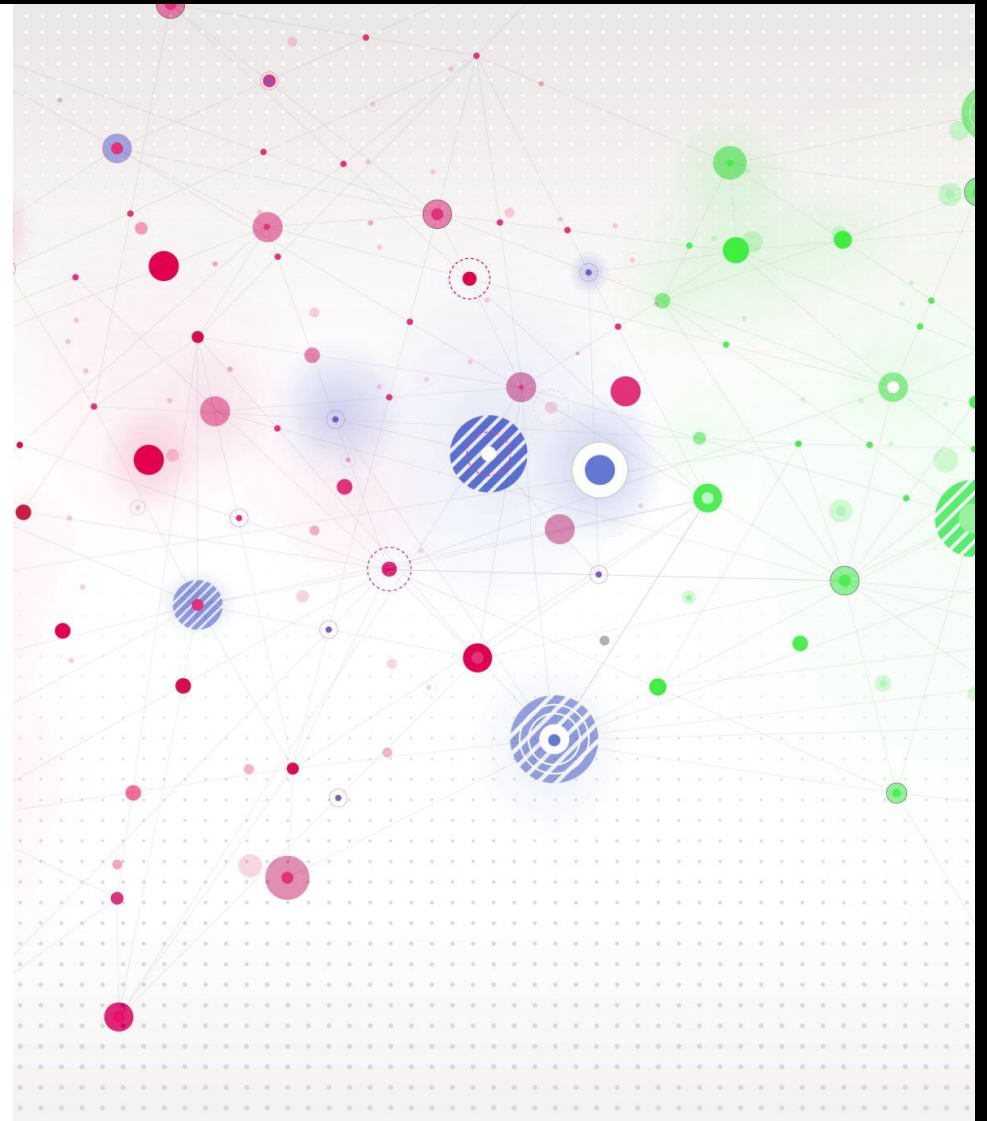


PRELUDE TO HIRING RIGHT

Case Discussion:

**Deshpande, R., & Raina, A. (2011).
The Ordinary Heroes of the Taj.
Harvard business review.**



S U M M A R Y

When terrorists attacked the Indian city of Mumbai in 2008, employees of the Taj Mumbai hotel displayed uncommon valor. They placed the safety of guests over their own well-being, thereby risking—and, in some cases, sacrificing—their lives. The case describes how this behavior was not merely a crisis response. It was instead a manifestation of the Taj Group's deeply rooted customer-centric culture and a values-driven recruitment system that emphasizes integrity and duty over talent and skills.

