

TRACOM® GROUP

THE SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPANY®



PROGRAM PARTICIPANT RESEARCH

Do People See a Value in Interpersonal Skills Training?



KEY FINDINGS

An **overwhelming majority** of training program participants had experienced workplace conflict situations, communication breakdowns and negative performance due to interpersonal issues.

More than three-fourths of participants had personally experienced difficulties in relationships that were due to personal style differences.

When these difficulties occur, **75 percent believe that applying SOCIAL STYLE® concepts would improve the situation.**

More than 70 percent of participants had previously completed a personal development assessment. SOCIAL STYLE® was identified as “easier to understand and use” by **90 percent** of respondents who had experienced another assessment(s) and felt there was a difference.

80 percent said a multi-rater profile made them more aware of challenges or opportunities they would not have otherwise considered.

EVALUATING INTERPERSONAL SKILLS TRAINING

Growth-aspiring organizations continually look for ways to improve their organizational performance. Employee training programs are common, but measuring the benefits and payback of these initiatives is difficult. Organizations often consider one or more of the following questions:

- Have we equipped staff with the tools to successfully address inevitable workplace productivity problems?
- Are developmental activities aligned to support priority business initiatives?
- Do we use the interpersonal skills model preferred by both training professionals and program participants?
- Have we measured the impact of investments in training and development?
- Could our training and development efforts achieve greater success?

To help answer these questions, The TRACOM® Group, conducted a research study of more than 500 recent graduates of interpersonal skills training programs. These “end users” were asked about their training experience and the impact that training has in the workplace. The results of the research study follow.

PARTICIPANT VIEWS ON INTERPERSONAL CHALLENGES IN THE WORKPLACE

The survey asked a series of questions regarding specific negative situations that can arise in the workplace. Participants were asked if they had seen or experienced instances of workplace conflict, communication breakdown, negative morale and relationship difficulties that were due to differences in behavioral or personal style.

Not surprisingly, these situations had been experienced by the majority of respondents. More than 85 percent cited conflict and communication problems. Nearly 60 percent said that performance had been negatively affected by personal style differences.

More important than the existence of these problems is the participants strong belief that understanding and applying SOCIAL STYLE® would improve the workplace situation. For example, participants who said performance would improve

Figure A: Percentage of respondents who say personal style differences in their workplace had caused:

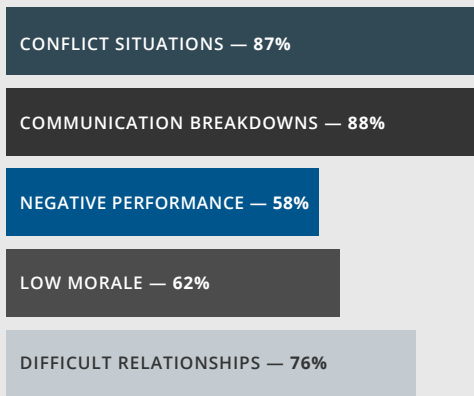


Figure B: Participant response to “Would applying SOCIAL STYLE® improve results in the following situations?”

| | YES | NO |
|---------------------------|-----|----|
| Conflict Situations | 375 | 18 |
| Communications Breakdowns | 392 | 16 |
| Negative Performance | 358 | 21 |
| Low Morale | 343 | 32 |
| Difficult Relationships | 375 | 36 |

through applying SOCIAL STYLE® outnumbered those who said performance would not improve by more than 17 to one. Figure B shows participants held similarly strong beliefs about the benefits of SOCIAL STYLE® in regard to other workplace problems.

PARTICIPANTS’ PREFERRED TRAINING MODEL

While respondents had participated in a SOCIAL STYLE® training program in the two months prior to completing this survey, most had previously experienced another assessment earlier in their careers. More than 70 percent of those surveyed had previously undergone a personal development assessment. This prior experience provides an opportunity to compare participants’ beliefs about SOCIAL STYLE® with other assessments such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and DiSC.

More than half of the people who had experienced multiple assessments felt there were differences in their ease of understanding and use. More than 90 percent of those identified SOCIAL STYLE® as “easier to understand and use.”

A majority (80%) felt that having a multi-rater profile with “self” and “other” scores made them “more aware of challenges and opportunities that would not have otherwise been considered. Only SOCIAL STYLE® is available as a multi-rater profile among leading assessment models.

There has been much industry-wide debate about the need for ongoing follow-up to maximize impact of training programs, and a large majority of this study’s participants see the benefits of follow-up. Nearly 80 percent said they “would benefit from a follow-up profile.” Clearly interpersonal effectiveness is a lifelong skill and a periodic refresher and review is helpful to most people.

CONSIDERATIONS OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH STUDIES

This research shows that end users believe applying SOCIAL STYLE® can improve the workplace. It confirms the findings of two earlier research studies. In the Evaluating Corporate Training Practices study, training professionals strongly indicated their belief that interpersonal skills were very important for a multitude of work tasks:

- 98% believe it is important for communicating effectively
- 98% believe it is important for building and maintaining co-worker relationships
- 97% believe it is important for managing conflict
- 94% believe it is important for retaining valued employees

In that study, 88 percent of corporate training executives who had used SOCIAL STYLE® believed it worked “very well” or “extremely well.” This was significantly more than the number of executives who believed that other interpersonal models such as MBTI (73 percent) and DiSC (61 percent) worked well.

The end user data also builds on TRACOM®’s Managerial Success Study, which looked at job performance of managers at an international publishing company. That study compared Versatility — TRACOM®’s measure of a person’s ability to establish effective relationships — with performance on 47 job competencies such as managing conflict, coaching others and leading teams. It clearly showed that managers with high Versatility outperformed managers with low Versatility in all areas of managerial performance. Findings from this study are highlighted in Figure C.



Collectively these three studies provide a comprehensive evaluation of the need for and impact of interpersonal skills and training. Corporate training professionals say these skills are needed to perform specific workplace roles and directly support business goals. These executives also identify SOCIAL STYLE® as the most effective interpersonal skills model.

Similarly, a study of program participants shows that end users find the SOCIAL STYLE® model easier to understand and use. They overwhelmingly say applying SOCIAL STYLE® improves results in their workplace.

Finally, a comprehensive study of corporate managers shows that those who have high levels of interpersonal skills significantly outperform others in all areas of managerial responsibility. These high Versatility managers even earn significantly higher compensation, further evidence of their workplace contributions.



ABOUT **TRACOM[®] GROUP**

THE SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPANY[®]

[WHY we do]

We believe that improving peoples' understanding of themselves and others makes the world a better place.

[WHAT we do]

We synthesize our discoveries into actionable learning and resources that improve an individual's performance in all parts of their lives. We call this Social Intelligence.

[HOW we do it]

Through research and experience we uncover the hidden barriers to individuals achieving their maximum potential and identify how to help overcome them.

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