

Personal development | Sales

The 8 styles of salespeople

The effective salesperson can stretch into the style that is best for each customer.

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You prepare a pitch that would work great on you, but it falls flat with your customer. Maybe you try to build a relationship, and they just want the facts. Or you share what you think are important details, and they only care about the big picture. Why is connecting with some customers easier than with others?

Even if you don't have *sales* in your job title, learning about selling (and buying) styles is useful. Whether you're raising money for a nonprofit, getting your friends on board for a wild vacation, interviewing for a new job, or navigating bedtime with kids, you'll benefit from understanding your values around sales.



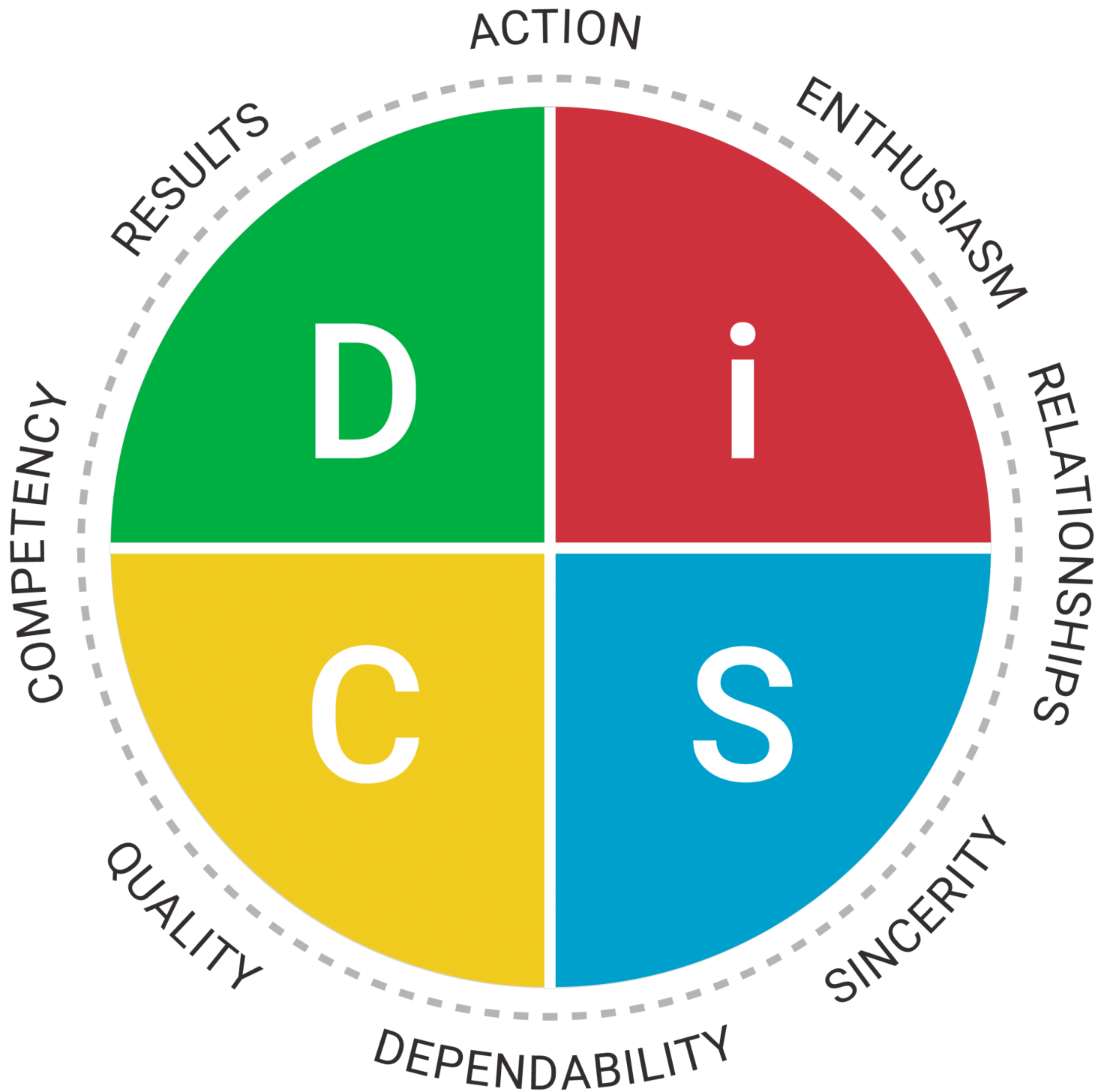
Thinking about “selling” to your friends and family can be off-putting if you see sales as transactional. In reality, **says leadership coach Lori Darley in Forbes**, “the selling mindset means being curious.” It is about listening, learning, and connecting. **“Sales is a contribution mindset.”**

Sales is about connections, and **DiSC®** has been helping people connect for decades. Using the **Everything DiSC® Sales** model, you can discover how your values show up in your sales style, how to use people-reading to understand customers’ values, and how to stretch into a sales mindset that will work best for both of you.

What are the different sales styles?

There are 8 priorities that shape a person’s natural sales style:

- Action
- Enthusiasm
- Relationships
- Sincerity
- Dependability
- Quality
- Competency
- Results



Most people value a few of these priorities over the others, and this determines their default personality in sales situations. They find some behaviors energy-giving and others energy-sapping.

For example, a person who prioritizes relationships and sincerity likely enjoys getting to know a new customer, including the “off-topic” discussions about their hobbies or families. They see this time as well-spent because their sales philosophy is anchored in developing genuine long-term relationships. Someone who prioritizes results, however, may grow impatient if a customer engages in what they see as small talk.

