

## Retrospective: team communication and personalities

Some time ago, I experimented with some team retros to start discussion and exploration on our communication and the team's personalities. After a few tries I came up with this small format. It helped me and my teams getting a swift feeling on each other do's & don'ts and a to create a general team vibe. You can use this format either at a new team formation or whenever you are looking for an alternative retro.

### Invite & preparation

This format starts with an explicit invite and personal preparation. Thinking on your individual story and using the results to formulate your ideas before the session gives people a head start and saves time during the session. In case new topics do come up, you can always still on-board them on the fly. For the Scrum Master this phase means collecting and preparing all the inputs and making sure they are available during the session.

Hi all,

Next Monday we will use our retro to reflect on ourselves as persons, the team and the way we communicate. In order to have a fruitful session I am asking you all to do a little preparation.

Preparation:

**Step 1: Reflect on yourself and the team:**

- Complete: <https://www.123test.com/personality-test> (max 5 min)
- Complete: <https://www.123test.com/disc-personality-test> (max 5 min)
- Think about your place in the team and what you find challenging or good in the collaboration and communication
- Send the visual & textual summary to me in pdf or screenshot

*Note: Perhaps you have done assessments or tests before. Of course, you can use these results also as inspiration.*

**Step 2: Prepare a personal pitch (max 2 minutes)**

- What do I like or dislike in terms of communications and collaboration and a few remarks on "How to work with me"
- 2 or 3 topics we could improve in our team setup
- Send these topics to me as well

Retro format:

**Step 3: Personal pitches**

- 2 min pitch, the test results will be available to support your talks
- Don't forget to include the improvement topics in your pitch

**Step 4: How can we improve as a team?**

- Overview of all team members
- Decide on topics to discuss further

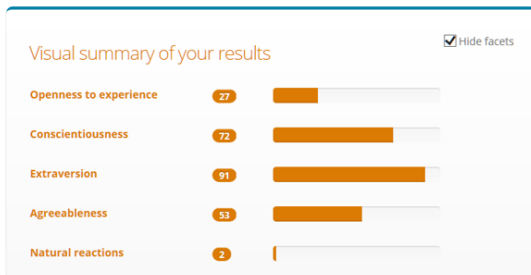
**Step 5: Come up with actions & agreements**

Cheers,  
 Your friendly neighborhood Scrum Master

### The actual retro

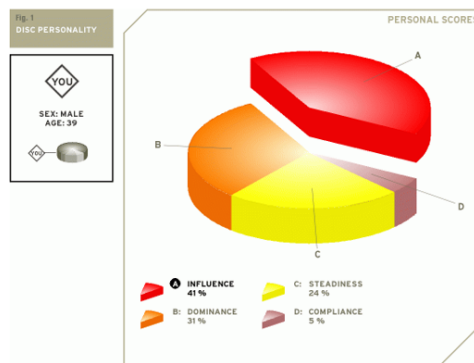
All team members do their personal pitch with the help of their preparation and a personal page provided by the Scrum Master. Sometimes teams are a bit shy to start. So it can be a good idea as a facilitator to start by setting the example and presenting your own slide. Usually other team members will come up with questions and then the session is kick started easily.

## Individual page



### Textual summary of your report

The Big Five Factors	Describing a low range scoring person...	Percentile	Range	Describing a high range scoring person...
<b>Openness to experience</b>	Traditionalist • down-to-earth • practical • conservative	27	Low	Imaginative • open-minded • experimental
<b>Conscientiousness (Work Ethic)</b>	Spontaneous • disorganised • prefers flexible plans	72	High	Conscientious • disciplined • efficient • well organised
<b>Extraversion</b>	Reserved • formal • serious • quiet	91	High	Outgoing • friendly • assertive • likes working with others
<b>Agreeableness</b>	Hard-headed • sceptical • competitive • proud	53	Middle	Compassionate • eager to please • good natured
<b>Natural reactions</b>	Not easily upset in stressful situations • relaxed	2	Very low	Experiences negative emotional reactions and feelings of anxiety • prone to worry



