



COMPETITIVE EDGE, INC.

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The Competitive Edge, Inc. Newsletter



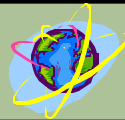
Photo by Hugh Foster

“BE DARING, BE FIRST, BE DIFFERENT.”

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Communicating in a Global Marketplace



So you want to go "global"?

There are some key things that you should research and understand before you begin on your path into the international marketplace. All cultures define "truth" through their definitions of faith, fact and feelings. Some cultures are predominated by their faith or belief system that can be either a religion or a political ideology. Others make decisions based solely on fact. Most commonly, a culture will make decisions based on feelings; they need to like you before they will do business with you. Each of these characteristics is further qualified by cognitive style. People organize and process information differently. The open-minded seek out more information before making a decision while the closed-minded have tunnel vision; they see a narrow range of data and ignore the rest. Most cultures are closed-minded when things are going well. They only become open-minded when they need to find a new way to flourish.

Within each of these cultures, there also exist those human characteristics that define all business environments. The DISC model defines human interaction and its application to the extended marketplace maximizes a company's chances at success.

DISC is the language of people watching. It identifies not only the primary behavior that people exhibit, but also the primary behavior people like to be interfaced with.

DISC stands for Dominance, Influencing, Steadiness and Compliance. Dominant people have high egos, like to direct the action and look for personal challenges. They are going to get the job done. They tend to very impatient and results-oriented. Influencers are optimistic and people oriented. They enjoy their interaction with others and need

social recognition. Steady people are great team players, are loyal and employ traditional practices to achieve results. Compliance to high standards drive the "C" person. They strive for accuracy and perfection using accepted or proper methods.

Understanding the values or attitudes that drive these primary behaviors provide even greater insight into new cultures. The values commonly identified include theoretical, utilitarian, aesthetic, social, individualistic and traditional attitudes. If you can apply this knowledge to a culture of people based on their drivers of faith, fact and feelings you will significantly increase your factors for success.

Can you change to meet the needs of a changing business environment? Do you know the driving characteristics of your corporate leadership? Putting the right teams together is paramount if you are going to succeed in the international marketplace. Larry Wilson was very prophetic when he said, "Your choice is to either learn this new game, or continue to be the very best player in a game that is no longer being played". There are a number of assessments available that can assist you in making the transition to a global playing field. These assessments address the DISC qualities of your key personnel and your organization as a whole. The Values assessments will help you to identify the passion that drives the behaviors. If you know the values of your leadership and your organization you can then determine in which marketplaces you have the greatest opportunity to succeed. The assessment results, when fully applied across an organization and then normalized, can even be used to define the make up of a successful team or specific jobs within your infrastructure. Investment in the identification and application of DISC and Values will tip the scales in your direction.

**CEI has grown and is Moving!!!
Details soon!!**



Our next issue:

Got a question?
Need an answer?

ASK JUDY

Let *Advice from the Edge* know your questions and then watch for Judy's advice in future issues.



The only differences between countries and markets will be skill levels, education, and the level of empowerment of the workplace.

Lew Pritchett

Leadership – Guliani Style

“There is no conceivable human action which custom has not at one time justified and at another condemned.

Joseph Wood Crutch

“A leader’s role is to raise the bar.”

“A leader has to be a part of the organization but also feel it exists for another purpose, not just the satisfaction of those who work in it.”

“Making the right choices is the most important part of leadership.”

“When selected to a position of leadership, do not believe you were selected by God.”

WHAT JUDY IS READING...

I recently read a book, [The Influentials](#), that I would like to share with you. It is written by Ed Keller and Jon Berry, executives with RoperASW, a global marketing firm specializing in brand strategy, customer loyalty and corporate reputation building. [The Influentials](#) discusses the 10% of the American population that drives the opinions of the remaining 90%. I found the book extremely interesting as it links directly to the values and endorsement models to which I so strongly subscribe.

Who are the Influentials? They are the 10% of Americans who are most engaged in their local communities. Through their influence on the grass root communities they shape the opinions and trends throughout the country. They are socially and politically active (High I, Social). They have many interests and are connected to many groups (Theoretical). Their opinions are heard by many people and influence decisions in others' lives. They spread the word about new ideas in persuasive ways (High I) and set the context in which society views the world. Influentials are people with active minds. They are considered "generalists" who know a lot about some things (Theoretical), something about a lot of things, and will usually track down the answer if they don't know it. They believe in growth and change (High D). They rate "family first" in all of their life decisions (Traditional) but are also strongly dedicated to their community, their workplace and their places of worship as well. They crave knowledge, enjoy learning, and are likely to be ahead of the curve on products that will have major impact on succinct markets (High D, Theoretical). Influentials were strongly behind the introduction of the internet, cell phones and PDAs as examples (High D – efficiency and control).

