



Colorado Charter Schools Annual Conference

February 25-27, 2026
Denver Marriott Tech Center



PRESENTED BY



Bridging the Gap

Empowering First-Year Teachers and Enhancing Administrative Insight

Steve Hopkins, Director
Wipfli Advisory

Evergreen A
February 27, 2026 | 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Schools and Leadership



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We make it our priority to **advocate** for high-quality public charter schools across Colorado.



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Try the PREDICTIVE INDEX Assessment!

Insight into your natural operating style!

This assessment typically takes less than six (6) minutes to complete and provides insights into our “core operating style”, helping us to understand where we excel and where we need to pay more careful attention.



“The Predictive Index has become an essential component of our leadership and team-development strategy”

Dennis Wimmert, Red River Bank

Agenda



Take the PI assessment!

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Creating Performance & Retention	04
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01

INTRODUCTION



Presenter
Wipfli Advisory
Leadership Consultant Team

Wipfli Advisory Services

We go beyond numbers to deliver strategy and tactics to mitigate liabilities and meet compliance regulations.



From strategy and custom software solutions to data, analytics, ERPs, CRMs, we help clients connect, transform and grow.

Build the organization you envision with a compelling vision, operational excellence and tech optimization.

Our team proactively manages compliance and risk across your organization.



We help build the transformational leaders of tomorrow through one-on-one coaching and leadership essentials training.

We help clients maximize value and capitalize on opportunities on both the buy and sell side of M&A transactions.



Optimize your day-to-day operations when our team handles your accounting, controller, HR, payroll, technology and cybersecurity needs.

02

SESSION GOALS



Where we want to focus today:

- Effective evaluation practices for early-career teachers
- Coaching and mentoring practices that build confidence and competence
- Utilizing personality insights to improve communication and self-awareness
- Building trust and psychological safety in school teams
- Aligning feedback with individual strengths and growth areas

03

STATING THE PROBLEM



Pressures Facing First-Year and Early-Career Teachers

High Workload & Extended Expectations

- Longer instructional days
- Additional duties falling on smaller staffs
- Fewer contractual limits

Compensation Challenges

- CO teacher comp is lower than national average
- Reduced funding per pupil with charter schools impacts compensation

Increased Accountability & Reduced Autonomy

- Increased governance & oversight
- Additional reporting requirements
- Renewal scrutiny

Insufficient Induction, Mentorship and Support

- Novice teachers assigned to “high-need” classrooms
- Insufficient staff to support onboarding or mentoring

Isolation & Lack of Community

- Especially in rural communities
- Opportunities for professional networking and sharing

Accelerating Attrition

- 47% of educators are considering leaving the profession
- “Revolving door” of talent makes support and experienced help difficult

04

**CREATING
PERFORMANCE &
RETENTION**



The Big Picture



Intentional Teacher Support

Sustained commitment to mentoring and onboarding is essential to retain first-year teachers in charter schools.

Balanced Workload and Growth

Managing workload and fostering professional growth help teachers succeed and reduce early-career burnout.

Holistic Support Framework

Building community creates a nurturing environment to address early teaching challenges.

Outcome: Stability and Achievement

Effective retention strategies improve instructional quality, student achievement, and school stability.

Effective Induction

Creating a clear and intentional approach to induction and orientation makes a marked difference for new teachers and staff.

- Mandatory orientation components
- Functional orientation components
- Developmental orientation components



Drivers for Performance & Retention



Intentional Teacher Support

- Offer formal, structured induction
- Provide structured mentorship and coaching
- Create teacher cohorts for development



Mentoring & Coaching

- Mentor training and recognition
- Leverage mentor/coaching cohorts and draw on internal talent
- Simple, consistent practices create impact



