

# PERSONALITY DIVERSITY

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## INTRODUCTION

Hello and welcome! This module will help you become acquainted with the fascinating topic of personality diversity. You will learn:

- Why personality *matters*
- The meaning of personality
- The five main personality traits according to the “Five Factor Model” of personality
- Nature or Nurture: Does personality change?
- Estimating your own personality trait tendencies
- How to communicate with others whose trait tendencies are different from yours
- Typical personality tendencies of HR professionals

## WHY DOES PERSONALITY MATTER?

Both you and your clients operate in a people business. It is virtually impossible to be effective in this business if you don't take the time to understand people. You must understand how people react, what motivates them, and how they behave either in the workplace or anywhere else!

Understanding personality matters in because...

- Human personalities vary greatly. In the book *The Owner's Guide to Personality at Work*, Pierce and Jane Howard (2010) explain that in any given mating, a male and a female could produce 52 trillion different genetic combinations in their offspring.

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The probability that your client will match your own exact personality trait combinations is minuscule.

- Our personality traits are like our personal *lenses* – we tend to see the world a certain way and react accordingly. These lenses are as unique as we are. Further, our lenses feel so natural to us that we don't see them – we tend to think that the world *is* the way we see it. It's important to become aware of our own *default* tendencies – the way we behave in the absence of conscious thinking or planning.
- People tend to be more influenced by those perceived as similar to them. Sometimes influencing another person requires stretching our behaviors to match his or her preferences.

## WHAT IS PERSONALITY?

The word *personality* comes from the Greek *persona* - a type of mask worn by actors in Ancient Rome. These masks were meant to represent the actor's mood: Happy, sad, angry, etc. Pierce and Jane Howard (2010) explain that personality means a *pattern of behaviors*. Others define personality as *a combination of non-physical and non-intellectual characteristics that differentiate a person from another* (Millon and Lerner, 2003). Let us understand these two definitions better:

- *A pattern of behaviors* means that our personality is categorized according to the behaviors most often exhibited. It also means that some of these behaviors are correlated: For instance, a sociable person is also likely to smile a lot, talk more, demonstrate *high energy* behaviors, etc.
- *Non-physical characteristics* means that you cannot guess someone's personality by observing physical traits such as height, weight, etc. There could be, however, relationships between someone's personality and the way this person chooses to present him or herself to others (dress, general appearance, health concerns, etc.).

- *Non-intellectual characteristics* means that there isn't a strong correlation between personality and cognitive intelligence.

*Ultimately, your personality could be described as the face you show the world, the you others get to know.*

Ultimately, your personality could be described as the face you show the world, the *you* others get to know. Most importantly, personality is not about how you behave once in a while – it's about how you behave most of the time. For instance, if most people perceive you as an extravert, you probably enjoy being around other people. You are likely the kind of person who takes the initiative to organize social or business events. You may enjoy working as a member of a team and could feel frustrated and drained if forced to work alone for too many hours. Thus, personality tendencies help us predict behaviors – For instance, one can reasonably expect an extraverted client to prefer meeting face to face to discuss a business issue (versus, for instance, reviewing a long written document).

That doesn't mean, of course, that you can predict *everything*. We often tell our clients that personality *is a tendency, not an obligation!* In fact, that leads us to an important disclaimer:

*The personality information we provide in this module does not apply to everyone all the time.*

That disclaimer is critical as you review the material that follows. Your extraverted client will probably want to be alone from time to time. Your super organized colleague may all of a sudden feel spontaneous.

*Most importantly:* Some of the information we share in this module may pertain to *the typical* HR professional. As we all know, people can vary widely from what is "typical."

In other words: We can tell you how a typical HR professional *is likely to be* ... but we can't tell you what Client X's personality tendencies are or how he or she is going to behave tomorrow. In fact, you will see words such as *may, maybe, possibly, or likely* a lot in this text!

## UNDERSTANDING PERSONALITY: THE FIVE FACTOR MODEL

Now that you understand what personality means, you need a model to organize the personality traits that you perceive around you (and *in* you!). The *Five Factor Model* or *FFM* is one such model. The FFM organizes personality traits around five main clusters or factors<sup>1</sup>. These factors are:

- *Need for Stability (N)* has to do with tolerance for stress, optimism, and the ability to recover when upset or frustrated. Those who are low in Need for Stability may crave less stability in their lives. As a result, they tend to be more resilient – when trouble hits them, they are more likely to *bounce back*. Further, they seem to succumb less often to anger or extreme worry. On the other hand, those who are high in Need for Stability may be better at detecting problems before they occur – their “nervous edge” could lead them to “sound the alarm” when something does not quite seem right.
- *Extraversion (E)* is connected to sociability, gregariousness, and a general interest in being with others. Extraverts tend to feel comfortable amidst bustle, noise, and considerable levels of sensory stimulation. Introverts, on the other hand, tend to prefer quieter and less populated areas. Extraverts deal well with situations characterized by high energy, where people interactions matter.

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<sup>1</sup> Various terms are used to define the five factors. The terms chosen for this module are more appropriate for workplace applications. They were taken from the Workplace Big Five Profile 4.0 (2012), a Big Five instrument written by Pierce and Jane Howard and are here included with their permission.

Introverts, on the other hand, may be better listeners and work well independently.

- *Originality (O)* governs our imagination, our “tolerance to newness and change,” and our interest in the “untried and untested.” Some of us are highly creative and imaginative, “breaking” what isn’t broken, and rebuilding what does not need to be rebuilt. Others are highly efficient and by nature more conservative – they enjoy finishing rather than starting, making things work rather than reworking things.
- *Accommodation (A)* is a general measure of one’s tolerance to the views and positions of others. People high in Accommodation tend to have higher service orientation and are generally more concerned with others’ needs. People low in Accommodation, on the other hand, may find it easier to challenge the status quo when needed.
- *Consolidation (C)* relates to one’s levels of methodicalness, perfectionism, and concentration. Those high in Consolidation are good at reaching pre-established goals. Those lower in Consolidation, on the other hand, are better multitaskers and are typically seen as more flexible.

As you may have noticed in the above definitions, the five main personality traits are defined along a continuum. For instance: Rather than saying *Joe is an extravert* it may be more appropriate to say that *Joe is more extraverted than 60% of the population*. Sally could be even more extraverted than Joe... and from Sally’s perspective, Joe is introverted!

*Personality is a relative concept. What matters most is not how you are but how you are in relation to others.*

Interestingly, each position along a personality trait continuum brings its own advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses. For instance, perfectionistic and organized individuals (i.e., those high in Consolidation) are often seen as desirable employees. They are focused and determined, methodically follow

their objectives, and are thus more likely to reach whatever they established as their primal goal. These same employees, however, may have difficulties “switching gears” or ignoring a previous path that no longer works. Indeed, personality expert Pierce Howard (2010) suggests that those lower in Consolidation may be better equipped to deal with customer service positions – especially when such positions require constant interruptions to help a client in need.

