

Culture After COVID

Wyoming Community Development Authority

Management Innovation: Human Resources

HFA Staff Contact

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The Opportunity

Culture: the consistent, observable patterns of behaviors within an organization.

COVID had an undeniable impact on employee wellbeing and satisfaction at WCDA. With a combination of staff events coming to halt, the stress of change, and turnover in leadership resulting in just over 50% of managers being new to their teams, our culture had taken a hit. This was evident in our Great Place To Work survey scores- while we remained certified, every single scoring category decreased. Overall, only 78% of staff could say they believed WCDA to be a Great Place to Work, while pre-pandemic scores were in the 90s. The GPTW survey had concluded that 22% of our staff were Flight Risks: employees that were disconnected to the culture and not invested in staying long term. We had work to do.

Based on the answers we gathered from our annual survey, leadership and HR identified key areas of culture that needed improvement: recognition and communication. By including these leverage areas in our annual Strategic Plan as a “People/Staff Focus” goal, we committed to a better culture after COVID. We were taking this seriously- it was weighted at 20% of what needed to be accomplished to achieve our company-wide annual bonus.

The Execution

Following comprehensive review and analysis, we have accomplished implementation of several new programs to revive and build a more fulfilling culture at WCDA.

Recognition: For several years, we had been using a “treasure box” system to reward employees for going above and beyond in their day-to-day work. If a team member was witness to another doing something incredible, they would email HR summarizing the good deed, and request that person be sent to the treasure box to choose from assorted items HR had picked out. The treasure box held items like mugs, hats, small electronics, gift cards, etc. While this was a fun bonus for those that participated, when we analyzed the impact, it was underutilized and less meaningful than we hoped. In fact, the GPTW survey reported that only 63% of staff believed management to show appreciation for good work and extra effort (a 22% decrease from previous years)

Introduce AwardCo. We invested in an online platform that took recognition to the next level with peer-to-peer recognition, manager to staff recognition, and everything in between. We gave every employee twenty-five points to be disbursed in five point increments to any peer whose behavior and effort exemplifies one of our core values. Purpose is fostered within the value cycle- people find meaning when they see a clear connection between what they highly value and what they spend time doing. By tying every single recognition to Teamwork, Accountability, Integrity, Community, or Compassion, we are empowering our team members to recognize WCDA values within each other, driving desired behaviors that build culture.

In addition to the peer-to-peer program, we allotted managers a minimum of 125 points, up to 200 points (depending on how many staff they supervise) to be disbursed in 25 point increments. Once a team member has been awarded points, they have access to shop the expansive Amazon catalog with zero mark up. This means they can choose anything they would normally buy on Amazon, with dollar-for-dollar value from their points. 5 points = \$5 not only on the spending side, but on the deposit side as well. Every dollar that we give staff to recognize with keeps its value as points. We replenish the “giving” banks on a fiscal year basis.



Other opportunities that we found to celebrate our team with points were birthdays, completing new hire orientation, non-milestone anniversaries, and wellness challenges. Once a recognition or other rewarded event has been sent, it gets posted to the “feed” that is on the landing page of AwardCo for all WCDA staff to see the amazing things happening within our teams every day, and even comment and “react” with emojis! Activity breeds activity, so this has been a powerful tool to inspire people to be watching for recognizable acts. We have people recognizing each other almost every day for big and small things. With COVID bringing employee wellbeing to center stage, recognition, and appreciation have been a valuable investment in our organization.

“I was struck by how this encourages the team to celebrate wins big and small and to recognize the great folks at WCDA in real-time.” -Michael Holliday, newly onboarded team member of WCDA

Communication: COVID posed both anticipated and unexpected communication hurdles at WCDA. We went through the same growing pains as every organization in the country with sudden heavy utilization of Zoom, Teams, and written communication replacing in-person connection. However, once we returned to office and were afforded those in-person opportunities paired with the new channels, our employee surveys were still showing drastic decrease in satisfaction with the messaging. Maybe the problem *wasn't* quantity, but quality. Team members were reporting inconsistency, lack of vision, management’s lack of approachability, and unclear expectations. A concerted effort for quality conversations needed to be made.

TriMetrix became a tool to put in every team member’s toolbelt. This assessment is a multi-faceted analysis that measures a person’s behaviors, communication style, motivators, emotional intelligence, skills and acumen. By analyzing so many different dimensions of the person, potential communication barriers are determined, and strategy may be implemented to reach a team’s full potential. We hired Bob Peter, president of Insights2Improvement, not only to administer the assessments but also provide communication and team-building coaching. We hosted Bob at our annual staff retreat for an all-staff learning session, as well as continuous departmental work sessions, leadership development sessions, and even included him in our SWOT analysis and management retreat. The value these developmental sessions provided has improved internal conflict resolution, supervisory, and external customer service communications.

After we had dug into the strategy of effective and meaningful communication, it was time to start having those quality conversations. Our Executive Director, Scott Hoversland, and Deputy Executive Director, Christopher Volzke, committed to having one-on-one time dedicated to every team member at WCDA. During a “Coffee with an Executive,” Scott or Chris would take the staff member off-site to a coffee shop, and let them drive the conversation about whatever they may want to address. Every invite also included a structure of four areas to consider when brainstorming topics:

- Growth: what projects would you like to work on or be more involved in?
- Motivation: what’s one thing that should change to make you happier at work?
- Communication: where has our communication faltered? Can you give me an example?
- Work: what, if anything, feels harder than it should be in your day-to-day work?