QUESTIONS

- Was the situation grave? What was/were the challenge(s) in delivering work performance?
- How did the staff behave in this crisis situation according to you?
- The Taj hotel staff was young and yet able to deliver- why do you think that “young” is being discussed?
- There was a clear preference to hire for right values over talent and skills- is this the right approach? Why do you think so or not?
- What conclusions can you safely make about right hiring from this case?

BURNING QUESTION: THE LOOKISM DEBATE

Problem Statement : Especially a societal issue in South Korea, beauty standards play a significant role in hiring especially in industries like:

- Entertainment: K-pop, acting and modelling
- Service and Hospitality: common perception is that client facing employees are the face of the company and a good looking face creates a better impression – so hire good looking people
- Corporate culture: Beauty standards must be followed. Incumbents are asked for photos on CV before they are hired.
- Older people are not hired and South Korea has an ageing population issue going on

BURNING QUESTION: THE LOOKISM DEBATE

Defining Korean Beauty Standards

1. Pale Skin – ever wondered why Korean make up is so famous?
2. V-shaped face – south korea is a destination of medical tourism and cheaper and effective plastic surgery treatments
3. Slim bodies
4. Hair and clothing standards

BURNING QUESTION: THE LOOKISM DEBATE

What self-management skills do we need to inculcate to protect ourselves?

BIASES IN HIRING

- Biases are everywhere and we deal with them everyday.
- Biases are an energy conserving mechanism whereby we are allowing our brain to function on an auto-pilot and not engaging in central processing (we engage in peripheral processing)
- Biases are lack of rationality too (read : one sided + emotional).

SOME COMMON BIASES IN HIRING

- Halo/horn effect
- Anchoring bias
- Beauty Bias
- Homogeneity bias (including gender, race etc)

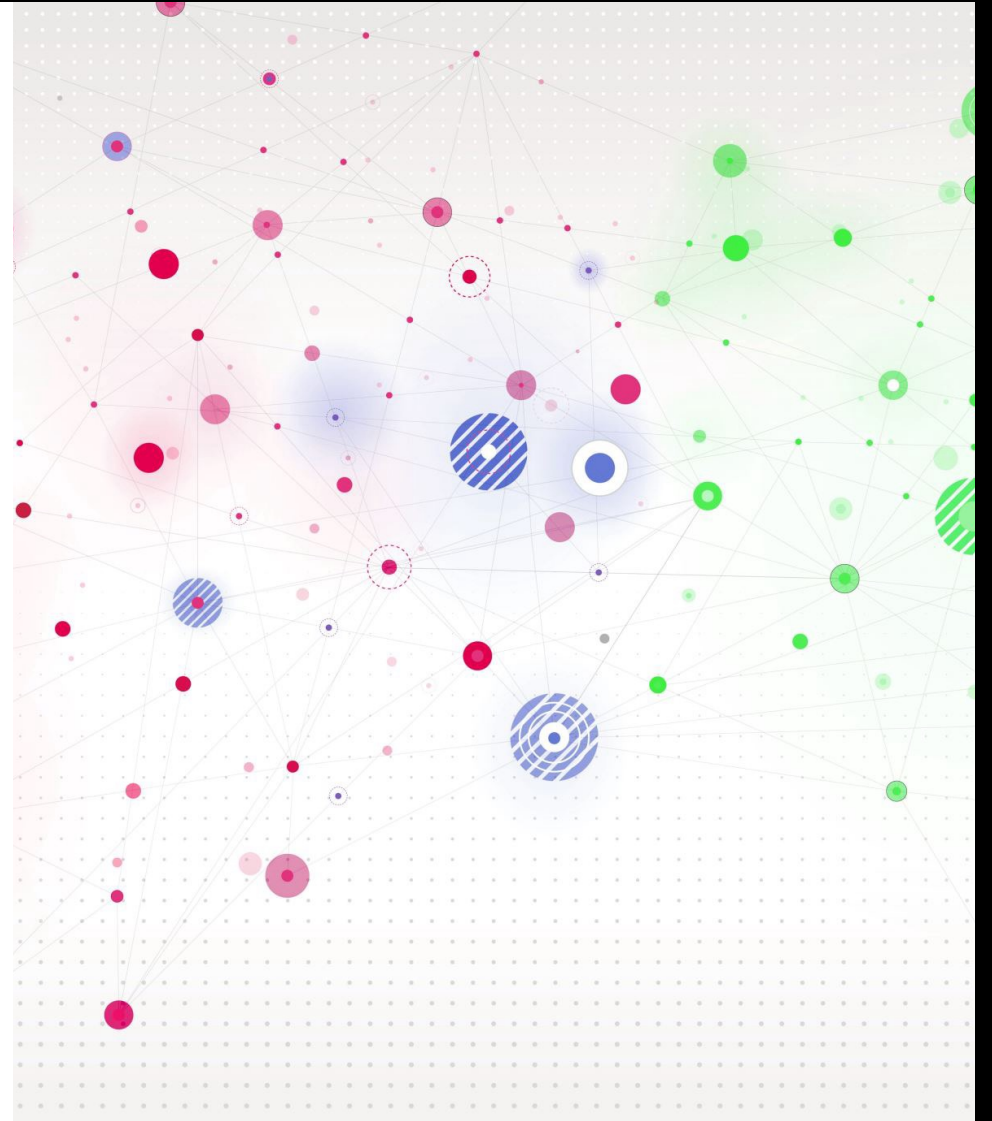
(essentially all stem from the reasons we discussed just now : lack of rationality)