In summary, most experts agree that personality traits are neither *good* nor *bad*. Instead, each trait brings seeds of greatness and failure, insight and *blind spots*. Further, it is not appropriate to say, for instance, that *Jane has a lot of personality* or *Susie has no personality*. Everyone has a personality tendency – and that tendency provides that person with unique gifts!

## NATURE OR NURTURE: DOES PERSONALITY CHANGE?

One important debate amongst personality psychologists has to do with the *origins* of personality. Are we *born* with a specific personality tendency? Does our personality change as we get older? What is the impact of our social environment on personality?

This debate *matters* for two main reasons. If personality changes:

- One could *choose* his or her own personality – maybe with a little extra effort. One could, for instance, decide to *become more extraverted* or *become calmer*.
- We could decide which personality tendencies are best for specific jobs – and then *train* people to exhibit them.

As you read these options, you are probably shaking your head and thinking “that’s unreasonable.” Indeed, expecting someone to *choose* his or her personality is as illogical as wanting a tall person to become short. Perhaps a useful metaphor is hair color: A person can die his or her hair a different color but the original color will come

back fast enough. Further one's facial features will likely remind anyone of the *original* hair color.

Expecting someone to change his or her personality is unreasonable for two main reasons:

- Personality has a strong *genetic* component. Conservative estimates (Howard, 2012) suggest that at least 60% of one's trait tendencies are innate. Some trait tendencies (for instance, one's tendency towards anxiety or nervousness) could be 80 to 90% genetic!
- It is true that personality has an *environmental* component. However, personality traits are likely to develop slowly over time – and much of the changes occur early in life. Indeed, one can already see traces of the adult personality in very young children!
- More significant personality changes occur in early adulthood (between ages 20 and 30). However, these changes are not huge – a 20-year old extravert is not likely to become introverted at age 30.

*A 20-year old extravert is not likely to become introverted at age 30.*

How do we know that personality has a strong genetic component? Mostly we know that because of extensive studies conducted with identical twins separated at birth. Twin studies can, if well designed, help clarify the "nature" vs. "nurture" debate in personality development because:

- Given that two identical twins have the same genetic code, any personality differences observed between them are likely to result from environmental differences.
- These studies analyzed identical twins who were separated at birth and raised by different families, often in different states and under different economic conditions.

- The researchers identified surprising personality similarities among twins studied and used these findings as evidence of the genetic components of personality (Millon & Lerner, 2003).<sup>2</sup>

Here is an important caveat: The idea that personality tendencies are not likely to change does not imply that *nothing* changes in the *face one shows to the world*. One's basic *traits* (Need for Stability, Extraversion, Originality, Accommodation, and Consolidation) are unlikely to change. However, one's *values* and *motivations* change throughout life – and those values and motivations do impact a person's behaviors! Think about it:

- A person whose Accommodation scores are naturally low (called a *Challenger*) may be deeply committed to helping others – even if his/her *basic tendency* is to pursue his/her own goals.
- A naturally disorganized and *big picture* person may pay special attention to the details of a policy – not because he or she *likes* details but because he or she considers the policy particularly important.

Remember this first key lesson about personality:

## KEY LESSON # 1: Personality is a tendency, not an obligation!

*The good news:* The fact that your personality is mostly genetic simply means that your *tendencies* are unlikely to change. It *does not* mean that you can't change your behaviors or make those behaviors match – albeit temporarily – the preferences of others. This temporary change in behaviors to meet others' needs is called *stretching*. Stretching can be a very beneficial skill – learn it!

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<sup>2</sup> Read more about the Minnesota Twin Studies in this New York Times article:

<http://tinyurl.com/inthenews1>



## KEY LESSON # 2: Learn to Stretch!

### A UNIQUE PORTRAIT OF YOU: ESTIMATING YOUR FIVE TRAITS

Now that you understand the basic *elements* of personality it is useful to estimate your own traits. A caveat: What you'll do now is *estimate* your personality traits. That is a good start... but may be somewhat inaccurate, especially if:

- You feel a strong pressure to *be a certain way*... Maybe, for instance, you are really introverted but think it's *better* to be extraverted.
- You haven't spent some time in the past thinking about your personality tendencies.

Two antidotes for the problems above:

- Remember that personality is a *neutral* concept. It simply provides you with certain tendencies. These tendencies do not determine your performance or make you a good or bad employee.
- Talk to people who know you well. Ask them the questions included under each personality trait section. That may give you further insight on the *face you show the world most often*... especially when there aren't significant constraints leading you in a certain direction.

**Important Note:** An accurate estimate of your Big Five traits requires the completion of a normed and valid Big Five instrument. The questions below are not meant to substitute such an instrument – for starters, they have not been *normed* or applied to a reasonably sized sample. Nevertheless, we thought that these questions would be useful to help you better understand each of the traits and, thus, apply the content of this module to improve your relationships with your HR clients.

## WHAT IS YOUR NEED FOR STABILITY?

Need for Stability (N) has to do with your reactions to stress. Some people are highly reactive and emotional, others are very calm and resilient - still others are somewhere in between. Basically your N score indicates the extent of a problem before it is perceived by you as a considerable stressor.<sup>3</sup>

- People who are *Resilient* (low N) are calm and rational, able to move into problem solving mode rapidly. This helps them stabilize a group under stressful situations. Resilients, however, may be perceived as cold and uncaring by others who are higher in that trait.
- People who are *Reactive* (high N) are emotional and prone to higher levels of stress. One of their strengths is the willingness to take responsibility to solve all sorts of problems - even others' problems. Empathy for others' problems may also come easily to reactives. On the other hand, reactives may be perceived as unreliable during crisis situations.
- *Responsive* (middle N) people are somewhere in the middle between Reactivity and Resilience. Their response to stress may be more situational, or they may exhibit moderate signs of emotional distress under stressful circumstances.

If you want to estimate your N scores, consider answering the following questions<sup>4</sup>:

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<sup>3</sup> A stressor is something that comes between you and your goals. Because people's goals and the challenges they perceive to these goals vary, stressors differ from person to person.

<sup>4</sup> Questions 1-5 are taken from Goldberg, 1999. Questions 6-9 are written by the author of this module and are related to Howard & Howard's (2012) scales in the Workplace Big Five Profile 4.0, a research-based Big Five instrument.

	Never	Almost never	Neutral	Often	Almost always
1. I get irritated easily.					
2. I often feel blue.					
3. I change my mood a lot.					
4. I tend to get upset easily.					
5. I find it hard to relax.					
6. I tend to worry.					
7. I tend to feel angry (whether or not I demonstrate it).					
8. I tend to see problems before they occur.					
9. When I'm upset it takes me a while to recuperate.					

