

One approach to understanding personality is using trait theories. The most influential trait approach contends that five traits, or factors called the "Big 5," lie at the core of personality. The five factors are Openness, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism (Emotional Stability).

This week, you will complete two different versions of the Big 5 Personality Test. First, go through the Qualtrics platform (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. to take the complete test online (note – you will not receive results from the online assessment as this portion of the assignment is more about the experience of taking this type of assessment online). After you have completed the online test, you will see a link to download the Big Five Personality Short Form document version. Click the link and save the Big Five Personality Short Form document to your computer. Complete and score the short form version within the downloaded document. Once you have completed both the online and document versions attach the completed document short form to your initial post. In the discussion forum analyze and briefly explain the Big 5 Personality Test as a scientific tool. Detail your experience with both the online and document versions and give your opinion as to which of the two provided the better experience. Be sure to cite specific reasons for your statements.

Using the PSY600 Making Sense of the Big 5 Personality Short Form  tool as a guide, analyze the results from your document version. (Note: This is for educational purposes. There is no right or wrong personality type.) Assess how accurate the results are based on your understanding of yourself and the results as analyzed. Refute any areas with which you disagree providing examples which may disprove the assessment results. Evaluate the contemporary applications of personality tests today using the information provided in the United States Office of Personnel Management (n.d.) article on assessment and selection. Assess how knowing one's personality type can benefit them personally and professionally.

U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

ASSESSMENT & SELECTION OTHER ASSESSMENT METHODS

Personality Tests

Resources

Personality tests are designed to systematically elicit information about a person's motivations, preferences, interests, emotional make-up, and style of interacting with people and situations. Personality measures can be in the form of interviews, in-basket exercises, observer ratings, or self-report inventories (i.e., questionnaires).

Personality self-report inventories typically ask applicants to rate their level of agreement with a series of statements designed to measure their standing on relatively stable personality traits. This information is used to generate a profile used to predict job performance or satisfaction with certain aspects of the work.

Personality is described using a combination of traits or dimensions. Therefore, it is ill-advised to use a measure that taps only one specific dimension (e.g., conscientiousness). Rather, job performance outcomes are usually best predicted by a combination of personality scales. For example, people high in integrity may follow the rules and be easy to supervise but they may not be good at providing customer service because they are not outgoing, patient, and friendly. The personality traits most frequently assessed in work situations include: (1) Extroversion, (2) Emotional Stability, (3) Agreeableness, (4) Conscientiousness, and (5) Openness to Experience. These five personality traits are often referred to collectively as the Big Five or the Five-Factor Model. While these are the most commonly measured traits, the specific factors most predictive of job performance will depend on the job in question. When selecting or developing a personality scale, it is useful to begin with inventories that tap the Big Five, but the results from a validity study may indicate some of these traits are more relevant than others in predicting job performance.

It is important to recognize some personality tests are designed to diagnose psychiatric conditions (e.g., paranoia, schizophrenia, compulsive disorders) rather than work-related personality traits. The Americans with Disabilities Act considers any test designed to reveal such psychiatric disorders as a "medical examination." Examples of such medical tests include the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and the Millon Clinical Multi-Axial Inventory (MCMI). Generally speaking, personality tests used to make employment decisions should be specifically designed for use with normal adult populations. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, personality tests meeting the definition of a medical examination may only be administered after an offer of employment has been made.

Considerations

- Validity - Personality tests have been shown to be valid predictors of job performance (i.e., they have an acceptable level of criterion-related validity) in numerous settings and for a wide range of criterion types (e.g., overall performance, customer service, team work), but tend to be less valid than other types of predictors such as cognitive ability tests, assessment centers, and work samples and simulations
- Face Validity/Applicant Reactions - May contain items that do not appear to be job related (i.e., low face validity) or seem to reveal applicants' private thoughts and feelings; Applicants may react to personality tests as being unnecessarily invasive; Items may also be highly transparent, making it easy for applicants to fake or distort test scores in their favor
- Administration Method - Can be administered via paper and pencil or electronically
- Subgroup Differences - Generally, few, if any, average score differences are found between men and women or applicants of different races or ethnicities, therefore it is beneficial to use a personality

measure when another measure with greater potential for adverse impact (e.g., cognitive ability test) is included in the selection process