WHAT IS LOOKISM?

-

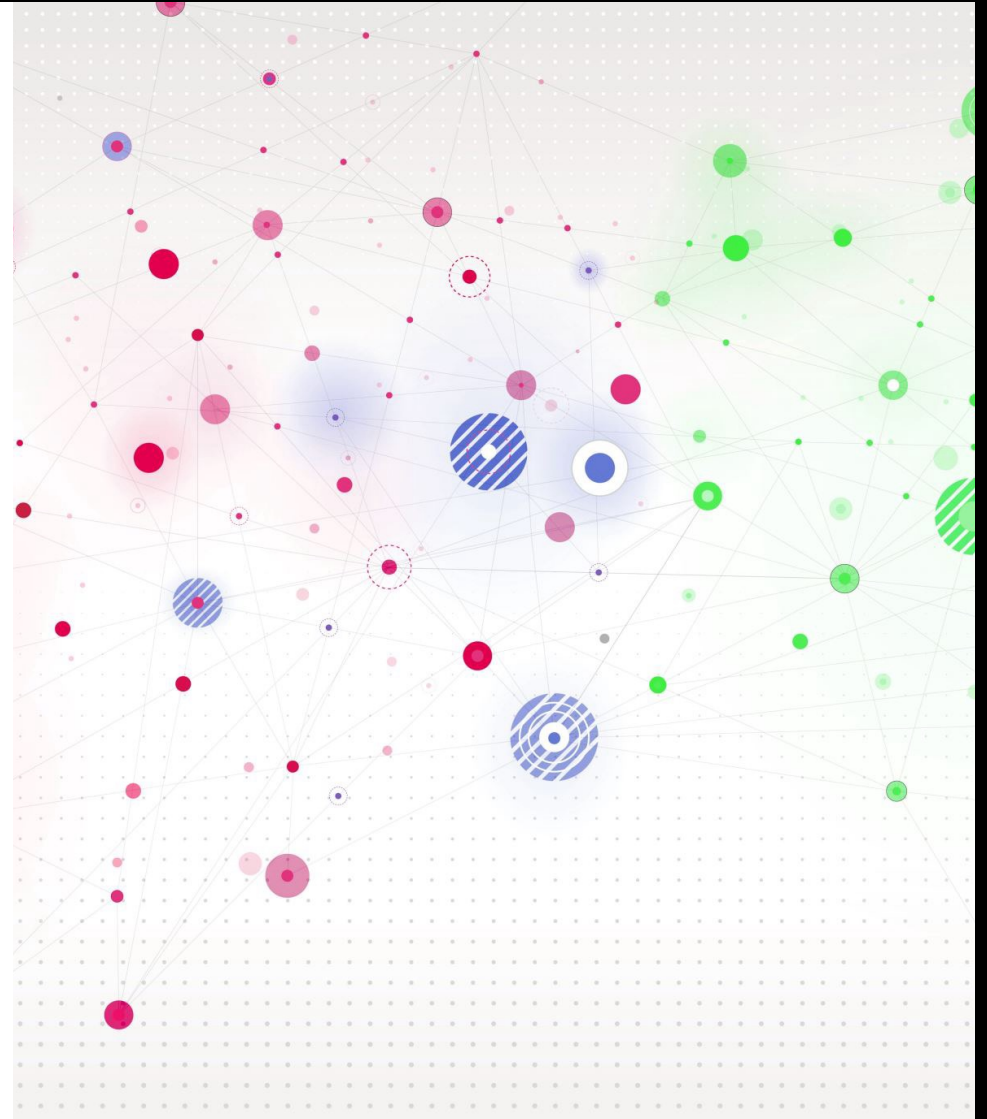
HIRING RIGHT

Dr Mahima Raina



AGENDA POINTS

- Discuss Psychometric Profiling
- Discuss Behavioural Interviews
- How do we solve hiring problems with these techniques in industry?
- Combining tech and touch in hiring



HIRING RIGHT

- Recruiting and keeping hold of top talent is always a top priority for organizations.
- Hiring people that are the right fit (called person-environment fit) creates more productivity and profitability for organizations

HIRING RIGHT: THE HUMAN FALLACY

- Organizations often face the challenge of hiring right but fail to do so because of several human reasons:
 - Outdated hiring processes
 - Lack of clarity over precise expectations from a candidate
 - Lack of an objective competency framework that would result in success in a job role
 - Recruitment processes often ignore personality traits, behavioral tendencies or individuals' motivations in the hiring process even though they contribute to job success

*kind of a summary of what we discussed so far

PSYCHOMETRIC PROFILING

- Psychometric profiling is the process of measuring a person's abilities and behavioral tendencies using a data driven, structured approach
- The goal is to find the person-environment fit (PE fit) to improve the hiring process
- If an organization hires people that experience PE fit, the culture becomes thriving which can reduce attrition

HOW IS PSYCHOMETRIC PROFILING DONE?

- Usually, psychometric profiling consists a **battery of measurements** including a candidate's:
 - Cognitive ability (you are quite familiar with this one)
 - Personality attributes
 - Motivations

HOW IS PSYCHOMETRIC PROFILING DONE?

- Usually, a simple survey method can be used to measure these attributes by creating items on a tested (eg., BIG 5 traits/theory of personality are known to be universal) theory
- Specific traits/attributes (called a **competency framework**) are linked to success in certain job roles , eg., the person scoring high on the trait of extraversion (Big 5 theory) is linked with success in client facing roles
- The quality of psychometric testing is that such tests are **reliable** (measure what they are supposed to measure) and **valid** (replicable results)- advanced statistical techniques are applied to test reliability and validity

