

Sarah: Hi everyone and welcome to today's webinar, ***Building Enriched Customer Relationships*** hosted by HRDQ-U and presented by John Dieseth. My name is Sarah and I will moderate today's webinar. Our webinar will last about an hour. If you have any questions go ahead on your go to webinar control panel, you'll see a questions area, you can click on that word, it'll break it open to a larger box, type in that white area and then click submit.

Sarah: Those questions will come through to John and I and we'll either answer them as they come in, at the end of the session depending on the time we have. Any questions we don't get to during our session today we will make sure to email back to you answers so don't hesitate sending those questions. Today's webinar content is from our self assessment and workshop, what's my selling style. If you are interested in delivering this training within your organization please contact HRDQ. Our presenter today is John Dieseth.

Sarah: John is president and founder of Business Performance Group, an elite group of business consultants who assist clients with launching and maintaining a successful sales or training program. With 20 years of experience in sales training, learning product development and coaching field, John consults with client organizations regarding inside sales, selection and hiring, sales management, customer service, technical and salesperson training, accidental sales, leadership, coaching, mentoring and knowledge transfer. Welcome John and thank you for joining us today.

John Dieseth: Well, thank you Sarah and thanks for the great introduction and hello everybody. Say you're a part of the 80% of salespeople or there's 80% of salespeople out there that never read a book on sales or research their profession. You're part of the 20% so congratulations on that of sales managers or salespeople that really care about getting better and being more successful. Congratulations on that.

John Dieseth: Before we get started talking about what's my selling style, I'd like to do just a little bit of a level set about the sales process and how what's my selling style fits into that and how you can use it in your sales department or with yourself if you're a salesperson. Take a look at this graph with me, if you would, and it begins at the very top with needs

definition and goes all the way down to post-purchase assessment.

John Dieseth: Let me walk you through a little bit of that because this is the way our buyers go through their buying process. First they start at the very top. They kind of define their needs. What do I need to do? What am I looking for? Can I solve this business issue or this personal issue with a product? They go through and kind of refine that. Then they go to the information search and say, okay, where can I find a vendor that can help me?

John Dieseth: Where can I find a product that I can buy or a service that I can consume that will help me solve this business issue or this personal issue? Then they go through option evaluation. I have five or six different places that I can buy a solution or buy a service or buy a product, so which one am I going to choose? And then finally they go through risk evaluation and risk evaluation is kind of considering, well, what can go wrong?

John Dieseth: Should I be taking a look at this? Maybe I shouldn't do anything right now. Now, for any of you, if you've bought anything expensive in your life, maybe a new car or a house or something like that or maybe an expensive television or something like that that you were taking on and you're going to pay over time, probably just before you signed that paperwork you weren't thinking, boy, I can't wait to get this television up in my house or I can't wait to drive that new car or I can't wait to move into that new house.

John Dieseth: You're probably thinking, boy, I sure hope I can make the payments and that's because you were going through your risk evaluation stage. And then finally our customers will make a decision and then after they've made the decision and they've consumed the product or service, they'll look back and say was that a good decision? Did I do the right thing here? Did that make sense? And so our customers go through this various stages as they're moving on to decide whether they're going to buy a product or service or not and which one that they're going to buy.

John Dieseth: Now, as sales people we have a sales cycle that matches this. We're going to be doing different things all along the way to be able to help us out and to be able to guide that customer down so that they can make a decision and then we're going to work as hard as we can to make sure that that decision is to buy our products or services. And we're going to try to be consultants as much as possible early on in the sales process. We really don't want to flip that salesy switch until we get down to asking for the sale.

John Dieseth: In that early part of the sales process we want to consult with the customer and we want to have some really good conversations. Take a

look at this graph. Since 2007 when Apple came out with the iPhone in June of 2007, the sales process has changed a little bit. Today a lot of times our customers come to us with their spreadsheets already filled in because they've done a lot of research online. They've gone out there and they've looked at the various different options that they have and they've put a spreadsheet together.

John Dieseth: If you're buying a new refrigerator I can bet that you've probably gone online and gone to consumer reports or some other process for whatever you are to take a look and see what other consumers recommend. You may have talked to somebody else, you've probably done a good web search on that. Today our customers are getting far deeper into the sales process, into the buying process before they engage with us as salespeople.

John Dieseth: Now, I remember back a long time ago when I first got into business I had structural steel fabrication plant and what I did is that I bought about 40,000 pounds of steel a week so that I could keep my people busy and then we would fabricate steel for other people and sell it to them. I had three salespeople that I kept on my trusted vendor list and these salespeople would come in and I would buy from one of the other trying to get the best price always of course, but these salespeople would come in with big thick books and specifications.

John Dieseth: If I needed to know the tensile strength of a certain steel or the weldability or other things that would help me in my fabrication process, they would dig that book out of their car and they would bring it into my office and they would page through it and come to the right page and then they'd be able to help me with that. Well today you don't need to do that because if you want to find any of those specs or whatever, you can go online and find all that. You don't need to wait till a salesperson comes in.

John Dieseth: Our role of salespeople is less to be information providers rather, but our really role is to be information gatherers so that we can help that buyer through the sales process. If you see over time the sales processes is kind of switched. It used to be that we were the experts, we had all the technical details and so we would come in and do our presentation and do our magic and show it to everybody and then that would have a big impact on how people would buy. But today they can get a lot of that information online.

John Dieseth: It puts much more of a focus on the conversations that we have. Take a look at this diagram. Our knowledge of style, our knowledge of what our customers style is, is critical to be able to move them back from that option evaluation stage when they're taking a look and they may have

three or four or five people on their spreadsheet to kicking them back up to the beginning of the process where we can have a good conversation with them about needs definition, about their information search, about their buying process to help guide them through.

John Dieseth: And so your knowledge of style is critically important to that. Now, I'm an engineer and I'm systematic and we're going to be going through that later in the course when we talk about styles. But I really like a little bit of math. I'm going to give you just a little bit and I'm not going to require that you do any adding or subtracting or multiplying or dividing but I just want you to keep a few things in your head. First, if you take a look at the typical sales process that goes on out there today, most people will find that they participate in about 30% of the sales.