After a full year of valuable work in communicating effectively with one another, and giving each member of our team the floor to have a voice with an executive, it was time to start the strategic planning all over again. To demonstrate dedication to open communication, 2023 was the first year WCDA involved staff level employees in the SWOT analysis process. Each manager was able to



nominate 1-2 people in a non-leadership role to partake in this process at the management retreat. This fostered a sense of personal accountability for strategy execution at every level of the authority – from specialists to senior leadership.

The Innovation

Building improvement of culture into WCDA's Strategic Plan and Bonus Pool Plan made a statement to our staff that they are the most valuable asset in our organization. Culture is not simply tangible, but the impact it has over productivity and long-term success, is. Instead of getting back to the norm after the pandemic, WCDA took the opportunity to invest in actionable steps toward a more fulfilling workplace legacy. People cannot be what they don't see, so creating a positive culture of teamwork, responsibility, integrity, community and compassion has to be done using actionable innovation that is easily observable and at the forefront of day-to-day operations.

The Replicability and Resources

Recognition:

- AwardCo is a contracted vendor that will require a subscription for services. After the annual subscription fee, the organization deposits dollar-for-dollar whatever budget they choose for disbursement of points. A client services manager is assigned to your account to assist with platform set up and customization, training, and continuous program support.

Communication:

- TriMetrix is a personality assessment that we believed would be most beneficial for our team's needs. We connected with a certified coach and signed a year-long contract for his services.
- Coffee with an Executive consisted solely of scheduling the one-on-one time and creating a structure for the conversations based on the feedback we were seeking.
- Involving staff in the SWOT analysis required internal training of the process that was led by our Deputy Executive Director.

The Results

The impact these initiatives had on our culture is palpable within the walls of WCDA, and also in the results of our most recent employee survey. We are happy to report that with a 100% participation rate, 84% say WCDA is overall, a Great Place To Work. Every category improved, and our "Flight Risk" individuals significantly decreased to 7%.

In addition to the black and white survey results, we have also seen an internal promotion rate of 66% filling our position openings over the last year. Our team members are investing in a future with WCDA when they see WCDA invest in them.

When leaders drive momentum within the authority toward a carefully designed culture that aligns with a common set of values and vision, engagement becomes clear and service excellence soars.

"Implementation of all these programs has been very effective in helping transition out of the pandemic. I feel productivity has increased, morale has improved, and overall company efficiency has improved." – Tom Price, tenured team member of WCDA

Reimagining Employee Recognition

awardco



HOME FEED MY RECOGNITION RECOGNIZE EARN REWARDS SPEND POINTS

50 POINTS Callie Quinlan

Points that have been awarded to me

Completely customized banner. Pictured are WCDA employees!

ADMIN

REAL PEOPLE providing REAL SOLUTIONS for homeownership in WY THAT deserves recognition.



Good Morning, Callie
You have 50 Points to spend

Who do you want to recognize?

Type a name to search...

Next

Opportunities to Give



LET'S RECOGNIZE
15 Points to give resets in 1 month

Points that I have to recognize others with

Recognition Feed

All

Danielle Huseas recognized

May 6

Christopher Volzke recognized

April 17



Firework Friday! For those who were not here toward the end of the day, we had very vocal customer complaining about his escrow analysis and corresponding payment increase. He was yelling loud enough that I could hear him from my office, so I went up to chat with him in the lobby. While the customer seemed initially volatile, Christal did a nice job a diffusing the situation before I got there. I found after the fact that his same customer had an unpleasant and similar interaction with Lexi earlier in the week.

Thank you to both Christal and Lexi for always providing stellar service to our in-person customers. Even in unpredictable exchanges, they always stay calm and help the customer to better understand the situation and what options may or may not be available. As the 'face' of the WCDA for many of our homeowners, I appreciate them showing our WCDA value of Compassion.
#localservicingadvantage

Show Less...

TAGS COMPASSION

2 1 1 + REACTION

Add comment

Wyoming CDA Recognition recognized

April 4



Stephanie Smith

Happy Anniversary from WCDA!

1 1 1 1 + REACTION



Rhonda Mundorf Happy Anniversary!

April 7



Scott Hoversland Congratulations!

April 12



Christina Pelton Happy Anniversary Stephanie!

April 17



Add comment

Stacy Howard recognized

March 16



Patricia Burget



Patti, I would like to commend you for your efforts to understand the escrow analysis information and to take the time with our borrowers to explain in a compassionate manner. I know that you have a hefty workload, but you never let the stress show when helping our borrowers. You are giving our borrowers a great experience, which is particularly tough when the information you are presenting is difficult. I want you to know that your efforts are noticed and I am grateful to have you as part of the team!

TAGS TEAMWORK RESPONSIBILITY COMPASSION

4 1 1 1 + REACTION



Add comment

CUSTOMIZABLE NOTIFICATIONS BY EMAIL:



Happy Employee Appreciation Day!

Happy National Employee Appreciation day, Petel!

The foundation of affordable housing in Wyoming has been built on WCDA since 1975, and the foundation of WCDA is you. Thank you for all you do every day to help our community; the teamwork inside this building is what makes our mission a reality. As a token of our appreciation for your work and to help celebrate your day, a gift from us:

15 Points

You can redeem these points at any time on our AwardCo platform.

Sincerely,
Wyoming Community Development Authority

[Log Into Your Account](#)

Website: wcda.awardco.com



Happy Birthday, Arik!

We want you to know how much we appreciate you and the work you do. We hope your day is filled with good things, and that the next year is even better than the last. Thank you for being a part of Wyoming Community Development Authority!

