review the following tool.

2. Read the word in the left hand column and then read the statements.

3. Check the statement that **best** describes how you respond to each situation. (Choose only one statement)

Your answers may fall into all three columns, but one column will likely contain the most answers.

The column with the most check marks indicates your primary learning style.

Answer the following questions:
1. What did you learn about your style?

2. How might this affect the way you supervise others?

Tool: Assessing My Learning Style [5]

When you…	Learn by Seeing	Learn by Hearing and Talking	Learn by Touching and Doing
Spell	☐ I visualize the word.	☐ I sound out the word.	☐ I write the word down to find if it feels right.
Talk	☐ I talk sparingly but dislike listening for too long. I like words that create an image such as *see, picture*, and *imagine*?	☐ I enjoy listening but am impatient to talk. I use words such as *hear, tune*, and *think*.	☐ I gesture and use expressive movements. I use words such as *feel, touch*, and *hold*.
Concentrate	☐ I become distracted by untidiness or movement.	☐ I become distracted by sounds or noises.	☐ I become distracted by activity around me.
Meet someone again	☐ I forget names but remember faces or remember where I met the person.	☐ I forget faces but remember names or remember what was talked about with the person.	☐ I remember best what I did with someone.
Work with children and families	☐ I prefer direct, face-to-face, personal meetings.	☐ I prefer using the telephone.	☐ I prefer talking with people while walking or participating in an activity.
Read	☐ I like descriptive scenes and will pause to imagine the actions described.	☐ I enjoy dialog and conversation or hearing the characters talk.	☐ I prefer action stories but reading is not my favorite activity.
Do something new at work	☐ I like to see demonstrations, diagrams, slides, and posters.	☐ I prefer verbal instructions or talking about it with someone else.	☐ I prefer to jump right in and try it.
Put something together	☐ I look at the written directions and the picture.	☐ I ask someone who knows how to do it, to tell me how to put it together.	☐ I ignore the directions and figure it out as I go along.
Need help with computers	☐ I look for pictures or diagrams.	☐ I call the help line, ask a neighbor, or swear at the computer.	☐ I keep trying to do it or try it on another computer.

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[5] This chart has been adapted from *Accelerated Learning*, Colin Rose (1987)
http://www.chaminade.org/inspire/learnstl.hem

It is important for supervisors to understand their own styles of learning, as they tend to teach in the style with which they are most comfortable as learners. Once the supervisor has determined his/her own style, giving this self-assessment to staff and asking them to complete it will lead to discussions with them about how they learn best. This lets staff know that their supervisor is interested in their growth and development and gives them permission to work with the supervisor to maximize their learning experiences.

Supervisors and staff who have an understanding of their learning styles can come to an understanding of how they will work together to maximize learning. The following tool, *Suggestions to Aid Learning,* is designed to help supervisors assist individual staff in their learning process. *Suggestions to Aid Learning* includes three (3) charts that list the learning type, the trait and how supervisors can engage staff who exhibit a particular trait.

Tool: Suggestions to Aid Learning

Primarily Learns Through Seeing

Trait	Suggestion to Aid Learning
Likes visual material	Encourage the use of pictures, charts, maps graphs etc.
Likely to take notes when new material is presented	Make sure to have handouts available
Wants a quiet environment when working or concentrating	Allow staff to move their work to a quiet area of the office or take it home on occasion
Prefers the use of multi-media such as video tapes, PowerPoint, graphs and diagrams	Encourage the use of computers and video when appropriate
Talks about seeing the "big picture" or wanting enough details to paint a mental picture	Encourage use of visual metaphors

Primarily Learns Through Hearing and Talking

Trait	Suggestion to Aid Learning
Likes to discuss or debate the information	Encourage staff to talk with others during staff meetings, in-service trainings etc.
Enjoys talking in front of a group or making presentations	Create opportunities to make presentations, lead a meeting etc.
Likes to "bounce" ideas off of others	Create opportunities for "hearing learners" to discuss their ideas
Prefers dictating notes to writing them down	If possible allow staff to dictate notes or encourage them to allow enough time to complete computer work
Repeats things to remember them and reads information out loud	Verbally reiterate important points with "hearing learners"
Likes telling stories to illustrate a point	Practice tolerance for traits that are different from yours and consider using verbal illustrations

Primarily Learns Through Touching and Doing

Trait	Suggestion to Aid Learning
Likes to get up and move around in staff meetings and in-service training	Provide planned opportunities for staff to move during meetings; in training, plan for learning activities that require movement
Is a "hands on" type of person who learns best by getting involved	Provide opportunities to shadow experienced staff, take the lead in a teamed activity, etc.
Likes to dress up their work area with posters and art	Encourage appropriate creativity with workspace
Is overwhelmed by large documents and or puts off reading important material	Encourage staff to skim through something to get a rough idea of what it is before reading it in detail and highlight written information that they must have
Finds it difficult to sit for long periods of time	Encourage breaks, especially when high levels of concentration are needed

Instructions:
1. Think about the staff you supervise and choose someone from your staff that you think may have a learning style that differs from your own.

2. Ask that staff person to think about their learning style and fill out the tool, *Assessing my Learning Style,* found earlier in this workbook. (An extra copy is also available in the appendix of this workbook.)

After your staff person has finished the assessment, answer the following questions:

1. Did your staff person learn anything new about his/her learning style?

2. How did the outcome of the assessment differ from how you see this person's learning style?

3. Given this person's learning style, what learning aids could you use with him/her to capitalize on his/her learning style?

Important points to remember

- Most people have a tendency toward one style of learning or another, but may exhibit traits from other styles as well. Styles of learning include learning through seeing, hearing and talking and touching and doing.

- Supervisors have a tendency to teach in the style with which they are most comfortable as learners.

- Supervisors who understand their own learning style and that of others are enhancing their overall flexibility in dealing with staff.

- Once a supervisor identifies the learning style of staff members, techniques designed for that style can be used to assist and engage individual staff in the learning process.

3.5 Diverse Behavioral Styles
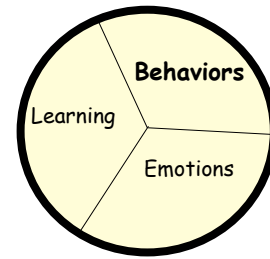
Behavioral styles are a broad topic that take into account each person's attitudes, behavioral patterns, emotional responses, and social roles. Behavior styles affect each person's actions, the words he/she uses, his/her relationships and how he/she functions in the work environment.

Understanding that staff come with a propensity for distinctive behavioral styles is important when looking at how people work together and how best to approach staff when offering supervisory assistance. Understanding individual behavioral styles will also help supervisors understand how a staff person will relate to children and families on their caseload.

There is much written about behavioral styles. The behavior style model presented in this workbook is based on the DISC Personality System [6] that looks at behavioral types in four categories:

D Driver

I Inspiring

S Supportive

C Cautious

These behavioral types vary in their **pace** and **priority** as illustrated in the figure below:
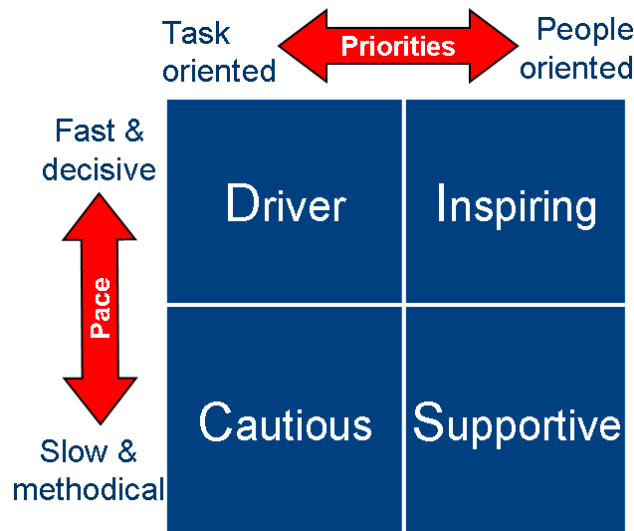

Figure 3.3 DISC Quadrants

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[6] The DISC model is the four quadrant behavioral model based on the work of William Moulton Marston Ph.D. (1893-1947). Material in this workbook has been adapted from: *You've Got Style* by Robert A. Rohm who has adapted and expanded on the work of Marston.

When factoring in both pace and priority the four basic behavior styles become:

- **Driver** – fast-paced and task-oriented
- **Inspiring** – fast-paced and people-oriented
- **Supportive** – slower-paced and people-oriented
- **Cautious** – slower-paced and task-oriented

It is important to remember that the characteristics listed are generalities. Not all behavioral styles exhibit all of the characteristics listed and may indeed borrow from other styles. In fact most people are never just one behavioral style or another, but have characteristics of several styles. It is important to realize that when people are stressed, they often revert to their dominate style in which traits can become exaggerated.

People develop styles of behaving to function in the situations they find themselves. These styles all have dominant positive characteristics as well as corresponding negative characteristics when taken to extremes. The important thing for supervisors to remember is that all types of styles are needed in the workplace. As supervisors, it is desirable to incorporate flexibility in behavioral style to accommodate the different styles represented among their staff. For example, supervisors who have a tendency to be very task oriented will need to work harder at becoming more sensitive to relationship issues. Those who are more people-oriented may need to become more task oriented, in certain situations.

This workbook promotes having supervisors become aware of their own styles and the styles of their staff only as another tool to help supervisors work more effectively with the individual needs of their staff. It is important to note that it is not the intention of this workbook to promote stereotyping of staff based on their own or their supervisor's assessment of their behavioral styles.

