

"Taking Flight! is packed with life-changing insights about you and everyone you know. You'll never look at people quite the same way again."

—**MARSHALL GOLDSMITH**,
Author of *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*

Discover
your true potential
like millions of others
who've taken our
online DISC profile.

Taking Flight!

Master the DISC Styles to Transform
Your Career, Your Relationships...Your Life



Merrick Rosenberg & Daniel Silvert

PRAISE FOR *TAKING FLIGHT!*

“*Taking Flight!* is an instant classic that will forever change how you see yourself and interact with others. The engaging fable that opens the book—and the enlightening discussion that follows—should be read by anyone seeking growth and success.”

—**Ken Blanchard**, coauthor of *The One Minute Manager*

“This wonderful book contains the secrets to nurturing supportive and enduring relationships. *Taking Flight!* will enrich your life by guiding you to understand and celebrate differences.”

—**John Gray**, author of *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*

“*Taking Flight!* is fun to read, but make no mistake—the lessons here are both practical and far reaching. This book is a real eye-opener.”

—**Jon Housman**, CEO, Ora.tv

“As an educator, I found *Taking Flight!* to be a book that will teach students important principles for everyday life. I will make this book mandatory for my students.”

—**Stan Kligman**, Clinical Professor of Marketing, Drexel University

“Rosenberg and Silvert write with humor, eloquence, and practicality—a rare combination. *Taking Flight!* got me looking at relationships from a whole new perspective.”

—**Pam Levine**, Executive Vice President of Marketing, HBO

“This book should be read by teachers, parents, or anyone who wants to impact others in a meaningful way.”

—**Michael Kozak**, Superintendent of Franklin Township Schools, New Jersey

“*Taking Flight!* offers incredible insight into why we say and do the things we do. We have applied this wisdom to our work team and have seen tremendous results. Definitely more than just another management book for your shelves.”

—**Del Ross**, Vice President, Americas Sales & Marketing,
InterContinental Hotels Group

“This cleverly crafted fable demonstrates how the DISC system can break down the walls that too often separate co-workers. *Taking Flight!* is all you need to kick-start collaboration.”

—**Frank Wander**, Chief Information Officer, Guardian Life Insurance Company

“*Taking Flight!* is destined to become the definitive work on the DISC styles.”

—**Salvatore LoDico**, Vice President, Human Resources,
Agusta Aerospace Corporation

“*This* is the kind of book that changes corporate culture.”

—**Lani Davis**, Manager, Human Resources, L-3 Tinsley

“Until now, there has been a void in literature that makes the concepts of DISC easily accessible. *Taking Flight!* fills that void. I will be making *Taking Flight!* a part of all my workshops.”

—**Bart Puglisi**, Vice President, Talent Management, Penske Truck Leasing

“What a wonderfully insightful way to understand relationships. While there is terrific material in here for anyone in the corporate world, I find myself applying its lessons everywhere. *Taking Flight!* is a gem of a book and I will recommend it far and wide.”

—**Monique Garret**, Head of Global Marketing, Octagon Research

“As an HR professional, I have been using the DISC styles for many years. *Taking Flight!* is a great vehicle for either introducing or re-enforcing this powerful model for understanding human behavior. The fable is fun and illuminates the styles in a clever way. The application section is packed with smart analysis and easy-to-apply DISC strategies. In a short number of pages, Rosenberg and Silvert have delivered both a highly readable and in-depth resource.”

—**Marda Kornhaber**, Director of Human Resources, ITT

“Finally, an easy-to-read resource that millions of DISC users can reference to improve their relationship management skills. From the parable-like story that defines the major behavioral styles, to the concrete applications of DISC scores, *Taking Flight!* is packed with insights and easy to apply. Managers will want to keep copies handy for new employees, and consultants/trainers will find this a very useful tool for their clients.”

—**Leonard S. Altamura**, former President/CEO,
Steininger Behavioral Care Services

“In *Taking Flight!*, authors Merrick Rosenberg and Dan Silvert have provided an insightful and entertaining allegory for today’s often complex business environment. A modern business fable that guides managers to identify, understand, and blend individuals’ characteristics and compatibilities into an effective team.”

—**Gary M. Ilkka**, Vice President, Human Resources, Emerson Electric Co.

TAKING FLIGHT!