Take note of each *often* or *almost always* answer you provide – the more of those, the more likely you are to be *reactive*. Of course, the opposite is true – the more you disagree with the statements (or indicate that you *never* or *almost never* feel that way) the more likely you are to be resilient.

An interesting point: Personality is distributed normally. That means that most people are going to find themselves somewhere in the middle. In other words, most of us get worried *sometimes*, get angry *sometimes*, take *some time* to recuperate depending on the stressor.

Regardless of where you find yourself, remember:

### KEY LESSON # 3: Personality is a neutral concept!

This means that it's not *better*, for instance, to be resilient. Yes, resiliency can be helpful in high stress environments. Yes, resilient people are often better suited for jobs in Emergency Rooms or for situations in which panic would be a major problem. Reactivity, however, can be very useful in cases in which *one cannot be too cautious...* For instance, you would want reactive people in an audit team, or a team trying to identify possible bugs in a product before it is launched. Trust a person who is naturally pessimistic when you need all bases to be covered!

## WHAT IS YOUR EXTRAVERSION?

Extraversion (E) has to do with tolerance to sensory stimulation. Some people have a high tolerance and even a desire for as much sensory stimulation as possible. This includes not only people but also noise, music, colors, etc. Others may be uncomfortable with too much stimulation for longer periods of time.

- *Extraverts* (high E) welcome sensory stimulation. These are the people who are likely to go out for dinner after a long day at a busy conference. They relax by meeting others and may prefer lively and energetic environments.
- *Introverts* (low E) welcome calm and quiet. They may be comfortable around other people for briefer periods of time, and then need to recharge their batteries. Introverts do better in peaceful surroundings and can comfortably handle tasks that require long hours doing lonely work.
- *Ambiverts* (middle E) find themselves somewhere in between Extraverts and Introverts. They may enjoy some sensory stimulation, after which they'll need to rest and refill their "peace and quiet" batteries again. Those are the colleagues who can handle a busy conference day well, but will later prefer to rest in their hotel rooms on their own.

In order to estimate your extraversion, answer the following questions (Goldberg, 1999):

	Never	Almost never	Neutral	Often	Almost always
1. I feel comfortable around people.					
2. I start conversations.					
3. I talk to a lot of different people at parties.					
4. I don't mind being the center of attention.					
5. I am the life of the party.					
6. I seem to have a lot to say.					
7. I make friends easily.					
8. I naturally take charge.					
9. I am skilled at handling social situations.					

The more *always* or *almost always* answers you provide, the more extraverted you probably are.

Extraversion is a well-known personality trait – so you are likely to be able to estimate your extraversion fairly well. Keep in mind that most people – by definition – are neither extraverted nor introverted. Instead, they are *ambiverted*, comfortable with social stimulation in moderation and for a certain period of time. Read the vignette below for an example.

*Jillian is a highly extraverted professor who enjoys networking, presenting, and generally working with others. One of Jillian's favorite activities is to join a large national conference – she loves the interaction and the general energy of a large conference hall.*

*The hardest part of a conference day for Jillian is the evening. She hates being alone in her hotel room, even after a whole day of activities. In order to avoid that, Jillian often networks with conference attendees and looks for fellow extraverts who wish to do something after hours... dinner meetings, karaoke outings, or even round table chats at the hotel bar. She also gladly agrees to share her room with fellow conference attendees or co-workers. This time, she is sharing a room with her best friend Susie.*

*As an ambivert, Susie is sociable and friendly during the day and enjoys the conference interactions. By the end of the day, however, she has had enough and is clearly “dragging tail.” She turns off the TV and opens her favorite novel – anything to keep the place quiet! She smiles as Jillian leaves the room to go out yet again with perfect strangers... but is secretly happy to have the room for herself!*

## WHAT IS YOUR ORIGINALITY?

Originality is the factor that relates to your interest in the new, the "untried" and the "untrue." Some people have the natural tendency to constantly be on the look for innovative or revolutionary ideas. Others prefer the efficiency that comes with practice and reinforcement. Still others are somewhere in between.

- *Explorers* (high O) are imaginative and visionary "idea machines." They typically accept change with gusto and are probably on the forefront of innovation.
- *Preservers* (low O) prefer to be known as experts in a particular field. They are the doers in the organization, the ones who implement plans with efficiency and often have a keen eye for detail.
- Finally, *Moderates* (middle O) are somewhere in between those two extremes, accepting innovation when they feel innovation is warranted, or perhaps inviting moderate amounts of change.

A successful work team might profit from the balance between those who do and those who plan, those who preserve, and those who innovate. Thus, being an Explorer is not better than being a Preserver or vice versa... both sides of the originality aisle are critical for success. Can you imagine a team solely composed of Explorers? Good luck getting anything accomplished!

In order to estimate your scores in Originality, answer the following questions (questions 1-8 are from Goldberg, 1999):

	Never	Almost never	Neutral	Often	Almost always
1. I love to think up new ways of doing things.					
2. I am good at many different things.					
3. I can handle a lot of information at a time.					
4. I am full of ideas.					
5. I am naturally imaginative.					
6. I spend time reflecting on things.					
7. I try to avoid complex people.					
8. I avoid reading complex material.					
9. I prefer to implement projects others created.					

Questions 1-6 are positive – The more *always* or *almost always* answers you provide, the higher your Originality is likely to be. Questions 7-9 are negative – Explorers are likely to answer *never* or *almost never* to them.

The items on *complexity* (items 7 and 8) deserve an explanation. In general, Explorers are tolerant of complexity – in fact, they may even embrace it! Complexity makes the world interesting for Explorers. Preservers, on the other hand, tend to prefer clear-cut and simple models. “If you know it, keep it simple” a Preserver might say.

Of course, the complexity of a model does not make it good or bad – one can have a simple yet beautifully elegant model, after all. The point is that Explorers are often happy to cut through complicated pieces to find their gold. They also enjoy making odd connections between seemingly disparate pieces. Preservers, on the other hand, prefer to have materials *dissected* by someone else before they tackle them!

As with other traits, most people are neither Explorers nor Preservers – they are Moderates, somewhere in the middle of the curve. In other words: Most of us can kick our imagination into gear when there is need for creativity but do not consider ourselves to be *idea machines*. Likewise, most of us can handle *some* complexity but get confused with people who go into too many tangents. The question, therefore, is not *whether* you can handle original tasks but... *how many of them* you can take in a stride! A true Explorer would say “Keep’em coming!”