Activity: Assessing Your Behavioral Style

Instructions:

1. Look at the tool that follows: *What Behavioral Style Am I?* and review the characteristics for each of the four behavioral styles listed.

2. Put a checkmark next to each characteristic that you think best describes your style.

3. Write down the number of the behavioral style that contains most of the checks.

4. Turn to the next page in the workbook to identify the DISC behavioral type that matches the number of the behavioral style where you have made the most check marks.

When you have identified your behavioral style, answer the following questions:

1. Do you think this is your dominant behavioral style?

2. What other behavioral styles do you exhibit that are not part of your dominate style but are characteristic of your behavior?

Ask someone from work that you trust to assess your behavioral style.

1. Does their assessment match your own?

2. If not, in what way is it different?

What Behavior Style Am I? [7]

Behavioral Style #1 – I….
- ☐ Have high standards for self and others
- ☐ Am goal and results oriented
- ☐ Tend to formulate a quick response
- ☐ Am often seen as being self-reliant
- ☐ Am not adverse to taking risks
- ☐ Would rather focus on getting the job done
- ☐ Am direct
- ☐ Am more task-oriented than people-oriented
- ☐ Pride myself on being straightforward
- ☐ Exude self confidence
- ☐ Am self reliant
- ☐ Can be competitive

Behavioral Style # 2 – I….
- ☐ Am dramatic and persuasive
- ☐ Enjoy being "on the go" and multi-tasking
- ☐ Can tune out or engage in side conversations when bored
- ☐ Often display exuberant optimism
- ☐ Like to dream big
- ☐ Have a tendency to get right to work on an idea
- ☐ Get very involved
- ☐ Am warm and friendly to everyone
- ☐ Am much more people-oriented than task-oriented
- ☐ Am exuberant
- ☐ Am outgoing
- ☐ Enjoy creating new processes

Behavior Style #3 – I…
- ☐ Am seen as reliable
- ☐ Like to work as a team player
- ☐ Am friendly and encouraging of others
- ☐ Have a high level of empathy for others
- ☐ Am self-effacing
- ☐ Work best when there is structure
- ☐ Am good at following an existing process
- ☐ Feel that cooperation is of utmost importance
- ☐ Am solid and steadfast
- ☐ Am caring and considerate
- ☐ Am loyal to the tried and true methods
- ☐ Prefer to go along to get along

Behavioral Style #4 – I…
- ☐ Prefer to be a doer
- ☐ Focus on results
- ☐ Focus on the task at hand
- ☐ Am well organized and efficient
- ☐ Am intense
- ☐ Like to look for the logic in situations
- ☐ Am task-oriented in communications with others
- ☐ Enjoy finding out about things
- ☐ Place a high value on learning
- ☐ Like to do things correctly
- ☐ Want all of the facts before decisions are made
- ☐ Am very conscientious in all aspects of life
- ☐ Feel the need to raise questions
- ☐ Like to get it right

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[7] Concepts adapted from: *You've Got Style* by Robert A. Rohm, Ph.D.

Key for What Behavior Style am I ?

Behavioral Style # 1 = ___ # of boxes checked	**Driver Style**
Behavioral Style # 2 = ___ # of boxes checked	**Inspiring Style**
Behavioral Style # 3 = ___ # of boxes checked	**Supportive Style**
Behavioral Style # 4 = ___ # of boxes checked	**Cautious Style**

Like the two sides of a coin, for every trait a particular behavioral style may have, there exists a flipside. This flipside occurs when the trait is taken to an extreme or when a particular quality is out of control or is very dominate in a particular behavioral style.

The following chart, *Both Sides of Behavior Styles*, illustrates the two sides, Ying and Yang, for each **DISC** behavioral style.

Both Sides of Behavior Styles

Ying	Yang
Driver Style – fast-paced and task-oriented	
• Have high standards for self and others	• Can be unintentionally critical of others
• Goal and results oriented	• Can be seen as abrupt and impatient
• Tend to formulate a quick response	• Can be seen as flippant or rude
• Often seen as being self-reliant	• May step over others to get the job done
• Not adverse to taking risks	• May be viewed as reckless
• Focus on getting the job done	• Have trouble working toward consensus
• Direct	• Can be seen as pushy
• More task-oriented than people-oriented	• Talk about fact over emotion
• Pride in being straightforward	• Can be seen as blunt
• Exude self confidence	• Can be seen as conceited
• Can be competitive	• May be seen as arrogant
	• Can be viewed as ruthless
Inspiring Style – fast-paced and people-oriented:	
• Dramatic and persuasive	
• Enjoy being "on the go" and multi-tasking	• Can be seen as manipulative
• Engages in side conversations when bored	• Don't always follow a task to the end
• Often display exuberant optimism	• Can be seen as impolite
• Like to dream big	• Can be seen as unrealistic
• Decisive and moves right ahead on ideas	• Don't want to deal with the important details
• Get very involved	• Can display impulsivity
• Warm and friendly to everyone	• Can loose sight of the big picture
• More people-oriented than task-oriented	• Not always seen as genuine
• Exuberant	• Talk about emotions over facts
• Outgoing	• Can be abrasive to some
• Enjoy creating new processes	• May talk much more than listen
	• Not always realistic
	• Can have difficulty with existing protocols

Ying	Yang
Supportive Style – slower-paced and people-oriented: • Seen as reliable • Like to work as a team player • Friendly and encouraging of others • Have a high level of empathy for others • Self-effacing • Work best when there is structure • Good at following an existing process • Feel that cooperation is of utmost importance • Solid and steadfast • Caring and considerate • Loyal to the tried and true methods • Prefer to go along to get along	• Can be overlooked or taken for granted • Can appear to lack initiative • Difficulty giving constructive feedback • Find it difficult to confront • Don't take the credit that is due • Difficulty when tasks are not clearly defined • Can have difficulty creating new processes • Can be seen as disingenuous • Can be inflexible • Can be easily manipulated • Resist change • Can be resentful when expected to acquiesce
Cautious Style – slower-paced and task-oriented: • Prefer to be a doer • Focus on results • Focus on the task at hand • Well organized and efficient • Intense • Like to look for the logic in situations • Task-oriented in communications with others • Enjoy finding out about things • Place a high value on learning • Like to do things correctly • Wants all the facts before decisions are made • Very conscientious in all aspects of life • Feel the need to raise questions • Like to get it right	• Loose sight of the interpersonal • Can be seen as too intense • Can loose sight of the bigger picture • May be seen as compulsive • Can be off-putting • Can be critical of others who are less logical • May be seen as pushy • Can be seen as nosey • Don't like to be talked down to or corrected • Can be seen as rigid • Can be too cautious • Can be seen as compulsive and worrisome • Can be seen as negative • May be judgmental of those whose style is more relaxed

With so many behavioral styles it is no wonder that opportunities for conflict exist in the workplace.

Driver types who have a goal they are working toward can have difficulty with **Inspiring types** who may already be bored with the project and haven't followed through on what the Driver asked him/her to do.

Cautious types can be seen as rigid, as they generally want the task done right. They can find themselves in conflict with **Driver types** who want to move ahead with the project, focusing more on meeting deadlines and overlooking the details.

Supportive types will often put more energy into making sure that their relationships with others are intact, even at the cost of a making a final decision. **Driver types** can be put off by the **Supportive type's** perceived inability to finish a task and move on.

Inspiring types who love to start projects, but don't think much about the detail, can lock horns with **Cautious types**, who really want everything in order before they sign off on a task.

Often staff and supervisors are not aware that differences in behavioral style can have an impact on the way staff members relate and how well the team functions. Sometimes, they conclude that an individual staff person is deliberately holding back or just trying to make trouble when, in fact, that is the person's natural behavioral style.

The goal of retention focused supervisors is to incorporate enough flexibility in their style so that they can relate to staff with all types of behavioral styles. Being able to match the pace and priority of staff with a variety of behavioral styles will help supervisors better understand and relate to the needs of individual staff while helping them to optimize their performance.

The following tool, *Increasing Effectiveness with Staff with Different Behavioral Styles,* is designed to help supervisors take a closer look at what it takes to work more effectively with staff who have a predominately different behavioral style than their own.

