

TECHNICAL NOTE

Foundations of the StarmyCV behavioral assessment

Information for hiring professionals

Version 1.1 · October 2026

1. Purpose and scope

This note describes the theoretical basis, the instrument, and the scoring procedure behind the behavioral assessment built into StarmyCV. It is written for the hiring professionals who receive its reports, so that they know what the assessment measures, how the results are produced, and how far they should be taken. It is not a substitute for training in test interpretation, nor a complete technical manual. Its purpose is to give a clear, checkable account of the assessment on which the use of the report in a hiring process can rest.

2. Theoretical framework

The instrument is based on the DISC model, set out by William Moulton Marston in *Emotions of Normal People* (1928). Marston proposed describing behavior along two axes: whether a person perceives the environment as favorable or hostile, and whether the person tends to act on it or to accommodate to it. Crossing the two axes yields the four dimensions that give the model its name: dominance (D), influence (I), steadiness (S), and compliance or conscientiousness (C). The model was never meant as a theory of deep personality; it is a description of observable behavioral styles, and that is the sense in which it is used here, as a person's preferred style of behavior in work settings.

Forced-choice questionnaires operationalizing the model were developed from the 1950s onward (Clever, and later Geier), and today they underlie most DISC instruments in professional use. StarmyCV follows that methodological tradition with a questionnaire and a scoring procedure of its own.

3. The instrument

The questionnaire consists of 24 blocks. Each block presents four first-person statements, one for each dimension of the model, and the respondent marks the statement that describes them best and the one that describes them least. The procedure therefore yields 48 choices and usually takes under ten minutes. The 96 statements were written by the StarmyCV team, are available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, and have been reviewed to balance the social desirability of the four options within each block, so that none of them is systematically more attractive than the others.

Forced choice has a methodological consequence worth knowing. Because each block requires one statement to be chosen as most characteristic and another as least characteristic, the scores on the four dimensions always sum to zero. This property, known as ipsativity, means that the raw profile describes how a person's preferences are organized internally (which dimensions weigh more and which weigh less for that person) rather than where the person stands relative to others. The literature

on forced-choice formats indicates that this design reduces the opportunity to present a uniformly favorable image, since raising one dimension necessarily lowers another (Christiansen, Burns, and Montgomery, 2005), at the cost of the limitation just described, which StarmyCV's scoring procedure addresses in the next stage.

4. Scoring procedure

4.1 From dimensions to competencies

Sixteen behavioral competencies are computed from the four DISC scores: leadership, autonomy, social influence, empathy, communication, resilience, tolerance for change, emotional stability, planning, technical precision, critical thinking, flexibility, active listening, compliance, collaboration, and results orientation. Each competency is defined as a weighted combination of the four dimensions, with positive and negative weights set from the content of the model and from the review of the questionnaire statements. Results orientation, for instance, rests mainly on dominance and is tempered by steadiness, while technical precision rests on compliance and is tempered by influence.

4.2 Norm referencing

Competencies are not reported raw. Each one is standardized against the distribution of that same competency in a reference population, and the resulting value is expressed on a 0-to-10 scale that corresponds to the percentile divided by ten. A score of 8.0 in planning means that the person is above 80% of the reference population on that competency. This transformation is what allows the sixteen competencies to share a single scale, to be compared with one another and across people, and it resolves in practice the ipsativity limitation noted in the previous section.

Three interpretive levels are assigned on that scale; the label shown in the report is in parentheses:

Level (label in the report)	Score	Interpretation
High (Pronounced)	7.0 or above	Roughly the top 30% of the norm group
Medium (Moderate)	3.0 to 7.0	The central part of the distribution
Low (Less natural)	Below 3.0	Roughly the bottom 30% of the norm group

Levels are derived from the displayed score, so the report never shows a level that contradicts the number next to it. The labels reflect what the instrument measures: because the questionnaire is forced-choice and the competencies describe preferred style, a low score is reported as less natural, meaning a behavior the respondent does not reach for spontaneously and that takes more deliberate effort, not a deficit in ability. No respondent can score high on all sixteen competencies; every profile has trade-offs.

4.3 Archetypes

The report summarizes the profile in a behavioral archetype. There are eight defined archetypes, each characterized by four distinguishing competencies, and a ninth, the balanced profile, reserved for people in whom no combination of competencies stands out clearly. For each archetype a fit index is

computed from its defining competencies and standardized, in turn, against the reference population. The archetype with the highest fit is assigned as the primary archetype provided it exceeds a minimum threshold; otherwise the balanced profile is assigned. When a second archetype shows a high fit close to that of the primary one, it is reported as a secondary archetype, which allows mixed profiles to be reflected without forcing a single label.

Archetypes are an interpretive summary and do not replace the competencies: two people with the same archetype can differ appreciably on several of the sixteen competencies, and that is where the most precise information about the profile lies.