As a token of our appreciation for your work and to help celebrate your day, we want to give you this gift:

5 Points

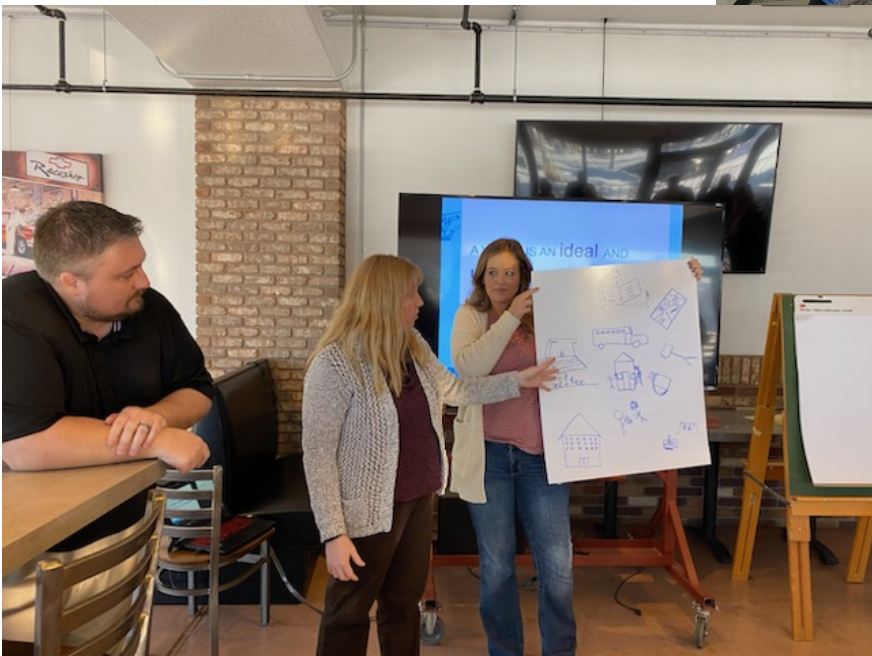
You can redeem these points for any item you like through our rewards platform. We hope that the gift you select will always remind you of our appreciation.

Sincerely,
Wyoming Community Development Authority

[Log Into Your Account](#)

CLICK HERE FOR A VIDEO DEMO OF WCDA'S AWARDCO PROGRAM!

TRIMETRIX SESSIONS STAFF AND MANAGEMENT RETREATS:



EXAMPLE REPORT:



TTI
SUCCESS
INSIGHTS®

TTI Talent Insights®

Engagement

Callie Quinlan

Administrative Officer

WCDA

08.02.2022

Insights2Improvement, Inc.