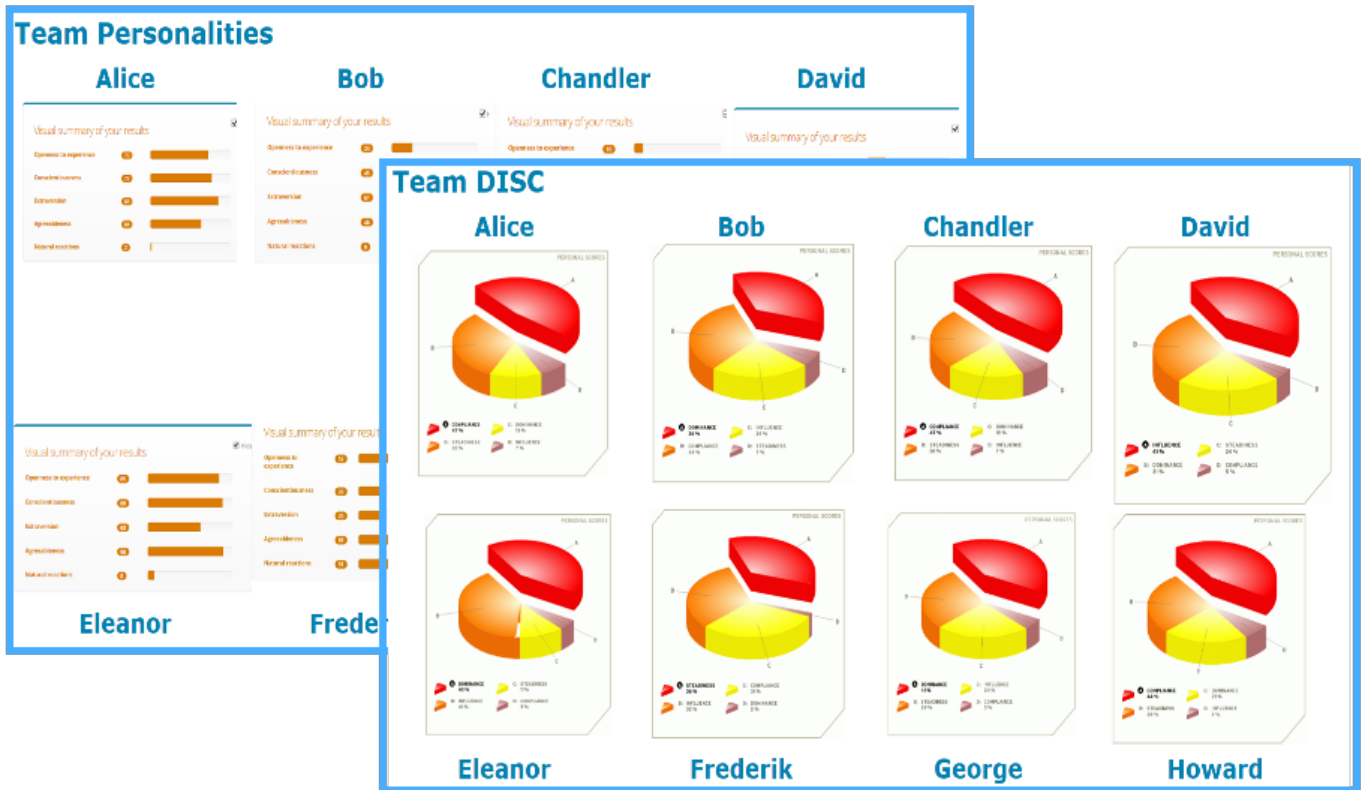
### DISC Personality Model

To help you understand the DISC model of personality here are definitions of the four factors measured.

- Dominance** Describes the way you deal with problems, assert yourself and control situations.
- Influence** Describes the way you deal with people, the way you communicate and relate to others.
- Steadiness** Describes your temperament - patience, persistence, and thoughtfulness
- Compliance** Describes how you approach and organize your activity, procedures and responsibilities.

## Team overview

After everybody has had his turn, you can present the team overview. The more diverse the better. A picture can tell a story but the value for me is in the interaction and flow that is created during the retro. Besides, most teams like to see their team picture! Based on the kind of tests you have selected for your team, you can get different options for visualization of course. There is no need for expensive material or assessment centers. Start with the options that are easy to use and for free (like the ones I have used).



Note: in the end it does not really matter which tests you use. This approach as such helps people thinking and talking about themselves. Although the graphs merely act as conversation starters, they do tell you a thing or two about the team.....

Have fun!