John Dieseth: And what I mean by participation is that the customer is actually considering your product or service. Say you've got 10 different people that supply the product that you sell out there. A lot of times if they're considering three options you won't even be one of the three so you won't participate in the sales process. Now, obviously if you're Boeing or you're Airbus and you're selling airplanes you're going to participate in every process, but we probably don't have the luxury of that. About 30% participation is normal.

John Dieseth: Now, of the 30% of the sales you do participate in, 45% of those sales on average get started, customer gets excited, thinks about it, but you never get a decision. In other words the sales process just kind of disappears and that's that big ugly ogre we call do nothing because nothing happens. Now, out of all those rest of the sales that do get down to a decision maybe you'll close about a third of them. That would be pretty typical. Now, I know this audience already because you're actually participating in some training today or trying to learn how to be better at your profession.

John Dieseth: You probably may close a little bit higher than that because almost by the process of sorting you're the kind of people that would do that. But say that you close about a third of your sales. Now, in that little discussion that I've had here think about all the opportunities we have besides just at the very end when we're trying to close the sale and persuade our customer that we have the best product or service. We've got that participation where we can work on that process and participate in more.

John Dieseth: We've got those 45% that never reach a decision that we can work with them to try to get them to make a decision to get to that end point of the sales process. And so that's where the knowledge of style is critically important. Yes it's important when you ask for the sale too, but it's

critically important in those early sales conversations when you're trying to talk to somebody and to say, hey, the next time you're in the market will you consider my firm?

John Dieseth: That understanding of style and be able to mirror the style of that person is critical to how they look at you and whether they put you on the shortlist that they'll call you the next time around. And then that 45% that never reach a decision that we get to of that group of people. It's critical that they bond with you, that they understand your style, that you're talking about their style and making sure that you're mirroring that so that when you get all the way through they will follow you along that sales process.

John Dieseth: Now, think about the sales process itself. You're probably closing more times on time than you are on money because if you have three or four steps that are needed in the sales process, then you're going to have to close on each one of those steps to get more time for the customer, to be able to go through your product or service, demonstrate your product or service, maybe invite them over to your place or plant if you're selling business to business. And so you've got to go through various steps that you're going to be closing on their time.

John Dieseth: People will only spend time with people they think they understand and that they can communicate with and that's why their knowledge of style is so important as we go through and try to do our sales process. It's important for participation, to getting to participate in that sales process and it's important to try to get us over that 45% of the people that just kind of dies away at the sales process.

John Dieseth: And yes, of course, important at the end of the sales cycle when we get down to the very end when all of a sudden we're going to try to ask for that sale and we want to be somebody that they trust and somebody that they can communicate with. Now, I'm systematic. I focus on all the details, but a lot of times the people in my buying committee that I'm dealing with they're different styles and so I have to learn to adjust the way that I communicate to be able to bond with those people and to be able to have a chance to be able to participate in that sale.

John Dieseth: Let's move on. Salespeople assessment usage. How do people use an assessment like what's my selling style? Well, the gain an understanding of how the selling style impacts the customer perceptions and dialogue. They use style to be able to see when I talk to a customer, how do they perceive what I'm saying and how do I engage in that dialogue? Am I going to want to make sure I start with a lot of personal things or I'm going to go direct to business and get right down to what they need.

John Dieseth: Am I going to be enthusiastic and get them all fired up or I'm going to be like I'm talking to an engineer and I'm going to have to detail all the specs and all the numbers and all those kinds of things. It allows people to profile our customers for future reference. If we're talking to them once, if we're calling them back later, when we pick up the call or we go face to face, how do we know how to start that communication? How do we know how to carry that through? Because we've profiled our customers and we want to make sure that that next communication fits in that too well.

John Dieseth: How do we structure sales communications for greater impact? How much data to deliver? How much relationship building should we be doing? Should we be doing a lot or maybe it's something direct that that's not going to be very important to them. How do we overcome objections? Do we need to be more emotional about it, more fact based? How are we going to handle that and how to ask for and close the sale? Remember I said earlier that getting a decision is one of the most important things that you can do. Now, think about your organization.

John Dieseth: If you're a sales manager, if you're a salesperson, think about your organization. Now, if you're in sales, your organization has chosen to use personal selling as part of the sales process. Personal selling because you've got salespeople that are in work. If you take a look in the United States right now it costs about \$18 for a typical outbound call if you're selling over the phone and about \$400 for the average field sales call. That's much more expensive than any sort of a marketing outreach per impression.

John Dieseth: For example I can send out an email for, well, almost for zero because it doesn't cost much money to send out an email. I can send out a flyer through the post office for maybe a dollar or something like that, but the minute that I hire a salesperson, put them on the phone, it's going to cost me about \$18 for every conversation I have and if I put somebody out in the field it's going to cost me about \$400 for that. It's much more expensive to have salespeople involved and why wouldn't we want to make sure that those conversations that those people are having out there or that we're having out there if you're in sales are going to be as impactful as possible?

John Dieseth: That's where mirroring your sales style with what the customer is will have a huge impact for you. Style knowledge helps you build relationships. Let's take a look a little bit at this slide. There's never enough time and make sure your dialogues are impactful. When I talk to our customer base a lot of people will tell me, well, I just don't talk to

my customer as much anymore. They text me, they email me, they do all those kinds of things but we just don't have that many conversations. Because you don't have as many conversations today we want to make sure everyone counts.

John Dieseth: We want to make sure that we're getting as deep as we can, that we're finding out as much information as we can. We want to generate interest by being firmly in the customer's wheelhouse. Here's some guidance for it. Direct, don't bore me with small details. Considerate. Hey, what about me? What about the relationship? Don't you care about me? Spirited. Hang on, it's going to be quite a ride. I'm going to be a little bit enthusiastic here, a little bit of motive. Systematic. Well, of course we want all the details and then we'd like a few more details and if you could give us some details that would be great.