Tool: Increasing Effectiveness with Staff with Different Behavioral Styles

Driver **Supervisor**	**Driver Staff**	**Inspiring Staff**	**Supportive Staff**	**Cautious Staff**
Positives in the Relationship	• Can be dynamic as both like to get things done • May experience synergy in the relationship • Respect each other's style	• Both are fast-paced and enjoy challenges • Both enjoy new projects	• *D's* love to start projects and S's love to finish them • *D* supervisors can go to *S* staff who are seen as steadfast and reliable	• Both styles focus on tasks and like to get things done • Bring different skills to the task – *D's* think big while *C's* work on the details
Challenges in the Relationship	• Can be competitive with *D* staff • May seek out *D* staff to assign cases to in a disproportional manner based on their "get it done" attitude	• Work habits can conflict – *I* staff are often seen as lacking follow through • See *I* staff as loosing sight of the big picture	• Styles contrast as *S* staff are slower-paced and people oriented • *S* staff can be easily taken for granted by *D* supervisors • Easy for *D* supervisor to overlook contributions of *S*	• *D's* take risks and adjust as they move forward while *C's* like to plan ahead and comply with the rules • Conflicts can arise over *C's* focus on deadlines vs. *D's* focus on quality
Ways to Increase Effectiveness	• Help staff to look at both emotion and fact • Allow staff to have a level of flexibility and give varied assignments and opportunities • Encourage attention to the feelings of others	• Work with staff to focus on details • Set expectations that help the *I* follow through • Give opportunities for new experiences and flexibility	• Help staff accept and give feedback • Give staff credit when due • Help *S* staff to manage change and incorporate flexibility • Help *S* staff to become more task-oriented	• *D* supervisors can work to appreciate *C* staff attention to detail • Work to reframe *C's* questions from negative to positive • Help *C* staff to keep sight of the big picture • Work with *C* staff on relationship-building

Inspiring Supervisor	Driver Staff	Inspiring Staff	Supportive Staff	Cautious Staff
Positives in the Relationship	• Both are fast paced and have fun together • Both styles enjoy challenges and seek out new projects	• Because their styles are so similar, they are often drawn to each other • *S* supervisors count on *S* staff to match their desire for a challenge and be flexible in the face of change	• Since they are both "people-focused," they work easily together • *S* staff help *I* supervisors make their dreams practical	• Both styles love to work with ideas and concepts though they take different approaches • *C* staff can add a dimension of caution when I supervisors are looking only at the big idea
Challenges in the Relationship	• Are likely to have different priorities • *D* staff want to know that they have the resources and help to complete the task in a high quality way, while *I* supervisors are more interested in the concept	• Both love the limelight and may end up sacrificing getting things done for flexibility • *S* supervisors may feel frustrated in with their difficulty in helping *S* staff meet deadlines and finish projects	• Being people-oriented, both may overlook the details of the task at hand • Contributions may be overlooked by *I* supervisors who enjoy the limelight	• The *C* staff's desire for consistency and structure is thwarted by the *I* supervisors desire for flexibility and new opportunities • May talk at cross purposes as the *C* staff is more interested in the task and the *I* supervisor in people
Ways to Increase Effectiveness	• Allow staff to put focus on a task • Understand that *D* staff want to talk about facts over emotions • Understand that the *D* staff focus on task is not rude or ruthless • Encourage more attention to feelings and how *D* staff relate to others	• Work to help *I* staff finish tasks and look for a logical way to implement a plan • Work to talk more than you listen and help *I* staff to do the same	• Work to help *S* staff embrace flexibility and change • Offer expressions of trust • Acknowledge contributions of *S* staff	• Help *C* staff to balance fun and work • Be open to improvements by *C* staff to *I* supervisor's creative ideas

Supportive Supervisor	Driver Staff	Inspiring Staff	Supportive Staff	Cautious Staff
Positives in the Relationship	• *S* supervisors naturally offer patience and support to the hard driven *D* • Serve to soften the task-oriented *D* and help him/her to relate better to people	• Both are people-oriented in their approach • *S* supervisors naturally help *I* staff feel appreciated and supported when they take on new projects	• Feel comfortable with each other and enjoy a sense of peace and harmony in their interactions • Feel well suited to work together as the *S* supervisor appreciates the *S* staff's team work	• Are respectful of each other's style and try not to intrude on one another's area of expertise • *S* supervisors can depend on *C* staff to follow through and complete tasks on time and with accuracy
Challenges in the Relationship	• *S* supervisors may feel that *D* staff challenge them and do not always respect their abilities and authority • *S* supervisors may find *D* staff's focus on tasks before people as frustrating	• May find it difficult to pin down the impulsive *I* style staff • Have problems with *I* staff who do not like to follow existing procedures and protocols	• Though both have the same style and are comfortable with each other, tasks that require thinking outside of the box or creation of new protocols can be difficult for this supervisory combination	• *S* supervisors may have difficulty with the *C* staff who seem critical or impatient • The "like to get it right" attitude of the *C* staff can seem judgmental and rigid to the *S* supervisor
Ways to Increase Effectiveness	• *S* supervisors need to feel confident in their supervisory abilities and not allow the challenges of *D* staff to undermine them • Employ patience and be a supportive sounding board for *D* staff • Work to give constructive feedback to *D* staff even when they appear not to want or need it	• Be appreciative and offer approval to *I* staff who take on new challenges • Give plenty of opportunity to grow and try new challenges • Take opportunities to be involved in the projects and work that *I* staff are involved in • Be careful not to resist change and new opportunities that excite *I* staff	• Work at giving *S* staff the recognition and appreciation that they deserve • Appreciate the *S* staff's teamwork ability, and help them to take the initiative when the work requires it • Give *S* staff plenty of support when changes need to be made • Challenge *S* staff to stay on task	• Offer kindness and support even when the *C* staff appear to be distant • Help *C* staff to work on "people skills" when they would rather attend to the details of a task • Allow *C* staff opportunities to work on detailed assignments that allow them to use organizational skills

Cautious Supervisor	Driver Staff	Inspiring Staff	Supportive Staff	Cautious Staff
Positives in the Relationship	• Both are task-oriented and focused on results • *D* staff can learn about accuracy and being thorough from the *C* supervisor	• Have different sets of skills that allow them to play different roles in projects • *C* supervisors can help *I* staff to focus on tasks and complete projects	• *C* supervisors can relate to the predictability that *S* staff bring to situations • *S* staff feel respected by *C* supervisors for being good team players	• Both approach the work with seriousness and high standards • Work well together because they are both concerned with learning and focusing on results
Challenges in the Relationship	• Self-reliant and risk-taking *D* staff may feel held back by *C* supervisors who are more concerned with organization and efficiency, while preferring to avoid risk • Both are task-oriented but approach situations differently and need to negotiate boundaries and accountability	• *C* supervisor's attention to detail can seem restrictive to *I* staff who prefer the creative process • Exuberant optimism on the part of *I* staff can seem naïve and short-sighted to the *C* supervisor	• The *C* supervisor's need to raise questions and confront is difficult for the *S* staff who prefers to be friendly and encouraging of others • *S* staff can be overlooked or taken for granted by *C* supervisors who enjoy the *S's* sensitivity to people, but don't see them as the "go to person" when challenges arise	• If they do not develop different areas of expertise, *C* supervisors and *C* staff can easily be in competition • Because they are both task-oriented, *C* supervisors may not be as helpful to *C* staff in working on interpersonal relationships
Ways to Increase Effectiveness	• Be open to learning from *D* staff who are not adverse to taking risk • Help *D* staff to evaluate and set standards for appropriate risk • Set clear boundaries	• Help *I* staff to translate feelings and ideas into realistic actions • Help *I* staff to listen more than they talk • Give *I* staff opportunities to be creative, work on new projects and processes	• Validate the important role that the *S* staff play in the team and work environment in general • Define tasks clearly so that *S* staff have the structure they need to perform optimally	• Work to respect *C* staff's area of expertise • Resist being condescending to *C* staff who place a high value on learning • Encourage and model relation-ship building

The following scenarios are designed to give supervisors an opportunity to strategize as to how best to work with different behavioral styles. They depict areas of conflict that can naturally arise when people with different behavioral styles interact.

Activity: Identifying and Working with Behavioral Styles

Instructions:

Read each scenario and answer the questions that follow.

Russ (Driver) and Shandra (Supportive)

Russ has many of the Driver behavior traits. He is the type of supervisor who prides himself on being straightforward. He doesn't like to beat around the bush, preferring to be more direct in his approach. Sure some of his staff think he is pretty pushy at times, but according to Russ: "That's just the price you pay when you are focused on reaching your goals." When staff ask for a decision, Russ has no problem being decisive, so staff don't have to wait for a response. The problem is that his focus on giving a quick response or getting the job done means that he really doesn't like to work toward consensus, preferring to go it alone whenever possible. Everyone knows that Russ is most encouraging with staff that earn their worth with him; generally those who have the same type of focus that he does.

Right now Russ is getting very exasperated. Shandra, who has many of the supportive behavior traits, is 15 minutes late for a meeting he has scheduled with her. The problem with Shandra, as Russ sees it, is that she lacks focus. The families seem to like her friendly encouragement. She is always talking to someone in the visiting room or running out to see a child. Her caseload isn't without problems, but she seems to be able to handle them. She is always there to help a fellow team mate, but Russ thinks that some of the workers on his unit take advantage of her easy going nature.

The real problem is that she is habitually late - late to meetings, late to get her reports in, late making it into the office in the morning. Even more importantly, she doesn't seem to take his instruction about how to improve her job performance. Furthermore, she has to tell him why her reports are late, rather than when she plans to have them done. Russ gets the impression that Shandra just tolerates him. He sees her as going along with him on the surface, but underneath she resists making changes. Russ is stumped on how to work more effectively with Shandra.

1. In what ways are behavioral styles contributing to this issue?

2. How can Russ help to bring out Shandra's strengths?

3. What can Russ do to adjust his style to work more effectively with Shandra?

4. What can Shandra do to improve her ability to work with Russ?

Erica (Cautious) and Lidia (Driver)

Erica has many of the traits associated with the Cautious behavior type. Walking into her office it is plain to see that she is well-organized. She has a large *Year at a Glance* calendar hanging on her wall that she keeps updated with information about her staff's activities. As a supervisor, she drives her staff crazy with her desire to get as much information as possible and process it before making a decision. Her staff have learned that waiting for an answer from her can cause them to miss important deadlines. In fact it can really be hard to get a direct answer out of Erica. If you ask Erica's staff, they will tell you that she can be critical of their efforts. It's not that she doesn't notice when they have done well, but she seems to feel that the best way to help them grow is to challenge them.

Lidia, who has many of the behavior traits associated with the Driver type, is meeting with Erica on a new family recruitment effort the agency is undertaking. Lidia has volunteered to spearhead the effort and has submitted several ideas to Erica to get her feedback. Lidia has a self-reliant and self-confident air about her. Once she commits herself to a project, she would rather focus on getting it done than meeting and talking about it.

