

Big 5 Personality Questionnaire (B5PQ)

Feedback to Test Takers

Introduction (page 2)

Key points to make

- The Big 5 Personality Questionnaire (B5PQ) measures aspects of your personality by asking you questions about your behaviours, attitudes and reactions in various work and life situations.
- Groups of questions relate to different personality dimensions. It is the particular combination of personality dimensions possessed by a person that shapes their style, and contributes to their job performance.
- Personality is not the only influence on your performance, however, as your competencies, your interests, your values, your pattern of intellectual abilities, your life experience, and your current situation also contribute to making you the person you are.
- Psychological tests do not measure the whole you which is why they need to be interpreted in the context of other information about you.
- Your profile is based on what you have said about yourself through your responses to the questionnaire so that what we are measuring here is your own perception of what you are like.
- The results can also be affected by your strategy for answering the questionnaire - whether this was conscious or unconscious – for example, whether you were very frank, whether you were very self-critical or whether you felt under pressure to convey a more than usually positive impression of yourself.
- The assessment is intended to help you clarify your view of yourself and help you to develop and achieve personal growth. If you do not recognize yourself in the following profile, check what other people think by taking views from bosses, peers and direct reports.
- The framework provides a way of analysing how your personality along with your abilities and motivations may be influencing your current job performance.
- Taking each broad personality area in turn, think about the tasks that you find come easily to you, and those that you find harder to perform consistently to a high standard. In deciding where to put your development efforts, focus on one or two areas that are likely to have the biggest impact on your work performance. Set yourself specific learning goals, and identify what you are going to try to change.

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Profile summary (page 3)

Key points to make

- The B5PQ is based on the Big Five factor model of personality whose major proponents are Lewis Goldberg, and Paul Costa and Robert McCrae. This theory proposes that five broad dimensions provide a complete description of personality.
- The Big 5 Factors are commonly referred to as Openness to Change, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism/Emotional Stability (OCEAN).
- The test has 20 scales measuring different aspects of these factors. These scales are shown on the profile chart on page 9 of your report along with a short explanation of what each scale reflects.
- The questionnaire also has an impression management scale. This scale indicates how self-critical you have been in answering the questionnaire. A high score indicates that the test taker has attempted to create a favourable profile (sometimes called faking or cheating) whereas a low score indicates that the test taker has been hard on themselves.
- The scores on the profile chart are based on an international comparison group of 25,000 people who have taken the test. The majority of respondents come from the USA, Canada, UK, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. The average age in the sample is 31. The sample includes people from a wide range of occupations, and includes managers at all levels.
- The scores reported in the profile sheet are Standard Ten Scores (Stens). Figure 1 shows how Stens and other commonly used scales map onto the normal distribution curve.
- The average range on a Sten scale is from 4 to 7 with a score of 4 interpreted as low average and a score of 7 interpreted as high average. Sixty eight percent of people score in this middle range. Sixteen percent of people score higher than 7 and sixteen percent score lower than 4.
- There are statistically significant correlations between scores on the questionnaire scales and ratings of job performance. Analysis indicates that about 13% of the variability in job performance ratings is explained by personality dimensions assessed by the questionnaire. This compares favourably with general intelligence which is considered to account for between 10 and 20 percent of academic and job success.

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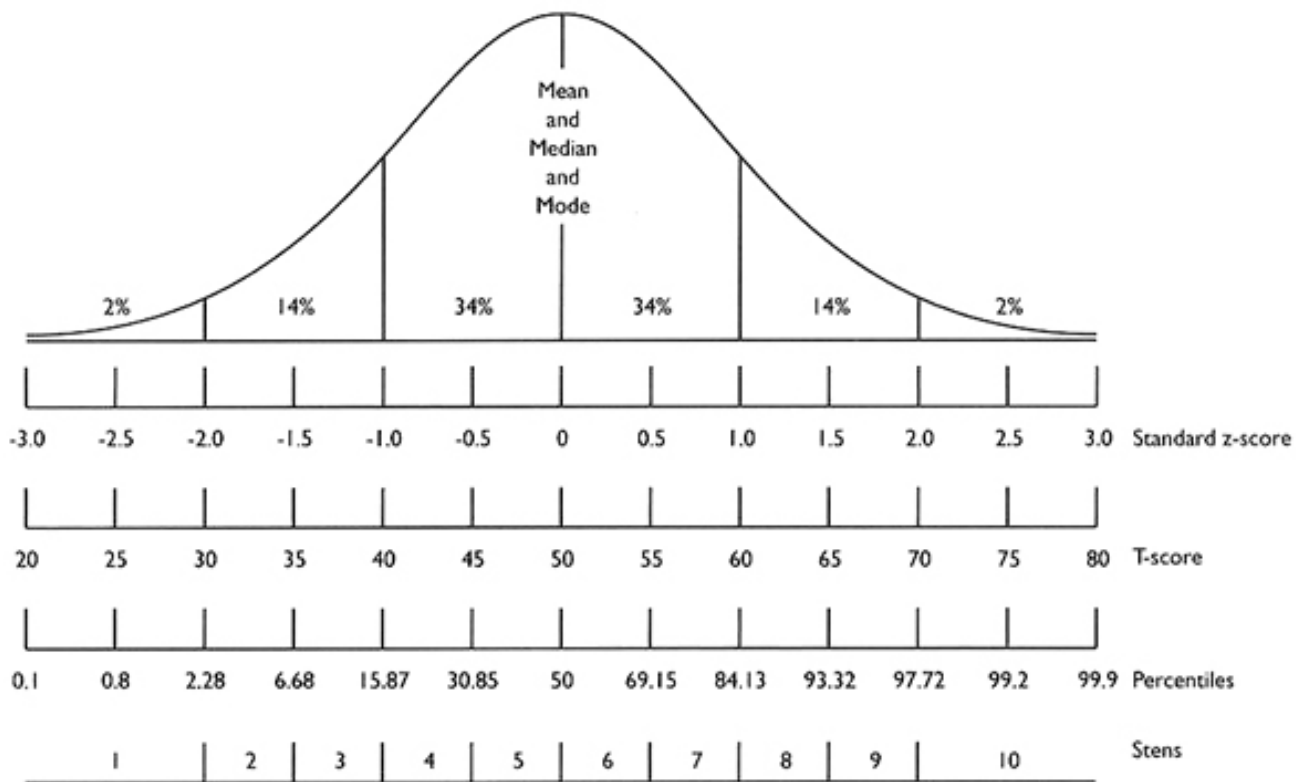