MASTER THE DISC STYLES TO TRANSFORM
YOUR CAREER, YOUR RELATIONSHIPS...
YOUR LIFE

MERRICK ROSENBERG
DANIEL SILVERT

Vice President, Publisher: Tim Moore
Associate Publisher and Director of Marketing: Amy Neidlinger
Acquisitions Editor and Marketing Manager: Megan Graue
Editorial Assistant: Pamela Boland
Development Editor: Russ Hall
Operations Specialist: Jodi Kemper
Cover Designer: Chuti Prasertsith
Managing Editor: Kristy Hart
Senior Project Editor: Lori Lyons
Copy Editor: Chrissy White, Language Logistics, LLC
Proofreader: Sheri Cain
Interior Designer/Composer: Gloria Schurick
Manufacturing Buyer: Dan Uhrig

© 2013 by Take Flight Partners, LLC
Pearson Education, Inc.
Publishing as FT Press
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

FT Press offers excellent discounts on this book when ordered in quantity for bulk purchases or special sales. For more information, please contact U.S. Corporate and Government Sales, 1-800-382-3419, corpsales@pearsontechgroup.com. For sales outside the U.S., please contact International Sales at international@pearsoned.com.

Company and product names mentioned herein are the trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

Sixth Printing: October 2014 with corrections June 2015

ISBN-10: 0-13-312129-1

ISBN-13: 978-0-13-312129-2

Pearson Education LTD.

Pearson Education Australia PTY, Limited.

Pearson Education Singapore, Pte. Ltd.

Pearson Education Asia, Ltd.

Pearson Education Canada, Ltd.

Pearson Educación de México, S.A. de C.V.

Pearson Education—Japan

Pearson Education Malaysia, Pte. Ltd.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Rosenberg, Merrick.

Taking flight! : master the DISC styles and transform your career, your relationships-- your life / by Merrick Rosenberg and Daniel Silvert.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-13-312129-2 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Personality assessment. 2. Interpersonal relations. 3. Interpersonal conflict. I. Silvert, Daniel. II. Title.

BF698.4.R62 2013

158.2--dc23

2012023618

*Traci, your insight, support, and unconditional love
are the wind beneath my wings.*

Gavin and Ben, thanks for being who you are.

—Merrick

For Cindy, your love and humor fill my life with joy.

For Eden, Benjamin, and Jakob.

—Daniel

Contents

Introduction 1

PART I: TAKING FLIGHT! THE FABLE 5

Chapter 1	Home	7
Chapter 2	The Forest Grid	11
Chapter 3	The Council	15
Chapter 4	An Old Friend	25
Chapter 5	The Aftermath	35
Chapter 6	If a Tree Falls in the Forest...	39
Chapter 7	Reconnaissance	47
Chapter 8	The Four Styles	55
Chapter 9	Reflection	63
Chapter 10	The Awakening	71
Chapter 11	The Home Rule	77
Chapter 12	The Stakeout	93
Chapter 13	The Gathering	107
Epilogue	The Power of DISC	113

PART II: THE *DISC* MODEL 117

- Go Online to Discover Your Style 120
- The History and Mystery of the Four Styles 122
- The Four Styles 123
- People Reading 127
- Seven Transformative *DISC* Principles 133

**PART III: APPLYING THE *DISC* STYLES
IN YOUR LIFE** 155

- Steps for Reaching Your Highest Potential 157
- DISC* for Selecting an Educational and Career Path 165
- DISC* in the Work Environment 170
- Tapping the Power of Style in Teams 174
- DISC* for Teaching and Coaching 185
- Educating with *DISC* 187
- Better Parenting with *DISC* 190
- DISC* Action Planning 198
- DISC* Mapping 203
- Postscript 201
- Appendix: Style Combinations 211

This page intentionally left blank

Acknowledgments

We are very lucky to have had many talented and caring people walk with us on our journey. Our co-workers at Team Builders Plus and Take Flight Learning—most notably, Jeff Backal, Ken Blackwell, Cathryn Plum, Stew Bolno, Aaren Perry, Andy Kraus, Lesley Cruz, Dolores Woodington, Heather Hafner, Andrea Bardon, and Britni Coleman—have been enormously supportive in helping this book take flight. To our parents, family, and friends, you have all contributed in ways you will never know.

Special thanks to Traci Rosenberg for her intuitive wisdom and to our talented editors, Cindy Silvert and Melissa Brandzel, whose owl-like clarity humbled a parrot and an eagle. We also want to thank Kulin Shah and the graphic artists at 3RDEYE for bringing the characters to life and to Todd Nordstrom for his insights.

Thank you to our publisher, Tim Moore and his team, for having the vision to put this book out there as only Pearson can. And last, thank you to Richard Andrews, whose passion and steadfast commitment successfully guided this book through every stage of the publishing journey.