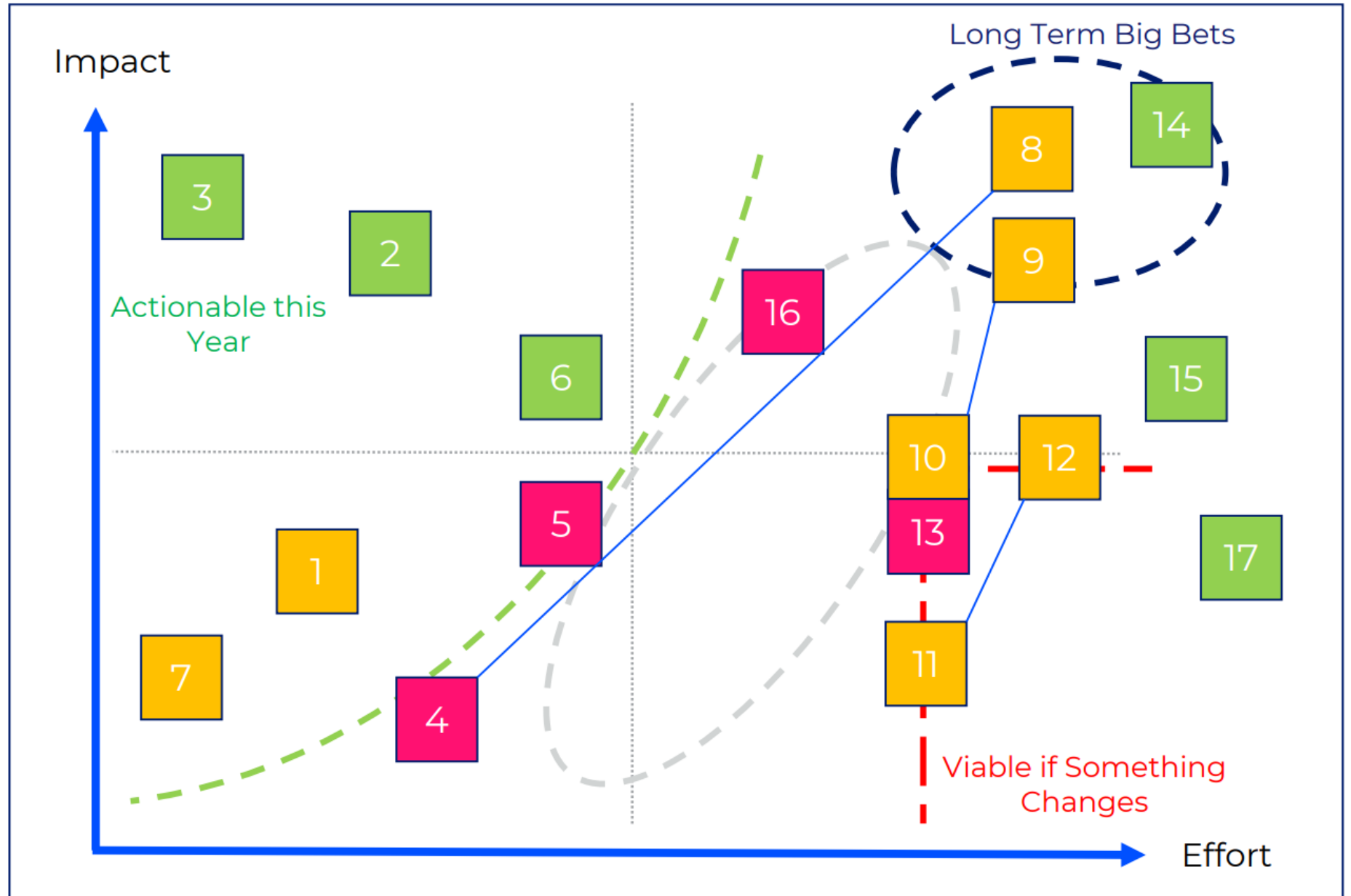
Supportive Leadership & Culture

- Leadership modeling
- Positive school climate
- Mission-driven culture

Leadership & Culture Practices

- High-Level
 - Building trust and communicate!
 - Advocate for your teachers!
 - Model your culture
 - Publicly recognize your teachers and staff
 - Be visible! And share your knowledge!
- Practical Steps
 - Institute mentoring, coaching and peer observation – use teacher-leaders to drive development opportunities
 - **Be deliberate and focused on development – not just checking a list for compliance!**
 - Establish “professional learning communities” (PLCs) – build cohorts to problem-solve and share best practices
 - Take time to coach and develop yourself

Evaluation of Potential Action Items



Partner Discussion

Let's take 7 Minutes

- Choose a partner
- We have three (3) key drivers:
 - Intentional Support
 - Mentoring & Coaching
 - Supporting Leadership & Culture
- Which of these three, if strengthened by even 10%, would most improve performance and retention for your team?
What is the impact vs effort for this choice?
- Share with your partner



Phased Approach to Retention

PHASE	TIMELINE	KEY ACTIONS
Phase 1	Spring	Recruit mentors, finalize induction calendar
Phase 2	Summer	Orientation, mentor training, PD sessions
Phase 3	Fall–Spring	Weekly mentoring, monthly cohorts, data reviews
Phase 4	End of Year	Retention analysis, program evaluation, next-year planning



05

**CREATING DEEPER
IMPACT THROUGH
INSIGHT**



The Value of Self- Awareness

How Do We Create Stronger Impact?