844.426.7520

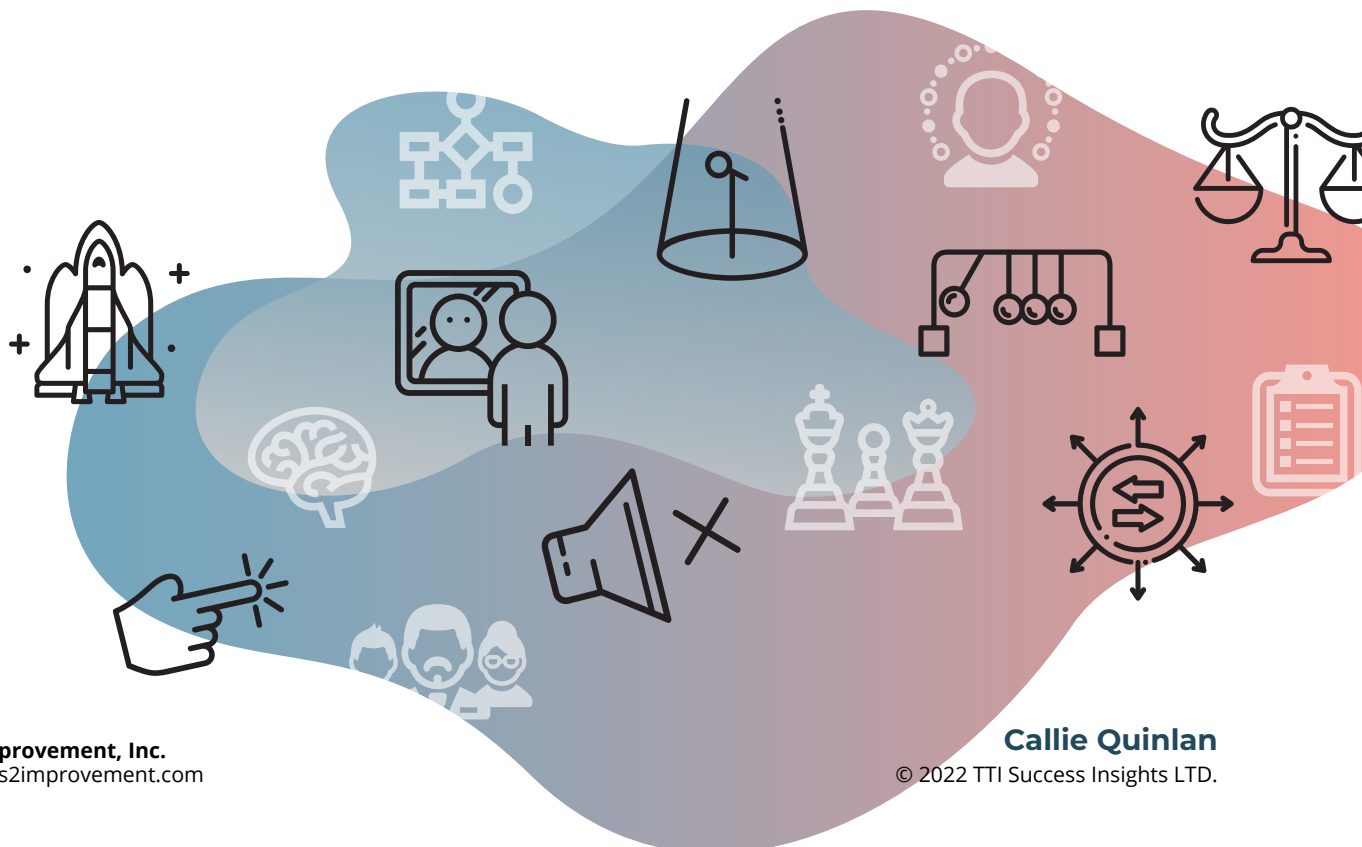
info@insights2improvement.com



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Where Engagement Begins

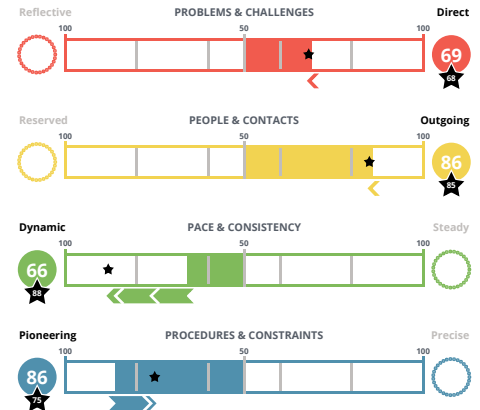
Getting to Know the “How” of Callie



The following report is designed to help Callie become more self-aware and aware of others in order to raise levels of engagement. People tend to be more engaged when comfortable and connected to the activities and people they encounter. This page offers insight into HOW Callie prefers to do what she does.

Callie enjoys using her people skills to "facilitate" engagement between people. She tends to look at all the things the group has in common rather than focus on the differences. She usually uses many gestures which may be diminished when communicating virtually. She may cause certain styles to become disengaged if she over-communicates her point. Positive in her approach to dealing with others. She may not understand why everyone doesn't have the same level of engagement as she does. Callie tends to solve conflict through communication. She feels that communication and transparency are the keys to engagement when working with a group.

Sometimes Callie should use more facts and figures to support her ideas. She tends to lean heavily on friendliness in order to keep the level of engagement high during a negative situation. She will optimistically interact with people, always conveying confidence in her message.



Act: Which statements do you identify with the most? Choose 1 - 3 and reflect on how those shape your day-to-day interactions with others. Share your findings with a leader or colleague to increase engagement.

Where Engagement Begins

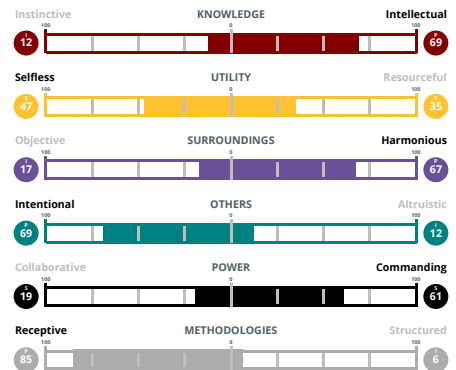
Getting to Know the “Why” of Callie



What people are drawn to and what keeps people motivated differ from person to person. Below, we explore why Callie does what she does. In general, what does she value that keeps her motivated and engaged.

Callie is always looking for new ways to accomplish routine tasks. She is most engaged when thinking outside-the-box. She will challenge the status quo to increase the engagement of the group. She is willing to help others if they are working to achieve their goals. Callie may question the amount of time individuals spend on making sure others are engaged. She may be firm in her decisions and tries not to be disengaged by others' unfortunate circumstances.

She may integrate past knowledge with new information to solve problems. She may appear disengaged; however, she is often immersed in researching a new topic. Callie will thrive in a role where engagement is high, and she can experience self-realization and gratification. She is most engaged when working in an aesthetically pleasing environment. Given the choice, Callie would choose to engage in new opportunities. She is seeking opportunities to enhance her ever-changing system for living.



Act: Which statements do you identify with the most? Choose 1 - 3 and reflect on how each statement contributes to your level of engagement. Share your findings with a leader or colleague to increase engagement.









Keys to Engagement

Unlocking Callie's Potential



Isn't it funny how something that excites one person can completely turn off another? Each individual is engaged by a unique combination of approaches, topics and ideas. Below are a few of the most effective ways to keep Callie engaged.

Engagement happens when...

-  Her leader is optimistic about her ability to explore new ways of doing business.
-  There are positive and open interactions between colleagues and leadership.
-  She can promote new opportunities within the organization.
-  The experience of the people and their surroundings are happy and balanced.
-  She is recognized as a resource for those who are willing to work towards a common vision.
-  Programs are promoted that produce results by utilizing the skills of others.
-  She is able to seek out new information that will be valuable to share with others.
-  She has the opportunity to share knowledge with others.



Act: Use this list to help keep yourself motivated during work projects. Can you seek out pieces of a tough assignment that lean toward one or more of your keys to engagement? If yes, focus on those pieces to finish strong.

Engaging Through Communication



How (and How Not) to Talk with Callie

When it comes to engaging others in conversation, use the Platinum Rule. Approach others as they want to be approached. Behavioral styles have a major effect on communication preference. This section provides a shareable list of ways to and not to communicate with Callie in order to have the most effective conversations.

