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What is Your Big Five Personality Score?

You'd be better off taking this personality test than Myers-Briggs.



Coach Tony

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Oct 17, 2016 · 4 min read ★

Here, go ahead and take the test:

<http://www.truity.com/test/big-five-personality-test>

You should end up with a score across five different personality traits. You'll be offered to create an account to see your results — you should skip this by clicking the “No thanks, just show my results” link.

Pretty much all free online personality tests get paid back by dragging some demographic information out of you. That's exactly what the test I linked to is doing. So don't get creeped out when they ask for your political affiliation.

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Using Your Results

The most common use for personality tests is as a discussion topic with friends. They're fun and interesting like a great horoscope.

Scientifically, they're not perfect. There are lots of ways to misuse them.

However, there is a way to use the test as a sort of self-assessment to help you understand deeper patterns in your life. But be warned — personality tests fail hardest when they're being used to evaluate other people. So — use your common sense.

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What are the Five Personality Traits?

The Big 5 Personality test looks at 5 traits which were then correlated with different behaviors and tendencies. Danger: correlation is not causation.

Openness to experience

- High score: inventiveness and intellectual curiosity, having a preference for variety over routine, and seeking fulfillment in intense, euphoric experiences.
- Low score correlates with: consistency and caution, seeking fulfillment in perseverance, tending to be pragmatic and data-driven.

Conscientiousness

- High score: efficiency and organization. Tendency to be self-disciplined and dependable.
- Low score: easy-going and perhaps careless. Flexible and spontaneous, but can be perceived as unreliable, sloppy.

Extraversion

- High score: a tendency towards being outgoing and energetic. Assertiveness, talkativeness, positive emotions, and a tendency to seek the company of others. High extraversion can be perceived as attention-seeking and domineering.
- Low score: a tendency towards being solitary and reserved. Often a reflective personality, though low extraversion can be perceived as aloof or self-absorbed.

Agreeableness

- High score: a tendency to be friendly, compassionate, and cooperative. Indicates ones trusting and helpful nature, and whether one is well-tempered.
- Low score: an analytic and detached tendency. Often competitive or challenging; can be seen as argumentative or untrustworthy.

Neuroticism

- High score: a high emotional reactivity and vulnerability to stress. Neuroticism may correlate with perceiving many situations as threatening.
- Low score: tendency to be calm, emotionally stable, and free from persistent negative feelings. However, freedom from negative feelings does not mean that low-scorers experience a lot of positive feelings.

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Traits vs. Correlations

The root of all bad personality tests is in the belief that they describe important fixed traits.

If you've taken Myers Briggs and came out as an introvert, you might think there's an introversion structure in your brain. And that's not quite right.

That thinking gets worse — some companies have tried to use personality tests like Myers-Briggs in their interview process. They're putting a pass-fail grade on a test that should never have that.

However, the Big Five test takes a different tact. It is completely agnostic about whether your personality traits are an inherent, fixed version of your personality.

Rather they say, people who have answered like you answered tended to also express these other characteristics. These are correlations.

The questions you should be asking now as you try to understand your results are:

- Are any of my traits holding me back? Is there a pattern worth addressing?
- Do any of my traits create opportunity for me? Should I embrace these traits?

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Understanding

I'll share my results and how I used those for self-assessment.

I was high in openness, moderate in extroversion and agreeableness, low on conscientiousness and neuroticism.

This reflects my own experience.

I think about how I ended up being an entrepreneur, which is much more stressful than any other job I could have. I fell into this work because of my openness score — I was open to following my heart, my passions and my ideas.

I stuck with it because of my low neuroticism. Even when things aren't going well I'm pretty calm.

I love the outcome of both of these traits — I embrace them!

I do have a low conscientiousness — lots of people would tell you that I gloss over details, that my personal space is a mess, that I screwed up some administrative detail. That's probably why I started my company (Coach.me) in particular — I wanted to have better habits and that didn't come naturally.

I'm thinking a lot about my moderate agreeableness. There was a time where I was trying to pitch investors and they said I was too soft to be a CEO (that's just their opinion). I wonder if they would have found me more impressive if I had a lower agreeableness score. That's sort of a cliché. But I do find that agreeableness isn't a virtue when you're trying to collaborate with other people who score low on that trait.

Agreeableness is the one that's most likely to hold me back (this seems counterintuitive). So I've embraced strategic disagreeableness in a number of forms. Often these forms are aided by meditation and introspection— by knowing what I believe, I can recognize when I'm agreeing to the opposite.

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You?

What's your story? Almost everyone has taken Myers-Briggs, but I find this test to be much more useful. Where did you score and did that reflect any truth in your life?

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