- Gain clearer insight into the individuals with whom we're working
 - Self-reflection
 - Investing 1:1 time with 1st and early-career teachers
 - Initiating feedback cycles
 - Explore tools and technologies that help us better understand performance and potential
- Customize approaches to take account of these differences



Predictive Index

“What **motivates** us to operate the way we do?”



INDIVIDUAL

Coaching & Mentorship



TEAM

Intentional Support, Cohort
Development, Means of
Addressing Friction



CULTURE

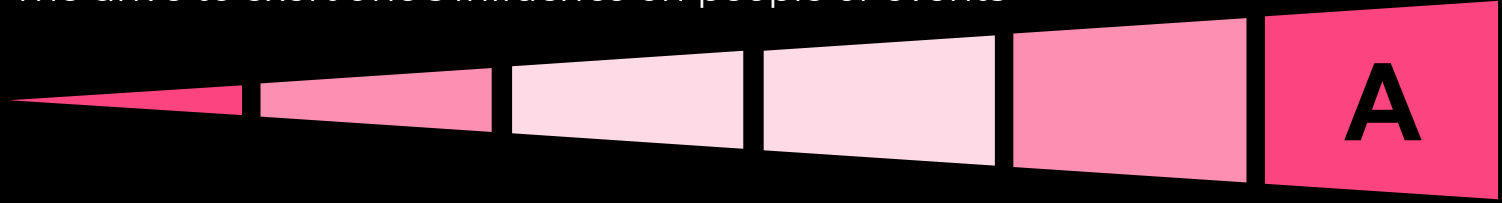
Leadership Support,
Development
Reinforcement,
Psychological Safety

The Predictive Index (PI)