Erica thinks that Lidia has not really given much thought to the "nuts and bolts" of the recruitment campaign and that as usual she is going ahead with out crossing all the "Ts" and dotting all of the "Is." Lidia has been waiting for Erica's feedback for some time. When, during the course of their meeting, it becomes obvious to Lidia that Erica wants to go through the proposal, line by line, she becomes angry.

"Why even bother to ask for your input, when all you're going to do is second guess me." Lidia says as she picks up her proposal and leaves Erica's office.

1. In what ways are behavioral styles contributing to this issue?

2. How can Erica help to bring out Lidia's strengths?

3. What can Erica do to adjust her style to work more effectively with Lidia?

4. What can Lidia do to improve her ability to work with Erica?

Ted (Supportive) and Jamal (Inspiring)

Ted, who has many of the traits associated with the Supportive type, is an easy going, reliable supervisor who allows his staff a great deal of freedom. He really enjoys working with the members of his team and places a high value on cooperation. He loves structure and places a high value on the existing unit protocols and processes. Ted is caring and considerate, but if he isn't careful (and often he isn't), he will let staff issues monopolize his time and he can't get the rest of his supervisory work done. Just ask his manager who describes Ted as a great guy who really cares about his staff but hates to say "no" to them and is not able to confront issues before they become real problems.

Jamal, who has many of the traits associated with the Inspiring type, is new to Ted's staff and to child welfare. He's a real people person and staff and families have taken to him right away. On his old job, he loved to dream big and often volunteered to start new projects, though he was rarely the one to implement the project. The problem is that Jamal has a lot to learn on his new job and he isn't very good at managing the complex nature of the work. He likes to multi-task but can't seem to attend to each task to see it to completion. He often lets his paper work slide and then can't get it done in time to meet deadlines.

Rather than confronting Jamal and setting time frames for him to complete his paper work, Ted has been covering for Jamal's lack of follow through. Recently Ted rewrote one of Ted's reports rather than asking him to make the necessary corrections.

Ted has begun to feel that Jamal is taking advantage of him and resents his "just in time" style of completing his reports. Ted tells Jamal that he is going to have to write him up if he can't get his paper work in on time. Jamal feels confused and wonders why Ted has gotten so punitive.

1. In what ways are behavioral styles contributing to this issue?

2. How can Ted help to bring out Jamal's strengths?

3. What can Ted do to adjust his style to work more effectively with Jamal?

4. What can Jamal do to improve his ability to work with Ted?

Jenae (Inspiring) and Brittney (Cautious)

Jenae, who has many of the traits associated with the Inspiring type, is the type of supervisor who is fun to be around – most of the time. She is very high energy and is usually warm and friendly with everyone. Jenae loves to start new projects and expects everyone else to be as enthusiastic as she is. She prides herself on being outgoing, but sometimes staff see her as talking way more than she listens to them. She likes to dig right into any problem or task, but does not always think things through.

Brittney, who has many of the traits common to the cautious type, has been on Jenae's staff for less than six months and is having some trouble dealing with the intensity of the work. She really wants to do a good job, and she likes everything to be done correctly. Recently she had to move three children to new foster homes on an emergency basis and in her zeal to make sure that the children are settling in, she is really feeling burned out. In the past Brittney has appreciated Jenae's optimism when it comes to the work, but lately she gets the feeling that Jenae is impatient with her when she can't bring a speedy resolution to a problem.

Brittney has had a supervisory meeting scheduled with Jenae and she is really looking forward to getting some help with one of her problem cases. Jenae breezes in and tells Brittney that she'll have to reschedule. She has recently been asked to chair a new committee in the agency and she needs time to prepare. Brittney is left wondering when she'll get the chance to talk to Jenae.

1. In what ways are behavioral styles contributing to this issue?

2. How can Jenae help to bring out Brittney's strengths?

3. What can Jenae do to adjust her style to work more effectively with Brittney?

4. What can Brittney do to improve her ability to work with Jenae?

Activity: Personal Reflection

Instructions:

Take a minute to think about the information on behavioral styles and answer the following question:

1. What did I learn about my behavioral style?

2. How can I apply what I have learned to my role as a supervisor with a staff person I have been having difficulty with?

3. My plan for adapting my behavioral style to work more effectively with this person is:

A person's supervisory style may be very effective in most circumstances, but he/she may find it difficult to work with staff whose behavioral style differs from their own. Supervisors need to be able to work effectively with diversity in their teams and staff. Working with differences requires self-awareness, flexibility, and broadening one's repertoire of responses to ever-changing situations and personalities. An effective supervisor understands that:

- He/she or another team member may revert to an extreme version of his/her characteristic behavioral style when under stress or threatened. Retention focused supervisors understand that rigid styles are behaviors learned (often as a child) to survive in a difficult world and are not necessarily a desirable way to behave all the time.

- A person <u>can learn</u> to be more flexible in his/her approach with self-awareness, deliberate effort and self-discipline. When the supervisor becomes more aware of his/her characteristic style and the style of others, he/she can learn to be more adaptive and flexible.

- When in conflict with someone who comes from a different background or has a different style, consider using Stephen Covey's book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People,* particularly Habit # 5: "Seek first to understand. Then to be understood."

Important points to remember

- DISC is **simply one tool** to help retention focused supervisors better understand their own behavior and that of their staff in an effort to cultivate flexibility.

- Understanding behavioral styles is important when looking at how people work together and how best to approach staff when offering supervisory assistance.

- It is important not to stereotype people simply based on how they score on the DISC scale or any other predictor of behavioral style. Supervisors need to understand that most people are never just one behavioral style, but borrow from other styles especially when under stress.

- No one behavioral style is superior to another in that all styles have characteristics that can be interpreted as both positive and negative.

- Working with people who have differences in behavioral styles can lead to unproductive conflict unless supervisors are aware of why and how this conflict can occur and take steps to remediate it.

- Supervisors come with all different behavioral styles. Understanding how to best use your individual style when dealing with staff with a variety of styles requires flexibility.

3.6 Managing Emotions to Enhance Effectiveness
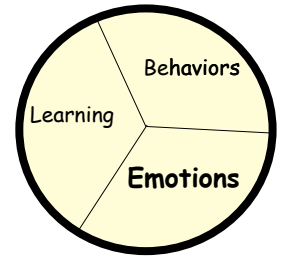
As discussed previously, understanding behavioral styles will help supervisors better understand themselves and their interactions with staff. But this is dependent to a large degree on the ability of supervisors to manage their emotions and be aware of and responsive to those of their staff.

Emotions drive behavior. It is true that supervisors and their staff all have their own behavioral styles, but the ability to be flexible in working with others depends on the ability to understand how emotions impact behavior.

Below is a diagram of an iceberg that illustrates the idea that emotions underlie behavioral responses to situations. It is often emotional responses and/or stress that causes people to be less flexible in their behavioral style. When supervisors and their staff experience strong emotions that are not acknowledged or dealt with, this can lead to behaviors that are rigid in nature. These behavior patterns can negatively impact relationships with staff and collegues. In order to maximize flexibility in dealing with others, supervisors have to be in touch with their emotions and those of their staff.
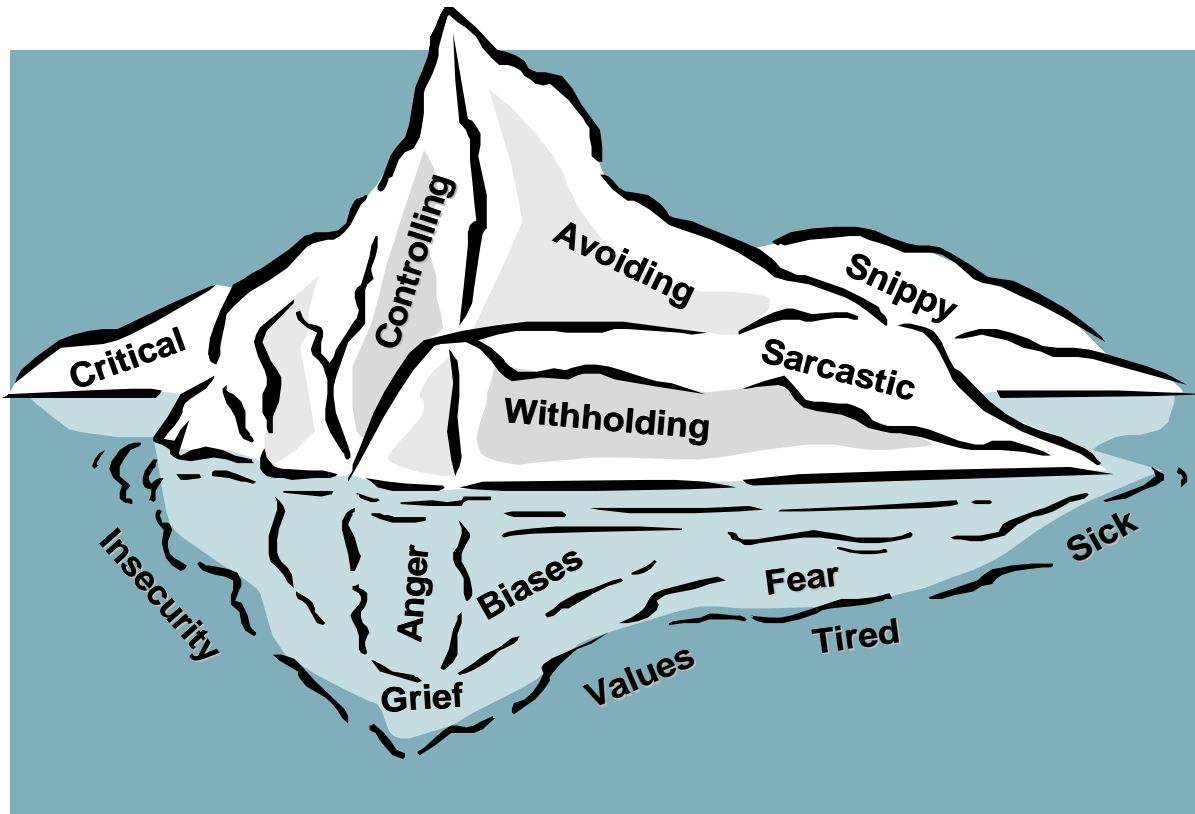
Figure 3.4 Communication Iceburg

Effective supervisors are aware that how they manage their own emotions can facilitate and/or inhibit the goals they are seeking to reach. It is essential to remember that supervisors are role models for staff and staff often take their cues about how to interact with families and children from their relationship with their supervisor. Modeling a style that acknowledges the poweful role that emotions play in work with children and families is essential for retention focused supervisors.

