

Unit 7: Interpretation Guide for Adaptability Self-Assessment

The lecture and chapter for this topic address what it takes to create a successful entrepreneurial or “intrapreneurial” venture. Part of the path to success for new ventures involves following effective processes. But, part of what determines success is related to the characteristics of the key entrepreneur(s) who create a new venture and those who work in them. One of the very important personal characteristics typical of successful entrepreneurs is adaptability. In fact, it is not just entrepreneurial ventures that require increasing levels of adaptability to facilitate success but most of today’s modern jobs.

Research shows that today’s organizations (both traditional and entrepreneurial) are characterized by changing, dynamic environments in which it has become increasingly important for workers to be adaptive. Changing technology continues to alter the nature of work. Market changes demand new solutions and ways of delivering value. Mergers, resizing and organization restructuring require workers to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge. In a global economy, many jobs require workers to learn to operate effectively across countries and while spanning cultures. To succeed in today’s organizations, workers need to be increasingly adaptable. Nowhere is this truer than in entrepreneurial organizations.

Adaptability involves a combination of capabilities such as the ability to: handle emergency and crisis situations; demonstrate physical adaptability; handle work stress; solve problems creatively; deal with uncertain/unpredictable work situations; learn new work tasks; master new technologies and procedures; demonstrate interpersonal adaptability; and demonstrate cultural adaptability.

The purpose of this self-assessment is to identify your perception of your own adaptability as measured by a series of questions that address important aspects of adaptability.

As you look at your self-assessment results, think about how your overall results and your answers to the individual questions will likely impact your ability to manage uncertainty and change in organizations. We know that organization members with low adaptability scores are more likely to struggle with the rapid changes that are typical in new ventures as well as in rapidly changing established organizations. And we know that those with high adaptability scores are more likely to be comfortable with and more easily adapt to changing organization environments. We also know that it is possible to become more adaptable through training, experience, and the acceptance of the realities of our rapidly changing organizations.

If you have a low score, this does not mean that you can never succeed as an entrepreneur or in another rapidly changing environment. Rather, it means that rapid organizational change is more likely to be stressful for you than for those with higher scores and that you will need to work harder to be effective in the face of change. In particular, those with low scores may find entrepreneurial ventures difficult while those with high scores may find such ventures particularly exciting with the challenges inherent in such ventures considered a positive rather than a negative.

Remember that adaptability is a skill that can be developed through experience, training, and attitude adjustment. The classifications below as low, medium, and high are comparative based on normative data from assessment of a broad cross-section of organization members from both entrepreneurial and traditional organizations. Your score should be evaluated, not as an absolute score, but as relative to others who have completed the assessment.

Overall Adaptability Score

Score of 11-21	=	Low Adaptability
Score of 22-43	=	Medium Adaptability
Score of 44-55	=	High Adaptability