- Development Costs - Cost of purchasing a personality test is typically less expensive than developing a customized test
- Administration Costs - Generally inexpensive, requires few resources for administration, and does not require skilled administrators
- Utility/ROI - High return on investment if you need applicants who possess strong interpersonal skills or other job-related specific personality traits
- Common Uses - Typically used to measure whether applicants have the potential to be successful in jobs where performance requires a great deal of interpersonal interaction or work in team settings; Less useful for highly scripted jobs where personality has little room to take effect; Frequently administered to large groups of applicants as a screen

References

(See [Section VI](#) for a summary of each article)

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The [Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology \(SIOP\) website](#) contains information on Personality Tests.

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- Reference Checking
- Situational Judgment Test
- Structured Interviews
- Training and Experience
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Related Methods

- Background Evaluation/Investigation
- Job Fit Measures
- Physical Ability Tests
- Realistic Job Previews

Related Information

- See an example of a personality test item. (PDF file)

Chapter 7: The Personologists

from *Key Thinkers in Psychology*

[View article on Credo](#)

Human beings appear to differ from one another along many dimensions. Some people are gloomy and pessimistic. Others are cheerful and optimistic. There are shy people and there are ebullient people. There are submissive people and aggressive people. Attributes like these are the marks of differences in personality. Are they permanent traits of people, or do they come and go with the situations people find themselves in? How are we to explain the differences between presentations of self of different people in the same situations and the same person in different situations? Is a 'scientific' personology possible, in the sense of the possibility of the discovery of lawful relations between personality traits and the types of situations in which they are displayed? Are personality traits, if they exist, explanatory of human behaviour? The authors whose lives and works are to be discussed in this chapter had very different views on these questions. Some believed in the existence of traits, others thought the very idea incoherent.

The 'humours' theory of human types, originating in antiquity, had held sway in Europe for at least a millennium. According to this classification, there were four basic human personality types: choleric, phlegmatic, melancholic and sanguine. The terminology is still in use today in the vernacular. The four temperaments were grounded in the physiology of the four humours. These were believed to be constituents of the human body, which varied in proportions from person to person and from time to time. A person in whom the hot and dry humours predominated was choleric, the cold and dry person was melancholic and so on. With the demise of the physiology of humours, theoretical support for the ancient quadruple personology collapsed, though it has survived as a commonsense classification.

The 20th century saw a revival of interest in the psychology of personality, led by **Gordon Allport**. In the first chapter of his (1961) book, he frames the study of personality in a general conceptual scheme. There he distinguishes personality from character, and both from temperament. He introduced the concept of 'trait' as the main analytical tool, though with subtlety and appropriate reservations against its misuse. Allport's books were amongst the earliest to address the question of a scientific personology. They are still of outstanding intellectual quality. Reading his *Pattern and Growth in Personality* (1961), one has to remind oneself how long ago it was published, so relevant is it to the 21st century. Most of the work published after the Second World War has used methods presupposing positivistic philosophy of science and relying on dubious statistical inferences. Anticipations of most of the current criticisms of these attempts at a 'scientific' study of personality are already to be found in Allport's writings.

Allport's work straddles the rise and decline of the trait theory of personality. He was largely responsible for introducing the concept in the 1930s and in the 1960s provided the most telling criticisms of the misuses of the concept by people like his erstwhile colleague, **Raymond Cattell**. **Hans Eysenck** was surely the most widely read British psychologist in the 20th century. However, as we shall see, he was among those whose work has proved most vulnerable to the kind of criticisms made by Allport and others. While 'personality' was the main topic of research for both Cattell and Eysenck, each undertook studies of other major dimensions or groups of dimensions along which they presumed people differed intrinsically, for example 'intelligence'. Here we are concerned mainly with their contributions to personality research.