Supervisors may have the best intentions when modeling behavioral styles that aim to be open and flexible. As discussed in the following section, however, there are emotional triggers at play that can easily sidetrack these efforts.

Working with Emotional Triggers

Triggers are those factors that influence emotional reactions. Triggers can be either positive or negative in nature, though it is often the negative triggers that ambush interactions with others. Triggers can be classified as both internal and external in nature. Examples of both types of triggers are found in the table below:

External Triggers	Internal Triggers
Negative moods and attitudes that come from others who are: • Critical • Dismissive • Condescending • Arrogant • Attacking • Biased or prejudiced • Unrealistic in their expectations • Manipulative	Negative moods and attitude that come from within the person: • Unrealistic expectations of ourselves and others • Self-criticism • Self-doubt • Assuming the worst • Dwelling on negative thoughts • Internalized biases and prejudice • Comparisons to others • Competing with others • Need for approval from others
Stressful situations on the job and at home: • Situations that feel out of control • Situations that push one beyond his/her limits	Stress that is generated by the person's perceptions: • When perceptions are that one is not good enough • When one feels that his/her values and/or beliefs are questioned
Physical factors: • Illness • Fatigue • Stressful environments • Lack of physical safety	Behavioral styles (each style has potential pitfalls that are easy to fall into) • Driver styles – can be impatient • Inspiring styles – can overlook the mundane parts of a task once the initial excitement of starting the project is over • Supportive styles – can spend so much time trying to take care of others that they can be resentful when they are not appreciated or acknowledged • Cautious styles – can become upset with those who lack attention to detail

When emotional triggers are not recognized or dealt with, supervisors can become rigid and less creative in their interactions with staff. For their part, staff can react to emotional triggers with behaviors that can seem to be out of character and/or designed to protect themselves from emotional harm. Recognizing emotional triggers and their impact on staff who are working in a field that is ripe with emotional stress is imperative for retention focused supervisors.

When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but creatures of emotion.

Dale Carnegie

Hijacked by Emotional Triggers

If Alice doesn't hurry, she is going to be late for the unit management meeting. Her ex-husband called just as she was leaving the house with the kids this morning. Once again he wanted to reschedule his weekend visit. "Why does he always do this when I have weekend plans?" Alice says to herself. She can feel a migraine coming on.

Alice scoots into the meeting just as Vivian, the unit program manager, is getting started.

Vivian lets her staff know that she is going to be out for about three weeks while her sister, who lives out of state, is having open heart surgery. She explains that she will be staying to help her sister begin her recuperation.

"While I am gone, James will be taking over for me. I have briefed him and he will be attending meetings for me as well as handling any issues that might arise in my absence. So please talk to James if you need anything while I am gone."

"James!" Alice thinks to herself. "Why James? I have almost six months seniority over him, plus I have more life and professional experience than he does! James is young and he joined the agency straight out of graduate school. You've got to be kidding me. What is Vivian thinking?"

Alice is distracted by her internal dialogue for the remainder of the meeting. She feels slighted and begins to question her abilities. She wonders if the problems with the Smith case last month influenced Vivian's decision to pick James over her. After thinking about all of her management deficits Alice says to herself: "Maybe I'm just not cut out to be management material."

As Alice walks toward her unit after the meeting Carolyn, another foster care supervisor joins her. Alice says: "I wonder what Vivian was thinking, choosing James to take over for her." Carolyn shrugs her shoulders and says: "I would have thought she'd have asked you. You've been here longer."

"Yeah you'd think so, especially with all the trouble James has had with his staff lately. I hear he's not well liked by many of them," Alice responds. "I guess I'm not really surprised" Alice says as she turns into her office. "After all he is a man and aren't they always in charge?"

Later that day Rebecca, one of Alice's workers stops by her office. "I just got a group email from James. He says that Vivian is going to be gone for a while and he's going to be taking over while she is gone. I'm kind of surprised that you weren't asked."

Alice can feel her blood pressure rising and her head is throbbing. She says sharply: "Well let's hope he can handle the added responsibility better than he handles his own staff."
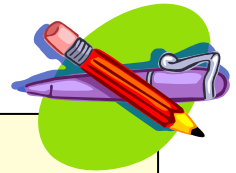
Instructions:

Think about the Alice vignette *Hijacked by Emotional Triggers* and complete the following:

1. Please list the external triggers that may have been affecting Alice.

2. Please list the internal triggers that may have been affecting Alice.

3. List those actions/behaviors that Alice took that did not work to improve her emotional response.

4. List those actions/behaviors that Alice could take to improve her emotional response in the situation described.

Cultivating Flexibility

According to Bradberry and Greaves in their book, *The Emotional Intelligence Quickbook,* the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions and be effective with others is based on four areas or skills.[8] The graphic that follows illustrates this:

Awareness of Self
Ability to accurately perceive your emotions

What is Seen

Awareness of Others
Ability to perceive the emotions of others

Managing Emotions

Management of Self
Ability to direct your behavior in a positive manner

What is Done

Management of Relationships
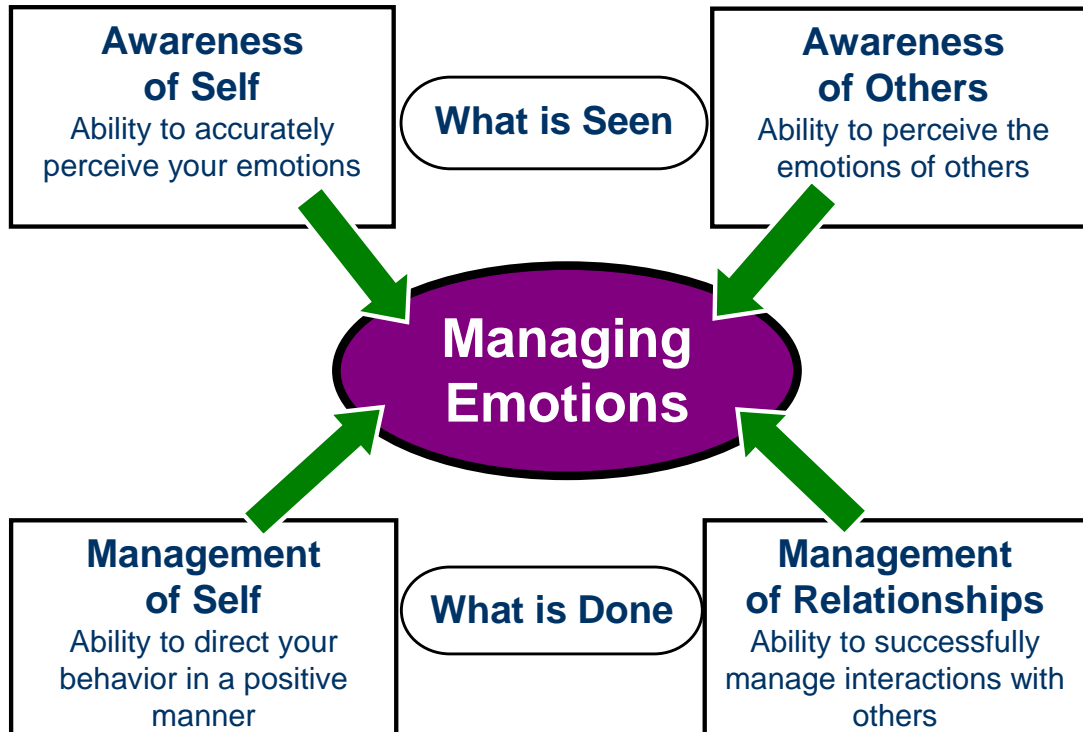Ability to successfully manage interactions with others

Figure 3.5 Managing Emotions

Creating flexibility in their interactions with staff and others requires supervisors to consciously and thoughtfully be aware of and process emotional information from staff as well as from within. This begins by valuing emotions both as a source of information and of energy. The tool on page 61, *Dos and Don'ts for Enhancing Behavioral Flexibility,* may be helpful in tuning into that process.

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[8] Bradberry and Reaves, The Emotional Intelligence Quickbook, page 12.