John Dieseth: Give me some more details to kind of figure that out. We want to also gather information that you can back up the sales process. To be able to say, you told me, you mentioned, you asked. Now, earlier in my career I was a sales manager and I was working for a training company and one of the things that we did is we sold library services which would be kind of like an outsourced learning management system, something like that. We had a large bank that had asked us to come in and present what we do.

John Dieseth: And so we went to New York City and my salesperson was from Iowa so he almost craned his neck by looking up at the skyscrapers all over in beautiful downtown New York City. We went up to the 30th floor in the conference room and as we're going into the conference room of this large bank we saw one of our competitors taking down their easel, taking down their flip charts, all that kind of stuff, gathering up all their stuff and leaving the room. And then we came in and my salesperson started out by saying, "Well Jim, you told me that," And went into a little conversation about him.

John Dieseth: "And then Sarah you mentioned to me," And then he went in a conversation about that. And said, "Well Harry, I know the details are important to you and so I've prepared some facts and figures for you and handed over some facts and figures. And Jan, you mentioned to me that your sister had an accident last week. How's she doing?" By knowing and having conversations with those customers before we got there, this person was able to adapt the style in each of the ways that he communicated with the people in the room.

John Dieseth: As a result, during that hour that we had with that customer we didn't have a presentation. We had a conversation because we were able to address every person's needs. When we got into about 30 minutes of

the conversation it was going back and forth across the room and just the fact that our salesperson knew the styles of everybody, could communicate that, prepared for each of that before coming in, made a huge impact and of course we won the sale. Your job as a salesperson used to be just to explain the product or service, but it's not just that anymore.

John Dieseth: Now it's about building that relationship, finding out about where customers are and helping them through that buying process. It's important to be able to understand the customer and help them through the buying process cause we want to have them make a good decision. One other thing to consider and that's this, style helps you broaden the playing field. Now, I know that out in our audience today there's probably some people that sell a value product and what I mean by that is you aren't the cheapest in the marketplace but you offer more longterm value.

John Dieseth: Over time you're going to save that customer money but initially you're going to be a little bit higher price. I always tell students when I give a presentation that sometime in my career I'd like to work for a low cost producer. I'd like to come in and say here's my price. I know you're going to buy from me because I'm cheaper cause I can solve your immediate problem. If you sell on value it's a different world for you. You have to have conversations to find out what the customer strategies are, whether there are opportunities, where are they going so that you can position your product as more longterm value.

John Dieseth: I have a client that sells replacement components for tractors. Ours last longer. They can be rebuilt for a second or third life. They're far better over time. The competitors just come in and just solve the problem of today just to get the tractor back up and working and getting it back out in the field. And so all they sell on is we can get your tractor running and we're the lowest price. We have to sell on value. Is resale value important to you? Would you like to have components that you can rebuild and so it's going to cost you a lot less the next time?

John Dieseth: Would you like to have lower unplanned downtime? Would you like to have the lowest costs per hour? Our playing field needs to be broader than our competitors playing field. They're just playing with problems and price. We need to play with their opportunities, their strategies, where they're going, what are the longterm things that they want to accomplish with that tractor. Conversation is more about style. To move you from having conversations, the more style is important. The more deeper conversations that you need to have, the more in being able to mirror the style and understand the style of your customer is going to be important to you in what goes forward.

John Dieseth: That's what you hire salespeople for. If you're in a value selling position, if you have a value product that may not be the lowest initial price, you hire salespeople. You are a salesperson in that kind of an organization to be able to have those deeper and broader conversations and that's where having the style match makes so much of a difference. Now that we've done our setup let's talk about today's agenda. We're going to talk about discovering the four selling styles. We're going to kind of go through that.

John Dieseth: We're going to talk about the style strengths and trouble spots where you may run into some issues and what your style strengths are in trouble spots. Things for you to recognize in yourself. We're going to talk about recognizing the styles of others. Now, why do we care about that? Well, because I've been talking all during the set up here that we want to mirror the customer's style as much as possible. We want to flex our style to be able to be with their ... Well, we can't do that if we don't know what style they are and obviously we can't give them an assessment.

John Dieseth: We can't say here's this great assessment from HRDQ called what's my selling style. Could you please take this and then I'll know how to communicate with you? We can't do that. What we've got to do is we've got to be able to pick up on clues that they're communicating with us to be able to recognize the styles of others. And of course lastly we've got to be able to flex our selling style to match with others. We've got to be able to come back and say, okay, I got to recognize that style at the very beginning part of our conversation and then I've got to be able to flex my style so that I can come back and actually be able to sell into that.

John Dieseth: Example, I'm systematic and I want to present too much detail. I tend to focus on winning the sale like it's trialed by a jury. That somebody is sitting there and they're balancing all the facts and figures but I recognize that that's not the way that a lot of people buy. People have a tendency to buy an emotion and justify with fact and if all I'm doing is shoveling all this fact based stuff at them, well most of the time was the other three styles I will be doing it the wrong way. Now, think about the conversations you have.

John Dieseth: If your one style then it's likely that 75% of the time you're going to be talking to somebody who has a different style. It's hard, isn't it? Sales is hard work. We talked about earlier about how expensive sales is compared to send out a marketing flyer or an email, but the fact that personal selling works means that we want to put the effort into it and doing it right is hard work. If you're on the phone typically in business to business, outbound selling or in consumer side too, you're going to be

getting about 20 conversations a day if you're talking to customers.

John Dieseth: Maybe talk about 150 minutes of conversations with people. If you're in the field maybe you're going to making five to six calls a day on people out in the field. And so you're probably going to spend about 150 minutes with customers there too. And so about 110 minutes a day, if you're a typical salesperson out there, you're going to be talking with people that's the opposite style than you. It's going to be people that do not have your same style and to be effective you're going to want to change your communication style a little bit to be able to fit in to where your customer's at.

John Dieseth: And that'll have a huge impact on the selling process and have a huge impact on how well you're going to be able to close those sales. Let's take a look at our sales quadrant here that we've got and what's my selling style. This is the way it looks and you'll notice that we've got direct and then spirited at the top and then we've got systematic and considerate at the bottom. Now, you'll notice that each one of these has a little bit different symbol. Our direct as a triangle. Our spirit is a parallelogram, our systematic is a box and there considerate is a circle.