OTHER BENEFITS OF PSYCHOMETRIC PROFILING

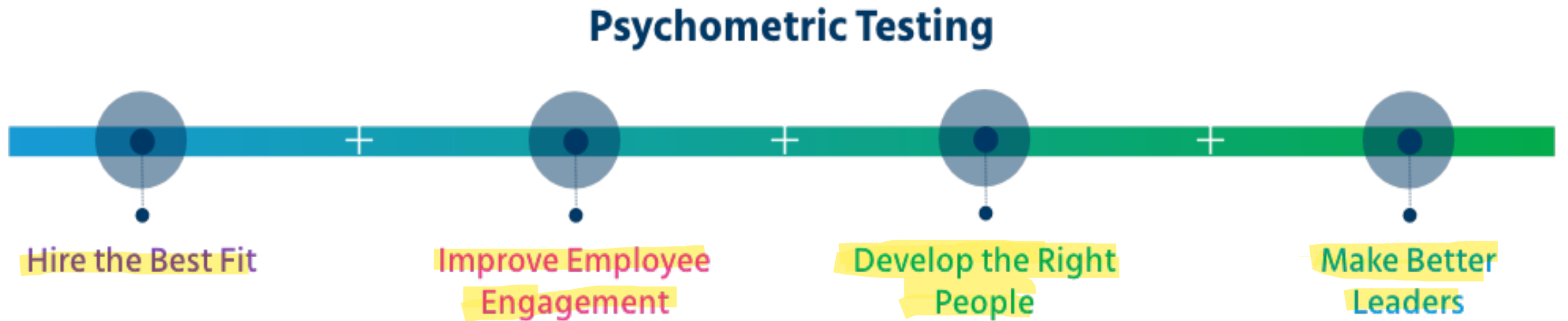


Image sourced from Mercer|Mettl Website

CHALLENGES

- Some inherent challenges of the survey method (commonly used method in personality testing) is as follows:
 - **Social Desirability** Candidates may respond to psychometric tests in a way that they believe is more socially acceptable or favorable, rather than providing honest answers. This can skew results and lead to inaccurate assessments of a candidate's true personality or abilities
 - **Practice effect**
 - **Acquiescence** (usually minimal in high stakes situation such as hiring)
- Cultural Bias:** Many psychometric tests are developed based on specific cultural contexts, which may not be applicable or relevant to individuals from different backgrounds. This can result in unfair assessments and misinterpretation of results for candidates from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Limited Scope:** Psychometric tests often focus on specific traits or competencies, which may not capture the full range of an individual's abilities or potential. This can lead to an incomplete understanding of a candidate's suitability for a role
- Ethical Concerns:** The use of psychometric profiling raises ethical questions regarding privacy and consent, particularly if candidates are not fully informed about how their data will be used or if they feel pressured to take tests as part of the hiring process

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- For Social Desirability: Eg., inclusion of a lie scale or a social desirability index in the report
 - Cultural Adaptation of Tests:** To mitigate cultural bias, psychometric tests should be adapted for different cultural contexts. This may involve translating tests, ensuring cultural relevance in the questions, and validating tests across diverse populations to ensure fairness
- **Using a battery of assessment method** – making human assessment more holistic to include cognitive, emotional and behavioral measurements and using different personality tests
 - Balanced Assessment Approach:** Organizations should avoid over-reliance on psychometric tests by integrating them with other assessment methods, such as structured interviews and practical evaluations. This balanced approach can provide a more rounded view of a candidate's qualifications and fit for the role
- **Combining different forms of personality testing** (methods)- eg., a situational judgement or in-basket assessments (again using a pre-determined set of competencies based on data)
 - Ethical Transparency:** It is crucial to maintain transparency regarding the use of psychometric profiling. Candidates should be informed about how their data will be used, the purpose of the assessments, and their rights regarding privacy. This can help build trust and ensure ethical practices

A EXAMPLE OF PSYCHOMETRIC PROFILING

Positive Personality Traits:

Positive personality traits of employees enable organizations to maintain a positive culture, innovate, adapt and succeed