About the Authors

Merrick Rosenberg, M.B.A., is an accomplished entrepreneur and keynote speaker. In 1991, he co-founded Team Builders Plus, the most recognized team-building company in the United States. Merrick has led team and leadership development training programs around the world for more than two decades. Drexel University honored Merrick as the Alumni Entrepreneur of the Year, and *NJ Biz* selected him as one of the New Jersey Executives of the Year. Under Merrick's leadership, Team Builders Plus was recognized as the New Jersey Business of the Year by *NJ Biz*, one of the Fastest Growing Companies in the U.S. by *Inc.* magazine, and on numerous occasions, as one of the Fastest Growing Companies and Best Places to Work in the Philadelphia region by the *Philadelphia Business Journal*.

Daniel Silvert, B.A., is the President of Velocity Advisory Group. A sought after speaker, executive coach, and facilitator, Daniel has led organizational developmental programs at every level on the DISC styles, leadership, teamwork, and accountability.

Daniel has consulted organizations through merger/acquisition cultural integrations, building greater accountability into workplace culture, effective communication through behavioral style awareness, leading change, and executive coaching.

Take Flight Learning

Based on more than two decades of experience with the DISC styles, the authors co-founded Take Flight Learning to share DISC with the world. Take Flight Learning offers a variety of DISC training programs, products, and services. DISC sessions can be conducted for organizations (including programs for individuals, teams, leaders, salespeople, and educators), trainers (through the *Take Flight with DISC Certification*), and in public seminars. Merrick Rosenberg and Daniel Silvert are available as keynote speakers to enliven conferences with DISC wit and wisdom. And individuals can discover their strengths and challenges through the *Take Flight with DISC* profile.

Team Builders Plus

Team Builders Plus helps teams and leaders create more engaging and productive work environments. Team-building sessions range from team bonding events to facilitated interventions. On the lighter side, groups of just about any size can participate in treasure hunts, philanthropic activities, and an assortment of programs that are just plain fun. More intensive sessions are also available for groups who seek to build trust, improve communication, increase collaboration, break down silos, and instill accountability.

Velocity Advisory Group

At Velocity Advisory Group, we believe that high performing organizations successfully execute strategy, develop leaders, and are intentional about their culture. From Fortune 100 companies to nonprofits, we have guided organizations to greater workplace engagement, productivity, and success.

Learn more and connect with the authors:

ChiefParrot@TakeFlightLearning.com
(In case you're wondering, this is Merrick Rosenberg.)

www.velocityadvisorygroup.com

daniel@velocityadvisorygroup.com

Follow us Twitter at @DISCstyles, @MerrickR, and @DanielSilvert

www.TakeFlightLearning.com

856.807.0200

www.TeamBuildersPlus.com

856.596.4196

Like Take Flight Learning, Team Builders Plus, and Velocity Advisory Group on Facebook

Connect with the Taking Flight with DISC and Team Builders Plus LinkedIn groups

Introduction

Sometimes we discover a pattern so obvious and predictable that we can't believe we hadn't noticed it before. Imagine if this pattern could provide a blueprint for better understanding yourself and every person with whom you interact.

Such a framework exists through a simple four-style model of behavior known as *DISC*. The pattern is hidden in everything we do, and it might just be the most powerful tool you ever discover because it will enable you to maximize your potential and deepen your connection with everyone you know.

If you're already one of the millions of people familiar with the *DISC* behavioral styles, the principles shared in *Taking Flight!* will elevate your understanding to a whole new level. If you haven't yet been introduced to the four styles of *DISC*, brace yourself for impact: This knowledge will change your life!

In our work with hundreds of companies and tens of thousands of people from all walks of life, we have witnessed phenomenal transformations in people. We have watched mediocre managers evolve into highly effective leaders, teams mired in conflict resolve years of pent-up stress, floundering salespeople transform into superstars, frustrated teachers become inspirational educators, and countless careers revitalized and redirected by individuals who have learned how to fully leverage their natural gifts. As they replaced judgment with acceptance, couples have told us that understanding *DISC* saved their marriages, and parents have approached us with joy and relief at better understanding their children.

Whether you're interacting with coworkers or customers, family members or friends, *DISC* will empower you to better relate with others. You will soon understand why you click with some people and clank with others. Moreover, you will gain a valuable framework for maximizing your strengths and minimizing your weaknesses.