Figure 1. Stens and other scores

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Openness to change (page 4-8)

Key points to make

- The second part of the report has a page on each of the Big 5 Factors. These appear in order of their strength. The openness to change factor covers 4 personality dimensions showing your preferred style of creativity and problem solving.

Scale	High Score Meaning
Imaginative	Has strong imagination, sets aside time for thinking, enjoys daydreaming
Innovative	Generates original solutions to problems, has lots of ideas for change
Rule Breaking	Prepared to bend the rules and take risks to achieve change
Adaptable	Tries new ways of working, prefers variety to routine, adapts quickly to change

- The theory behind the openness to change factor is that all people have creative ability, but individuals express it differently according to their thinking style. Thinking style influences where people look for information, the sort of information they prefer dealing with, and the type of environment they prefer working in. When solving problems and making decisions, people divide into two camps - adaptors and innovators.
- Adaptors accept problems at face value and focus on solutions that do things better. They prefer structured environments, established ways of doing things and concrete information. They process information in a rational and sequential way. Innovators are the exact opposite. They dislike established structure and routine, have little regard for rules and look for solutions that focus on doing things differently. They prefer intuitive thinking, and are comfortable in situations where there is incomplete information. Feeling comfortable in ambiguous situations, innovators adapt quickly to change.
- These differences appear to influence the occupations people choose - for example, entrepreneurs tend to be more innovative perhaps because they have to create their own organizations because they don't fit within established ones. Adaptors on the other hand fit in well in most large organizations and make good corporate citizens. When solving problems, they tend to come up with solutions that represent fine-tuning or continuous improvement rather than radical shifts.
- There is a place for both styles in most organizations just as there is a place for continuous improvement and radical innovation in technology. It is important to recognize the validity of both styles, understand your own style and in certain situations adopt features of the opposite style where that style would help achieve your objectives.

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Conscientious (page 4-8 of the report)

Key points to make

- This section covers your scores on 4 scales measuring how conscientious you are.

Scale	High Score Meaning
Competent	Completes tasks, excels at work, gets things done efficiently
Organized	Likes to be organized, keeps things tidy, does things according to a plan
Achieving	Works hard, sets high standards, does more than is expected of him or her
Proactive	Gets down to work quickly, initiates activities, prepares in advance

- The conscientious person displays a strong sense of direction and self-control at work and in their personal life. High scorers are competent, organized, achieving and proactive. Low scorers do not seem to have the same sense of purpose and direction in their lives.
- Modern society and employers expect people to have a reasonable degree of this trait. Employers selecting candidates for job positions are unlikely to recruit people with low scores on all the conscientiousness traits.
- Personality traits that relate to behaviours such as competence, organization, achievement and initiative map directly onto business management competencies that occur frequently in company competency frameworks - for example, competencies such as planning, quality and achieving results. This is why employers will be looking for people who have average to high scores on these traits.

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Extraversion (page 4-8 of the report)

Key points to make

- Extraverts and introverts represent the opposite ends of a key personality trait that affects how people form and manage relationships with others and how they communicate - both at work and in their personal lives. The majority of people are of course neither very extrovert nor very introvert but somewhat in between.