John Dieseth: You can take a look and maybe you're kind of thinking already, we're going to give you a chance as we talk a little bit more about styles to kind of figure out what you are. But you probably got some sort of idea, kind of what era you fall in already. And notice that we have high assertiveness at the top and low assertiveness at the bottom and low expressiveness on the left hand side and high expressiveness on the right hand side. We're going to kind of talk a little bit more about that and how that all fits in.

John Dieseth: But it just as a way of kind of putting the way that our customers communicate in kind of an area so that we can learn how to deal with it. Now, there are 14 million sales people in the United States. It's a huge number. It's a little bit more than 10% of all the people that work in the private sector have a job that's in sales. Now, there's huge difference in selling cosmetics at a retail counter, in one part of sales to consumers or in business to business industrial products. But whatever it is that you do sell or your organization sells, it does come down to connecting with the customer and having good conversations.

John Dieseth: Whether you're selling cosmetics or big generators to put in the basement of some new bank, it still comes down to conversations and finding out what's important. Now, this morning I just went out and did a search on Amazon in preparation for this discussion today and I found that there was over 90,000 books on sale at Amazon. Now, regardless of the technique you use, regardless of the sales book that you choose to

kind of give you your technique or if you've developed your own, that's totally ineffective unless your customer connects with you.

John Dieseth: Unless you're able to connect with that customer, then any sales technique that you choose that fits you is going to work a lot better. I have a client that sells hydraulic pumps to original equipment manufacturers which we call OEMs in the business to business world and all the customers are engineers that must design in the product. In other words, our company makes hydraulic pumps and they've got to design that on their tractor or whatever that they've put our hydraulic pumps in. Most of the salespeople that I deal with there are heavily systematic because they're engineers and they probably came from that world.

John Dieseth: And so they kind of tend self select into that world of being systematic. A lot of systematic people are engineers and a lot of engineers work for this company in sales and so they need to deal with a lot of engineers over in the people that they sell to. If they're dealing with somebody that makes tractors or something, they're going to be dealing with the engineers have put the tractor together to try to convince them to buy that hydraulic pump or whatever the case might be. But besides that of dealing with people that their own style, they also have to deal with people that have radically different styles.

John Dieseth: They have to deal with the people in the marketing department and maybe they're more direct. They have to deal with the people in the sales organization of their customers and they're maybe more spirited. They have to deal with customer service and explain to them how to get parts and all those kinds of things and they may be considerate. Even sales positions where you would think style wouldn't be all that important, it turns out to be critically important because most businesses and most consumers will consult with other people before they buy.

John Dieseth: If you're selling consumers and you're selling to the wife maybe she'll talk to her husband or you're selling to the husband maybe he'll talk to his wife. Or if you're selling to a business and you're in the business to business space, there's bound to be other people that they run into at the water cooler or whatever that will have some input into that sale. You need to be able to be able to talk to everybody even regardless if you think you're in a fairly tight quadrant of selling. That's our basic diagram and we're going to kind of work with that and flush that out as we kind of go through.

John Dieseth: Let's talk about the dimensions of style. I said that we're going to talk about assertiveness and expressiveness a little bit as we kind of went

through. And so assertiveness is the effort that a person makes to influence or control the thoughts or actions of others. People who are assertive tell others how things should be and are more task oriented. They're more active, they're more confident. People who are less assertive ask others how things should be and the ones that are process oriented they're deliberate and they're attentive.

John Dieseth: Now expressiveness, our second characteristic here, is the effort that a person makes to control his or her emotions when relating to others. People who are expressive display their emotions and they're more versatile and sociable and demonstrative. People who are less expressive tend to control their emotions more in a focused, independent and more private. You remember on the assertiveness scale I said that our direct and spirited people may be more assertive and that may cause the systematic and the considerate people, those at the lower level there, to pull back a little bit because it's just too much emotion.

John Dieseth: Now, I have a national organization that I work with sales training products as well. This particular organization and I was working with them on cross selling and upselling. They had a customer service group that was taking inbound calls and then the customers would ask for a particular product and their goal was to cross sell and upsell things with it and their sales just weren't doing very well. They asked me to come in and see if there was anything I could do, if there was any training that these people need.

John Dieseth: I came in and I slept on a headset and I listened to a bunch of calls and I found that some conversations went pretty well and the cross selling and upselling went just like it had been scripted out just like we told them to do. They had great conversations and it was working pretty effectively. But other calls it just wasn't working very well at all. And especially they were struggling with people that tended to be more direct and to the point. When they got off the phone and I would ask them, well, why didn't you make that offer to that person?

John Dieseth: They would say, oh, they didn't sound interested. They sounded like they just wanted to order one of the products. What I did is I proposed to the client that we put them all through the what's my selling style assessment. Because I said I think what's going on here is that they're probably one style and they're struggling with people who are another style. We broke them into small groups because you can't take everybody off the phone at once. I worked with small groups.

John Dieseth: We had about a two hour session and we went through and had them determine their style and then how to judge the sell of their customer

and then how to relate them that way and sales jumped up 18% in the first month. When you kind of looked at it and we had conversations with them they would tell me that, oh, there was somebody who was more spirited. I just thought that they were kind of all over the place and I didn't want to mention it. Somebody that was direct I thought, well, they're just going to shut me down anyway.

John Dieseth: And then we'd go through this whole litany of things. It finally turned out when they recognized that people have different styles. If you're direct they said I would really recommend you buy this and a lot of times they would. It made a huge impact in the way that the sales went just by going through this one exercise and understanding how customers relate and how you can be a different style than someone and that other style isn't wrong, it's just different. Let's talk about style strengths a little bit.

John Dieseth: If you're direct, and you're going to have a chance to kind of tell us what you are here in a few minutes, you're more confident and goal oriented. If you're spirited, you're more enthusiastic, you're more persuasive. Probably spirited is the typical sales persona that people think about when they think of sales people. You can think about spirited as being kind of your quintessential used car salesperson, something like that. If you're considerate, you're more responsive, you're more customer focused.

