

TRACOM® GROUP

THE SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPANY®



Research: The Relationship Between

VERSATILITY AND DIVERSITY

Among LEADERS

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WHAT IS DIVERSITY?

Most large organizations have made strides to increase diversity in their workforces, and many implement “diversity training” to help their leaders and employees be more aware of the issues faced by a diverse workforce. But too often this training fails to achieve its desired results, and can leave people feeling confused about what concrete steps they can take to benefit from an understanding of diversity.

Part of the problem is that some organizations don't provide their people with a clear definition of diversity or how it can benefit their bottom lines. According to an article in Training Magazine,ⁱ the most effective training programs treat diversity as an inclusive process, rather than excluding people who don't meet the traditional definitions of a diverse person. Essentially, diversity encompasses any dimension that differentiates a person or group from others. This definition includes everyone. Since we are all different from one another, we all contribute our own unique perspectives and abilities. The key is to educate people about how to leverage these differences for business success.

HOW IS SOCIAL STYLE RELATED TO DIVERSITY?

SOCIAL STYLE® describes differences and similarities in people's natural behaviors and work preferences, with the ultimate goal of teaching people how to manage those preferences for increased productivity and effectiveness. Over many years of practice and research, we've found that each Style has specific strengths that help them succeed in their work lives. However, one person's strengths can be another person's stress. Success at the team and organizational levels requires people of all Styles to work together, and in order for this to happen they need to understand basic Style differences and how to manage these differences.

Regardless of a person's ethnicity, age, or nationality, he or she will have behavioral preferences that result in a particular SOCIAL STYLE. TRACOM collects data from across the world and we've found that all people can be described by their Style behaviors, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, or nationality. This is important because it means that one of the most effective ways to work toward success is to understand other people's SOCIAL STYLE. In essence, this is the gateway to getting to know others and working effectively with them.



RESEARCH OVERVIEW

In a study of 143 managers at a large multinational defense contractor, The TRACOM Group found that managers with high Versatility were rated significantly more effective at promoting Diversity and Inclusiveness (D&I) than managers with lower Versatility. Importantly, these evaluations came from the managers' direct reports, those in the best position to determine D&I behaviors.

Managers with high Versatility were more likely to engage in pro-diversity behaviors, such as actively trying to understand others' experiences and perspectives, recognizing employees' contributions, fostering a welcoming environment for the team and valuing different opinions. Highly Versatile managers were rated up to 17% more effective on these behaviors than low Versatile managers.

It's important to note that Versatility is one aspect of the overall SOCIAL STYLE Model. It measures a person's ability to build effective relationships with others. The Model additionally identifies four unique SOCIAL STYLEs which are preferred patterns of behavior. The four Styles are Driving, Expressive, Amiable and Analytical. This research found no relationship between a person's unique SOCIAL STYLE and D&I performance, only between Versatility and D&I. In fact, TRACOM discovered that Versatility accounted for 21% of the variance in D&I practices, whereas SOCIAL STYLE did not account for any of the variance. Since Versatility can be learned and practiced, this means that any manager can learn to behave with higher Versatility, and this is likely to impact D&I practices, among other performance outcomes.

WHAT IS VERSATILITY?

Versatility is the best predictor of success and the key to boosting interpersonal effectiveness in the real world, whether at work, at home or in any social setting. Versatile employees know how to leverage the strengths of their own Style while recognizing and responding in appropriate ways to others' unique Styles. When people interact with one another, they consciously and subconsciously observe and evaluate each other's behaviors. TRACOM's research has shown that the behaviors others often evaluate can be categorized into four broad areas: Image, Presentation, Competence and Feedback. The impact of your behavior on others in these four areas is called Versatility.

STUDY OVERVIEW

This study included the participation of 143 leaders from the global training and learning division of a large, multinational defense corporation. This organization has an active D&I process that advises recruitment, hiring, development, community outreach, and multiple learning and development programs.

