

SUCCESS STORY

MBA Programs use SOCIAL STYLE To Develop Future Leaders



University of North Carolina
Kenan-Flagler Business School

INDUSTRY:

University

CHALLENGE:

"The SOCIAL STYLE Model provides such great insight into facilitating communication and it makes influencing and motivating others that much easier."

JUDY TISDALE
UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School,
Clinical Professor

SOLUTION:

SOCIAL STYLE

THE CHALLENGE

The best business schools look for ways to make their programs relevant and valuable to both students and employers. They strive for education that goes further than what can be acquired in a job setting. Students who enroll in an MBA program are looking to improve their leadership abilities, develop deeper critical thinking skills, and gain specific knowledge that can jumpstart and advance their careers. But as people move into more advanced positions, core functional skills become less important as leadership and relationship skills become more influential.

THE SOLUTION

To develop those critical skills, students in the MBA program at the University of North Carolina Kenan-Flagler Business School are trained in SOCIAL STYLE. Students and faculty find SOCIAL STYLE to be a highly useful model with business relevance and impact. UNC Kenan-Flagler professor Judy Tisdale has been using SOCIAL STYLE in her MBA courses for 15 years and is consistently impressed with how it helps business students become more successful business professionals.

Much of what makes a great leader is their ability to build relationships, influence others, and motivate their staff. SOCIAL STYLE and the Versatility skills element of the course provide students with the tools to do exactly that. By recognizing their own leadership style they are aware of how they are perceived by others, as well as how to appeal to people who are different from them.

Tisdale was introduced to SOCIAL STYLE while working as a retail banking center manager. She participated in a nine-month management training program that included SOCIAL STYLE. The content and strategies had an immediate impact on her performance and have continued to guide her leadership and teaching.

FEEDBACK

At UNC Kenan-Flagler she developed and teaches a course titled “Communication for Developing Leaders” that is a popular course in the MBA curriculum. “Students continue to demand the class because they find the insights provided by SOCIAL STYLE to be truly transformational in how they use it, teaching them how to adapt their interactions for enhanced working relationships,” said Tisdale.

Based on that success, SOCIAL STYLE has also been integrated into a course in the Master’s of Accounting Program, a PhD professional skills course, and a leadership communications course which was designed to help students think about how they influence people in different ways, emphasizing impacting people who do not have any reporting responsibility to you. “The SOCIAL STYLE Model provides such great insight into facilitating communication and it makes influencing and motivating others that much easier,” says Tisdale.

“We do use several assessments throughout our programs, but I find that SOCIAL STYLE is the most effective. It takes a concept that is complex and makes it easy to understand, breaking everything down into four quadrants to learn about behavioral Style and Versatility – how our behavioral Style impacts our actions as well as how others’ Styles impact their own actions and preferences.”

Versatility is the primary learning lesson of SOCIAL STYLE training. It ties in the understanding of each Style and teaches learners how to apply those lessons to be highly effective in their interactions.

SOCIAL STYLE helps students to think more broadly outside of their culture. When they are put in an international or culturally diverse business scenario, they can plug SOCIAL STYLE training in to help their effectiveness.

According to Tisdale, “Students find it workable and usable. They find it fascinating and highly applicable to their prior experiences in the business world.”

“TRACOM’s SOCIAL STYLE is amazingly simple, yet based on very complex research that remains current, validated, reliable, and uses global and job-specific norms.”

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