Drives Measured by the PI

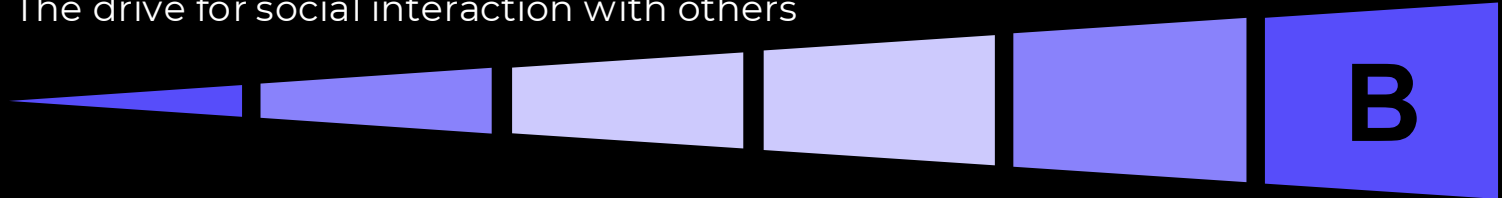
Dominance

The drive to exert one's influence on people or events



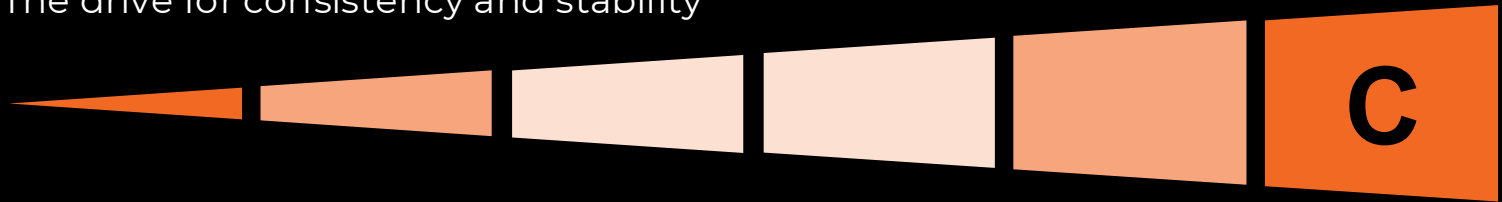
Extraversion

The drive for social interaction with others



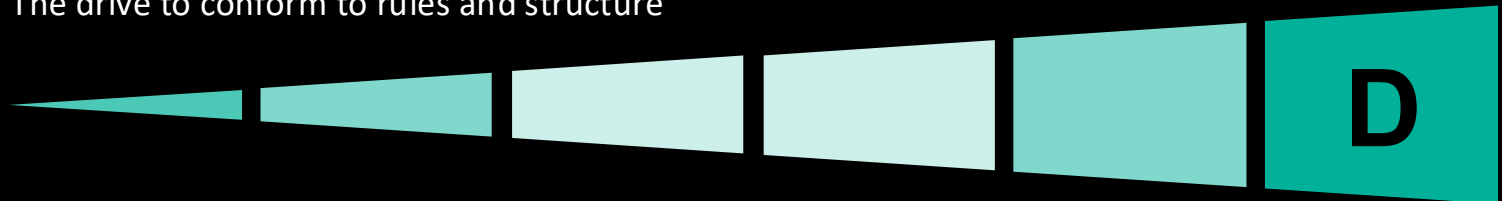
Patience

The drive for consistency and stability



Formality

The drive to conform to rules and structure



A - Dominance

Less than average (Low)

Gets along
Unselfish
Promotes collective efforts
Accepts others
Creates win-win situations

When perceived as ineffective

Avoids friction
Reluctant to offer views
Needs good deal of support
Risk sensitive
Timid

Greater than average (High)

Takes the initiative
Deals with adversity
Conceptual
Results focused
Challenges status quo
Self confident

When perceived as ineffective

Dominates
Threatening
Intolerant of other views
Pursues their own agenda
Belligerent

Motivators:

- Encouragement, assurance
- Harmony
- Freedom from competition
- Strong leadership
- Supportive, team-oriented environment

Motivators:

- Independence
- Control over own activities
- \$ - to measure success, power, influence
- Opportunity to compete (prove oneself)

B - Extroversion

Less than average (Low)

Logical

Task-focused

Imaginative

Thinks before acting

Deals with “reality”

Straight-forward

When perceived as ineffective

Remote

Blunt

Emotionally disconnected

Hard to get to know

Little disclosure / little feedback

Greater than average (High)

Persuasive

Intuitive

Engaging

Includes others

Empathetic

Verbally fluent

When perceived as ineffective

Artificial

Not to the point

Image conscious

Unrealistic

Action vs. results

Motivators:

- Opportunity for introspection
- Recognition for technical / intellectual achievements
- Freedom from “politics”
- Private personal recognition

Motivators:

- Social interaction
- Social recognition / acceptance
- Prestige / status
- Admiration and being liked
- Visible signs of position (office, title)

C - Patience

Less than average (Low)

Quick to act

Multi-tasks

Applies pressure

Anticipates

Handles variety of activities

Time conscious

When perceived ineffective

Underestimates time

Fires before aiming

Creates tension

Loses focus on items that can't be finished quickly

Volatile

Greater than average (High)

Responsive

Consistent

Reliable

Handles routine

Approachable

Attentive listener

When perceived ineffective

Slow to adapt

Change resistant

Has difficulty setting priorities

Reactive

Won't say no

Motivators:

- Variety
- Change of pace
- Mobility
- Freedom from repetition
- Work where results are achieved quickly

Motivators:

- Belonging / affiliation
- Supportive (family-like)
- Stable, familiar environment
- Recognize loyalty
- Sequential, planned workflow

D - Formality

Less than average (Low)

Flexible
Creative
Undaunted
Challenging
Tolerates uncertainty

When perceived ineffective

“Loose cannon”
Unstructured
Rebellious – authority
Lacks focus
Lacks self-discipline
Doesn't tie ends together

Greater than average (High)

Expert
Exact
Conscientious
Process / system driven
Idealist – “just, right”

When perceived ineffective

Avoids risk
Protective
Inflexible
Demanding
Anxious or fearful
Absorbed in details