Each manager had at least three direct reports who were also solicited to participate as raters of their manager's Versatility and D&I practices. Participation for managers and their direct reports was voluntary.



VERSATILITY & DIVERSITY MEASURE

Versatility was measured using TRACOM's Multi-Rater SOCIAL STYLE & Enhanced Versatility Profile. Concurrent with the Versatility assessment, each manager's direct reports also completed a 38-item D&I survey. This survey was developed for this study, tailored to the organization's D&I practices. It included items that measured individual manager behaviors, the impact that D&I practices have on the department and organization, and awareness of D&I initiatives. Each item was rated on a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The D&I survey items are listed in the Appendix.

OBJECTIVE

TRACOM tested the data to answer three questions:

1. Is Versatility related to D&I practices?
2. Is there a meaningful difference in D&I practices between managers with lower Versatility and managers with higher Versatility?
3. To what extent can Versatility and SOCIAL STYLE predict D&I practices?

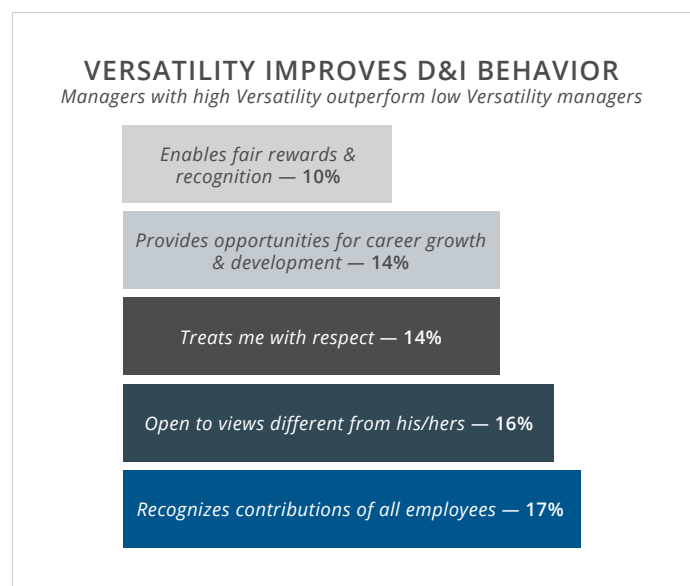
Versatility was positively and significantly correlated with 35 of the 38 D&I items, meaning that managers with high Versatility received higher scores on these D&I measures. For example, managers with high Versatility were rated 15% higher than managers with low Versatility on the item "my manager values different opinions of employees" and 17% higher on the item "my manager recognizes the contributions of all employees". See Table 1 for all D&I items and the Versatility Correlation.

Using a statistical technique known as Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), these differences were determined to be statistically significant. High Versatility managers did in fact measurably outperform low Versatility managers.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VERSATILITY AND D&I PRACTICES

Versatility was positively and significantly correlated with 35 of the 38 D&I items, meaning that managers with high Versatility received higher ratings on these measures. The third hypothesis was that Versatility could, to a certain extent, predict D&I practices.

TRACOM used multiple regression analysis to test how well Versatility predicted D&I practices. It was found that Versatility accounted for 21% of the variance in D&I practices. This is comparable to the influence that measures such as intelligence, education or personality have on job performance.



HOW CAN SOCIAL STYLE CONTRIBUTE TO BOTTOM LINE RESULTS?

Understanding SOCIAL STYLE concepts can increase the power of a diverse workforce in several ways; one of the most important is through its ability to help people from different cultures and societies understand and interact with one another. Common barriers to success include language differences, cultural nuances for appropriate behavior, global politics, and differing concepts of authority structures and relationships. Misunderstanding any of these things can make working together difficult, but the combination of them can be disastrous.