Do...

- ✓ Provide specific answers that are not open to interpretation.
- ✓ Use an original approach when appropriate.
- ✓ Ask questions to clarify any details she may have missed.
- ✓ Start the conversation with something stimulating and fun.



Don't...

- ✗ Talk down to her.
- ✗ Dismiss or discourage her ideas.
- ✗ Hesitate when discussing issues.
- ✗ Leave decisions hanging.

Act: Choose the top two Do's and top two Don'ts from the list above (your game-changers) and review them with your manager and team to open the lines of communication.

Creating Peak Productivity



Where Callie Excels

Call it a happy place, safe space or ideal environment; each of these descriptions shows how an individual's environment (including place and people) can have an effect on motivation and productivity. Each person's productive place is based on what can truly engage them. This page offers a list of Callie's preferences that will engage her most productive self.

Callie's productive place includes...

- ▶ An environment that rewards the communication of changes in the system.
- ▶ The ability to blend her creative and optimistic problem-solving approaches.
- ▶ A forum to work with people as it relates to moving the organization forward.
- ▶ Groups that are willing and able to assist and drive desired outcomes.
- ▶ A forum to discover new information.
- ▶ Conferences, webinars and online platforms in order to gain information and interact with others.



- ▶ Opportunities to dream and develop new ideas with others.
- ▶ A fun and creative working environment.

Reflect: Where do you do your best work? What and who are in that location that makes it most productive? Is there a specific mood or tone to the happy place? Can you take any pieces of that environment with you to remain productive no matter the location?

Make It or Break It

How Callie Impacts the Team



A popular saying goes, “Teamwork makes the dream work,” but has that dream ever turned into a nightmare? Understanding that each team member provides unique strengths and abilities will help avoid conflict and maximize the engagement of the group. The list below identifies a few of those strengths and potential weaknesses that Callie brings to the team.



STRENGTHS

- ✓ Good relationship skills.
- ✓ Strong communicator of issues.
- ✓ Values people over tasks.
- ✓ People-oriented.
- ✓ Enthusiastic.
- ✓ Optimistic communicator.



WEAKNESSES

- ✗ May have trouble disciplining.
- ✗ Acts impulsively based on a surface analysis.
- ✗ Can struggle with time management.
- ✗ May trust people indiscriminately.
- ✗ May not pay attention to the details.
- ✗ May be talking when she should be listening.

Act: When taking part in a team project, identify the 1 -2 strength(s) that makes you the best fit for the group’s assigned tasks. Share that with the team. Also, write down 1 or 2 weaknesses that you want to work-on while working with the group.

Avoiding Time Traps

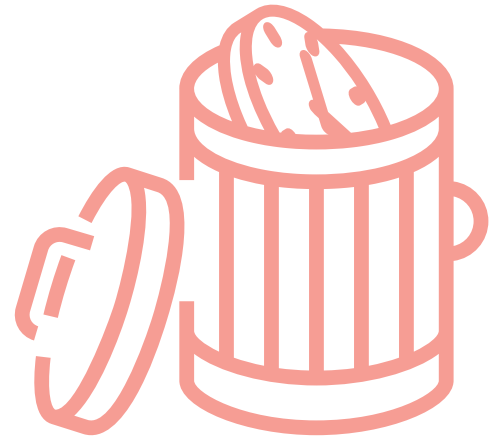


Maximizing Callie's Time

If there were only more hours in the day... An individual's time is valuable, and it is important to make the most of it. Each style comes with its own set of time management issues and opportunities. This section focuses on Callie's personal set of time traps and tips to overcome "wasting" valuable time.

Time traps

- ❌ Priorities are not written down.
- ❌ Fear of missing out.
- ❌ Sees organizing and filing activities as a waste of time.
- ❌ Wants to be involved in group activities.



Time savers

- ✓ Take time to identify her limitations.
- ✓ Evaluate how much time is really available.
- ✓ Break large projects into small steps and do one at a time.
- ✓ Keep daily priorities in view to keep on task.

Tip: There is a chance that you have already designed ways to overcome the time traps listed in this section. If you still struggle with time management, try to identify what might be consuming your time, based on what you have learned about your style so far.

Making an Impression



How Others View Callie

Stress or pressure can make people act in many different ways. But, think about how those actions might be perceived by others. Realizing others' perspectives can be an uncomfortable exercise to go through, but it is a good step toward increasing stronger self-awareness and engagement with others. The list below outlines how Callie sees herself and how others might perceive Callie.



Callie Sees herself as...

- ✓ Enthusiastic
- ✓ Inspiring
- ✓ Outgoing
- ✓ Persuasive
- ✓ Charming
- ✓ Optimistic



Day-to-day, Others May See Callie as...

- ✓ Self-promoting
- ✓ Presumptuous
- ✓ Talkative
- ✓ Unrealistic



In Extreme Situations, Others May See Callie as...

- ✓ Arrogant
- ✓ Poor Listener
- ✓ Insincere
- ✓ Shameless

Reflect: Have you ever felt misunderstood or that others aren't seeing your point-of-view as intended? How might you adapt some of your behaviors or actions to better communicate your intended meaning? How might that improve your engagement with others?

Identifying Obstacles



Getting Callie Out of her Own Way

When faced with an obstacle, people can either press on (or attack) or take a path of least resistance. Self-awareness and awareness of others are key in persevering over or through obstacles instead of becoming disengaged. This page assists Callie in identifying some of her potential limitations.

Callie may...



Be inattentive to details, only focusing on outcomes.