Scale	High Score Meaning
Friendly	Gets to know people quickly, cheers people up, enjoys contact
Outgoing	Likes to be surrounded by people, talks a lot, enjoys social occasions
Assertive	Communicates views and ideas, seeks to influence people, takes control
Energetic	Keeps busy, reacts quickly, is always on the go, fills spare time with activity

- If you are high on extraversion, you will like being surrounded by people at work and in your personal life. You will enjoy socializing with people, and you will be talkative and communicative. You will also lead an active existence, and you will seek excitement and stimulation. People are likely to perceive you as cheerful, upbeat and optimistic. Extraverts are selected for sales positions because the job demands these qualities.
- Introverts lack the extravert's qualities but do not necessarily display the opposite ones. The typical introvert will be content to work on their own, and will not feel the need to be surrounded by lots of people. This does not mean that they are unfriendly nor suffer from social anxiety. They are just more reserved, and while they may not seek out opportunities for excitement nor display the extravert's high spirits, they are not necessarily lazy, unhappy nor pessimistic. Similarly, while they may keep their ideas and opinions to themselves, they may be very articulate when invited to express their views.
- Most managerial jobs demand extravert and introvert qualities. At times, you will have to work on your own and focus on listening to what your bosses or direct reports are saying rather than expressing your own views. At other times, you will be expected to lead from the front, communicate a vision, and inspire people. The trick is to recognize and be able to flexibly deploy the appropriate behavioural qualities even if it means working against the grain of your personality.

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Agreeableness (page 4-8 of the report)

Key points to make

- This section covers your scores on 4 scales measuring agreeableness. Like extraversion, agreeableness is a personality dimension that influences people's relationships. People who score high on agreeableness display sensitivity, compassion, and understanding.

Scale	High Score Meaning
Trusting	Believes that people have good intentions, trusts people to be honest
Genuine	Behaves straightforwardly, does not manipulate or use people
Considerate	Shows concern, listens well, makes people feel welcome
Unassuming	Keeps quiet about achievements, avoids talking about self

- These qualities - often referred to as empathy - are important in caring professions and also in aspects of managerial work. People expect their bosses to accept what they say at face value, to behave in a straightforward fashion, to listen to their views and opinions and show concern when they experience problems. A manager who displays these qualities is perceived as having a participative and democratic style that is believed to be beneficial to the organization and motivating to the individual.
- The individual who scores low on agreeableness is, by contrast, more independent, self-absorbed, sceptical of people's intentions and competitive rather than cooperative. Whilst agreeable people are more popular than independent/antagonistic individuals, agreeableness is not a virtue in all situations. At times, you need to be ready to fight your corner, to compete with others for promotion, and to be sceptical of people's intentions.

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Emotional stability (page 4-8 of the report)

Key points to make

- Individuals who score high on emotional stability are usually calm, even-tempered and relaxed at work and in their personal lives. They can generally handle stressful situations without becoming upset and rattled. Low scorers tend to have difficulty controlling their thoughts and emotions. People with very low scores across all the dimensions may be at risk of or suffering from psychological problems.

Scale	High Score Meaning
Relaxed	Has fewer worries than most people, finds it easy to unwind
Contented	Comfortable with self, happy with life, positive about future
Self-Assured	Confident in unfamiliar surroundings and with new people
Resilient	Calm under pressure, copes with problems, overcomes setbacks quickly

- The high score end of this trait is the desirable end to lie. Employers look for mental toughness in their managers and managers who lash out at people under stress are increasingly less likely to get promoted. When things go wrong, managers are expected to display outer calm whatever they may be feeling inside.
- This does not mean that a high score on all the emotional stability dimensions is necessary. People who naturally worry about things may be less likely to make mistakes because their natural vigilance leads them to think about the risks associated with different actions.

Development advice (not in report)

Key points to make

- Most people don't need to completely change their style to be more effective. The following kinds of modest changes have been suggested by experts in the field of personality, emotional intelligence and leadership.
- Try to understand what you do well, what motivates and satisfies you and what people and situations push your buttons. Assess how your mood affects your behaviour and performance. Seek feedback to check whether how you see yourself is the same as how other people see you
- Observe people and listen to their conversations. Get to know people on a personal level and try to understand their perspectives and work well with them. Walk around your work environment and notice what is happening. Put yourself in other people's situations and ask yourself what you would do.
- When things get difficult, give yourself time to digest difficult situations and sleep on things. Put your immediate needs on hold in favour of achieving larger goals. Give things an opportunity to work out before reacting but don't allow things to fester. Use performance enhancement techniques such as breathing techniques, visualisation, and smiling and laughing to help manage pressure and lift your mood.
- Try to use your feelings as a signal to understand what is going on, and balance emotional considerations and facts when making decisions. Try to make your decisions transparent, and try to be reliable and genuine when you discuss your reasons for decisions.
- Displaying positive emotions such as enthusiasm and optimism can be a huge motivator. Convey to your team the message that you know they can do it. It will raise their confidence and encourage them to work harder.
- Encourage people to think about new ways of doing things and come to you with ideas and suggestions. When someone comes to you with ideas, think first about the positive aspects of their proposals - "yes and" instead of "no but". Engage people by asking them what they would do rather than by dictating solutions.
- Create space in your diary to find out about and pay attention to people's views and concerns. Be careful not to operate through only the best performers who will quickly be perceived as your favourites. Personally thank subordinates for their efforts. Face-to-face communication is best but written notes and emails will also do.

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Personal Improvement Plan

Name	Date
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Openness to change		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Improvement Actions

Conscientiousness		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Improvement Actions

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Extraversion		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Improvement Actions

Agreeableness		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Improvement Actions

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Emotional stability		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Improvement Actions
Notes		