## WHAT IS YOUR ACCOMMODATION?

Accommodation has to do with someone's willingness to let go of control. Challengers are reluctant to accept others' directions or suggestions when those go against their own. Adapters, on the other hand, prioritize harmony and are typically quite willing to adapt their wishes to the needs of others. Negotiators are somewhere in between.

- *Adapters* (high A) can be cordial, agreeable, and modest, willing to adjust to the needs and requirements of others.
- *Challengers* (low A) are more likely to challenge the status quo and attempt to impose their will.
- Finally, *Negotiators* (middle A) are normally in a good place to reach a middle ground between those two groups.

Read the vignette that follows for an example.

*During a Big Five workshop, the presenter proposes the following scenario:*

*Imagine that you are having a meeting with your supervisor to discuss your ideas for a key project. Your participation in this project is an important part of your performance evaluation. Bob is a member of your team. During a meeting with the supervisor, Bob happily shares an excellent idea – and the supervisor loves it. There is just one problem: Bob did not come up with that idea in the first place... you did! Tell me what you're feeling as this happens... and what you plan to do about it.*

*The workshop participants divide into three groups – Challengers, Negotiators, and Adapters.*



*Challengers are quick to take action against Bob. For instance, Molly says “I would say something right away – it’s not right for Bob to steal my idea!”*

*Negotiators are annoyed but suggest that diplomacy is the best course of action. Peter says: “I wouldn’t say something then, but I would definitely talk to Bob afterwards and ask him to clarify the matter with the Supervisor.*

*Adapters are rather bewildered by all the fuss. Mel’s statement perfectly illustrates this group’s position: “Who knows whose idea it was... and who cares! After all, ideas can emerge from brainstorming and it’s impossible to determine who the author is. Regardless of the author, the idea will benefit the team... and that’s what matters!”*

In order to estimate your Accommodation, answer the questions that follow (Goldberg, 1999):

	Never	Almost never	Neutral	Often	Almost always
1. I am interested in other people’s problems.					
2. I sympathize with other people’s feelings.					
3. I make people feel at ease.					
4. I inquire about others’ well-being.					
5. I know how to comfort others.					
6. I love to help others.					
7. I easily show my gratitude.					
8. Others call me a great team player.					
9. I have a good word for everyone.					

The more *always* or *almost always* answers you provide, the higher your Accommodation is likely to be.

Accommodation is an interesting trait – a clear example that “there’s no good place to be.” Most of us enjoy being around Adapters – who doesn’t like to be helped and supported? Not surprisingly, Adapters are often successful in customer service positions. Further, Adapters can be popular team members and are, indeed, essential for the success of a team.

A whole team of Adapters, however, may have a difficult time *fighting the good fights*. Indeed, Adapters are more likely to agree with than to challenge others – even when the *others* in question are *wrong*. While Challengers may be, well... *challenging*... they may also be useful when battles need to be fought or when the team needs to be defended against external forces.

## WHAT IS YOUR CONSOLIDATION?

The last factor - Consolidation - has to do with a person's focus on specific, pre-determined goals. Some people clearly know what their goals are and move towards them in a methodical and determined fashion. Others are more spontaneous and flexible.

- *Focused* individuals (high C) are often disciplined, organized, and methodical. They may also be quite ambitious and determined to be "number one."
- *Flexible* people (low C) may be more spontaneous and easy going, able to quickly switch gears and move from one direction to the other.
- Finally, *Balanced* (middle C) individuals are somewhere in between. They may find it easier to balance work and family life and may naturally be able to concentrate on specific goals when appropriate.

In order to estimate your Consolidation scores, answer the following questions (questions 1-8 are from Goldberg, 1999):

	Never	Almost never	Neutral	Often	Almost always
1. I like to tidy things up.					
2. I love order and regularity.					
3. I am always prepared.					
4. I get my chores done right away.					
5. I put things in their proper place.					
6. I am exacting in my work.					
7. I do things according to a plan.					
8. I continue until everything is perfect.					
9. I prefer to do one thing at a time.					

The more *always* or *almost always* answers you provide, the higher your Consolidation is likely to be.

The last question is particularly important. Focused people prefer to concentrate on one task at a time. As a result, they may not be comfortable with multitasking or with rapidly shifting priorities. Also, focused people tend to be better at following procedures. Flexible people, on the other hand, may be energized by fast paced and rapidly changing work situations.

One could think that the focused *side* of the Consolidation continuum is *better* – after all, traits such as organization and perfectionism may be valued in certain jobs. However, keep in mind that not *all* jobs demand perfectionism. In fact, perfectionism might actually hinder one’s productivity under certain conditions! Also, excessive concerns with perfectionism and organization may somewhat curb creativity. Not surprisingly, artistic or creative positions are often supported by lower scores in Consolidation.

Another interesting point: Focused people tend to dislike interruptions. Read the vignette below for an example:

*John and Mariah are organizational development professionals at a large organization. This month, they are working on a new leadership development program – and there is a strict deadline for program completion.*

*Organized and methodical, John enjoys focusing on each piece of the project at a time. He has a clear plan of action and follows it to a “t.” As a result, he is never behind schedule. He would like Mariah to stick to her side of the plan as well – and is annoyed at her inability to respect deadlines.*

*Mariah has a totally different style. She feels constrained by John’s deadlines which she finds unnecessary. “We do have a big deadline at the end and that’s enough!” she says. Further, she would love to be able to bounce ideas with John as needed. She hates that John keeps a “closed door” and wants to schedule every meeting. “John, why can’t you just go with the flow!” she protests. “I can’t create in a box... and you’re putting me in one!”*

*Finally, John and Mariah sit down to create a reasonable plan of action. John agrees to leave two afternoons a week open for “free flowing collaboration.” Mariah agrees to stick to some critical pieces of the plan.*

## COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

The last vignette illustrates the “relative” aspect of personality. Both John and Mariah are perfectly capable of producing outstanding results. Before they can work together, however, they must take the time to understand one another’s tendencies.

Remember: Personality is a set of lenses. Those lenses are invisible to the user. Thus, we tend to see *our way* of doing things as *the only way*. Anyone exhibiting a different style is, well... wrong!

Under some conditions, our style may, indeed, be the best one. For instance, John's organization and methodicalness may make it easier for him to meet the deadline in the first place! Mariah's free flowing mind, however, may offer a better support for the creativity needed to design a training program. Thus, *both* Mariah and John can be useful. The issue is: How can they best work together?

The following are important tips as you plan your interactions with others:

- *Know yourself.* Before you can assess the impact of your own personal lenses on others, you need to become aware of these lenses in the first place!
- *Observe.* When you first meet someone, avoid reacting too fast (this can be a challenge for those of us who are Reactive!). Instead, pay attention to physical and non-physical clues. How loudly does the person speak? How eagerly does he or she seem to express her opinions? Does he/she appear thoughtful? Does he/she appear to be somewhat skeptical? See Table 1 for some "clues" as to someone's personality preferences.
- *Ask.* Do not assume that you *know* what the other person wants. For instance, just because *you* prefer to meet people face to face doesn't mean everyone else does. Remember that personality is neutral. There is no *right* or *wrong* way to be!