What you are about to read is not just a story about birds. At its heart, *Taking Flight!* is about *you*. Although you might not notice it at first, before long you will quickly recognize yourself in these pages. *Taking Flight!* is about why you react to your family, friends, and coworkers the way you do. It's also about how you respond to the world around you and what drives your decisions and actions. And, it's about how you can use this newfound knowledge in the future.

As you read, consider what *you* would do in the birds' situation and think about what that says about who *you* are, how you behave, and how you perceive and respond to the people in your life. Yes, this is just a story. But it's also a representation of your life. Believe it or not, you are one of the birds in this story. The question is, which one?

Is there a character in the story who acts like you?

Perhaps one of them reminds you of someone you know.

Do you find yourself cheering for one of the birds?

Do any of the characters push your buttons?

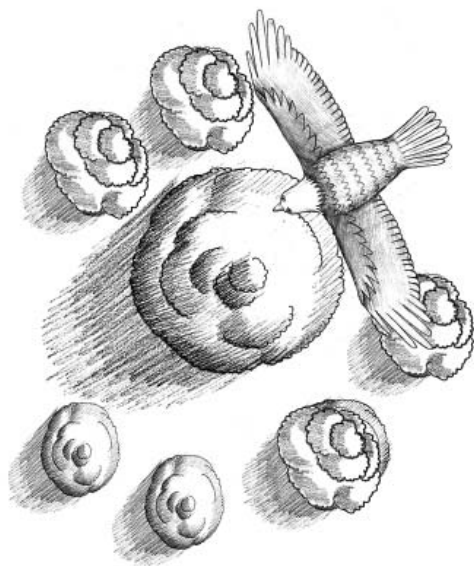
Birds know that in order to fly, they must first take a leap. They must jump from the secure branch that grounds them and head into the unknown that lies ahead.

If we wish to soar and reach new heights in our closest relationships, in our business careers, and in all aspects of our life, we too must take a leap. We all know that birds can *Take Flight*. The question is, can you?

This page intentionally left blank

C H A P T E R 1

Home



It began with a subtle crackling sound—hardly noticeable at first. Branches vibrated as the ground trembled below. Leaves shimmered. Suddenly, a booming snap echoed through the forest as the tree swayed one last time in the morning sun. Within seconds, the mighty tree would no longer provide shade for ground animals or shelter for birds. The two-hundred-foot giant hurtled downward, crashing to earth with a deafening thud.

An aftershock of anxiety rippled deep within the forest, known simply as “Home.” To the diverse community of birds that dwelled there, Home was a place of safety and serenity. Here, fearsome eagles interacted with kind doves, and boisterous parrots mingled with watchful owls.

High above it all flew Dorian, a majestic eagle with a proud, sharp gaze and impressive seven-foot wingspan. From sunup to sundown, Dorian patrolled the skies. The mighty eagle felt a great sense of responsibility to ensure the security for all those who lived below. On this day, however, his sixth sense alerted him that something unusual had occurred. But what was it? Instinctively, his sharp eye and decisiveness kicked into a higher gear.

With focused attention, Dorian flew over a family of doves sharing quiet conversation. He noticed Samuel and Sarah sitting on their usual dependable branch preparing a meal for a friend. Their soft white and grey feathers blended seamlessly into their surroundings. Sarah was hatched in this tree, as was her mother, and her mother before her.

Typically, Dorian would hear soft cooing in sweet rhythmic tones as he glided past Samuel and Sarah's branch. The eagle never quite understood why so many birds went to the dove family tree to seek companionship, advice, and comfort.

But today, no cooing could be heard. The echoing thud had rattled the doves, and the resulting silence spoke volumes to Dorian.

The eagle continued his daily patrol and made certain to watch for Man or any other intruders. The birds enjoyed great harmony in their world, and Dorian intended to keep it that way.

He soared over the Great Lake and spotted a group of parrots. Though not large in number, they seemed to be *everywhere*. With a burst of red here and a flash of yellow there, parrot laughter reverberated from one end of the forest to the other. Dorian listened in for a few minutes as the parrots amused themselves with their usual banter.

“Hey everybody!” belted Indy, widely recognized as the forest’s biggest personality. “Let’s fly!”

“Where are we headed?” asked Ivy.

“We’ll figure it out when we get there,” Indy replied.

Passing just below, Dorian heard Indy remind the group, *“Life’s no fun when there’s work to be done. But we can make it better if we do it together. Yeah!”*

“That darn parrot motto. They are such time wasters,” thought Dorian as he scanned the forest below. “Don’t they realize that we need to figure this out right now?” If only they could just channel that parrot energy into something constructive.”