Accept information at face value.



Have difficulty with planning and time management.



Overlook details unless they are important to her.



Be a situational listener.



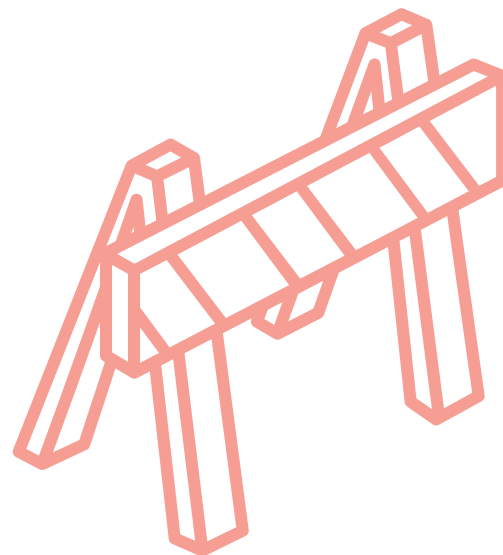
Be unrealistic in appraising people, especially if the person is a "friend."



Be so enthusiastic that she may be seen as superficial.



Overuse praise in leading others.

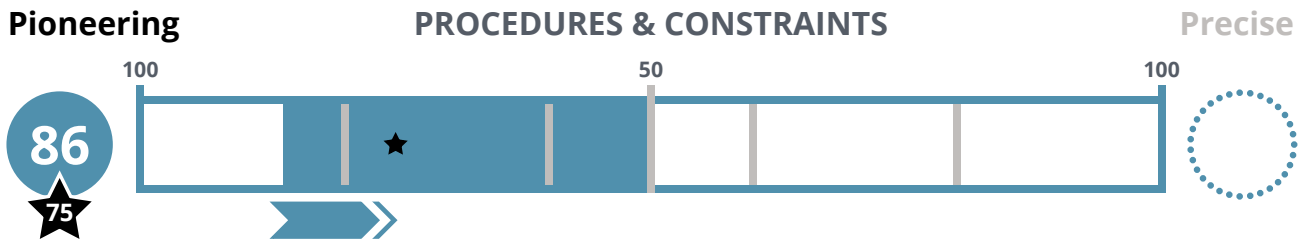
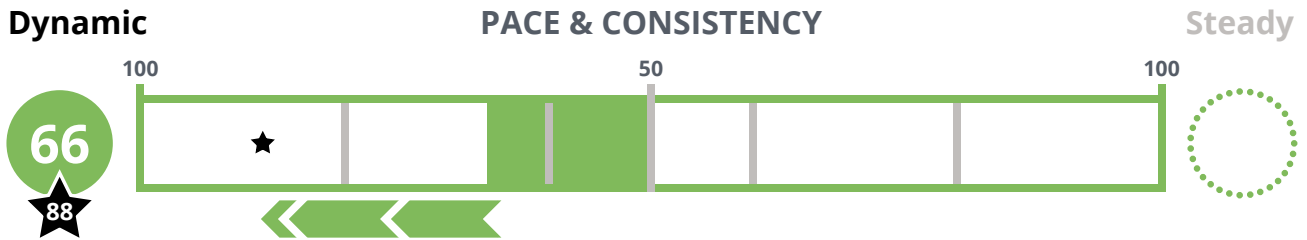
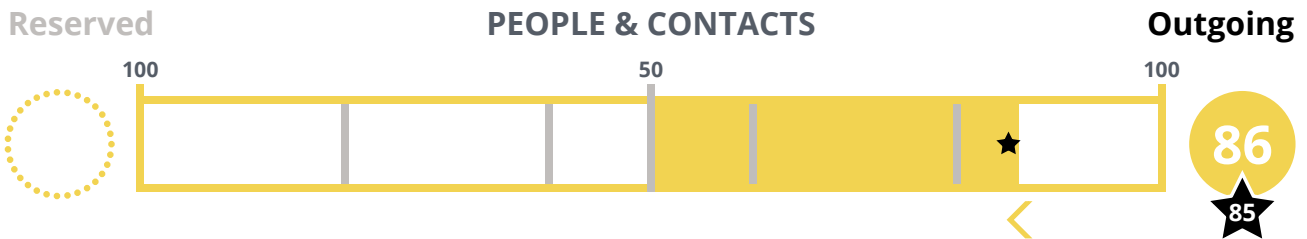
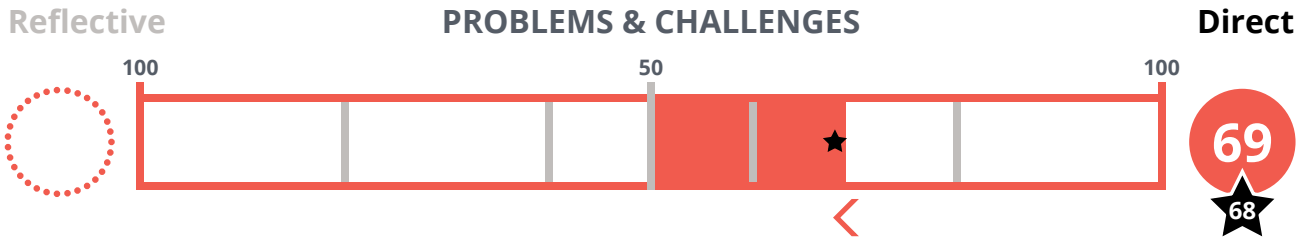


Tip: Weaknesses can be turned into strengths at any time. An obstacle can be an opportunity to accomplish something you never thought you could before.