*Table 1* includes some possible clues as to others' personalities. A caveat: This table provides some tips but it is far from perfect! You may not be able to identify someone's personality tendencies during casual contact. Some traits – for instance, Extraversion – are easier to detect. Others (Need for Stability, Originality) may be harder to identify.

Table 1: Personality Clues

Trait	Consider...	
Need for Stability	Sense of Urgency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reactive</i> people tend to see more urgency... they may seem upset if something takes long to be completed (even if that <i>something</i> may seem less than important to you!)</li> </ul>
	Expression of Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's harder to <i>read</i> the emotions of a <i>resilient</i> person. <i>Resilients</i> tend to show their emotions less – they tend to appear calm and collected even when problems occur. <i>Reactives</i> often appear to be more “passionate” or “emotional.”</li> </ul>
Extraversion	Communication style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Extraverts</i> are often louder, speak more often, and may smile more as they speak.</li> <li>• <i>Introverts</i> may be quieter and appear to be more reflexive.</li> </ul>
	Social events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An <i>introvert</i> may “stick to” the same small group of people throughout a social event. An <i>extravert</i> may move around more. Further, extraverts may look happier and more comfortable during larger gatherings.</li> </ul>
Originality	Detail orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Explorers</i> may be impatient of too much detail – they often prefer to “fill in the blanks” on their own. Pay attention to people’s reactions as you provide instruction or information.</li> <li>• <i>Preservers</i> may probe for <i>more</i> details, especially when asked to perform a task</li> </ul>
	Focus on policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Explorers</i> may seem uninterested in the exact contents of a policy. <i>Preservers</i> are more likely to value policies and procedures and to follow them closely.</li> </ul>
Accommodation	Helpfulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Adapters</i> may be more likely to volunteer and offer their help – especially when such help is <i>not</i> required. For instance, an adapter may be more likely to answer a survey.</li> </ul>
	Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Challengers</i> may express their opinions more readily – they may, in fact, appear quite comfortable when they <i>disagree</i> with someone else during a conversation.</li> </ul>
Consolidation	Interruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Flexible</i> people may <i>welcome</i> interruptions – and they may seem eager to switch gears (especially if they are both flexible <i>and</i> explorers)</li> <li>• <i>Focused</i> people may demonstrate displeasure when interrupted – even if the interruption is slight! Interruptions may be particularly upsetting to people who are <i>both</i> focused <i>and</i> reactive.</li> </ul>

Notice that the last clues – the ones provided for flexible and focused people – include references to *other* traits. Here is why: Traits do not impact our behaviors *in isolation*. Instead, multiple traits act together to make us who we are.

For instance: Imagine that one of your colleagues – let’s call him “Jim” – reacts strongly to a new policy with which he disagrees. For the third time that day, Jim comes into your office and says:

*“I am furious! What is Director Smith thinking? This policy makes no sense! It’s not like we don’t have enough policies already – and all those rules are impacting our ability to meet our quota! I’m fully planning to bring this up at the staff meeting tomorrow – and I could care less that Director Smith is present! Besides, here’s what I plan to say: Policies are not mandates – they are just the result of a bunch of people thinking stuff up!”*

What personality trait could be involved in your colleague’s reactions?

Of course this is a tricky question – clearly, more than one trait is involved! The fact that Jim is so upset with a policy could suggest that he is high in Originality (an Explorer), low in Consolidation (Flexible) or both. Indeed, a possible clue to Jim’s “Flexible” tendencies is the fact that he keeps interrupting you. However, Jim’s strong reaction and anger could indicate high Need for Stability as well. A resilient and flexible person might ignore the new policy but not be “angry” at it. Further, Jim is probably a challenger. After all, adapters would probably not “bring this up” at a full staff meeting or challenge a director.

As you can tell, this is fairly complicated. The good news: As with anything else in life, practice makes perfect! Remember to sharpen your “SAW”!

**Study:** Personality is a worthwhile topic! Even a quick “google” search will connect you with hundreds of articles and other resources on the Big Five model.

**Ask:** Show your colleagues or family members the questions included in this module. How would they rate you? You might be surprised at their answers. Also ask *others* questions that can help you estimate their personality tendencies.

**Wait:** Treat each new person as a book you haven’t yet read. Take the time to pay attention. Ask questions. Never assume that the other person sees the world the same way you do.

## TYPICAL PERSONALITY TENDENCIES OF HR PROFESSIONALS

Let’s briefly recap what we’ve seen so far:

- Personality *matters*. It impacts our behaviors most of the time, especially if we don’t make conscious efforts to “stretch” and meet someone else’s preferred styles.
- Personality is relatively *stable*. Your clients’ personalities are not likely to significantly change – and neither will your own!
- Personality is *neutral*. Personality tendencies are neither good nor bad *per se*. Certain trait tendencies, however, can be helpful or not helpful under specific circumstances.
- The *five factor model* categorizes personality according to five major traits: Need for stability (tolerance for stress), Extraversion (sociability, tolerance for stimulation), Originality (tolerance for newness and innovation), Accommodation (tolerance for others’ needs) and Consolidation (focus, methodicalness, organization).