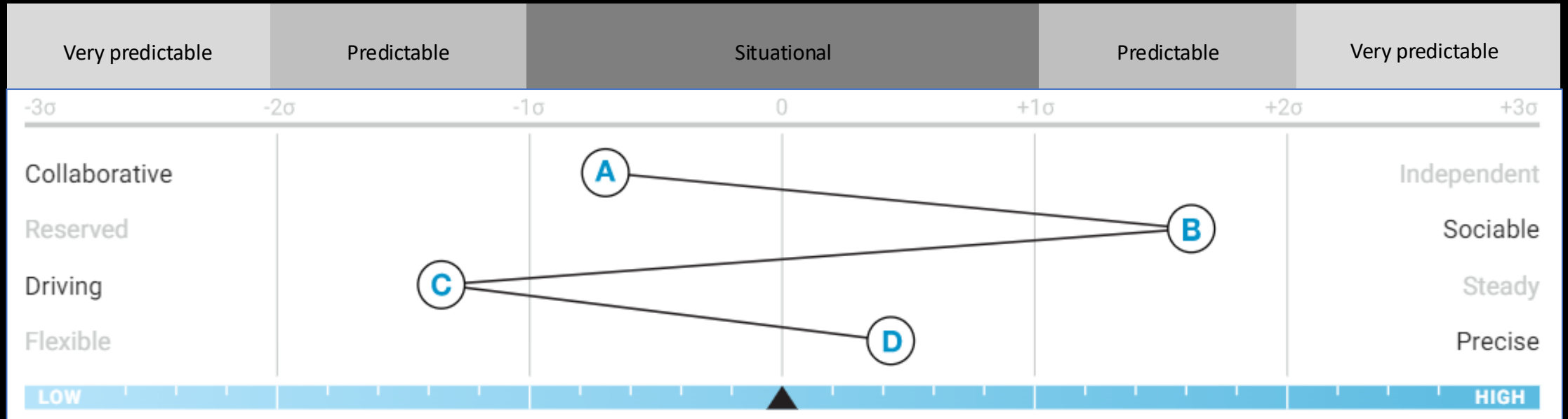
Motivators:

- Absence of tight controls or highly-structured “book”
- Opportunity to delegate details
- Informality
- Freedom to do their own thing, their way

Motivators:

- Certainty, knowing exactly what the rules are
- Structure and clear definition of responsibility
- Freedom from risk of error
- Firm / decisive leadership