Examples: Curious, Organized, Compassionate



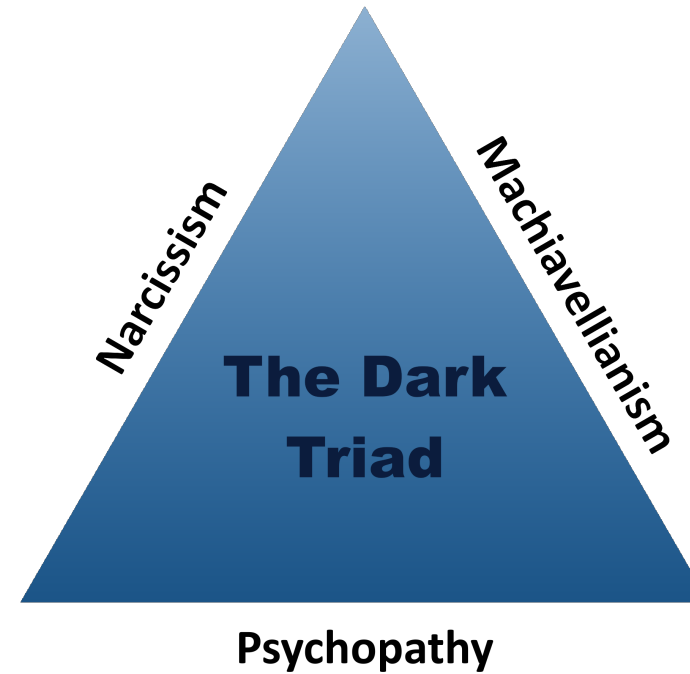
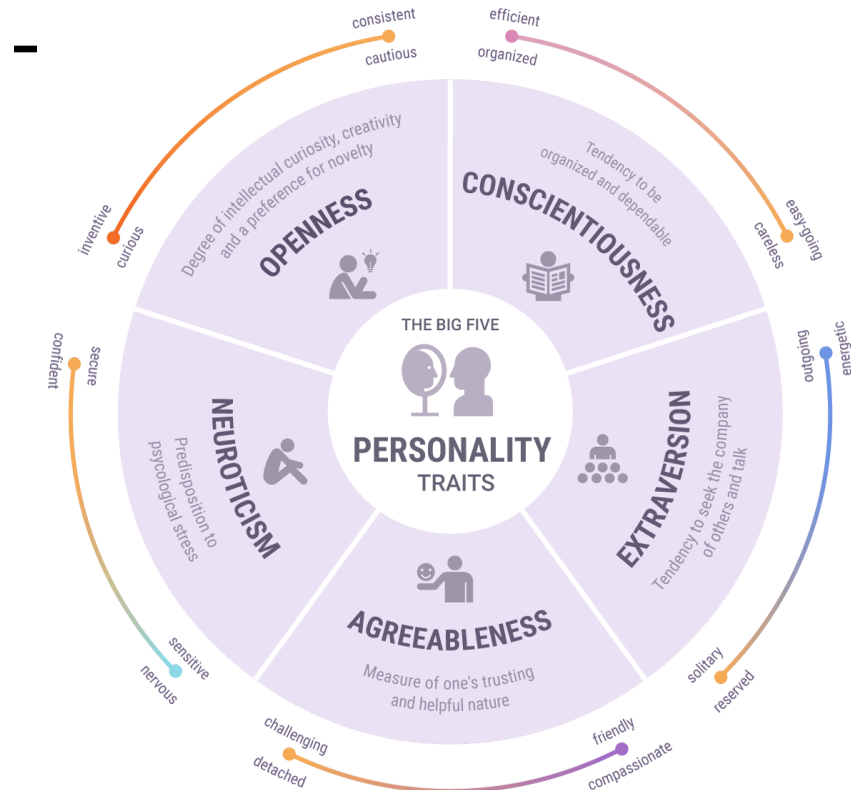
Dark Personality Traits:

Dark personality traits are undesirable characteristics that negatively impact employees, organizations and clients