Allport's emphasis on the complexity of the explanatory 'packages' required to understand people's behaviour has been echoed by many later writers. For example Walter Mischel argues that 'one must take account of interaction between various qualities in the person and in the situation'. It follows that the most important research question is to ask 'when are situations more important for explaining behaviour ... when are personal variables likely to be most influential?' (Mischel, 1986: 496). However, the main research thrust in personology has been animated by a rather simple version of the concept of a 'trait'. Trait theorists have been accused not only of logical errors in their use of the concept of a trait, but also of misunderstandings of statistical methods. The most recent and telling of these criticisms can be found in the work of **James Lamiell**.

Some of those who contest the presuppositions of trait theory, that is the alleged permanence, stability and universality of traits, have tried to develop another style of personality psychology, the dramaturgical theory. According to this theory, personalities are displays, performances suited to the immediate situation and to the people therein. Personality types are like roles in a play. In accordance with the dramaturgical theory the opening paragraph should be written: When and in what circumstances is this person likely to appear gloomy and pessimistic, playing some homespun version of Hamlet? When and in what circumstances is this very same person likely to appear ebullient and optimistic, in performing some more heroic role? There is no X which any given person is. Each of us has mastered the local repertoire of personality types to some degree, and is a more or less skilful performer.

Dramaturgical theorists observe and sometimes record actual human interactions. They analyse what they have seen or heard, looking for the conventions by which appropriate personality attributes are displayed, drawn from a working repertoire, finding who makes use of them and in what circumstances. **Erving Goffman** made outstanding contributions to the study of personality as a dramatic performance.

The trait theory and the dramaturgical approach are not irreconcilable. A person who is in command of a repertoire of personality types, to be displayed in the appropriate circumstances, must be ascribed certain capacities and skills. Like traits, the form in which

capacities and skills are ascribed is conditional. 'If such and such a situation occurs including this or that type of person, X will probably display such and such a personality attribute'. X's repertoire could be expressed in a hierarchically arranged set of capacities.

Gordon Willard Allport (1897-1967)

Raymond Bernard Cattell (1905-98)

Hans Jürgen Eysenck (1916-97)

James Thomas Lamiell (1950-)

Goffman, Erving (1922-82)

Reflections

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APA

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Big Five Personality Short Form

Qualtrics Platform
Online Test i Took
(5 pages)

This is an example of an individual self-assessment of personal styles. The sample questions below allow you to indicate your personal style on each of five global trait dimensions. There is no "right" or "wrong" or "good" or "bad" side to these dimensions; rather they help you identify your stylistic disposition and potential strengths. This is similar to finding out if you are left- or right-handed. Below each global trait is an example of personal style and three related questions with some on each of the poles.

Openness

Openness is the level of a person's receptiveness to novel ideas, change, innovation, and new learning. On the continuum, this can be seen as preference for change on one end of the spectrum and preference for stability on the other.

Preference for Change You value new learning, change, and innovation and find motivation in novelty, variety, and possibilities for improvement. New tasks and new learning are stimulating and attractive to you.	Answer each of the questions listed below by marking the selection that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.					Preference for Stability You value familiarity, predictability, and precedent, and find comfort in stability, routine, and tradition. New tasks and new learning may be uninteresting or demanding for you.
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
1. The idea of lifelong learning appeals to me.	Strongly Agree				Strongly Disagree	
2. I find it fun to learn and develop new hobbies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	3. I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.

Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is the factor related to one's reliability, dependability, trustworthiness, and the inclination to follow norms and rules.

Structured		Answer each of the questions listed below by making the selection that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.					Flexible
Orderly, organized, and predictable, you strive to work according to plan and obey the rules, and you expect others to do the same. Comfortable with established procedures and policies, you appreciate reliability and conscientiousness in those around you.							Spontaneous, flexible, and adaptable, you strive to get results, by unconventional means if necessary, and feel restricted by rules and regulations. Comfortable with ambiguity, you appreciate originality and nonconformity in those around you.
1. I am very dependable and reliable in everything I do		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
2. I like to keep everything I own in its proper place.		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	3. It is hard for me to keep my bedroom neat and clean.