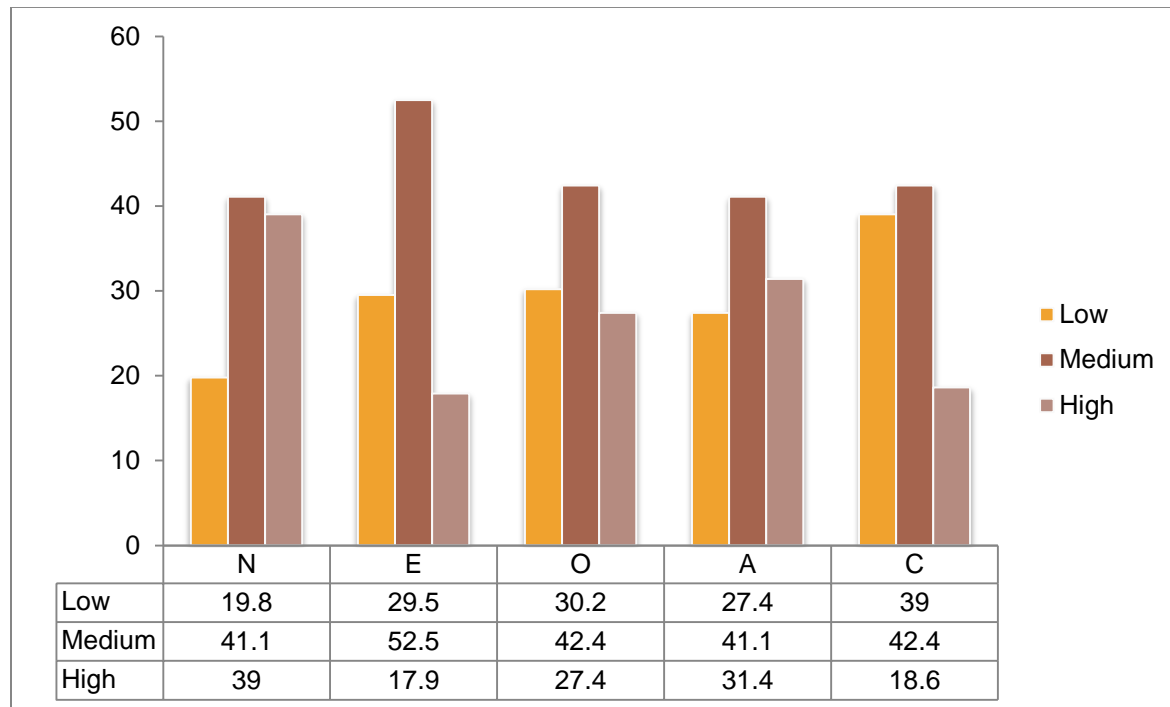
## A PORTRAIT OF HR: REVIEWING HR PERSONALITIES

Next, we will review typical personality tendencies of HR professionals. Some important information:

- The information presented here is based on the analysis of a database of 7,858 professionals. Of these, 474 were HR professionals and 1,371 worked in Sales/Marketing (specific comparisons between HR and sales/marketing will be provided below). All participants completed the WorkPlace Big Five Profile, a personality instrument published by the Center for Applied Cognitive Studies (CentACS, Howard & Howard, 2012).
- Current research suggests that HR professionals may be more likely to match certain personality characteristics. *More likely to*, however, doesn't mean *certainly will*. Keep in mind that the differences between HR and non HR personalities are not large enough to justify creating rigid "HR stereotypes" (i.e., if this person is HR he/she *must* behave in a certain way).
- *Rank* may matter greatly. For instance, an HR director may display significantly different personality tendencies than an HR generalist (refer to the section on *HR Rank and Personalities* below)
- Remember to *contrast* your personality to that of typical HR professionals. After all, what matters is not whether (for instance) "HR professionals are likely to be more extraverted." Instead, what matters is whether *you* are likely to be significantly more introverted than your clients!

Figure 1 includes the distributions of personality scores for the 474 professionals included in the sample.

Figure 1: HR Personalities (in %)



## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO YOU?

Based on the figure above, we can make certain assumption on the probability that a given HR professional will have certain personality tendencies. Take a look at the table and recommendations that follow.

*Table 2: HR Traits and Implications*

Need for Stability	Possible Implications and Tips
<p>HR professionals appear to be either moderate (41.1%) or high (39%) in this trait.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The typical HR professional is more likely to be attentive to possible problems (even before they occur) and somewhat reactive in crisis situations.</li> <li>• Do not take problems lightly. Problems may seem more urgent to individuals higher in Need for Stability. Take every problem (even small ones) seriously.</li> </ul>
Extraversion	Possible Implications and Tips
<p>HR professionals appear to be moderate in Extraversion – 52.5% of the sample consisted of ambiverts, or “middle of the road” scorers. This means that the typical HR professional is neither super sociable nor super introverted – instead, the typical HR professional appears to have moderate needs for sociability and stimulation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambiverts are normally quite happy to work with people – in moderation. For instance, after a long conference day including multiple meetings, the typical HR professional may want to relax on his/her own (instead of attending an evening social event).</li> <li>• Avoid planning events for the end of the day.</li> </ul>
Originality	Possible Implications and Tips
<p>HR professionals tend to be moderate in Originality – 42.4% scored in the middle between preservers and explorers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderates are typically down to earth – they accept change when change is needed, not “for the sake of change.”</li> <li>• Keep explanations practical and reasonable, but don’t be afraid to introduce new ideas. Justify suggested innovations logically.</li> </ul>
Accommodation	Possible Implications
<p>HR professionals are moderate in Accommodation (i.e. they are likely to be “Negotiators”) – 41.1% scored in the middle between challengers and adapters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiators are often interested in “win-win” solutions to problems. Their comfort with conflict may depend, to a certain extent, on their Need for Stability score – for instance, a Resilient Negotiator may be more comfortable with conflict than a Reactive one.</li> <li>• Avoid excessively challenging or rigid solutions. Look for possibilities that allow all parties to feel successful in the negotiation.</li> </ul>
Consolidation	Possible Implications
<p>HR professionals are either low (39%) nor moderate (42.4%) in Consolidation – notice that only 18.6% of the sample scored high in that trait.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR professionals live in a “multitasking” world – their profession requires attention to multiple areas at the same time. Further, HR is a multidisciplinary field, involving the study of various business topics (operations, finance, marketing, etc.). Thus, over specialization may simply be impossible for the average HR professional.</li> <li>• Be tolerant of interruptions and try to be flexible in the scheduling of meetings or collaborative projects.</li> </ul>

## HR RANK AND PERSONALITIES

A key difficulty emerges as we attempt to interpret research data on HR personalities: HR personalities are not “created equal.” For starters, *rank* matters. As you can imagine, different personality traits are likely to support individuals with different responsibilities in the workplace.

A study was conducted involving members of Linked:HR – a mega HR group on LinkedIn (currently, Linked:HR has a membership of more than 700,000).<sup>5</sup> The main differences were identified between HR Executives (vice presidents and directors) and HR Generalists (professionals who handle a variety of HR tasks and who do not have managerial responsibilities). The differences were as follows:

- HR Executives were *lower* in Need for Stability than Generalists
- HR Executives were *higher* in Extraversion than Generalists
- HR Executives were *higher* in Originality than Generalists
- HR Executives were *lower* in Accommodation than Generalists
- There were no significant differences in Consolidation between HR Executives and Generalists

The “Portrait of the HR Executive,” therefore, suggested a *calmer, more sociable, more original, and more challenging* professional. Those results are not altogether surprising – after all, leaders *in general* have these characteristics (Howard & Howard, 2012)!

*According to Pierce and Jane Howard (2012), the typical leader (in general, regardless of field) is low in Need for Stability (calm), high in Extraversion (sociable, warm, enthusiastic), high in Originality (innovative, change oriented), low in Accommodation (challenging, focused on his/her own goals) and high in Consolidation (focused, somewhat methodical, organized, and perfectionistic). The data on HR professionals suggest that the typical HR executive approximates this profile – except for one area: Consolidation. HR executives may match the multitasking and balanced tendencies of their lower-ranked counterparts.*

<sup>5</sup> Go to <https://www.baker.edu/nams/new/jnams/Win2012Vol12.pdf> to read a comprehensive research article including data from this study. Look for the article “A Portrait of HR” written by Christo-Baker and Wildermuth (p. 40).