Examples: Self-Obsession, Insensitivity, Temperamental

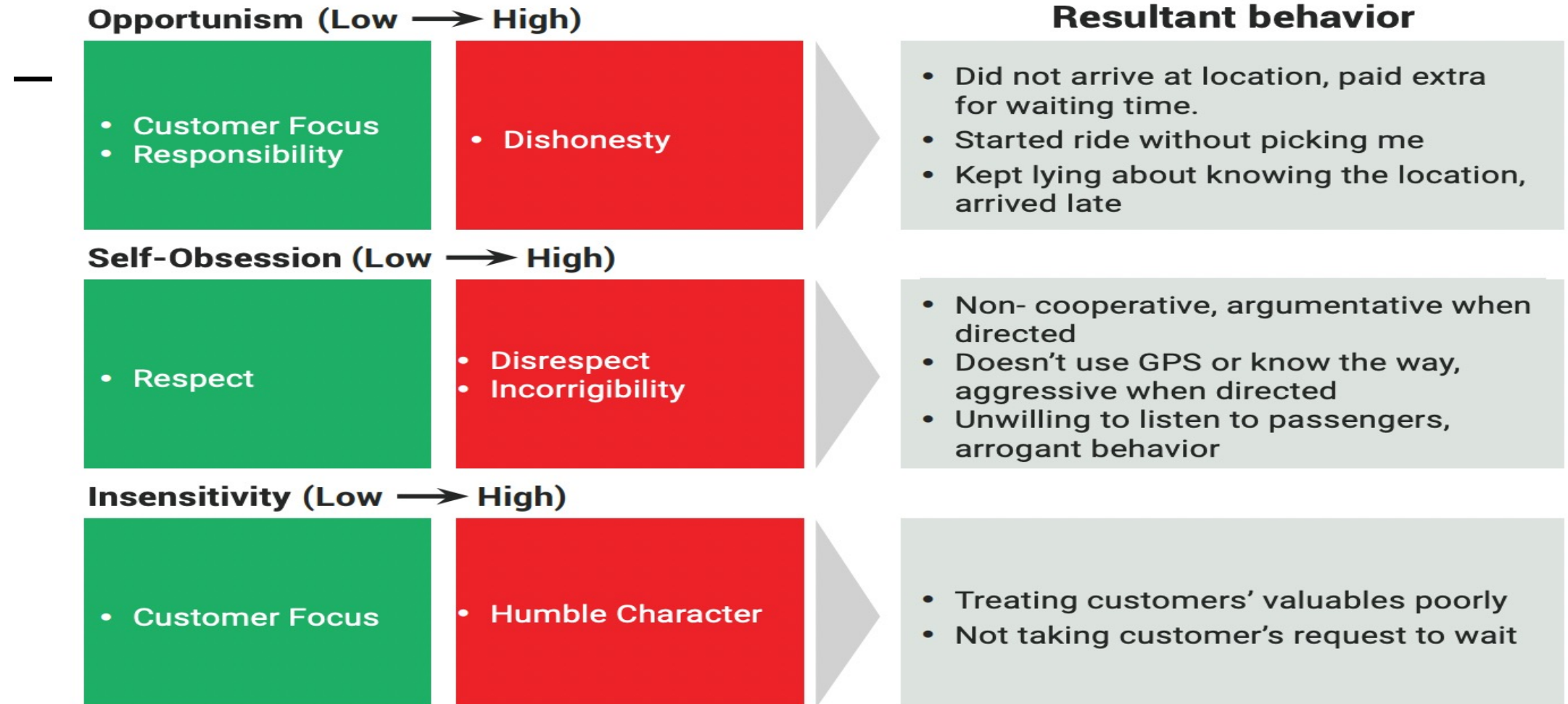
Image sourced from Mercer|Mettl Website

THEORETICAL BASIS



COMPETENCY MAPPING

Dark Personality Trait Framework for Cab Drivers



BEHAVIOURAL INTERVIEWS

Behavioural interviewing is a technique that assesses a candidate's ability to meet the job requirements based on their previous experience.

Focus on a candidate's past experiences to assess how they've navigated specific situations and utilized skills relevant to the position.

TOP THREE BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS*

You must have come across questions like:

- 1.
Tell me about a time when you faced a challenging situation at work and how you handled it.**
- 2. Describe a situation where you had to work with a difficult team member. How did you handle it?**
- 3. Give me an example of a project or accomplishment that you're proud of. What was your role, and how did you contribute to its success?**

TOP THREE BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS*

The question is asked to assess you on:

- 1. Tell me about a time when you faced a challenging situation at work and how you handled it.**

problem-solving skills, resilience, and the ability to handle adversity.

TOP THREE BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS*

The question is asked to assess you on:

2. Describe a situation where you had to work with a difficult team member. How did you handle it?

interpersonal skills, teamwork, and conflict resolution.

TOP THREE BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS*

The question is asked to assess you on:

3. Give me an example of a project or accomplishment that you're proud of. What was your role, and how did you contribute to its success?

achievements, initiative, and the ability to take ownership of tasks.

HOW CAN/ARE COMPANIES MAKE THIS TECHNIQUE INEFFECTIVE?

By asking these questions without a “purpose”.

Purpose means- they are still not clear why they need to ask such questions and how some of these human attributes are related to performance in the roles they are hiring for

HOW CAN COMPANIES GET THE BEST OUT OF IT!

By getting more specific about what they care (read performance) about in people*

Companies need to determine specific human values and skills that are critical for performance in the they are hiring for

*remember diversity problem?

EXAMPLE TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THIS

Have you called customer care at Amazon? What was your experience like?

How about Myntra?

AMAZON LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Have you called customer care at Amazon? What was your experience like?

How about Myntra?

