[Transcript] Everything DiSC® Worksmart: Engaging in Healthy Conflict

Hello, Julie Chance with Action Strategies by Design. And in this video, for Everything DiSC Catalyst facilitators and participants, I'm going to be previewing one of the Everything DiSC Worksmart for Managers modules. Just as a quick reminder, Everything DiSC Worksmart is designed specifically for managers and people leaders. It's a series of five modules. I will go over those topics in just a minute. If somebody has access to Worksmart when they log into their Catalyst account, on the home page, they will see this tile that says, Discover Worksmart. If they then click on that, it will take them to the Worksmart area.

The five topics you see here are Giving Constructive Feedback, Managing Conflict, Empowering Your Team, Navigating Change, and Motivating Your Team. Today, I'm going to be previewing the Managing Conflict topic. I have previewed the other four topics previously and you can check those out on our YouTube channel if you're interested in learning more about those.

The other reminder about the Worksmart modules is there is a built-in action planning tool. When there's a facilitated session or when somebody is going through the specific module, action planning is a part of that. And then leaders and managers can come back into Catalyst at any time, and they can both review saved action plans, and they can create new action plans on any of the modules. So just an added feature of Worksmart that's really powerful in terms of managing and leading teams.

I am going to be previewing, as I said a minute ago, the Managing Conflict module. Let’s dive in. All of the modules are laid out similarly, and they start with an overview of what's going to be included. In the Managing Conflict module we're going to talk a little bit about what makes conflict challenging, the four DiSC styles and their instincts or their natural tendencies around conflict, and then some tactics for navigating conflict with each of the different styles.

There's always a quick overview of DiSC available if it's been a while since participants have gone through a DiSC session then that's something you might want to cover. And then there's a large group discussion. In this particular module, it asks, “What's your gut reaction to conflict?” and gets people to share a little bit about that.

Next conflict is defined as a difference in opinion that requires some resolution or intervention. It often causes some tension. The four instincts or the four natural tendencies of each DiSC Style in Conflict is outlined.

Somebody with the D Style in Conflict tends to assert. They want to take control. They're generally very direct, and they want to win. Somebody with the i style is likely to be very expressive in conflict. They're going to verbalize their feelings, and they're really going to focus on feelings. They're going to want support from others, and they are going to engage with emotions. Somebody with the S style wants to harmonize. They like to keep the peace. They want harmony. They're going to likely minimize any uncomfortable feelings. There's a tendency to withdraw or avoid conflict. And people with the C style tend to defend. They justify their position. They gather and provide and present evidence, and they're sometimes a tendency to Stonewall or dig in their heels.

It goes into personalized content and gives each participant information on their specific instincts in conflict. It talks about with my D style, where do I shine, what are my strengths in conflict, and what are the downsides? What tends to trip me up or get in my way or cause problems when engaging in conflict? There's a group discussion around that narrative, about what rang true, how those strengths of the style have helped in conflict in the past, and how they might have caused problems.

Next we talk a little bit about how the different instincts cause a different conflict. If somebody's instinct is to avoid, that level of conflict is going to look very different than somebody who tends to be very direct and assertive around conflict. We ask participants to think about a colleague and to guesstimate their style if they don't know what it is using the people reading format and questions. I am going to pick a colleague of the C style. There is a little bit of information about me, my style, and each of the other styles. I'm going to look at the C style. And it says, that because I have a D style, I tend to move fast, and I don't need a lot of time to process information or feelings, and that it can be a challenge when I am in conflict or disagreeing with somebody with the C style because they need a little bit more time to process and think through things.

There's a group discussion, another breakout session around what's an insight that resonated, what's something that I wish to other people understood about me in conflict, and some ways to adapt our own behaviors and to be more effective in conflictual situations. It talks about that we need to leverage our instincts when they're helpful, and then we need to adapt or choose a different approach when they're not so helpful. And that's really what emotional intelligence is about, right? That's a piece of emotional intelligence.

Finally we go into the make a plan piece. Each of these modules are designed to be facilitated, virtually or in person, from the Catalyst platform in about 45 minutes to an hour each. If the person that you want to develop the action plan for is in Catalyst, you can type their name in and it will pop up. For confidentiality and privacy reasons, I'm not going to type somebody's name in, I'm going to use the “Guess Someone’ Style” function. And I'm going to say they're cautious and reflective and accepting and warm, which is somebody with the S style.

Now it's going to help me develop an action plan for an individual who has the S style. It's going to give me a little bit of information to understand my colleague better. They're going to prioritize calm over confrontation. They may tend to dwell quietly on issues, so they may not bring it up, but that doesn't mean that they're past it. They might hold back unless they're feeling truly heard, and it's really going to take a lot for them to speak up. I can drop any one or all of these down and read a little bit more about it. They might not voice frustrations, they might brood internally, and they might need some time to process before they're willing to discuss it openly.

I would read about each one of those, and then I would go to choose my approach. It's going to let me choose two of these to work on for an action plan for engaging in conflict more effectively with this colleague. And let's see, out of these, I'm going to pick be mindful of my wording and to avoid being too forceful, because I think those are things that I really need to pay attention to.

It will bring those two things forward. It says I need to use toned-down language, especially maybe a little bit less direct and less what I may not think is blunt, but which somebody with the S style could interpret as being blunt. And then I want to avoid being too forceful. I need to soften my approach and slow the bulldozer down or get off the bulldozer and get into a less forceful type vehicle.

There are a series of questions that it asks me, and I can type my responses directly into the Catalyst platform. What might be challenging for me? Where and how will I try these? What am I going to do to prepare ahead of time? Once I've answered those questions, I can go to the “next” button and my answers will be saved. Then it asks me to think about how I'll hold myself accountable. And finally, one last question, something that I learned today, something that I'll do differently as a result of going through this. The last page provides some information, some reminders or some things to keep in mind as I think about being more effective, engaging in healthy conflict.

I'm going to have the opportunity to save and exit. When I do that, that action plan that I created will be saved, and I could go back right here and review the saved action plans, or I could create a new action plan.

That is the Managing Conflict Module in Worksmart Modules for Managers. As I mentioned when we kicked off, there are five modules. I have previously done videos on the other four, and you can check those out on YouTube.

Please feel free to reach out if you've got any questions. If you'd like any more information, or if you'd like to review this in any more detail, I would welcome the opportunity to talk with you.