4.4 Personalized report

The narrative section of the report is written by an artificial intelligence system configured with psychometric criteria. This system plays no part in computing the competencies or assigning the archetypes, which are produced by the deterministic procedure described above. Its role is to interpret the full set of sixteen scores together with the assigned archetype, describe how that profile tends to show up in the workplace, and suggest points worth exploring in an interview. Because it works from the whole profile rather than from the archetype alone, two people with the same archetype receive different reports.

5. Psychometric properties and calibration

The reference population used for standardization was built from a statistical model of the questionnaire calibrated with the dispersion observed in real responses, and it is updated periodically as the base of completed assessments grows, at which point the norms become fully empirical. The scoring procedure records in each report the version of the algorithm and of the norms with which it was computed, which guarantees traceability and allows results to be recomputed when the norms are updated.

StarmyCV maintains an ongoing evaluation program for the instrument that includes internal-consistency analysis by the split-half method, the study of profile stability, and the monitoring of the distribution of levels and archetypes in the assessed population. The results of these analyses will be incorporated into subsequent versions of this note.

6. Interpretation and recommended use

The assessment describes a person's preferred style of behavior at work: how they tend to make decisions, relate to others, organize their activity, and respond to change. It does not measure cognitive ability, technical knowledge, or experience, and on its own it does not predict performance in a role. Its results should therefore be read as a source of information that complements the résumé and the interview, useful for forming hypotheses about the candidate and for framing questions that test them, and not as a screening criterion.

This recommendation is consistent with international guidelines on test use in selection settings (International Test Commission, 2001), which advise integrating the results of any test with other sources of evidence and never basing a hiring decision on a single instrument. It is also recommended that the professional share with the candidate the conclusions drawn from the report, both for the

sake of transparency and because checking them against the person is the best test of whether the reading is sound.

In the United States, any procedure that informs an employment decision falls under the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978) and should be demonstrably job-related. This assessment is designed as a structured input to the interview rather than as a pass/fail screen; organizations that extend its use beyond that role should document job-relatedness and monitor for adverse impact, consistent with the SIOP Principles (2018).

7. Relationship to other instruments

The DISC model underlies many instruments in wide use in human resources, and the format of four-statement blocks with a most and a least choice is common to a good number of them. StarmyCV shares that basis and that format and differs in three respects: the questionnaire and its statements are its own; competencies are expressed on a norm-referenced basis, which makes them comparable across people, rather than as purely ipsative profiles; and the report includes an individualized interpretation generated from the profile as a whole.

Compared with norm-based personality inventories (those built on the five-factor model, for example), the StarmyCV assessment is shorter and focuses on work-related behavioral style rather than on general personality traits. That makes it well suited as a first approach to the candidate and as support for the interview, and less suited as the sole instrument in processes that call for an in-depth evaluation.

8. Frequently asked questions

Can a candidate game the result? The forced-choice format makes it hard: raising one dimension requires lowering another in every block, and attempts to project a particular image tend to produce internally inconsistent profiles. No self-report instrument is immune to social desirability, so the report should be checked against the interview.

Why does the report show one archetype, or two, when the person seems to combine several? The archetype is a summary. The report shows the one that best describes the profile and, when another has a similar fit, adds it as secondary. The full picture is in the sixteen competencies and in the individualized interpretation.

What does the balanced profile mean? That no combination of competencies stands out markedly against the reference population. It is as informative a result as any other and generally describes versatile people whose style adapts to the context.

How long does it take? Under ten minutes in most cases.

Do two people with the same archetype get the same report? No. The interpretation is generated from each person's sixteen competencies, so it reflects the differences between profiles that share an archetype.

References

- Brown, A., & Maydeu-Olivares, A. (2013). How IRT can solve problems of ipsative data in forced-choice questionnaires. *Psychological Methods*, 18(1), 36-52.
- Christiansen, N. D., Burns, G. N., & Montgomery, G. E. (2005). Reconsidering forced-choice item formats for applicant personality assessment. *Human Performance*, 18(3), 267-307.
- Hicks, L. E. (1970). Some properties of ipsative, normative, and forced-choice normative measures. *Psychological Bulletin*, 74(3), 167-184.
- International Test Commission. (2001). International guidelines for test use. *International Journal of Testing*, 1(2), 93-114.
- Marston, W. M. (1928). *Emotions of normal people*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co.
- Meade, A. W. (2004). Psychometric problems and issues involved with creating and using ipsative measures for selection. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(4), 531-552.
- Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. (2018). *Principles for the validation and use of personnel selection procedures* (5th ed.). Bowling Green, OH: SIOP.
- Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, 29 C.F.R. § 1607 (1978).

Legal notice

This document is provided for information purposes. It may be distributed in full and without modification, citing StarmyCV as the source. All other forms of reproduction or adaptation are reserved. DISC is a public-domain model formulated by W. M. Marston (1928); the questionnaire statements, the scoring procedure, and the archetypes described here are the creation of StarmyCV. StarmyCV® and its logo are registered trademarks in Argentina and Spain.