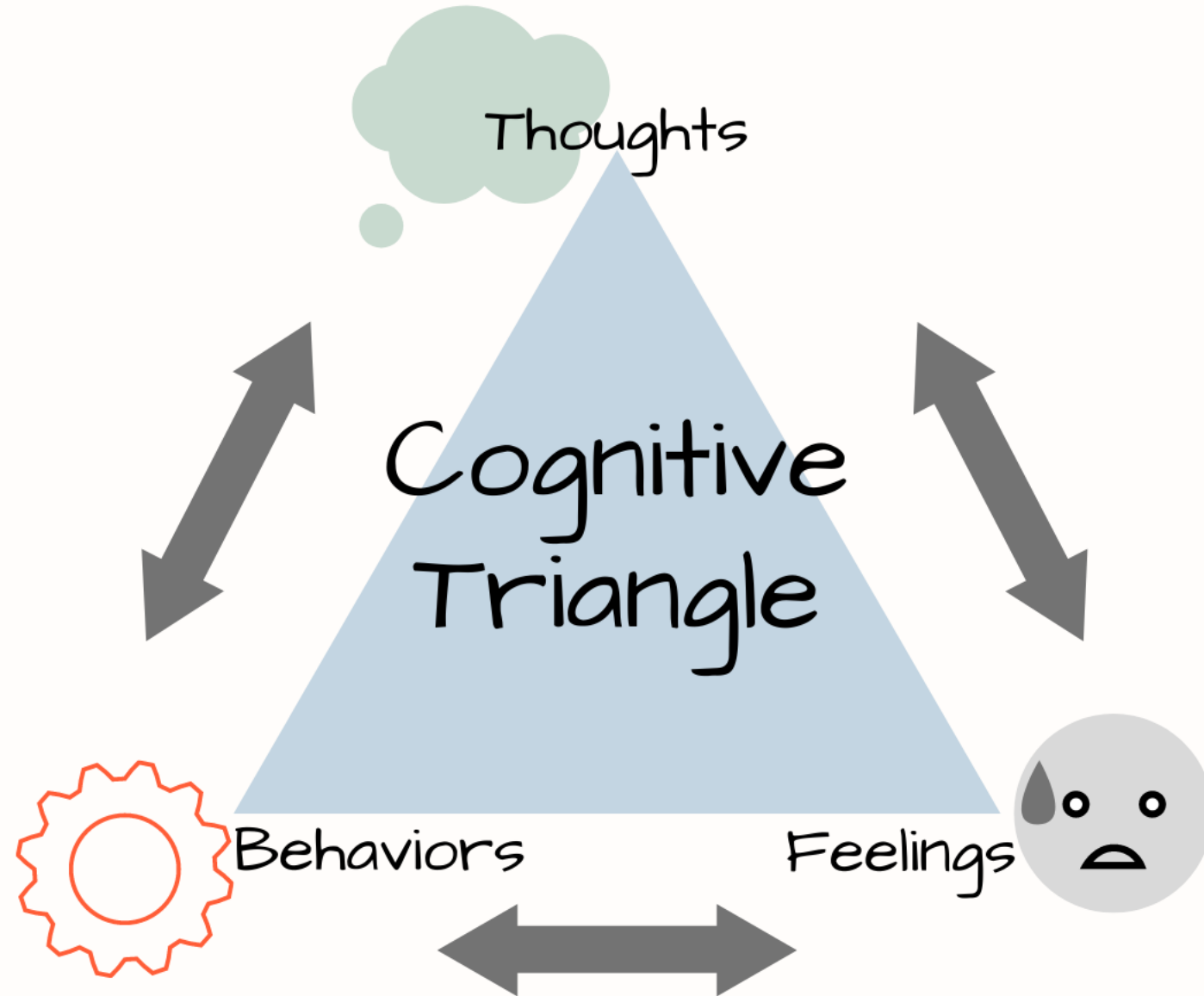
AMAZON LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Bias for Action

Speed matters in business. Many decisions and actions are reversible and do not need extensive study. We value calculated risk taking.

TIPS FOR BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEW

As much as possible, the thought-feeling-behavior link must come across clearly in your answer



MY PERSONAL TIPS*

-
- **Authenticity over perfection** (there is a subtle x-factor/confidence in candidates who are genuine- it is so hard to miss btw).
 - **Strong thought boundaries****- polite disagreement (or agreement with logic) and sticking to what they think is right

*Based on what am I looking for when I interview – I interviewed about 120 CAT candidates last year . Also: Markowitz, D. M., Kouchaki, M., Gino, F., Hancock, J. T., & Boyd, R. L. (2023). Authentic First Impressions Relate to Interpersonal, Social, and Entrepreneurial Success. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 14(2), 107-116. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19485506221086138>

**I would take class discussions very seriously if I were you