John Dieseth: Now, in that last example I gave you of that national organization that sells training products, what do you think most of their people were by that description that I gave you? Well, you're right if you guessed considerate. A lot of people in customer service tend to be considerate. A lot of people in product support tend to be considerate and so the styles that they're going to struggle with most are those other three. Fellow considerates they're probably going to bond with, have good conversations with, talk about their parents and their kids and all that kind of stuff. But they're going to struggle with some of these other styles.

John Dieseth: And so learning how to adapt their style through this assessment is a great tool for helping them sell more. Which one of these ones is successful you may be asking yourself. Is it direct? Those people that are more confident and goal oriented. Is it spirited? The ones that are enthusiastic and persuasive. Is it considerate? Those ones that are responsive and customer focused or is it systematic like me the ones that are prepared in detail oriented? Well, everybody can be successful. Your style doesn't say that you're going to be unsuccessful.

John Dieseth: As long as you're willing to flex your communication style, you can be

successful in any one of these quadrants and you get more latitude as you build the relationship to be more yourself. And again, where mirroring your style is going to really prove that it's worth is participation and trying to get people to make up a decision. To give you an answer and not let that big ugly ogre called do nothing get in your way. Let's talk about the direct strengths here. If you're direct, what are some of your strengths?

John Dieseth: Well, you have a tendency to be more confident. You have a tendency to focus on the goal and ask for the business. You keep your conversations focused and to the point. I've got one of my favorite clients as a salesperson that was really direct. He's absolutely fearless. He has no call reluctance. This person would call anybody and ask them anything. They're especially good at reactivating or reawakening dormant accounts and my client would typically put him in that kind of a territory. He was good at calling people on the fence and getting them to close too so he was a good closer.

John Dieseth: That's some of our strengths of our direct people. How about our spirited people? Well, they're enthusiastic. They're focused on generating excitement. They look for creative solutions and they shift gears pretty easily. When I was a sales manager back a few years ago, out of my 35 salespeople I had one girl who was just very spirited. I mean, she would come in my office and she would say, "Oh, I just had this great call with a customer and it was just exciting." And so I had to create a Carol free zone, that's not her real name.

John Dieseth: But I had to create a free zone where I said you just can't come into my office like that all the time. Her enthusiasm was so infectious and so that's really a strength of a spirited person. They've got that emotion behind them and they can get people fired up. How about considerate? What's some of the strengths if you fall in the considerate category? And you can see this girl in our slide. Look at her study in that customer. They're customer oriented, they focus on customer needs. They listen attentively and they're really patient with challenging customers.

John Dieseth: They've built great relationships. One of my favorite sales people when I was a sales manager was very considerate. She would never say a mean word about anybody. She knew all about the children, the pets, the relatives that everyone in the sales department and she built a great relationship with a buyer who has of all things an ex CIA agent and had gone for work for a large retailer and was in charge of buying all the products that we sold. It was a huge account for us, but every time we went out and maybe we had a meeting and I would go with her to participate as somebody from management, I could tell that he couldn't care if I was in the room or not.

John Dieseth: He would direct all of his conversations to her. They would exchange telephone numbers and call each other on the cell phone over the weekend and she was just that ability to build that one-on-one relationship with a person. Systematic. Do we have any strengths? Well, yes, we're very detail oriented. We focus on preparation. We do good follow through and we juggle multiple accounts well because we really know how to use our CRM system and put in all our notes and everything.

John Dieseth: Now, there's about 350,000 people in the United States that the US Department of Labor says they're sales engineers and they kind of fall into this category. When I was a manager I had an ex Navy Seal that was a salesperson for me. He was as tough as a brick and kind of looked like a brick too. Now, this was telephone sales and he made all the dials. When he got a customer on the phone, he gave them all the information and presented a rock solid business case because he was systematic.

John Dieseth: Now, he didn't have as much raw sales talent as many of the other people in the department, but he did the work and he was consistently in the top 10% of the department. If you know your strengths you can be able to succeed regardless of what style you are. What are some of the direct trouble spots? What are some of the things we're worried about if you're direct? Well, you tend to be impatient with objections. Maybe underestimate the value of developing relationships a little bit. Maybe you miss some important nuances in the conversation and perhaps you can be overly aggressive at times.

John Dieseth: I know the last time that I went out to buy a new car, I went to an automobile dealership about 30 miles from town here because I also wanted to engage them as well as the automobile dealership here in town. Now, I bought a car from them before as well as I bought here locally and a direct salesperson got me as I walked in the door and had a conversation with me and he was pretty challenging to me. He kept saying, well, why are you up here? Why don't you buy from the local dealership? I mean, he was pretty challenging to me and he was very direct and wanting me to make up my mind.

John Dieseth: Well, I'm systematic so I'm not going to buy until I have all the pieces fit in the puzzle and I know all the nuances and everything else and I've got all the details. This was not going to work for me and of course I ended up buying somewhere else. Spirited. What are some potential trouble spots for you? Well, you could have a tendency to exaggerate claims. Sometimes you talk more than listen. Sometimes you might miss important details and maybe your preparation isn't quite as good as some other folks. Now, I was out on a call with a field salesperson one

time and we went into the call.

John Dieseth: The customer as we were talking to them about preparing for the meeting he said, "Well, my mom was in the hospital so I didn't get a chance to get into the office till a little bit later yesterday so I didn't have a chance to go through your proposal." Well, my spirited salesperson took that as a clue and said, "Oh, let me walk you through it right now." And so he did. And as we walked out to the car after the sales call I simply said to him, "What about mom? He just said his mom was in the hospital. Let's really start out our conversation with how's mom doing?"

John Dieseth: And so that can be some of the trouble spots that you run into if your spirited and kind of get carried away with the sales process a little bit. Considerate. What are some of the trouble spots for you? Do you have any trouble spots? Well, you might have a few. When I was a sales manager one of my biggest challenges was getting considerate salespeople to let go of an account. They can get really emotionally invested in a poor account and they struggle when customer needs can't be met. There's the ones that if you're a sales manager come into your office and say, can we just do this?