## COMPARING HR AND SALES PROFESSIONALS

Lastly, it may be interesting to look at possible differences between HR professionals and professionals involved in sales and marketing. In order to identify such differences, the author of this module reviewed personality traits from 474 HR and 1,371 sales professionals (no rank was identified). The following are some highlights of the findings:

- In general, sales people seem to be *calmer* (lower in Need for Stability) than their HR counterparts. HR professionals appeared to *worry more, react more readily to stress*, be *more pessimistic*, and *take longer to recuperate from disappointment* than sales people.
- Results on Extraversion were somewhat surprising. Overall, HR appears to be *friendlier* and *warmer, more likely to want to “be in charge,” higher in trust*, and *higher in tact* than sales professionals (the identified tact difference was quite sizable... careful use of words appears to *matter* to HR!)
- HR professionals also appear to be more original than sales professionals. They may be *more imaginative, creative*, and *tolerant of change*. Also, HR professionals appear to be more *impatient of details* and more *interested in broad views*.<sup>6</sup>
- The differences between HR and sales professionals appear to be particularly prevalent in the *Accommodation* trait. In general, HR professionals are higher in Accommodation. They are *more interested in others’ needs, higher in humility* and *less likely to express opinions* than sales people.
- Finally, sales professionals appear to be more *focused on pre-established goals* than HR professionals. HR professionals seem to be more flexible and favor multitasking. Interestingly, however, HR professionals are more *perfectionistic, methodical*, and *organized* than sales professionals.

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<sup>6</sup> Apply these results cautiously as different studies reveal different sides of the HR originality. First, it's possible that originality scores vary according to the region – for instance, a recent study on the personalities of Central Iowa HR professionals found that about 50% of the group was *low* in Originality! (van Genderen, 2012). Second, remember the differences in Originality according to *rank* – higher level HR professionals are likely to be more original. Third, sales professionals are not “all created equal” either! Sales personalities could depend on the field (consulting sales people tend to be more original) and rank (sales leaders could match the personality tendencies of their counterparts in other fields).

A main message here is: There were significant and rather sizable differences in personality between HR professionals and sales professionals in the analyzed sample. Of course that doesn't mean that every sales person is different from every HR professional – just that an “average” sales person is likely to be different from an “average” HR professional. Here are a few possible implications for sales professionals working with an HR clientele:

- Your clients are likely to worry more than you do. Your clients are also more likely to want well planned and organized processes that cover all the bases. Plan ahead for uncertainties.
- Tact appears to be particularly important. HR professionals appear to value tactful and respectful communications.
- Your clients are likely to be higher in Accommodation – more interested in the needs of others. That does not mean, however, that they do not want to be in charge (the “take charge” scores were actually relatively high). However, it does mean that your clients may seek win-win solutions and be turned off by an excessively aggressive or challenging style. If you are a Challenger (low in Accommodation), you may need to consciously “take a step back.”
- In particular, keep in mind that you may not always know what your HR counterparts are thinking (higher Accommodation individuals tend to “hold back” their thoughts more than their more challenging counterparts). Take the time to probe and to hone your own listening skills.

## SO WHAT?

In this module, you have learned about personality, explored the five main personality factors, estimated your own personality traits, and reviewed recent research on the personalities of HR professionals. Now what? Here are a few tips for you to make the best of this information.

- Copy the table provided on page 32 of this module. Then use it to estimate your own personality preferences and that of your key clients.
- Carefully review the information on the personalities of HR professionals. How well does it match your experiences with your own clients? Could it explain any of the concerns or successes you've had?
- Review the differences between HR and sales professionals. What sales issues could these differences explain? In particular, what can you *do* as a sales professional, to capitalize on this information? Discuss this information with your sales team. Then use the space provided to draft an action plan.

## ACTION PLAN

I will...

For information on the Workplace Big Five Profile, 4.0, a robust Big Five personality assessment specially designed for the workplace, please contact:

Mel Wildermuth

[Mel@TheEffectivenessGroup.com](mailto:Mel@TheEffectivenessGroup.com)

[www.TheEffectivenessGroup.com](http://www.TheEffectivenessGroup.com)

419 221 0100

## PERSONALITY IS RELATIVE!

- Use the table below to estimate relative personality tendencies as follows:
- Use X to indicate your own estimated personality tendencies.
- Use O to indicate your client's (or a team member's) personality tendencies.
- What relationship concerns or successes could this table help explain?

Need for Stability		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

Extraversion		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

Originality		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

Accommodation		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

Consolidation		
LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH



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## TEST BANK QUESTIONS

1. Match the name of the trait to its description:

a. Need for Stability	1. Tolerance to stimulation and innovation, creativity, imagination, complexity
b. Extraversion	2. Tolerance to “not having one’s way,” comfort with conflict, likelihood of expressing opinions
c. Originality	3. Tolerance for stress, optimism, resilience
d. Accommodation	4. Focus, organization, methodicalness
e. Consolidation	5. Sociability, interest in working with others, enthusiasm and warmth

**Answers: a3, b5, c1, d2, e4**

2. Research on twins suggests that personality:

- a. Changes little between ages 20 and 30
- b. Does not change at all
- c. Has a strong genetic component
- d. Is 20% genetic
- e. None of the above

**Answer: c**

Comments:

- a. Changes little between ages 20 and 30 – not true, that’s precisely when personality tends to change
- b. Does not change at all – not true, as there are some changes in young years and also between 20 and 30
- c. Has a strong genetic component – yes, personality can be 60% genetic (more for some traits)
- d. Is 20% genetic – the genetic component of personality is stronger
- e. None of the above – try again, there is a possible answer

3. John participated in a personality course and learned about his own personality. Recently he experienced a conflict with a colleague and said: “You were in the same personality course I was ... you must know that this is just the way I am!” If you were to coach John, you might consider:

- a. John is right. Personality doesn’t change, so expecting him to change is unreasonable.
- b. John is right. Personality is neutral, so expecting him to change is futile.

- c. John may be aware of the way “he is” but that doesn’t exempt him from “stretching” to meet his colleague’s needs.
- d. There is nothing to be done here – John and his colleague are different and will, therefore, experience personality-related conflict.