Techniques to Manage Emotions

In her book, *The EQ Difference,* Adele Lynn provides a good process for "rewiring your emotional intelligence for greater performance and living your intentions." [9] The following table includes a process for increasing the skill level in each of the four areas:

Process for Improving Emotional Relationship Skills				
Self-Mastery			Relationship Skills	
Self-Awareness	Self-Management		Social Awareness	Relationship Management
Observe: • Emotional reactions to events including thoughts, feelings and physical responses • Increase awareness of emotional triggers *Track:* • Common responses to situations including: what is felt, seen, thought and done • Look for emotional patterns in interactions and relationships	*Problem solve:* • Set aside time to think about problems that could arise in a potentially difficult situation • During a difficult communication, provide time to think, by delaying responses, letting the other person talk and listening to what they are saying • Stop judgemental self-talk • Cultivate and listen to positve self-talk *Label feelings:* • Avoid labeling staff or situations: ie: "I feel impatient" rather than, "She'll never be ready to do this job on her own"		*Observe:* • Stand back and observe interactions, ask questions and listen to the answers *Take the emotional temperature of the individual or group:* • Listen and respond to emotions in staff • Observe interactions between others, listen and ask questions • Avoid the tendency to make snap judgements or rely on preconceived ideas	*Look for the role that emotions are playing:* • Pay attention to and be supportive of other people's feelings • Refrain from challenging the other person's emotions *Build on existing people skills:* • Look at current skills • Try to use these skills more often • Find ways to adapt the skill to use in different situations with different people

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[9] Adele Lynn, *The EQ Difference*, page 34

Tool: Dos and Don'ts for Enhancing Emotional Flexibility

Do	Don't
Learn to honestly look at and label your feelings when situations arise: "I feel impatient with her progress"	Avoid being honest about your own feelings by labeling people and situations: "She will never be comfortable with families"
Take responsibility for your feelings: "I feel angry about being left out of the loop"	Make others responsible for your feelings: "You never fill me in, you always leave me hanging"
Show respect for and validate staff and other's feelings: "How do you feel about…?," "I can understand how you might feel…"	Disregard staff and other's feelings: "This just needs to be done so get on it"
Listen, employ empathy and be non-judgmental	Command, control, criticize, judge and lecture
Look for feedback from many sources	Think you have all the answers
Look for and work with the differences in staff	Think that what works well for one works well for everyone
Demonstrate control in difficult situations	Lose your temper, lash out at staff and others when under pressure
Employ emotional honesty with yourself and others	Withhold your feelings or talk "about" rather than "to" staff
Work to trust staff and others	Rely only on your judgment and make staff prove themselves to you
Look at the situation from the viewpoint of the other person and seek clarification	Assume that your viewpoint is the only one that counts
Use feelings of anger to energize you and help you move ahead; get input from others	Get stuck in feelings of anger by allowing yourself to be righteously indignant when you are wronged
Take the time to cultivate positive self-talk-practice having your inner voice deliver positive messages when difficult situations arise	Continue to give yourself negative messages that cause you to doubt yourself and others
Create new assumptions about people and situations that are based on positive emotional responses	Continue to cultivate old assumptions that are based on unfounded or irrational fears and beliefs
Understand that the only person you can change is yourself but that you can serve as a role model for staff	Continue to believe that you have the ability to change staff if you just try hard enough
Use humor to change your perceptions, elevate your mood and soften your emotional responses	Lose your sense of humor when difficult situations arise

It is important to remember that emotional management can be affected by factors such as stress, hightened emotional responses and emotional triggers. The ability to relate to others effectively may be severely challenged during times of conflict and stress. Successful supervisors will put a high priority on self-mastery, while continuously improving their emotional/relationship skills. These character attributes and relationship capabilities are essential for success in their contacts with staff and their colleagues.

Activity: Enhancing Emotional Management during Staff Interactions

Instructions:

Think about an interaction that you had with one of your staff when your emotions got in the way of your best efforts.

1. Write a brief description of the situation.

2. Write a description of what you observed in yourself and the staff person.

3. Write down what you felt during the interaction.

4. Write down what you think the staff person felt.

5. Using the tool *Dos and Don'ts for Enhancing Emotional Flexibility,* think about what you could have done to be more effective.

Description of the Situation:			
What I observed	**What I was feeling**	**What I think the staff person was feeling**	**What I would do differently**
In myself:			
In the other person:			

Putting it Together

Alice and Vivian are wrapping up their first supervisory meeting since Vivian has gotten back from caring for her sister.

Vivian says: "Alice, I am really glad that we have had an opportunity to talk about your feelings about not being chosen to take over for me while I was gone. The fact that you brought it up to me shows real growth on your part."

"Well, it was because of you that I figured out it was important to talk to you about it," Alice says with a smile.

Vivian looks confused.

"Well do you remember all that material you gave me on staff diversity? At first I was upset about the mountain of information you sent, but after the James incident I thought I should take a look at it. I got pretty interested in some of the information on working with different personalities. That stuff on emotional styles hit home for me, I figure that is one area that I can take some steps to improve on. So I decided to bite the bullet and talk to you about how I felt when you didn't choose me to fill in for you."

"I'm really glad you did!" Vivian says with a smile: "It's good to know that someone around here reads what I send them! All kidding aside, Alice, I'm really happy to hear that you are interested in working on this."

Alice tells Vivian that even beyond thinking about how she works with her own emotions she has begun to think about her own unique characteristics including her background, how she learns, her behavioral style and how this impacts her supervision style. "You know, I guess I kind of assumed that everyone operates the same way I do. Yeah, I knew there were obvious differences in people, but I've pretty much approached all of my staff the same way, the way that works best for me."

Vivian asks her how that has been working for her and Alice tells her that she isn't so sure that it is the best approach, especially as she has been going through the licensing audit and seeing the impact staff turnover is having on the unit. "I'm thinking that I could be doing more to retain my staff, but I'm just not sure how to approach it. I want to feel like I am really communicating with each staff member, really getting through to them as individuals."

Vivian says: "Well, Alice, knowing yourself first and then working to enhance communication with staff is the right path and you seem to be on it."

Important points to remember

- Emotions drive behavior and the ability to be flexible in working with others is dependent on the ability to understand how emotions impact behavior.

- The relationship that supervisors have with their staff is often the model on which staff base their interactions with children and families. Effective supervisors model a style that acknowledges the powerful role that emotions play in the work that human service staff do.

- Both external and internal emotional triggers can influence emotional reactions and can lead to inflexibility in interactions. Individuals who are under stress are particularly susceptible to being influenced by emotional triggers.

- Behavioral flexibility is a skill that can be learned and improved upon when supervisors are mindful of what they observe in themselves and others during any given situation and how they manage their behavior and their interactions with staff.

- Self-awareness; self-management; social awareness and relationship management skills are necessary components for supervisors who want to improve their relationship skills with staff.

Workbook 3 has looked at the role of supervisors in managing diversity in the workplace. Increasing skills in working with staff diversity in race, culture, ethnicity and social class as well as the ability to work effectively with staff with a variety of learning and behavioral styles have been explored. Techniques to enhance skills related to increasing flexibility in behavioral styles by understanding and managing emotions were also discussed. Workbook 4, *Communication Skills,* will build on these concepts by looking at ways for supervisors to increase the effectiveness of their communication skills to enhance staff retention.

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Appendix

Tool: Checklist for Valuing Diversity

Some strategies supervisors can employ to increase multicultural competencies for themselves and their staff include:

☐ Treat everyone with respect without exception

☐ Make a personal commitment to study, learn and understand cultural differences and nuances to inform and continuously improve effectiveness (See the appendix for a list of helpful publications and web sites on this subject)

☐ Create a plan to eliminate personal fears and concerns about dealing with diversity including finding a personal cultural guide or mentor to assist in developing cultural awareness and competencies. Share this information with colleagues and staff

☐ Be open and available to staff to discuss issues related to working with diversity

☐ Make it clear to staff what the agency policy and program goals are regarding working with diversity

☐ Lead by example by cultivating personal and working relationships that cross racial and cultural lines

☐ Actively recruit and commit to developing and retaining a diverse and culturally competent work force in relative proportion to the population served

☐ Participate in developing and participating in ongoing staff training and support systems to assure cultural awareness and competence at all levels of the organization

☐ Attend functions within the cultural communities served

☐ Recognize and celebrate cultural traditions and holidays within the work unit (e.g. hosting an agency wide food fair that asks staff to bring in food that represents their culture or ethnicity)

☐ Assure that the office and workspaces honor cultural preservation and celebration

☐ Assure that culturally competent services are accessible in the communities served

☐ Assure that language translation services are provided, particularly in assisting and advocating for families who do not speak English

☐ Assure that program policies and procedures are developed in the cultural context of the populations served (i.e. value systems, family definitions and traditions, gender and age, etc.)

☐ Make sure that services and outcomes honor the cultural needs and heritage of the children served

Tool: Assessing My Learning Style [10]

When you…	Learn by Seeing	Learn by Hearing and Talking	Learn by Touching and Doing
Spell	☐ I visualize the word.	☐ I sound out the word.	☐ I write the word down to find if it feels right.
Talk	☐ I talk sparingly but dislike listening for too long. I like words that create an image such as *see, picture*, and *imagine*?	☐ I enjoy listening but am impatient to talk. I use words such as *hear, tune*, and *think*.	☐ I gesture and use expressive movements. I use words such as *feel, touch*, and *hold*.
Concentrate	☐ I become distracted by untidiness or movement.	☐ I become distracted by sounds or noises.	☐ I become distracted by activity around me.
Meet someone again	☐ I forget names but remember faces or remember where I met the person.	☐ I forget faces but remember names or remember what was talked about with the person.	☐ I remember best what I did with someone.
Work with children and families	☐ I prefer direct, face-to-face, personal meetings.	☐ I prefer using the telephone.	☐ I prefer talking with people while walking or participating in an activity.
Read	☐ I like descriptive scenes and will pause to imagine the actions described.	☐ I enjoy dialog and conversation or hearing the characters talk.	☐ I prefer action stories but reading is not my favorite activity.
Do something new at work	☐ I like to see demonstrations, diagrams, slides, and posters.	☐ I prefer verbal instructions or talking about it with someone else.	☐ I prefer to jump right in and try it.
Put something together	☐ I look at the written directions and the picture.	☐ I ask someone who knows how to do it, to tell me how to put it together.	☐ I ignore the directions and figure it out as I go along.
Need help with computers	☐ I look for pictures or diagrams.	☐ I call the help line, ask a neighbor, or swear at the computer.	☐ I keep trying to do it or try it on another computer.