Reading a PI Pattern

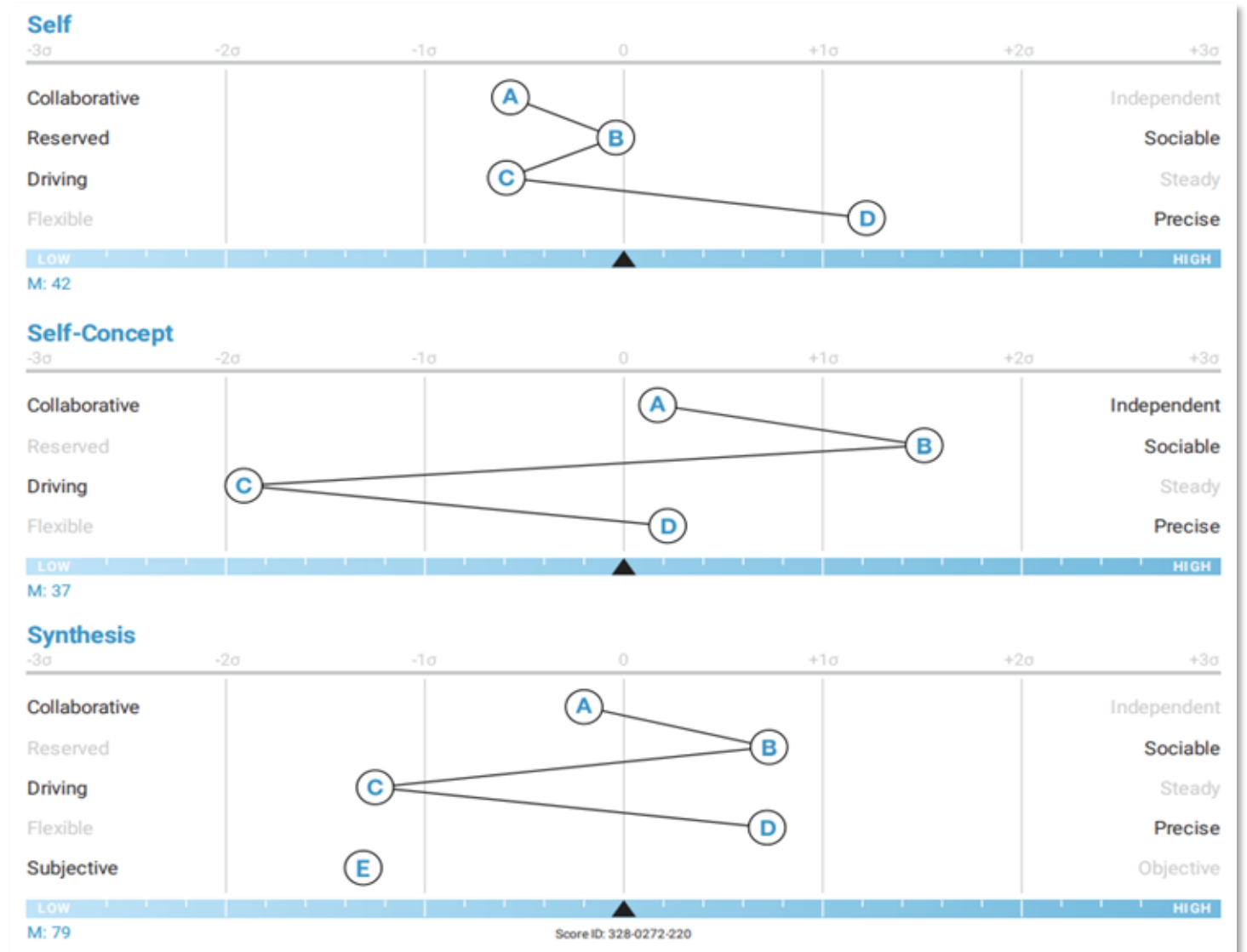


The Whole Pattern: Three Graphs

Self: Basic motivations and needs

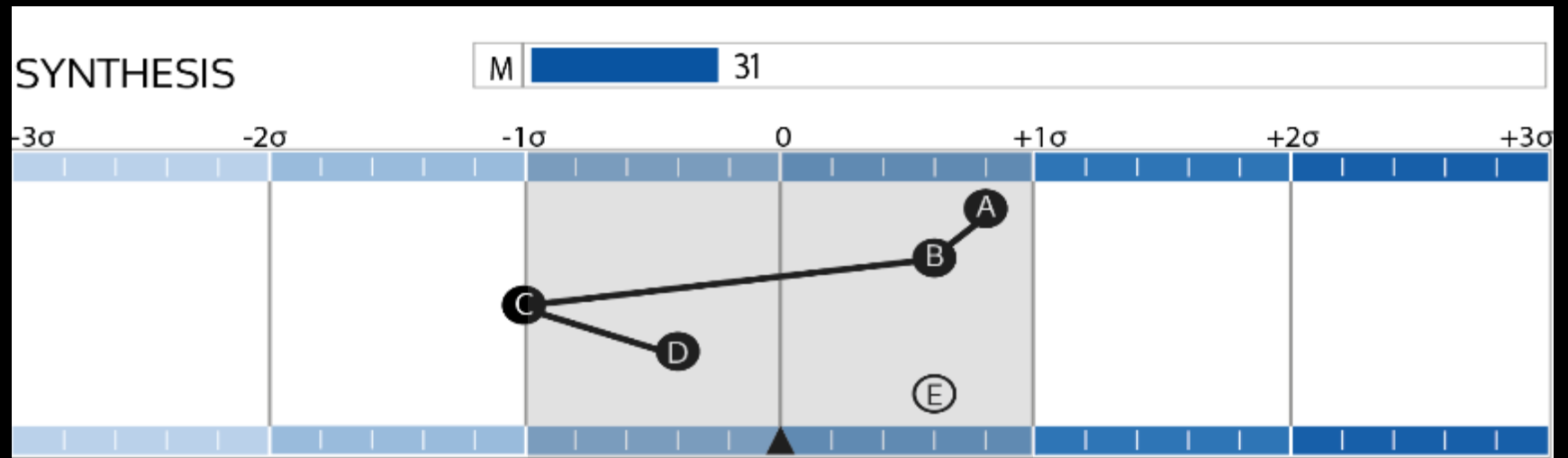
Self-Concept: How you think you need to adapt in response to the current environment