As you read about the 8 sales styles below, think about how you might fill in this blank: “I pride myself on being a _____ salesperson.”

Priorities drive personality, which drives behavior.

As we dig deeper into sales styles below, we'll look at the strengths of each priority, and also the challenges that can arise when a person overuses their default style without considering others.

Your sales style is only half the equation, of course. The customer's buying style is just as important. The effective salesperson understands their own natural tendencies *and* can quickly read the priorities of their customer. Then they stretch into the approach that is best for that customer, even if it takes more energy than their natural approach.

Taking *action*

“I don't waste the customer's time.”

Salespeople who prioritize **action** enjoy a fast-paced environment. They generally don't linger on mistakes or second-guess themselves. These folks bust through obstacles, want to take the lead, and value results over process. Their energy and confidence create a sense of momentum. Customers looking for immediate satisfaction and a no-nonsense approach will appreciate this.

Overuse: When a salesperson *over*-prioritizes action, they may promise more than they can deliver, exaggerate the benefits of their product or services, or move so fast they don't listen to the customer's specific needs.

The action priority aligns with the DiSC **Di** and **iD** styles.



Offering *enthusiasm*

"I keep things light and upbeat."

Salespeople who prioritize **enthusiasm** often emit a contagious excitement and positivity. They assume the best in others and remain friendly even when people don't reciprocate. Their expressive nature and genuine interest in other people encourage customers to open up and share their needs.

Overuse: If a salesperson leans too hard into this style, they may trust people too quickly, come off as naive to more skeptical colleagues, or choose anecdotes when the customer would prefer facts.

The enthusiasm priority aligns with the **DiSC i style**.

Developing *relationships*

"I love connecting with customers as people."

Salespeople who prioritize **relationships** are usually warm and welcoming, putting others at ease. They often have large networks, enjoy social situations, and look for opportunities to meet new people. These folks make time for casual small talk and remember details such as customers' birthdays and family members. They are good at finding common ground and tend to value cooperation over competition.

Overuse: A salesperson overly focused on relationships, to the detriment of other priorities, may appeal too much to customers' emotions, come off as too eager to please, or become overcommitted in their

desire to be helpful.

The relationships priority aligns with the DiSC **iS** and **Si** styles.



Showing *sincerity*

"I am a genuine and trustworthy person."

Salespeople who prioritize **sincerity** are often good listeners. They are approachable and want their customers to be honest about their needs. Customers sense that they're not just out to make a sale. Sincerity-focused salespeople treat others with respect and trust them to make good decisions. They are tactful and diplomatic, making an effort to guide more than pressure.

Overuse: Salespeople who rely *too* much on the sincere mindset may neglect to emphasize results, give people too much space, or become overwhelmed by more aggressive customers.

The sincerity priority aligns with the **DiSC S style**.

Emphasizing *dependability*

"You can count on me to follow through."

Salespeople who prioritize **dependability** show steadiness and consistency. They want customers to know they won't just close the deal and run—they're in it for the long haul. They show up prepared and

work hard to deliver on their commitments. If a problem arises, these salespeople will support the customer and make sure things get resolved.

Overuse: People who rely too heavily on a dependability mindset can overvalue routines rather than challenge themselves, allow customers to take control of situations, or move too slowly for some customers.

The dependability priority aligns with DiSC **SC** and **CS** styles.



Ensuring *quality*

"I will get it right."

Salespeople who prioritize **quality** are often well organized and excel at keeping track of details. Whatever the task, they are motivated to get it right, double-checking their work and identifying potential obstacles. When selling, they use facts and data more than bold assertions, letting the product speak for itself. They enjoy finding the most effective solution for each customer.

Overuse: When quality becomes *too* much of a focus, salespeople may let caution or perfectionism get in the way of progress. Their focus on data can fail to excite some customers, and open-minded people might find them too skeptical.

The quality priority aligns with the **DiSC C style**.

Displaying *competency*

"I know my stuff."

Salespeople who prioritize **competency** are confident and straightforward. They always do their homework and show up prepared to lead customers toward logical conclusions. They are not easily flustered and don't let personal feelings get in the way. These folks are usually excellent problem-solvers and make customers feel sure they've made the right decision.

Overuse: When the competency priority is overused, salespeople may come off as impersonal, impatient, or not empathetic.

The competency priority aligns with the DiSC **CD** and **DC** styles.

Getting *results*

"I will deliver."

Salespeople who prioritize **results** are persistent, assertive, and often competitive. These driven folks keep on track and stay focused on the main objective. They show customers the impressive results they could get, talking up the benefits without sharing unnecessary details.

Overuse: If salespeople lean *too* far into the results priority, they may come off as overly blunt or cocky, dig their heels in when they don't hear the answer they want, or rush past a customer's concerns without addressing them.

The results priority aligns with the **DiSC D style**.



Which DiSC style is best for sales?

No DiSC style is better suited to any job type, sales included. Everyone is a blend of all DiSC styles, and no style is more valuable than the others. As we outlined above, each style has its strengths and challenges in sales situations.

The best DiSC style for sales is the one that's needed in a particular moment, based on the customer's personality and the situation at hand. Using DiSC for sales is about adapting to the customer in a way that is still authentic to you. A C-style salesperson doesn't just flip a switch and become super enthusiastic and animated. But, they can stretch toward the enthusiasm priority when they sense it would make a customer more comfortable. This effort will come through in their own way.

To be an effective salesperson, you'll often be selling to people in a way that you yourself wouldn't want to be sold to. DiSC can help you find ways to connect, stay curious about your customers, and build more effective relationships.