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[10] This chart has been adapted from *Accelerated Learning*, Colin Rose (1987)
http://www.chaminade.org/inspire/learnstl.hem

Tool: Suggestions to Aid Learning

Primarily Learns Through Seeing

Trait	Suggestion to Aid Learning
Likes visual material	Encourage the use of pictures, charts, maps graphs etc.
Likely to take notes when new material is presented	Make sure to have handouts available
Wants a quiet environment when working or concentrating	Allow staff to move their work to a quiet area of the office or take it home on occasion
Prefers the use of multi-media such as video tapes, power point, graphs and diagrams	Encourage the use of computers and video when appropriate
Talk about seeing the "big picture" or wanting enough details to paint a mental picture	Encourage use of visual metaphors

Primarily Learns Through Hearing and Talking

Trait	Suggestion to Aid Learning
Likes to discuss or debate the information	Encourage staff to talk with others during staff meetings, in-service trainings etc.
Enjoys talking in front of a group or making presentations	Create opportunities to make presentations, lead a meeting etc.
Likes to "bounce" ideas off of others	Create opportunities for "hearing learners" to discuss their ideas
Prefers dictating notes to writing them down	If possible allow staff to dictate notes or encourage them to allow enough time to complete computer work
Repeats things to remember them and reads information out loud	Verbally reiterate important points with hearing learners
Likes telling stories to illustrate a point	Practice tolerance for traits that are different from yours and consider using verbal illustrations

Primarily Learns Through Touching and Doing

Trait	Suggestion to Aid Learning
Likes to get up and move around in staff meetings and in-service training.	Provide planned opportunities for staff to move during meetings; in training plan for learning activities that require movement.
Is a "hands on" type of person who learns best by getting involved.	Provide opportunities to shadow experienced staff, take the lead in a teamed activity, etc.
Likes to dress up their work area with posters and art.	Encourage appropriate creativity with workspace.
Is overwhelmed by large documents and or puts off reading important material.	Encourage staff to skim through something to get a rough idea of what it is before reading it in detail and highlight written information that they must have.
Finds it difficult to sit for long periods of time.	Encourage breaks especially when high levels of concentration are needed.

What Behavior Style am I? [11]

Behavioral Style #1 – I….	**Behavior Style #3 – I…**
☐ Have high standards for self and others	☐ Am seen as reliable
☐ Am goal and results oriented	☐ Like to work as a team player
☐ Tend to formulate a quick response	☐ Am friendly and encouraging of others
☐ Am often seen as being self-reliant	☐ Have a high level of empathy for others
☐ Am not adverse to taking risks	☐ Am self-effacing
☐ Would rather focus on getting the job done	☐ Work best when there is structure
☐ Am direct	☐ Am good at following an existing process
☐ Am more task-oriented than people-oriented	☐ Feel that cooperation is of utmost importance
☐ Pride myself on being straightforward	☐ Am solid and steadfast
☐ Exude self confidence	☐ Am caring and considerate
☐ Am self reliant	☐ Am loyal to the tried and true methods
☐ Can be competitive	☐ Prefer to go along to get along
Behavioral Style # 2 – I….	**Behavioral Style #4 – I…**
☐ Am dramatic and persuasive	☐ Prefer to be a doer
☐ Enjoy being "on the go" and multi-tasking	☐ Focus on results
☐ Can tune out or engage in side conversations when bored	☐ Focus on the task at hand
☐ Often display exuberant optimism	☐ Am well organized and efficient
☐ Like to dream big	☐ Am intense
☐ Have a tendency to get right to work on an idea	☐ Like to look for the logic in situations
☐ Get very involved	☐ Am task-oriented in communications with others
☐ Am warm and friendly to everyone	☐ Enjoy finding out about things
☐ Am much more people-oriented than task-oriented	☐ Place a high value on learning
☐ Am exuberant	☐ Like to do things correctly
☐ Am outgoing	☐ Want all of the facts before decisions are made
☐ Enjoy creating new processes	☐ Am very conscientious in all aspects of life
	☐ Feel the need to raise questions
	☐ Like to get it right

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[11] Concepts adapted from: *You've Got Style* by Robert A. Rohm, Ph.D.

Key for What Behavior Style am I ?

Behavioral Style # 1 = ___ # of boxes checked	**Driver Style**
Behavioral Style # 2 = ___ # of boxes checked	**Inspiring Style**
Behavioral Style # 3 = ___ # of boxes checked	**Supportive Style**
Behavioral Style # 4 = ___ # of boxes checked	**Cautious Style**

Like the two sides of a coin, for every trait a particular behavioral style may have, there exists a flipside. This flipside occurs when the trait is taken to an extreme or when a particular quality is out of control or is very dominate in a particular behavioral style.

The following chart, *Both Sides of Behavior Styles*, illustrates the two sides, Ying and Yang, for each **DISC** behavioral style.

Tool: Increasing Effectiveness with Staff with Different Behavioral Styles

Driver Supervisor	Driver Staff	Inspiring Staff	Supportive Staff	Cautious Staff
Positives in the Relationship	• Can be dynamic as both like to get things done • May experience synergy in the relationship • Respect each other's style	• Both are fast-paced and enjoy challenges • Both enjoy new projects	• *D's* love to start projects and S's love to finish them • *D* supervisors can go to *S* staff who are seen as steadfast and reliable	• Both styles focus on tasks and like to get things done • Bring different skills to the task – *D's* think big while *C's* work on the details
Challenges in the Relationship	• Can be competitive with *D* staff • May seek out *D* staff to assign cases to in a disproportional manner based on their "get it done" attitude	• Work habits can conflict – *I* staff are often seen as lacking follow through • See *I* staff as loosing sight of the big picture	• Styles contrast as *S* staff are slower-paced and people oriented • *S* staff can be easily taken for granted by *D* supervisors • Easy for *D* supervisor to overlook contributions of *S*	• *D's* take risks and adjust as they move forward while *C's* like to plan ahead and comply with the rules • Conflicts can arise over *C's* focus on deadlines vs. *D's* focus on quality
Ways to Increase Effectiveness	• Help staff to look at both emotion and fact • Allow staff to have a level of flexibility and give varied assignments and opportunities • Encourage attention to the feelings of others	• Work with staff to focus on details • Set expectations that help the *I* follow through • Give opportunities for new experiences and flexibility	• Help staff accept and give feedback • Give staff credit when due • Help *S* staff to manage change and incorporate flexibility • Help *S* staff to become more task-oriented	• *D* supervisors can work to appreciate *C* staff attention to detail • Work to reframe *C's* questions from negative to positive • Help *C* staff to keep sight of the big picture • Work with *C* staff on relationship-building

Inspiring Supervisor	Driver Staff	Inspiring Staff	Supportive Staff	Cautious Staff
Positives in the Relationship	• Both are fast paced and have fun together • Both styles enjoy challenges and seek out new projects	• Because their styles are so similar, they are often drawn to each other • *S* supervisors count on *S* staff to match their desire for a challenge and be flexible in the face of change	• Since they are both "people-focused," they work easily together • *S* staff help *I* supervisors make their dreams practical	• Both styles love to work with ideas and concepts though they take different approaches • *C* staff can add a dimension of caution when I supervisors are looking only at the big idea
Challenges in the Relationship	• Are likely to have different priorities • *D* staff want to know that they have the resources and help to complete the task in a high quality way, while *I* supervisors are more interested in the concept	• Both love the limelight and may end up sacrificing getting things done for flexibility • *S* supervisors may feel frustrated in with their difficulty in helping *S* staff meet deadlines and finish projects	• Being people-oriented, both may overlook the details of the task at hand • Contributions may be overlooked by *I* supervisors who enjoy the limelight	• The *C* staff's desire for consistency and structure is thwarted by the *I* supervisors desire for flexibility and new opportunities • May talk at cross purposes as the *C* staff is more interested in the task and the *I* supervisor in people
Ways to Increase Effectiveness	• Allow staff to put focus on a task • Understand that *D* staff want to talk about facts over emotions • Understand that the *D* staff focus on task is not rude or ruthless • Encourage more attention to feelings and how *D* staff relate to others	• Work to help *I* staff finish tasks and look for a logical way to implement a plan • Work to talk more than you listen and help *I* staff to do the same	• Work to help *S* staff embrace flexibility and change • Offer expressions of trust • Acknowledge contributions of *S* staff	• Help *C* staff to balance fun and work • Be open to improvements by *C* staff to *I* supervisor's creative ideas