Synthesis: Combination of Self and Self-Concept

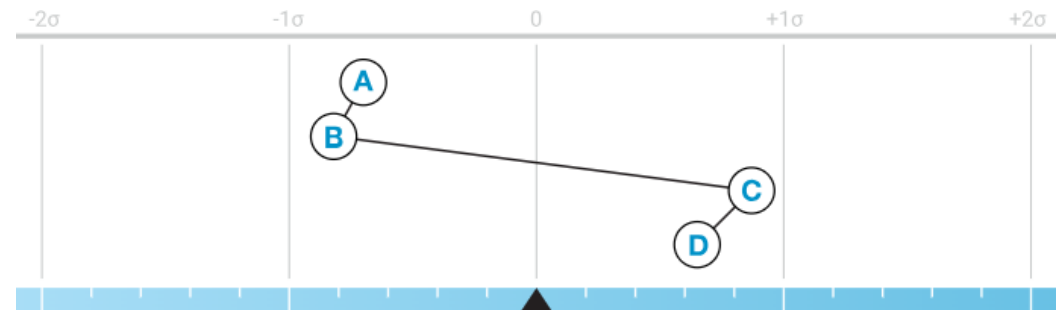
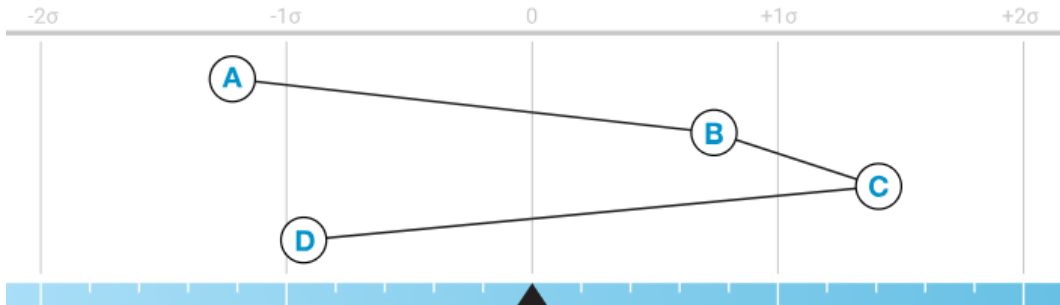


Factor E

Reflects our decision making or judgment style



How Do We Use These Insights?



- Dominance
 - Do they need more independence or more collaboration and feedback?
 - Is there a risk of overconfidence or “under-confidence”?
- Extraversion
 - What role does social rapport and communication play for them?
- Patience
 - What’s their sense of pace? Are they likely to get overwhelmed and feel rushed? Or succumb to multi-tasking and lack of focus?
- Formality
 - Do they need a firm process and clarity of purpose to operate? Or are they naturally flexible and open to risk?
 - Are they likely to miss critical details or underestimate the need for formal, focused planning?

Partner Discussion

Let's take 5 Minutes

- **Choose a partner**
- **Think about some of the strategies we've discussed for improving impact with your team members**
- **What are one (1) or two (2) changes you could make to:**
 - Increase the impact you're having with development work?
 - What information about your team members would be valuable for you to know in order to create that stronger impact?
- **Share with your partner**

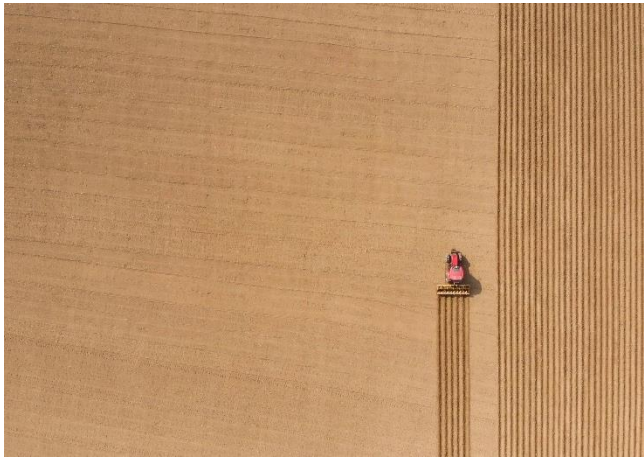


06

WRAP-UP & QUESTIONS



Final Thoughts



Focus on What We Can Control

- Improved self-awareness
- Our development
- Our professional community



Prioritize a Strong Induction Process

- Not just compulsory or functional areas
- Shared experience and professional bonding make the difference!
- Mentorship, coaching and community



Understand Your Strengths and Blind Spots

- Leverage instruments like the PI to uncover blind spots and guide development
- Strengthen mentorship and coaching through improved understanding

Thank you! Please reach out for more information!

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