Americans no longer base their buying decisions on marketing collateral. They are much more likely to investigate a product, comparison shop, and make decisions based on conversation with people they respect. Before they buy, they talk and they listen. Individual person-to-person communication has become the driving force behind most of today's consumer decisions.

As the American people continue to provide endorsement to the "Influentials", marketers must develop a strategy to reach these decision makers. Businesses need these influential individuals in the same manner as they need marketing, advertising, public relations, promotion and internet strategies. They need to know where influencers get their ideas, what publications they read, what programs they watch, what radio stations they listen to, and what web sites they go to. Success begins with information. Marketers need to know both the positive and negative things that influentials think. If influencers have a problem with a product or service they will likely do something about it. A consumer complaint is likely coming from an "Influential". It behooves a company to react quickly and sincerely.

As America moves away from individualistic goals and refocuses itself on family and legacy, it is necessary to not only understand, but also be willing to act upon, the shifting influencers for the American people. Know how to identify an "influencer", understand what drives them, and change your approach accordingly.

If you would like to read this book in it's entirety, it is published by the Free Press division of Simon and Schuster.

CEI's Preferred Providers

TTI (Target Training International) Performance Systems is our featured Strategic Partner for this edition. TTI is the primary source for our automated assessment tools. Bill Bonnstetter is the CEO of TTI and has been a colleague of mine since 1982. Bill is well known throughout the industry. He developed the first computer version of the DISC assessment and was one of the first to offer the web-based assessment delivery. Bill co-authored *The Universal DISC Reference Manual*, one of the most widely used DISC reference manuals in the United States. Bill has also authored *If I Knew Then What I Know Now*, a book on the Values/Attitudes Model of Eduard Spranger.

The TTI organization supports a worldwide network of distributors that provide a variety of consulting services and training interventions that focus on ways to identify, select, coach and retain the human talent in organization.

An added plus is the TTI staff, which provides excellent support. Their Customer Service and Technical Support are always friendly. The staff goes above and beyond to make sure that our clients and we have the product, the information and the support we need in a timely fashion. It has been a pleasure and my honor to call TTI Performance Systems my strategic partner for the past 13 plus years.

For more information regarding TTI's capabilities, training and products, please take a look at www.ttidisc.com.

Did You Know That...

Someone once said, "it's all about the details". If you are doing business in the Global Marketplace here are some interesting facts you should know:

1. When doing business in India, never say "no".
2. When in India, eat only with the right hand; the left hand is considered unclean.
3. If you are invited into a Belgian home, bring flowers, but not chrysanthemums, which signify death. Never bring 13 of any flower and red roses are only for lovers.
4. When selling in China, use black and white for your collateral materials. Colors have a great significance for the Chinese.
5. When doing business in Israel, women should wear modest clothing. Hemlines should be below the knee. Women should not wear pants or pantsuits.
6. If you give wine as a gift in Italy, make sure it is excellent vintage – many Italians are wine connoisseurs.
7. When in Australia, never give the "thumbs up". It is considered rude.
8. When doing business in South American countries, understand that people stand in very close proximity to each other. If you flinch or move away it will be interpreted as rejection.
9. In China, do not put your hands in your mouth (biting your nails, dislodging food from you teeth). This is considered disgusting.
10. Punctuality is very important to the Germans. Also, never keep your left hand in your pocket while shaking hands with your right.
11. In India, the North-American habit of nodding one's head up and down to mean "yes", means "no".
12. In Japan, never give 4 of anything. White flowers are considered associated with death. Don't use black and white wrapping paper.

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amzanig huh?

"The most universal quality is diversity."

- Montaigne

“Markets change, tastes change, so companies and the individuals who choose to compete in these markets must change.”

An Wang

“Business, more than any other occupation, is a continual dealing with the future; it is a continual calculation, an instinctive exercise in foresight.”

Henry Luce



ADVICE FROM THE EDGE

Things you would love to say out loud...but shouldn't

1. I like you. You remind me of me when I was young and stupid.
2. Do I look like a “people person?”
3. Sarcasm is just one more service we offer.
4. Any connection between your reality and mine are purely coincidental.
5. I will always cherish the initial misconceptions I had about you.
6. The fact that no one understands you doesn't mean you're an artist.
7. Errors have been made. Others will be blamed.
8. Chaos, panic and disorder - my work is done here.
9. A cubicle is just a padded cell without a door.
10. I'll try being nicer if you will try being smarter.

“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing themselves.”

Leo Tolstoy

Now Available

I am proud to announce the publication of my newest book entitled ***The Ripple Effect – How the Global Model of Endorsement Opens Doors to Success***, which discusses the importance of endorsements. I have also released an updated version of ***Exploring Values - Releasing The Power of Attitudes*** and ***Energizing People - Unleashing the Power of DISC*** (previously entitled ***Turning People On – The Power of DISC***). All three books can be ordered through the CEI web site at www.competitiveedgeinc.com or by calling our office at 770-487-6460. Enjoy!!