Supportive Supervisor	Driver Staff	Inspiring Staff	Supportive Staff	Cautious Staff
Positives in the Relationship	• *S* supervisors naturally offer patience and support to the hard driven *D* • Serve to soften the task-oriented *D* and help him/her to relate better to people	• Both are people-oriented in their approach • *S* supervisors naturally help *I* staff feel appreciated and supported when they take on new projects	• Feel comfortable with each other and enjoy a sense of peace and harmony in their interactions • Feel well suited to work together as the *S* supervisor appreciates the *S* staff's team work	• Are respectful of each other's style and try not to intrude on one another's area of expertise • *S* supervisors can depend on *C* staff to follow through and complete tasks on time and with accuracy
Challenges in the Relationship	• *S* supervisors may feel that *D* staff challenge them and do not always respect their abilities and authority • *S* supervisors may find *D* staff's focus on tasks before people as frustrating	• May find it difficult to pin down the impulsive *I* style staff • Have problems with *I* staff who do not like to follow existing procedures and protocols	• Though both have the same style and are comfortable with each other, tasks that require thinking outside of the box or creation of new protocols can be difficult for this supervisory combination	• *S* supervisors may have difficulty with the *C* staff who seem critical or impatient • The "like to get it right" attitude of the *C* staff can seem judgmental and rigid to the *S* supervisor
Ways to Increase Effectiveness	• *S* supervisors need to feel confident in their supervisory abilities and not allow the challenges of *D* staff to undermine them • Employ patience and be a supportive sounding board for *D* staff • Work to give constructive feedback to *D* staff even when they appear not to want or need it	• Be appreciative and offer approval to *I* staff who take on new challenges • Give plenty of opportunity to grow and try new challenges • Take opportunities to be involved in the projects and work that *I* staff are involved in • Be careful not to resist change and new opportunities that excite *I* staff	• Work at giving *S* staff the recognition and appreciation that they deserve • Appreciate the *S* staff's teamwork ability, and help them to take the initiative when the work requires it • Give *S* staff plenty of support when changes need to be made • Challenge *S* staff to stay on task	• Offer kindness and support even when the *C* staff appear to be distant • Help *C* staff to work on "people skills" when they would rather attend to the details of a task • Allow *C* staff opportunities to work on detailed assignments that allow them to use organizational skills

Cautious Supervisor	Driver Staff	Inspiring Staff	Supportive Staff	Cautious Staff
Positives in the Relationship	• Both are task-oriented and focused on results • *D* staff can learn about accuracy and being thorough from the *C* supervisor	• Have different sets of skills that allow them to play different roles in projects • *C* supervisors can help *I* staff to focus on tasks and complete projects	• *C* supervisors can relate to the predictability that *S* staff bring to situations • *S* staff feel respected by *C* supervisors for being good team players	• Both approach the work with seriousness and high standards • Work well together because they are both concerned with learning and focusing on results
Challenges in the Relationship	• Self-reliant and risk-taking *D* staff may feel held back by *C* supervisors who are more concerned with organization and efficiency, while preferring to avoid risk • Both are task-oriented but approach situations differently and need to negotiate boundaries and accountability	• *C* supervisor's attention to detail can seem restrictive to *I* staff who prefer the creative process • Exuberant optimism on the part of *I* staff can seem naïve and short-sighted to the *C* supervisor	• The *C* supervisor's need to raise questions and confront is difficult for the *S* staff who prefers to be friendly and encouraging of others • *S* staff can be overlooked or taken for granted by *C* supervisors who enjoy the *S's* sensitivity to people, but don't see them as the "go to person" when challenges arise	• If they do not develop different areas of expertise, *C* supervisors and *C* staff can easily be in competition • Because they are both task-oriented, *C* supervisors may not be as helpful to *C* staff in working on interpersonal relationships
Ways to Increase Effectiveness	• Be open to learning from *D* staff who are not adverse to taking risk • Help *D* staff to evaluate and set standards for appropriate risk • Set clear boundaries	• Help *I* staff to translate feelings and ideas into realistic actions • Help *I* staff to listen more than they talk • Give *I* staff opportunities to be creative, work on new projects and processes	• Validate the important role that the *S* staff play in the team and work environment in general • Define tasks clearly so that *S* staff have the structure they need to perform optimally	• Work to respect *C* staff's area of expertise • Resist being condescending to *C* staff who place a high value on learning • Encourage and model relation-ship building

Tool: Dos and Don'ts for Enhancing Behavioral Flexibility

Do	Don't
Learn to honestly look at and label your feelings when situations arise: "I feel impatient with her progress"	Avoid being honest about your own feelings by labeling people and situations: "She will never be comfortable with families"
Take responsibility for your feelings: " I feel angry about being left out of the loop"	Make others responsible for your feelings: "You never fill me in, you always leave me hanging"
Show respect for and validate staff and other's feelings: "How do you feel about…?," "I can understand how you might feel…"	Disregard staff and other's feelings: "This just needs to be done so get on it"
Listen, employ empathy and be non-judgmental	Command, control, criticize, judge and lecture
Look for feedback from many sources	Think you have all the answers
Look for and work with the differences in staff	Think that what works well for one works well for everyone
Demonstrate control in difficult situations	Lose your temper, lash out at staff and others when under pressure
Employ emotional honesty with yourself and others	Withhold your feelings or talk "about" rather than "to" staff
Work to trust staff and others	Rely only on your judgment and make staff prove themselves to you
Look at the situation from the viewpoint of the other person and seek clarification	Assume that your viewpoint is the only one that counts
Use feelings of anger to energize you and help you move ahead; get input from others	Get stuck in feelings of anger by allowing yourself to be righteously indignant when you are wronged
Take the time to cultivate positive self talk-practice having your inner voice deliver positive messages when difficult situations arise	Continue to give yourself negative messages that cause you to doubt yourself and others
Create new assumptions about people and situations that are based on positive emotional responses	Continue to cultivate old assumptions that are based on unfounded or irrational fears and beliefs
Understand that the only person you can change is yourself but that you can serve as a role model for staff	Continue to believe that you have the ability to change staff if you just try hard enough
Use humor to change your perceptions, elevate your mood and soften your emotional responses	Lose your sense of humor when difficult situations arise

About the Authors

John and Judith McKenzie, along with their colleague, Rosemary Jackson, are the principal authors, organizational consultants and trainers for the Michigan State University Workbook Series on *Staff Retention in Child and Family Services*. Their results-oriented work ethic, combined expertise, and successful work histories are ideally suited to assisting child and family service agencies in developing a culture for staff satisfaction and retention.

Judith was the CEO and President of Spaulding for Children for 22 years. Under her leadership, Spaulding grew from a small special needs adoption program to a renowned multi-service agency that has been the National Resource Center for Special Needs Adoption continuously since 1985. In addition, she has several years experience administering public child and family service programs, including public assistance, protective services, foster care and adoption and child welfare agency licensing. Judith has provided training, keynote addresses, and has written extensively on child and family services, public and non-profit agency management and strategic planning. Judith received her MSW from the University of Michigan.

John has been a "hands on" manager and organizational consultant in business and industry for over 25 years. He has led a number of change initiatives and implemented many new projects throughout his career, winning six executive level awards for his contributions to General Motors, TRW and Unisys. John has experience and proven expertise in strategic planning, change management, teambuilding, project management, and implementation of workforce and quality processes. He has adapted these proven methods and materials from business to provide assistance to state child welfare programs and non-profit agencies. John received his BS in Industrial Engineering from the University of Maryland.

John and Judith have provided consultation and training in strategic planning and change management for over fifteen states' child welfare programs. In addition, they have written a series of five, *Answering the Call*, publications for AdoptUsKids on recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive parents, which have been published and distributed to over 60,000 individuals and agencies nationwide.

Rosemary Jackson is an accomplished trainer, consultant, program developer and clinician. Rosemary has developed curriculum for clinicians and parents to address the post placement needs of foster and adoptive families and she currently offers post adoption services to adult adoptees and families who have adopted internationally. She has also developed training materials on a variety of topics including grief and loss; workplace stress and burnout; secondary trauma and others that are germane to staff offering services to children and families. Her years combining service delivery and product development make her uniquely qualified to offer training and consultation services in child and family services.

Project Services

With a flexible design, agency leaders, supervisors and front-line staff will be able to benefit from using the curriculum in many ways. However, it is important for users to understand that the curriculum, at its best, is intended to facilitate cultural change within agencies to support staff retention and job satisfaction and improve agency outcomes. Therefore, states and agencies that make a commitment to obtain professional services to facilitate the implementation of the curriculum will experience better and more lasting results. The various ways the curriculum can be accessed and used are described below.

Self-study - Specific workbooks target the needs and interests of agency leaders, supervisors and front-line workers. Workbooks include learning activities, case studies and tools to enhance individual learning.

Workshops - Trainers and advisors are available to conduct workshops for leaders, program managers and/or supervisors. These workshops are tailored to the specific audience and (when available) will include use of media to present learning principles, engage participants in small group learning activities and demonstrate how the program can be used in the work setting.

Training of facilitators - Project staff will provide facilitator training for individuals or agency teams. Sessions will equip teams to facilitate learning groups in an agency and to use the curriculum in a combination of self-study and small group activities.

Multiple agency user group(s) - Project staff will provide ongoing training and support to a regular group of selected and trained agency facilitator teams, who will form a User's Group. The advantage to this model is that teams will be supported and encouraged to share their promising practices.

Single agency model - An experienced project faculty team will facilitate an agency's development plan over a mutually agreed upon period of time. Services will involve high-level administrative commitment and involvement. Agency assessments will be conducted and an agency-specific plan developed. Internal leadership team(s) will determine and facilitate changes. Staff will be involved at all levels of the agency.

Project staff will work with interested states and agencies to explore options for delivering services tailored to agency needs and available resources. Fees will be established based on scope of work, staff time, travel and material costs to deliver the services requested.

If you are interested in learning more about the availability of training and consultation services, contact:

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