

## Trucking Safety: "S" is for the Safe Driver

Have you ever wondered why some drivers seem to be accident prone and others have never caused an accident? Would you like to know you're getting safe drivers before you hire them?

Safety research shows you can determine driver applicants' probability of causing future accidents by determining their behavioral style and attitudes. (Source: Behavioral and Values Associates, 1993.)

A behavioral assessment measures a person's 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 company and federal rules and regulations set by others.

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 S factor.

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

People with a Core S style tend to be steady, reliable, patient, and mild mannered. They're genuinely nice people who care about serving others. And they're safety conscious because their number one psychological need is to be safe and secure.

Drivers with a Core S factor can sit for hours without feeling antsy or restless. They can make good, steady time on the road without feeling stressed. They could drive even longer than regulations allow with less boredom and fatigue than those low in this style.

Drivers with a low S factor tend to be active, restless, and mobile and feel stressed when they have to sit for hours at a time. They need more frequent breaks than their Core S counterparts. They tend to drive faster and get distracted more easily.

Trucking companies that hire drivers with a high S factor have reduced accidents, costs, workers' comp claims, and turnover. This is the driver you want to hire and retain.

A driver who also has both high S and high C behavioral styles is the ideal driver. Look for my next article on the Core C driver, who's cautious and compliant to high standards.

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