John Dieseth: Can we just take that thing that we normally do and not do that. All those kinds of things can happen with considerate people and they take rejection personally. If they lose a sale they're going to be kicking the dirt for a little bit. That can be some of the things that you run into with considerate folks. How about systematic? Do we have any trouble spots? Well, we certainly do. We can overwhelm our customers with facts. We can give lackluster presentations. I hope we don't do that. We can miss the big picture and sometimes it can be overly opinionated because we think we got all the facts on our side.

John Dieseth: I'm systematic and I have to learn continuously that most people buy on emotion and justify with fact. The detail is important to only a few buyers, maybe a fourth of them, maybe a little bit more. And so systematic people like me we think that's all that matters, but really the emotional connection can be a very important part of the sale. That great conversation that we've said makes such a difference and that's why what's my selling style is such an important instrument to consider in your sales organization.

John Dieseth: I was just selling a large proposal for consulting work and I wrote out all this big document with all the details in it and why I was the best choice and all that. The customer after I handed to them paged through a little bit, you could tell he wasn't all that interested and he said, "I just want someone I can trust." Good thing that I'd spotted that person's considerate style. I still documented it because the systematic person in

me wanted to do that, but I spent most of my time building that relationship.

John Dieseth: Identifying the direct customer. This is one of the powers of this instrument and this is the reason that I use it as many times a year as I do and all of my facilitators use it in the field as well. This is the way to be able to teach your salespeople if you're a sales manager and if you're a salesperson yourself teach yourself how to identify what the style is of that person that you're communicating with, that customer that you want to convert and seeing what kind of style they are. Everybody right now put a person in your head that you can kind of think might be direct.

John Dieseth: They allow a set amount of time to discuss your product or service. They ask for the key points. They speak very confidently. They tell you what they think and they maintain good eye contact if you're in the field. That's our folks that may have a tendency to be pretty direct. How about the spirited customer? They have a little worry for time constraints. They ask a lot of questions. They speak enthusiastically. They share a lot of personal information. They use their hands when speaking.

John Dieseth: Think in your mind somebody that may be spirited. Now, I have a daughter that just graduated from college a couple of years ago and she had a friend that was a classmate of hers in high school and then went on to a different college but they remained very close. And since graduation two years ago since this girl who graduated the same time as my daughter, now since the last two years this person has had jobs as a photographer, a daycare worker, a dance instructor, a professional dog walker, and a yoga instructor.

John Dieseth: Now she's spirited and what a good friend she is to my daughter. Now, my daughter mirrored me which may or may not be a good thing. But she mirrored me and so she's pretty systematic, but they're the best of friends. I can tell the difference when my daughter was with her and when my daughter is with somebody that has a different style because the sleepovers are always different when they were kids. Because a lot of times especially daughters like to have sleepovers and if she had this gal over who had spirited, it was a totally different environment than maybe somebody that was more like her that was systematic.

John Dieseth: I could tell mostly from the noise that was coming out of the basement as they were talking. This is a way of identifying that spirited customer. How about the considerate customer? How do we identify them? Well, many in customer service fall into this category. Many people in product support that attracts considerate people 'cause they want to help other

people. They have a tendency to give you plenty of time. They talk about you personally and want to get engaged with you. They speak very encouragingly and they listen well and they stay calm.

John Dieseth: That's kind of the attributes that you can see in a considerate customer. And so that kind of gives you an idea of how these people are and they're really people people. When you have a conversation with a considerate customer you can know that right away. They're the ones that if you get them on the phone, for example, if you're calling them will say, "And where are you located? Which office do you work out off? Do you have a long commute to get there?" And so they're are people that you can really identify with that is going to be really worried about you as a person.

John Dieseth: And for me as a systematic person I've got remember to slow down and remember that the human being makes a big difference here. It's not just about the facts and figures. I could drown you in those, but I've got to remember that that considerate person is going to really care about people. Last but not least, our systematic customer. Well, I think we're sometimes easy to figure out. We require an appointment to discuss our product or service so we want to have it on our calendar. We want to ask for a lot of specific details. We speak pretty efficiently.

John Dieseth: We try not to use too many extra words. We structure our conversations and we don't show a lot of facial expression. We don't give that away. Back when I was in the seminar biz I had an opportunity to present our team leaderships seminar to a bunch of nuclear engineers at a nuclear power plant and it was one of the most interesting seminars I've ever done. I got no interaction from the crowd, but they did take a lot of notes throughout the day. Now, since I'm systematic, of course, I bonded with them immediately and we got so far out in the weeds that I'm sure if there been anybody that was considerate or any of the other styles in the room, they would have been just terrified.

John Dieseth: But it was a great seminar for me and it was a great seminar for them. The systematic customer. If you think of your typical engineer a lot of times they're systematic. Could be different than that, but a lot of times we fall into that category and of course I'm an engineer by original training. We're coming up on a pole here. We'd like to take a little poll with you here. Based on your explanation of the various styles that we've had so far, which style best fits your profile? Sarah?

Sarah: We've got the poll up on the screen. You could click those radio buttons, the direct spirited, systematic or considerate. It looks like people have found them. Good. Go ahead and click those and then click submit. We'll

give it another couple seconds. Make sure we get everyone's responses. Wow. I'm going to go ahead and share the results. There you go. Can you see those results on your screen John?

John Dieseth: I cannot Sarah.

Sarah: That's okay. I'll give them to you. Direct is 21%. Spirited is 21%. You'll be sad about this one, systematic is only 9% and then considerate style is 50%.

John Dieseth: We've got a considerate audience here and then waited with direct and spirited and the systematic are probably bringing up the rear and that's probably because a lot of the systematic people are out there reading some sort of tech manual or something so maybe they're not as engaged with us today. But that kind of gives you an idea of how our groups shapes out here. That's going to be the way it is when you're out there selling and talking to people. It's going to be a variety of mix. Now, I'm not surprised that considerate as a large part of our audience today.