Extroversion

Extroversion is a tendency to be outgoing, social, expressive, and talkative.

Introverted Inward-oriented and reserved, you prefer one-to-one or small group meetings to larger groups. You like to concentrate on one task at a time in a quiet setting with few distractions. Interacting with others takes energy; you re-energize by spending time alone.	Answer each of the questions listed below by marking the selection that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.					Extroverted Outgoing, gregarious, and talkative, you enjoy meetings and gatherings of all kinds and conversations with many people. You like to work interactively on multiple tasks and don't mind interruptions. Being alone takes energy; you re-energize by spending time with people.
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	1. I am very outgoing and talkative.
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	2. I have a lot of energy when I am around other people.
3. I am a fairly quiet person in most group settings.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	

Agreeableness

Agreeableness is a propensity for working well with a team and functioning cooperatively on group tasks.

Empathetic When appraising problems and drawing conclusions, you focus on the feelings and concerns of the people involved. Empathetic and considerate, you prefer to take account of emotions and personal sensitivities in your decisions.	Answer each of the questions listed below by marking the selection that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.					Tough-Minded When appraising problems and drawing conclusions, you focus on the facts involved and an objective analysis of results and costs. Dispassionate and logical, you prefer to make decisions based on data and demonstrable impact on the bottom line.
1. I try to get along with other people, even if I don't like them.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
2. I try to be nice and polite in every situation.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	3. I don't let personal feelings get in the way when I have to make decisions involving money.

Neuroticism (Emotional Stability)

Emotional Stability has to do with a person's overall level of adjustment and the tendency to remain emotionally stable when faced with stress and pressures.

Emotionally Resilient Resilient to work pressure, you can handle high levels of job stress without becoming upset. Calm when faced with stressors and conflict, you don't internalize tensions, and you recover quickly from disappointments and setbacks.	Answer each of the questions listed below by marking the selection that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.					Emotionally Reactive Reactive to work pressure, you are drained by stress and conflict in your work environment. You respond strongly to stressors, readily internalize tensions, develop symptoms of strain, and recover slowly from setbacks.
1. I smile a lot when I am around other people.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
2. I feel good about myself most of the time.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	3. My mood goes up and down more than most people.

Making Sense of the Big Five Personality Short Form

Big Five Personality Short Form

This is an example of an individual self-assessment of personal styles. The sample questions below allow you to indicate your personal style on each of five global trait dimensions. There is no "right" or "wrong" or "good" or "bad" side to these dimensions; rather, they help you identify your stylistic disposition and potential strengths. This is similar to finding out if you are left- or right-handed. Below each global trait is an example of **personal style** and three related questions with some on each of the poles.

Openness

Openness is the level of a person's receptiveness to novel ideas, change, innovation, and new learning. On the continuum, this can be seen as preference for change on one end of the spectrum and preference for stability on the other.

Preference for Change	Answer each of the questions listed below by marking the selection that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.					Preference for Stability
1. The idea of lifelong learning appeals to me. You value new learning, change, and innovation and find motivation in novelty, variety, and possibilities for improvement. New tasks and new learning are stimulating and attractive to you.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	3. I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas. You value familiarity, predictability, and precedent and find comfort in stability, routine, and tradition. New tasks and new learning may be uninteresting or demanding for you.
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
2. I find it fun to learn and develop new hobbies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	

What does this mean? Looking at the responses to each question in our example as indicated by the red "XX", the test shows that this person may have a preference for stability. In this case, the **definition** notes he or she values familiarity, predictability, and precedent, and finds comfort in stability, routine, and tradition. New tasks and new learning may be uninteresting or demanding. Had the results tracked toward the other side of the grid, a preference for change might have been indicated. **Repeat for each section that follows on the short form.**

(Took To Use)
To analyze the results