A Leader's Guide to Getting More: How VIPE, DISC, and Inclusion Shape High-Performing Teams

The *Ask the Expert* session on VIPE generated insightful questions about leadership, team dynamics, and decision-making. Leaders want to know how VIPE scores relate to DISC assessments, how to balance strengths, and how to lead effectively through complexity. This article explores these questions using research from *A Leader's Guide to Getting More*, linking key leadership concepts to practical applications.

by Cortex Leadership Consulting

Understanding and Applying VIPE Scores

How Do VIPE and DISC Relate?

One of the most frequently asked questions was whether VIPE scores align with DISC assessments. The answer? Yes! Here's how they connect based on the Cortex research of more than 7,000 leaders and their teams in comparing their VIPE scores with their DISC results:

Drivers (High D in DISC) → Visionaries (V in VIPE)

These individuals have a higher likelihood to be bigger-picture thinkers who push boundaries and set ambitious goals.

Influencers (High I in DISC) → Ideators (I in VIPE)

They generate creative solutions, love brainstorming, and inspire teams.

Steady Individuals (High S in DISC) → Planners (P in VIPE)

They excel at structuring ideas into actionable plans and ensuring feasibility.

Compliant Individuals (High C in DISC) → Executors (E in VIPE)

They focus on results, execution, and ensuring that plans are completed efficiently.

Should Leaders Focus on Improving Low VIPE Scores?

Rather than viewing low VIPE scores as weaknesses, leaders should focus on leveraging their strengths and collaborating with others who complement them. Teams that balance all four VIPE strengths—Visionary, Ideator, Planner, and Executor—are more likely to achieve sustained success.

Do VIPE Scores Change Based on Mood or Mindset?

Absolutely. Research suggests that when leaders are in the **Dreaded Drama Triangle (DDT) mindset**, they are more reactive and may struggle to innovate. However, shifting to the **Empowerment Dynamic (TED)** mindset allows for proactive leadership, encouraging creativity and collaboration.

Leadership, Inclusion, and Team Dynamics

How Can Leaders Effectively Practice Inclusion?

Leaders asked how to practice inclusion effectively. The *10 Rules of Inclusion* outlined in *A Leader's Guide to Getting More* offer a structured approach. Some of the most impactful rules include:

1 Setting Clear Expectations

Define norms for participation and decision-making.

2 Timed Rounding

Give each team member a chance to speak, ensuring all voices are heard.

3 Replacing "Yes, but..." with "Yes, and..."

This small shift encourages ideation and problem-solving.

How to Assert Yourself in Senior Leadership Discussions

One question focused on *Rule 10* of inclusion—asserting oneself in a room of senior leaders. The key? **Use proactive language** to trigger ideation and engagement:

Instead of saying, **"We should consider this idea,"** say, **"I commit to exploring this further."**

Replace **"I need to achieve this,"** with **"I will achieve this."**

Shifting from reactive to **proactive** language fosters confidence and influence.

Balancing Leadership Strengths and Decision-Making

Should Leaders Step Back from Certain Discussions?

Leaders often wonder if they should step back from meetings where their strengths may slow progress. The answer depends on the phase of the project:

Visionaries (V)

Should guide the vision but avoid micromanaging execution.

Ideators (I)

Should participate in brainstorming but recognize when planning must take over.

Planners (P)

Should structure ideas but avoid over-analyzing.

Executors (E)

Should focus on implementation but remain open to innovation.

How to Evaluate and Communicate Team Strengths

Evaluating VIPE strengths can help leaders understand how to allocate responsibilities. Here's a simple evaluation framework:

Identify each team member's primary VIPE strength

Observe team dynamics

Who naturally drives vision? Who excels at structuring? Who gets things done?

Have open discussions

Communicate strengths and how they contribute to team success.

Use a team report

Similar to DISC's team assessment, mapping VIPE strengths helps ensure a well-balanced team.

Leading Through Complexity and High-Pressure Situations

What Are the Key Leadership Behaviors in High-Pressure Situations?

Great leaders display three critical behaviors during complex challenges:

1. **Emotional Agility**
   They shift from a reactive mindset to an empowered one.
2. **Curiosity and Inclusion**
   They ask open-ended questions and encourage diverse perspectives.
3. **Decisiveness with Flexibility**
   They set a vision but adjust based on new insights.

What to Do When a Team is Stuck in Ideation?

Leaders often ask: *What do you do when a team can't move beyond brainstorming?* The **7-Step Decision Framework** can help:

1. **Identify the issue**
   Acknowledge that the team is stuck.
2. **Discover concerns**
   Why is the team struggling to move forward?
3. **Define success**
   What will it look like when the team has clarity?
4. **Pinpoint the biggest obstacle**
   What's the main roadblock?
5. **Brainstorm multiple solutions**
   List 5-10 ways to break the stalemate.
6. **Select the best option**
   Choose the most actionable step.
7. **Set a SMART goal**
   Ensure it is **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound**.