John Dieseth: Considerate people tend to be interested in learning through things like webinars like this and they tend to be involved on things like that. But it kind of gives you an idea of how you're going to run into a many different people when you actually get out there in the real world. Let's talk a little bit about, as we kind of advanced forward here, selling if you're a direct style. If you identified yourself as direct here, how are you going to be able to sell? Well, you'll see the little direct in the left hand side.

John Dieseth: If you go into the actual instrument you're going to see this. It's all laid out for you. It's just easy to go through and to talk to your salespeople about. If you're direct and you're talking to somebody else who is direct, it gives you some advice there. Don't butt heads over differing goals. If your spirited, be flexible and get down to business. Considerate, emphasize product needs. I'm not going to read all of them, but you can see even if you're dealing with systematic it gives you some ideas there. Now you don't need a lot to be able to flex your style.

John Dieseth: This doesn't have to be overly complicated. Just a little bit of information, a little bit of guidance on how to flex your style makes all the difference in the world and that's why this assessment is so powerful. Now, facilitating this. When I actually do this in real life I use the paper assessment and you can go online and do it too. One of the reasons I use the paper assessment and our facilitators do as well as facilitators, it gives us a little bit of a break while they're taking the assessment and I can make sure that it's right in front of them.

John Dieseth: But whether you take it online or you take it through the paper assessment, in the information that you get from HRDQ you've got all this information just in a really easy place to be able to put in front of you. If you're direct you know exactly what to do in this particular example. Let me go to the next one. If your spirited how can you do that? Well, if you're a spirited style your opposite is going to be somebody that's systematic. To go back to this slide here, if you're direct you're opposite is going to be somebody that's considerate.

John Dieseth: Typically you struggle most with people that are the opposite style as you. I'm systematic, I'm going to struggle most with those people that are spirited and they're going to struggle most in selling to me. Take a look at this, if you're spirited you want to tone it down a little bit and be prepared if you're dealing with systematic people. If you're dealing with other spirited people you don't want to get lost in unrelated conversations. Let's go on a little bit and say what if you're considerate style? What are you going to be doing there?

John Dieseth: Well, your opposite is direct so you're going to struggle most with those that are direct. Try not to take criticism personally, stick to the appointment time and make sure that you tell the customer what you want them to do. This gives you some guidance how to sell to people of each of those different styles. What we do in the exercise when I'm actually facilitating this is we have them think of customers and if they haven't been in sales and they're brand new and they're just coming in, think of a friend or something that fits these various styles.

John Dieseth: And then take a look at this diagram and see how flexing your style can make a big difference because it doesn't just have to be in sales, it can be in personal relationships as well. How about if you're systematic? Your opposite is spirited, that's who you're going to struggle with the most. If you take a look at this diagram it gives you ideas of how to flex your style and make sure things work all the way as you're talking to different types of customers. One of the things that I really like about what's my selling style, what this instrument is and why we choose it to offered in our organization for all of our customers is just this kind of input that I just gave you here.

John Dieseth: Because knowing about your own style and knowing how to do all those things and flex your style, all that doesn't make a difference unless you can identify what the customer's style is and then be able to find something to do it with and make it fairly simple. Because remember, if you're on the phone you're going to talk to 20 customers a day. For in the field maybe you'll talk to five or six. You're going to be going through this exercise a lot. You need some few clues that you can put in your

head and you can just listen to that person as the communication starts and be able to identify their style.

John Dieseth: What's the customer perception? Customers are typically more comfortable with someone of their own style. Let me repeat that. Customers are typically more comfortable with someone of their own style. Somebody of the opposite style may create the most challenging perceptions. For example, systematic folks with spirited or considerate with direct. I have a large training customer the that I work with who has a customer service task force that they're having and they were really struggling with upselling and cross selling and I told you that story earlier and it's just the perception of customers that makes a big difference there.

John Dieseth: Now, remember again the opposite styles as we had in that grid are going to be the most challenging. How about customer dialogue? Well, if you're systematic your customer conversations will contain much more detail and require time to process after the call. Dialogue will be very efficient if you're dealing with those folks at the bottom that are systematic. How about folks that are direct at the top? Well those customer conversations will be more to the point and require a firm bine recommendation. You want to make sure you tell them exactly what you're recommending that they buy.

John Dieseth: Salesperson is more likely to get a yes or no here and dialogue is going to be a little bit short. Do nothing doesn't tend to be as much of a problem with direct because they're going to give you an answer one way or the other. They're going to give you a yes or a no. How about considerate conversations? What are they like? Considerate customer conversations require more personal relationship building and the customer may be reluctant to commit on the call. Dialogue will be genuine though and it will be done talking about that person to person level.

John Dieseth: Last but not least, our friends that are spirited. Those conversations may be a more emotional and the salesperson is most likely to get a yes or a no from these folks too because they're more animated, they're more into it and so they're going to be more telling you where things are at. Really you're considerate and systematic are going to be the ones that tend to stall out more. You're direct and spirited are the ones where you're more likely to get an answer and you're dialogue is going to be a little bit like the way that I just discussed.

John Dieseth: Profiling customers for future reference. Listen on the first conversation, have visual guidelines that you can use right in front of you and the what's my selling style instrument gives you that. You've got something

you can even put up in their cubicles and lot of times we'll just have them cut that out and then they can paste it right up there so they can recognize that customer. They pick out their style just like the slides that I showed you there, whether they're direct or systematic or considerate or whatever the case might be, and they cut that out so they've got that right with them.

John Dieseth: I know field salespeople that take that and cut that out and put that in their binder that they bring in so it keeps reminding them that. I know telephone salespeople that have it taped up at the bottom of their computers so they remember it on each call. You can use the instrument for some visual guidelines. For future reference, if you have a scheduled conversation with somebody of some other style, then you probably know that if it's somebody of the same style it's going to build energy and it's probably going to be a great call.

John Dieseth: It's probably those ones that you're just excited every time they come up in your database. If you have a scheduled conversation with somebody of the opposite style, maybe it's going to consume some energy and adjacent styles would probably be more energy neutral. You can kind of plan your day and see how are those conversations going to go. Now, in my customer relationship management system or CRM, I'll put a little note in there. They're D if they're direct, C if they're considerate, SY maybe if they're systematic and SP for spirited so that I'll kind of know when I pick up the phone and call that customer or I go visit them face to face how those conversations are going to go.

