

PERSONALITY AS A LEADERSHIP DETERMINANT

GOALS

1. To define personality, both individual and organizational.
2. To give reason and purpose regarding an organizationally derived personality assessment of a potential leader.

DEFINITION OF PERSONALITY

In general terms, a person's personality encompasses the unique and enduring patterns of thought, feelings, and behaviors shaped by an individual's philosophy, genetics, and experiences.

Within organizations, personality is further influenced by institutional standards such as philosophy, mission, purpose, goals, and objectives.

HUMAN PERSONALITY MODELS

Personality differences arise from unique combinations of heredity, experiences, and environment. We all individually

think, feel, and behave as human beings in different ways. The Five Factor Model (OCEAN) evaluates traits of Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. These unique individual differences form our different personalities and the fundamental structure and enduring patterns of our *thoughts, feelings, and behaviors*.

Our individual five personality traits are measured by components of the Ocean Model:

OCEAN MODEL or The Five Factor Model (FFM):

O: Openness: Creative and curious

C: Conscientiousness: Organized and disciplined

E: Extraversion: Outgoing and assertive

A: Agreeableness: Compassionate, trusting, and cooperative

N: Neuroticism: Negative emotions and sensation

HEXICO MODEL--This is like the Five Factor Ocean Model; however, extends the OCEAN framework by including honesty and humility.

INDIVIDUAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS & LEADERSHIP

Organizational job descriptions should clearly define the personality traits and behaviors expected for each role, especially for leadership positions. Leader's must demonstrate behaviors that support organizational success and align with its philosophy, mission, purpose, goals, and objectives.

PROMOTING LEADERSHIP PERSONALITY

While various leadership personality assessments exist, their effectiveness varies. It is essential to document and communicate the specific personality behaviors required for organizational success, ideally within job descriptions. Positive workplace behaviors should be explicitly stated and reinforced through organizational models and systems. Job descriptions should consistently state expected leadership work behaviors and evaluate the degree of personality compliance, such as:

1. The recognized leader personality that promotes a successful and specific job title or assignment.
2. The need/reason for all leaders to personally be able to accurately account for their employment personality behaviors that enhance their employment success, support their continued employment retention, and

represent and support the organization's philosophy, mission, purpose, and goals.

WORKPLACE PERSONALITY MODELS

Effective behavioral workplace personality models encourage and make known the expectation of positive employee personality behaviors. These personality behaviors are overtly made evident in literature in at least two prominent ways:

1. The *Behavioral Workplace Model*: The *personality of the organization* is exposed overtly through basic documented tenets, stated foundation, and/or the behavioral workplace model of the organization. The workplace model consists of the organization's philosophy, mission, purpose, goal(s), objective(s), and rules that support organizational success.
2. The *Clutter Bug Individual Model/System*: The ability and ways *individual personalities* hired by the organization deal successfully with their work information, order, and structure that defines the organization's personality. The four models suggest that individuals and employees tend to align with at least one of these four personality types.

Model 1: Structure Ability and Meticulous Planners. (Busy Bees)

Model 2: “Free Spirits” and Creative thinkers. (Flitting Butterflies)

Model 3: Deadline-driven and Routine oriented. (Crickets)

Model 4: Seeks beauty, tidiness, and organization. (Ladybugs)

It is the recognition of effective work placement of specific employee personalities and traits that guides overall organizational success, decisions, and outcomes.

LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Marketed personality tools/tests are usually designed to assess a person’s potential or existing leadership *inclinations* as it relates to traits of personality, preferences, values, and motivation. However, standardized and *organization-specific* assessments can identify potential leaders’ natural tendencies and predict future leadership behaviors. These assessments should reflect real workplace scenarios to ensure alignment with organizational standards. Coaching and development should focus on leveraging leaders’ inherent personality traits to optimize organizational outcomes.

The truth is that lifetime inherent and natural personality traits/tendencies of a potential leader are more likely to prevail sooner or later regardless of administrative effort. Therefore, acceptable administrative-specific personality traits of potential leaders should be monitored carefully to consistently support the organization's success.

The goal is to require organization-specific and unique requirements related to the organization's success and supportive of the organization's personality standards.

The responses to administratively determined scenarios by a potential leader provide a somewhat accurate assessment of the most likely outcomes during future leadership problem-solving situations. This knowledge of existing personality leadership behaviors will identify the potential leader's *natural tendencies* that influence current and future leadership outcomes. Such preliminary testing of potential and natural leadership personality tendencies by organizationally developed and possibly covert testing will reveal *current* and *natural* potential leadership traits, personality, preferences, values, motivation, inclinations, and outcomes that will promote or hinder an organization's existing standards.

The administrative secret to leadership success is for the administration to coach and help groom new and existing

work effectively by using the potential leader's own personality leadership tendencies. Therefore, it is an organization's administrative covert and overt testing and personal awareness of natural behaviors/tendencies of a potential and existing leader's personality that can help assure appropriate leadership placement. This testing helps to ensure the attainment and maintenance of the intended organization's personality.

IN CLOSING

Selecting a potential/new leader and/or maintaining employee leaders with leadership personalities that encourage organizational success was never intended to be easy!

Successful selection by administration of a potential new leader requires recognition of leadership astuteness and a personality that enhances organizational outcomes.

Therefore, to promote optimum organizational personality success, the organization's administrative staff reviews and evaluates (i.e., use of a job description) all potential and existing employees—especially new and potential organizational leaders as to their natural personality propensities that support the personality of the organization.

Selecting and developing leaders who embody the desired organizational personality is challenging, but essential. Continuous evaluation and clear job descriptions that specify expected personality traits help ensure organizational success and growth.

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