**Answer: c**

Comments:

- a. John is right. Personality doesn’t change, so expecting him to change is unreasonable – Try again – even though personality doesn’t change much in adult years, there is a better answer.
  - b. John is right. Personality is neutral, so expecting him to change is futile - Try again – even though personality is neutral, that doesn’t mean that we can’t change our behaviors. There is a better answer.
  - c. John may be aware of the way “he is” but that doesn’t exempt him from “stretching” to meet his colleague’s needs – Exactly. Just saying “this is the way I am” doesn’t help improve workplace relationships. We don’t learn about personality just to “know the way we are” – we learn about personality so as to be able to “stretch” when needed.
  - d. There is nothing to be done here – John and his colleague are different and will, therefore, experience personality-related conflict – Try again – yes, John and his colleague *could* be different (the question doesn’t provide enough information on their differences) but that doesn’t mean that nothing can be done. There is a better answer.
4. Larry tells you that your client is more than likely to enjoy a large party at the end of a conference day. What would you tell Larry?
- a. Probably yes, because most people are extraverted.
  - b. Probably yes, because most people are tired at the end of the day at a conference and are likely to enjoy the refreshments.
  - c. Probably yes, because most HR professionals are “people oriented” and thus are likely to enjoy parties.
  - d. None of the above.

**Answer: d**

Comments:

- a. Probably yes, because most people are extraverted – not true, most people are ambiverted. Personality is distributed in a normal curve... and most people are in the middle of a normal curve. Try again.

- b. Probably yes, because most people are tired at the end of the day at a conference and are likely to enjoy the refreshments – not true, as most people are likely to be ambiverts (in the middle between extraverts and introverts). Ambiverts may have used all their energy during the day at a large conference. Try again.
  - c. Probably yes, because most HR professionals are “people oriented” and thus are likely to enjoy parties – not true. Even though HR professionals could be people oriented, that still doesn’t mean they will enjoy an event at the end of the day. Try again.
  - d. None of the above – that’s the best answer given the other options. Most HR professionals are actually ambiverts (somewhere in the middle between extraverts and introverts). Ambiverts may enjoy social events during the day but may need quieter time at the end of the day.
5. If you compare typical HR professionals with typical sales professionals, you are likely to find the following:
- a. HR professionals are likely to be more reactive, warmer, more original, more humble, and more methodical than sales professionals.
  - b. HR professionals are likely to be calmer, warmer, less original, more challenging, and more likely to multitask than sales professionals.
  - c. HR professionals are likely to be more reactive, less tactful, and more likely to multitask than sales professionals.
  - d. There are no significant differences in personality between HR professionals and sales professionals.

**Answer: a**

Comments:

In general, refer to the findings on page 29. Specifically:

- a. HR professionals are likely to be more reactive, warmer, more original, more humble, and more methodical than sales professionals – yes! See research findings on page 29.
- b. HR professionals are likely to be calmer, warmer, less original, more challenging, and more likely to multitask than sales professionals – HR professionals are likely to warmer and multitask more – the other characteristics are reversed. Sales people tend to be calmer, less original, and more challenging. Refer to research findings on page 29.
- c. HR professionals are likely to be more reactive, less tactful, and more likely to multitask than sales professionals – HR professionals are, indeed, more reactive and likely to multitask, but they are likely to be MORE tactful. Refer to research findings on page 29.

- d. There are no significant differences in personality between HR professionals and sales professionals – not true, please refer to research findings on page 29.

6. People who are low in Originality:
- a. Cannot use their imagination.
  - b. Cannot multitask.
  - c. Are likely to be terrible leaders.
  - d. Are likely to enjoy complexity.
  - e. Both a and b are correct.

**Answer: d**

Comments:

- a. Cannot use their imagination – nothing in personality is about “can” or “cannot.” Anyone can stretch and certainly anyone can use his/her imagination! Personality studies simply indicate our natural tendencies and preferences. Try again.
- b. Cannot multitask – nothing in personality is about “can” or “cannot.” Anyone can stretch and certainly anyone can use his/her imagination! Personality studies simply indicate our natural tendencies and preferences. Try again.
- c. Are likely to be terrible leaders – even though the “typical” leader tends to be higher in originality that certainly does not mean that a low originality person cannot be an excellent leader. Further, leadership success depends on the leadership situation (including the leadership challenges, the personalities of the followers, the environment, the culture of the organization, etc.). Try again.
- d. Are likely to enjoy complexity – yes! High originality individuals tend to favor complex solutions and find it easier to interconnect complex pieces.
- e. Both a and b are correct – nothing in personality is about “can” or “cannot.” Anyone can stretch and certainly anyone can use his/her imagination! Personality studies simply indicate our natural tendencies and preferences. Try again.

7. The typical leader is...
- a. High in imagination
  - b. Low in accommodation
  - c. Low in need for stability
  - d. High in consolidation
  - e. All of the above

**Answer: e**

Comments:

For all questions: Refer to Howard and Howard's description of the typical leader profile on page 28.

8. If you are working with a senior HR executive you may assume the following:
- He or she is certainly an extravert.
  - He or she is likely to have little tact.
  - He or she is likely to be an extravert but only if his/her nationality is American.
  - All of the above.
  - None of the above.

**Answer: e**

Comments:

- He or she is certainly an extravert – the problem here is the word “certainly” – try again.
  - He or she is likely to have little tact – actually, leaders are likely to be MORE tactful than average, not less. Further, HR professionals in general tend to value tact. Try again.
  - He or she is likely to be an extravert but only if his/her nationality is American – There is nothing in the text (or in research) suggesting that extraversion only matters to American leaders. In fact, international research suggests the opposite – leaders tend to be more extraverted than their followers *in general*. Try again.
  - All of the above – No, there are problems in all the above answers. Try again.
  - None of the above.
9. Since typical HR professionals are moderate in originality, you should:
- Avoid introducing new ideas.
  - Demonstrate that new ideas have reasonable likelihood of success and effectiveness.
  - Introduce new ideas only when the person occupies a leadership role.
  - Introduce new ideas by making the person believe that it's his/her idea.
  - None of the above.

**Answer: b**

Comments:

- Avoid introducing new ideas – Try again. Those who are moderate in originality may still very much value an important idea.
- Demonstrate that new ideas have reasonable likelihood of success and effectiveness – yes! Moderates are quite likely to appreciate a new idea when there's reasonable evidence predicting its success.

- c. Introduce new ideas only when the person occupies a leadership role – Try again. Those who are moderate in originality may still very much value an important idea, regardless of their rank or role.
- d. Introduce new ideas by making the person believe that it's his/her idea – Try again. Those who are moderate in originality may still very much value an important idea, regardless of their rank or role. Further, “making the person believe that it's his/her idea” would only be important if the person is *also* a Challenger (low in Accommodation).
- e. None of the above – Try again. There is a better answer.

10. Short Essay: Briefly describe the “typical” HR personality traits. Contrast those traits with your own estimated tendencies.