Complex Situations and VIPE: A Real-World Example

One of the most common questions was: *What's an example of a complex situation where VIPE is useful?*

Case Study: Engineering Firm Overcoming "Innovation Constipation"

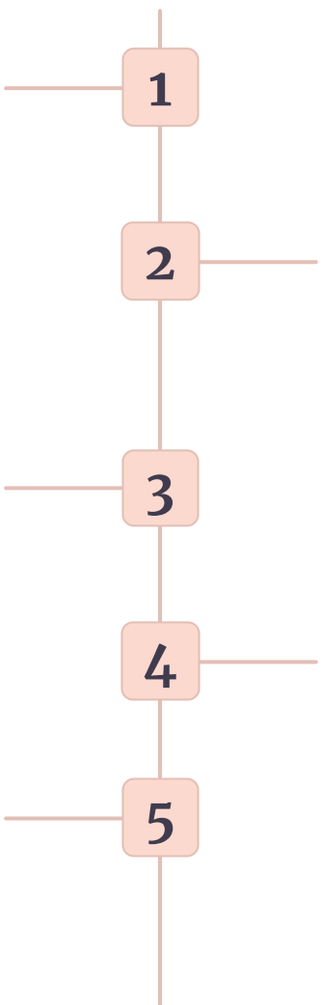
A large engineering firm struggled with stalled projects. Visionaries kept revising plans, while Executors pushed for immediate action without a solid strategy. The leadership team used VIPE to **align their strengths:**

1. **Visionaries set a 5-year strategy**
2. **Ideators facilitated brainstorming sessions**
3. **Planners structured a roadmap for implementation**
4. **Executors focused on measurable milestones**

By using VIPE to balance strengths, the team improved execution speed and reduced friction.

Actionable Next Steps for Leaders

To make these insights practical, EPIC participants can follow these key steps:



Step 1: Take the DISC & VIPE Assessments

Understand your leadership style and provide the assessment for your team (free for Cortex clients and EPIC participants)

Step 2: Implement the 7-Step Framework

Guide decision-making with a structured approach

Step 3: Master Proactive Language

Encourage ideation and collaboration with better communication

Step 4: Balance Team Strengths

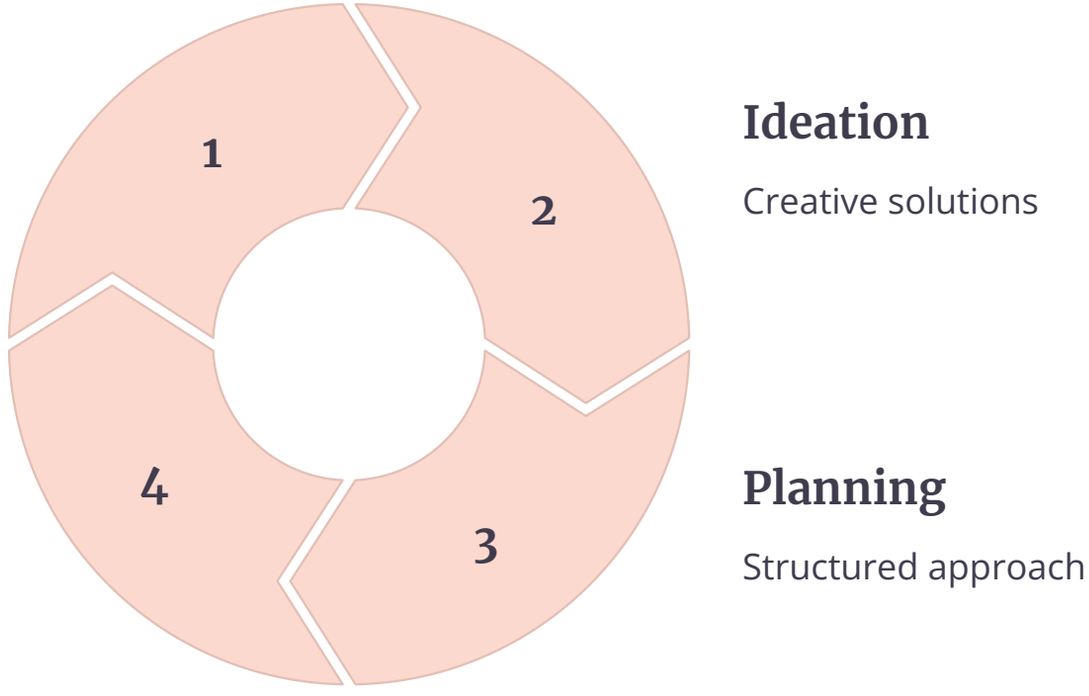
Ensure vision, planning, and execution are aligned for optimal results

Step 5: Foster Inclusive Practices

Create a psychologically safe and innovative workplace

Each step builds upon the previous one to create a comprehensive approach to effective leadership.

Final Thoughts: The Key to High-Performing Teams

The best teams don't rely on a single leadership style—they **balance strengths** across Vision, Ideation, Planning, and Execution. Leaders who understand their DISC and VIPE profiles can **leverage their strengths, adapt their approach, and create an inclusive culture that fosters innovation**.

By following these strategies, EPIC participants can **unlock the full potential of their teams, drive innovation, and lead with confidence**.