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Trucking Safety:"C" Is for the Cautious Driver

If you're looking for drivers who are least likely to cause accidents, those with a Core C behavioral style are the ones you want to hire and retain. Caution is not only their middle name; it's their first name.

Safety research shows drivers' natural behaviors and attitudes are a greater predictor of their chances of causing accidents than their level of safety training. (Source: Behavioral-Values Research Associates, 1993) It makes sense. If a person's main concern is safety, he or she will behave in a much more careful manner behind the wheel than someone whose first concern is, say, being in charge or interacting with other people.

Understanding behavioral patterns and values will tell you which drivers to hire if safety is your top concern. A behavioral assessment measures normal behavior in four areas: D (Dominant), I (Influencing), S (Steadiness), and C (Cautious, Compliant to Standards).

The D factor determines how drivers tend to handle problems and challenges, the I factor looks at their interactions and influence with others, the S at how they respond to the pace of the environment, and the C at how they respond to rules and regulations set by company and federal regulations.

A DISC behavioral assessment shows how the applicant ranks in each of the four factors from 0% to 100%. Fifty percent is the mid line; above this the person is said to be high in the factor, below 50% - low. The higher or lower the ranking, the more intense the behavior will be. In this article, we'll look at the highs and lows of the C factor.

Research shows the safest drivers are high in the C factor. Here's the reason why.

Drivers who score highest in the Cautious/Compliant behavioral factor are careful, cautious, detail oriented, and accurate. They follow rules to the letter. They are low risk takers and dislike making mistakes. In fact, the fear of making mistakes is one of their biggest stress factors.

Drivers low in the C factor are the opposite. They are high risk takers and tend to be careless, especially with details; they are likely to break rules and ask forgiveness, whereas High C drivers ask permission before acting or making decisions. Low C drivers can be arbitrary and hard to manage.

Your ideal driver has this behavioral profile: High in the S (Steadiness) and C (Cautious) factors, and low in the D (Dominant) and I (Influencing) styles. To see a sample of the ideal driver's profile, click here. (If that doesn't work, contact us and we'll email you a sample report.)

Research and experience prove trucking companies that use behavioral assessments to pre-screen driver applicants and hire only those who fit the safe driver profile have reduced accidents, costs, workers' comp claims, and turnover.

Most importantly, they have saved lives.

Annette Estes is a Certified Professional Behavioral and Values Analyst, Coach, and Consultant, specializing in helping companies hire safe workers. She is a professional speaker, award-winning columnist, and author of the book, Why Can't You See it MY Way? Resolving Values Conflicts at Work and Home

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