Behavioral Continuum



Everyone has a varying level of the four main behavioral factors that create their own, personal style. Each side of those factors lives on a continuum, and the combination influences individuals' level of engagement in different situations. The graph below is a visual representation of where Callie falls within each continuum.



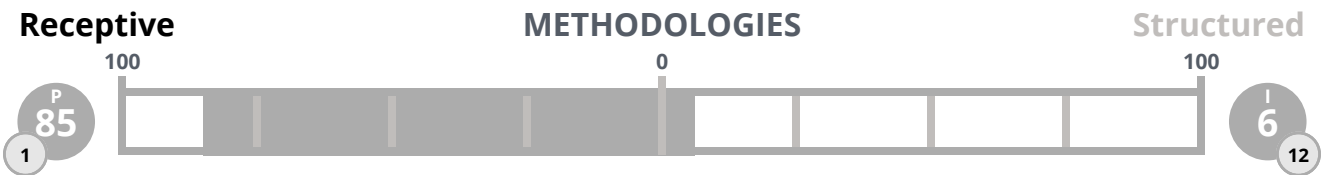
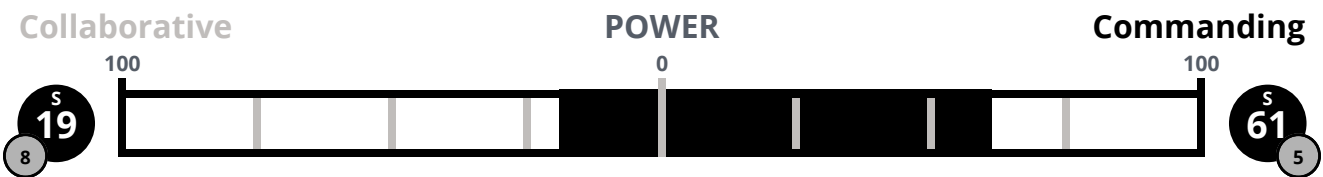
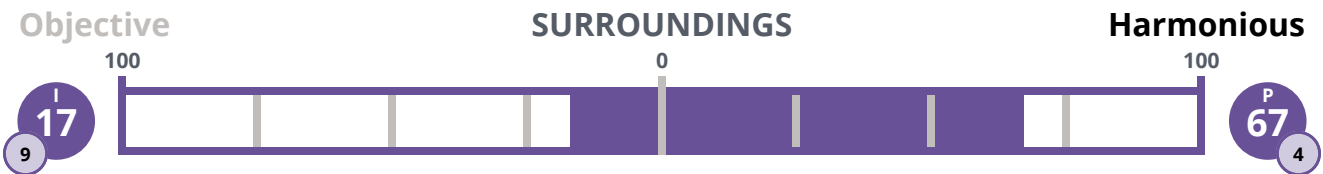
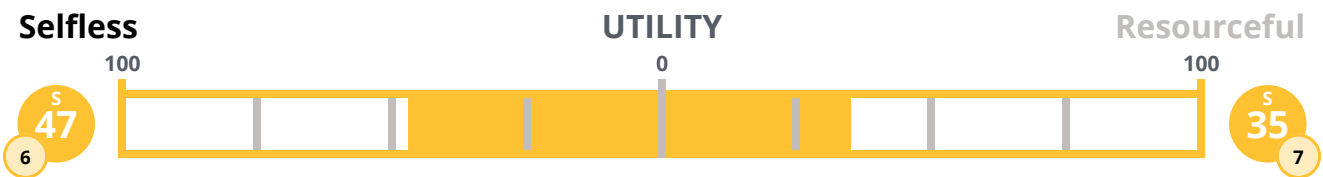
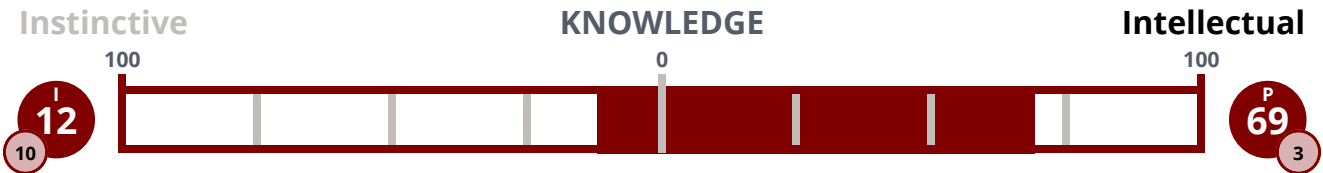
★ Adapted Position
 ◀ Adapted Movement

Norm 2021 R4
 8-2-2022
 T: 11:43

Motivational Continuum



The 12 Driving Forces® Continuum is a visual representation of what motivates Callie and the level of intensity for each category. The letter "P" indicates an individual's primary cluster. These four factors are critical to Callie's motivation and engagement regardless of the situation.