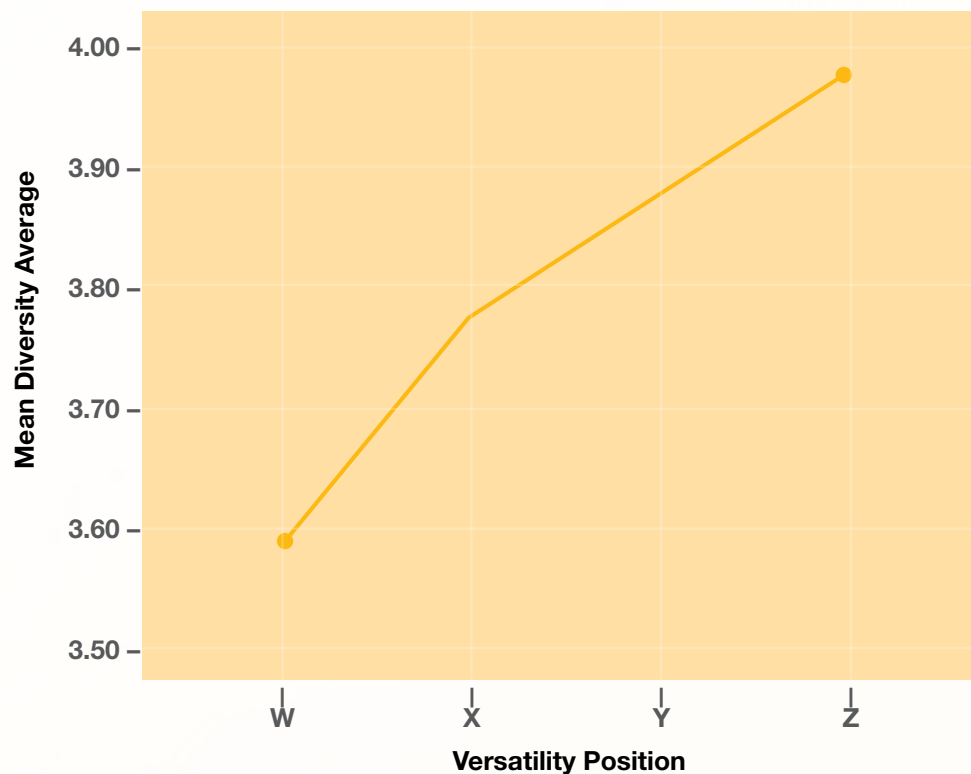
In many societies taking the time to develop a trusting relationship is essential before work even begins. SOCIAL STYLE can help do this; by objectively observing people's behaviors you can gain an understanding of their Style preferences. Then, by practicing good Versatility skills, you can more quickly make them comfortable in their interactions with you.

SUMMARY

This research study has shown that Versatility is a strong indicator of diversity and inclusion practices among a group of managers. Managers with high Versatility engage in personal behaviors that contribute to a diverse and inclusive team environment. Further, there are significant and noticeable differences in the D&I practices of managers with lower Versatility and those with higher Versatility. Importantly, a person's performance on D&I practices was NOT related to their specific SOCIAL STYLE, indicating that people of any of the four Styles can be effective promoters of diversity and inclusion, and learning and practicing Versatility behaviors can impact this.

APPENDIX

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VERSATILITY & AVERAGE DIVERSITY SCORE



APPENDIX

Table 1 - D&I Correlation with Versatility and Percent Gain from Low to High Versatility

