

SUCCESS STORY

TRACOM Provides SOCIAL STYLE® Training for Denver Charter School



University Preparatory School
(University Prep)

INDUSTRY:

Education

CHALLENGE:

“Our school staff, from teachers to deans to operations, needs to function as a united team in order to achieve our ‘to and through’ college mission for our children.”

DAVID SINGER
Founder, University Prep

SOLUTION:

SOCIAL STYLE

OVERVIEW

Like most large, urban school districts in the United States, Denver’s schools face many challenges including academic performance and funding shortfalls. One school working to combat these challenges is University Preparatory School (University Prep), a kindergarten through fifth grade, tuition-free, public charter school located in downtown Denver.

The school’s mission is to provide a foundation of skills, knowledge, and character. University Prep educates every scholar for a four year college degree and a life of opportunity. At University Prep, the option isn’t whether to go to college, or not, instead, the option is where you will be going to college.

THE CHALLENGE

Supported by the TeleTech Community Foundation and the TRACOM Cares initiative, University Prep is taking innovative steps to equip its faculty and educate its scholars. This includes access to state of the art technology as well as critical social intelligence skills including SOCIAL STYLE training.

University Prep was founded by David Singer and a group of teachers looking for new ways to achieve success. Singer says collaboration was crucial from day one and has proven to be a key part of the school’s success. “Our school staff, from teachers to deans to operations, needs to function as a united team in order to achieve our ‘to and through’ college mission for our children,” said Singer.

THE SOLUTION

Looking to industry for strategies and tools to build that collaboration, University Prep found a supportive partner in the TeleTech Community Foundation (TTCF). The Foundation represents TeleTech’s desire to support under-served communities around the globe. Initial support came through donations of classroom technology such as digital smartboards

and tablet computers, on-site reading programs, and underwriting holiday celebrations for students and their families.

In 2014, school and Foundation leaders identified that providing professional development skills for faculty and staff would have a significant impact. In 2015, TRACOM became involved to support a full-day of training and development prior to the start of the academic school year for both faculty and staff. The program featured SOCIAL STYLE assessments and training jointly facilitated by TeleTech and TRACOM instructors. SOCIAL STYLE is the leading behavioral preferences model for building effective and productive working relationships. These skills are crucial for educators according to University Prep leaders.

Katie Linn, director of instruction and curriculum emphasized the school's team teaching approach. "Our school is very collaborative and we realize the importance of getting to know each other as people. SOCIAL STYLE helps you to tailor your communications and understand how you're being heard. I'm a resource to our teachers, and the people I coach fall into each of the four SOCIAL STYLES. It's been an incredible asset for me to understand how to best work with all of our team."

Singer underscores the value of these skills. "Understanding each individual's SOCIAL STYLE and the implications that has for how we interact with one another on a daily basis is essential to building that united team and achieving our mission. The training provided us with the knowledge needed to understand, in concrete terms, how our behaviors will be perceived by others based on their Style, and in turn, how we can better connect," he said.

Linn believes that Style training will affect the classroom. "We have six of us on the academic team that coach teachers to improve their instruction skills. We meet each week and participate in the classroom. The SOCIAL STYLE and coaching strategies lead to better practices. It allows our teachers to grow at a faster rate and support the students."

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KATIE LINN
Director of Instruction and
Curriculum, University Prep

RESULTS

Individual teachers appreciate the insights that they can immediately put into practice with colleagues, parents and students. Linn says teachers were excited about a training that was both practical and fun. "Many have placed indicators of their individual SOCIAL STYLE in their work areas to help remind others and themselves of how to best work collaboratively."

University Prep's success is rewarding for TeleTech. Rich Herbst, vice president of learning and development for TeleTech says the foundation exists to support our employees' desire to make an impact on one of society's most pressing issues – education. "With operations in dozens of countries, we have a global footprint and want to make a difference for our employees, clients and communities. We know we are doing that with University Prep. These skills are valuable in the workplace and they're valuable in a school."

The success of University Prep has led Denver Public Schools to expand its scope. Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, University Prep will open their second campus. This will give even more students the opportunity to achieve academic and life success.