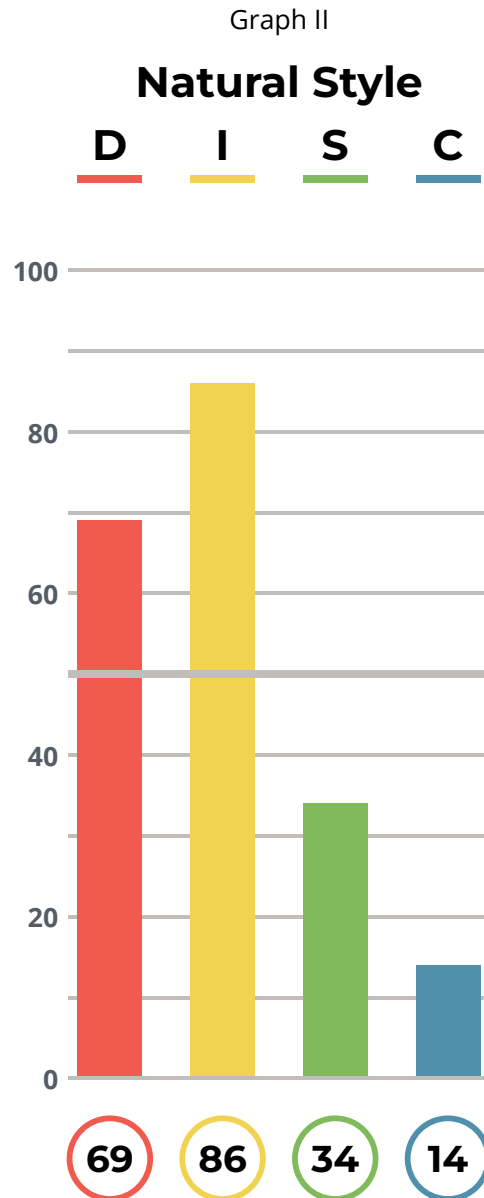
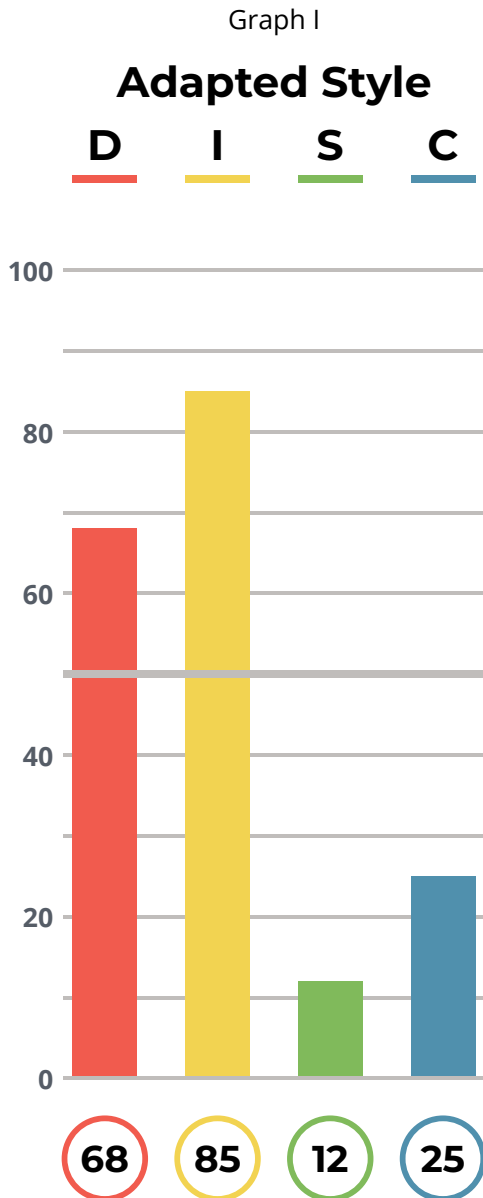
P Primary, Situational, or Indifferent
76 Driving Forces Score
3 Driving Forces Rank

Norm 2021
 8-2-2022
 T: 9:20

DISC Graph



The DISC Graph is a visual representation of an individual's behavioral style. Your score's distance from the midline indicates the intensity of observable behavior that others will see. Remember, your primary observable behavior may be above or below the midline. Below are Callie's behavioral styles represented in both its Natural and Adapted forms.



Norm 2021 R4
8-2-2022
T: 11:43

COFFEE WITH AN EXECUTIVE INVITE:



Growth

What projects would you like to work on or be more involved in?



Motivation

What's one thing that should change to make you happier at work?



Communication

Where has our communication faltered?
Can you give me an example?



Work

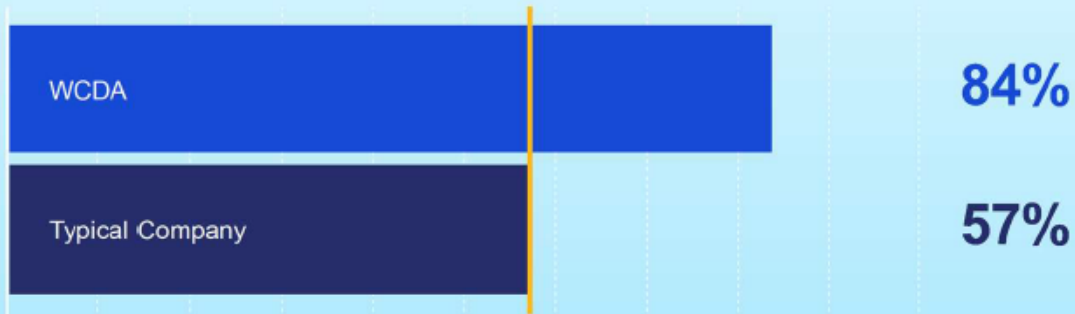
What, if anything, feels harder than it should be in your day-to-day work?

We're Great Place to Work-Certified™!



WCDA

84% of employees at WCDA say it is a great place to work compared to 57% of employees at a typical U.S.-based company*



Source: Great Place to Work® 2021 U.S. National Employee Engagement Study*

Comparison to Best Companies

"Taking everything into account, I would say this is a great place to work"

Average of All Statements