John Dieseth: Now, Robin Dunbar, a famous British researcher, found out that human beings can have about 150 relationships in their head at one time. That's called the Dunbar number in psychology. And so that would be someone that if you meet them in an airport you can go up and have a genuine conversation with them or if you spot them at a party that you attend you'll walk right over to them and kind of pick up where you left off. Most organizations know that once you go over about 150 people you have to have formal communication channels. And so think about your salespeople. How many people do they deal with?

John Dieseth: Well, probably a lot more than 150 because let's say they have a hundred customers. There's probably 300 different people they need to build relationships with, maybe three at every customer site. Or if you're in retail, how many different people come up to you in a year? And because of that you can't possibly remember what everybody's style was. And so I really recommend that you put that in your notes. Structuring our conversation for greater impact. If you're systematic, use a lot of facts and figures, bring literature, all those kinds of things that you can support what you're asking your customer to buy.

John Dieseth: If you're direct, be short unequivocal statements, prepare a recommendation, make sure you ask for the sale. They're going to expect that, they're going to expect to be closed. If your spirited it's going to be more emotional arguments. You're going to use reference stories. You're going to be able to relate to them one on one. Considerate it's going to be more of a personal narrative. When you kind of prepare, once you know what somebody's style is and you prepare for those subsequent conversations, you can really use your knowledge of style to be able to say, well, this is how the conversation is going to go.

John Dieseth: This is what I need to prepare, this is what I need to talk about, and this is what I can kind of expect how those conversations will go. Remember we talked about earlier that this is especially important as we started out almost 55 minutes ago, is when we said at the very beginning when we're trying to participate and also when we're trying to get our customers through to make that decision. We really want to be able to structure our conversations so that when we do have that time when we're talking to a customer, they go just as well as they possibly could. What's the benefits of style training?

John Dieseth: Let's cut to the chase here. Why should we do this? We're going to build better customer relationships, and as I showed you in some of my examples, you're going to sell more because you have knowledge of style. Customers will think your salespeople are more perceptive than the competition and we probably all got competition. More sales will close and so your closing percentage is going to go up. Salespeople will allocate time for each conversation more efficiently. If you're talking to somebody that's spirited you know it's going to take a little bit more time than you're talking to somebody that's direct.

John Dieseth: If you're talking to somebody systematic, maybe they're going to have a bunch of details that they're going to read in between the time that you come there. If you're talking to somebody that's considerate, probably going to want to make sure you spend that time to relationship build. Salespeople have less stress. They'll have less stress because every time they go into a customer conversation they're going to know what to expect. If they're doing cold calling they're going to know that once they start that conversation they're going to be able to determine that person's style and they're going to know how to flex their style so that that's a lot better conversation.

John Dieseth: It's not going to be that abrasive, awkward way that a lot of our conversations go if we just can't sync our styles together. I finally reached the last slide here. How can HRDQ help you? We've got a whole

bunch of information on this. What do I do when I facilitate the workshop? I want to spend just a second and talk to you about that. Well, what I typically do is we'll hand it out. We use the paper assessment because it gives us a little bit of time to relax a little bit but you can use the online assessment as well. That works out really good.

John Dieseth: And then typically if we've got a group that's just starting out we'll take a little bit longer than we do. If a group that's been in sales more often maybe we'll shorten it up a little bit because they're able to relate to it quickly and get going with that. But it's something we work into every workshop and to be honest with you, I try to do it right after lunch because right after lunch when people are a little bit tired, maybe they just had that big lunch and they'd been sitting all morning and going through an exercise, this has something to just be able to think about themselves and think about those conversations we have and it's incredibly motivating.

John Dieseth: It's a great thing to do right after lunch, get them into thinking about themselves. Everybody loves to kind of learn more about themselves and it's just a great instrument for you to be able to use with your sales force and it will help you close more sales. Sarah.

Sarah: Thank you so much John. Great, great information. If you have any questions for John, go ahead and send those through to us there right on the control panel. It looks like we've got two minutes. I do have one question here that's already come in so I am going to ask you that John and then any others that happen to come in if we're out of time we will email answers back to you. Go ahead, don't hesitate to send those in. A question we have already here is from Jamie and Jamie asks today people are using text and email more than conversation and so how does style help you in that kind of context?

John Dieseth: Well, you can actually pick out a person's style sometimes with these kind of textual based conversations. For example, I have customers that'll send me one or two word responses. If I send them a half a page email or something I'll get a yes at the beginning or a no. I can kind of tell what kind of style they are. It's a little bit harder with texts because that's very constrained, but you can take a look at kind of the message and kind of get the feeling for it.

John Dieseth: Probably the most important thing is if you have customers that are doing a lot of texting and emailing, that just means that that conversation you have with that customer is going to be even more critically important and that's where the knowledge of style really comes in. If they really like to communicate by text and email, those may be two or three times a year, maybe four times a year where you

actually have a face to face conversation or have one on the phone.

John Dieseth: Then being able to communicate with them in depth is going to be critically important to maintain that relationship and that's where that knowledge of style is pretty important. Yes, you can figure out a little bit from those kinds of communications, but perhaps the most important thing is that means those communication, those times that we talk is going to be so much more important and it allows you to make sure that those are as valuable as they can be.

Sarah: Wonderful. Thank you so much John. And for those that are new to HRDQ, you can check us out. We publish research based experiential learning products that you can deliver in your organization. Our online or print self assessments like our what's my selling style, the foundation of today's webinar. We also have out of your seat games. We have reproducible workshops that you can customize and we also offer services.

Sarah: If you need help with either delivering a training onsite or virtually if you would like your trainers to be trained, we provide train the trainer as well. Check us out, take a look at us for being your soft skills training resource. John, thank you so much for your great stories and all of your knowledge today.

John Dieseth: All right, thank you Sarah.

Sarah: And thanks everyone for participating in today's webinar. Happy training.