D&I ITEM	CORRELATION WITH VERSATILITY	PERCENT GAIN FROM W TO Z
My manager fosters a welcoming environment for the team.	.60**	16%
My manager recognizes the contributions of all employees.	.56**	17%
My manager tries to understand others' experiences from their perspective.	.55**	18%
My manager is open to being persuaded by people who view things differently from him or her.	.55**	16%
My manager values the different opinions of employees.	.54**	15%
My manager treats me with respect.	.54**	14%
The people in my department feel supported and included.	.47**	15%
In my department, new team members feel welcomed and encouraged.	.40**	11%
My manager encourages employees to be involved in diversity and inclusion events.	.39**	13%
My manager communicates the measurable impacts that diversity and inclusion practices have on our business.	.35**	12%
I have opportunities for career growth and development within this organization.	.34**	14%
I have access to a mentoring program within this organization.	.34**	13%
In my department, a buddy or mentoring system is effectively utilized.	.32**	13%
Rewards and recognition is fair (note: this is distinct from the annual performance management review).	.32**	10%
The people in my department treat one another with respect.	.32**	9%
I have access to training programs to enhance my skills and abilities.	.29**	12%
My department's hiring practices are aligned with this organization's diversity and inclusion mission.	.28**	10%
The distribution of rewards and recognition is appropriately balanced among individuals and teams.	.27**	10%
This division's rewards and recognition systems are inclusive of all locations (note: this is distinct from the annual performance management review).	.26**	9%
My manager has encouraged me to attend diversity and inclusion training.	.26**	8%
The people in my department value my ideas and opinions.	.26**	7%
In my department, I have seen how our diversity and inclusion practices results in better ideas and solutions to problems.	.26**	8%
The diversity and inclusion practices in my department influence people to stay with the organization.	.25**	9%
In my department, we have an active internship program.	.23**	12%
At this division, I have seen evidence that diverse and inclusive teams generate more innovative ideas and solutions than teams that are less diverse and/or inclusive.	.23**	7%

APPENDIX

Table 1 - D&I Correlation with Versatility and Percent Gain from Low to High Versatility

D&I ITEM	CORRELATION WITH VERSATILITY	PERCENT GAIN FROM W TO Z
The diversity and inclusion mission is directly linked to this division's strategic imperatives or business results.	.23**	8%
I am offered meaningful work assignments and opportunities.	.22**	6%
People in my department are actively engaged in diverse and/or inclusive activities.	.21*	7%
I understand the value that the Diversity Council brings to this division.	.21*	8%
The purposes of the Diversity Council have been communicated to me.	.20*	7%
At this division, I have seen evidence that diverse and inclusive teams deliver greater customer experiences than teams that are less diverse and/or inclusive.	.20*	6%
I understand the organization's inclusion mission.	.20*	7%
In my department, we have people with diverse talents and perspectives.	.19*	4%
This organization is recognized outside of the company for its community outreach efforts.	.18*	7%
I am aware that metrics are utilized to measure the impacts of diversity and inclusion practices.	.17*	7%
At this organization, I have seen evidence that diverse and inclusive teams are more successful at generating new business than teams that are less diverse and/or inclusive.	.14	4%
I am aware of the Diversity Council.	.14	7%
This organization is recognized outside of the company as an employer of choice for its diversity and inclusion practices.	.10	3%

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

About the Author

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Dr. Casey Mulqueen oversees the research and development of TRACOM's various assessment instruments and products. He has experience developing a wide variety of assessments such as personality inventories, 360-degree feedback programs, performance appraisal systems, and employee opinion surveys. His expertise in cross-cultural assessment and norming has helped ensure that TRACOM's global surveys are valid and reliable throughout the world. He is a writer who has authored a variety of materials including books, book chapters, and peer-reviewed journal articles. Casey has an M.S. in clinical psychology and a Ph.D. in industrial/organizational psychology.

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ABOUT

TRACOM[®] GROUP

THE SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPANY[®]

We provided the “AH HAs” to people as to how and why they act and interact with the world around them the way they do. We do this by teaching people about the core elements of an individual: their behavior, their emotions and their mindset and the impact these elements have on them each and every day. We call these core elements Social Intelligence. Most people are completely unaware of the impact that these elements have on them each and every day in how they interact with others and how they frame what is happening in the world around them.

For more information, visit WWW.TRACOMCORP.COM or call (303) 470-4900 — (800) 221-2321 (U.S. only)