

## Unit 1

## Personality

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### 1.1 Introduction

Our own experience is enough to tell us two things about human beings. First, they are all unique. Each possesses a set of traits and characters which cannot be completely duplicated by any other person. Second, these traits remain stable over time. For comfortable interactions with each other, it is better to first understand the meaning of personality and its types. Then we can inculcate those traits in ourselves which paves our way to be a successful individual in the society.

**Objectives:**

After studying this unit, the students should be able to:

- understand the term personality
- explain the determinants of Personality
- discuss the various theories of personality.
- defence Mechanism

**1.1 Personality – An Explanation**

When we talk of personality, we don't mean a person who has charm, a positive attitude towards life, a smiling face, or who has won a beauty contest. When psychologists talk of personality, they mean a dynamic concept describing the growth and development of a person's whole psychological system. The word 'personality' has interesting etymological origins. It can be traced to the Latin word "personare" which translates as "to speak through". Personality traditionally refers to how people influence others through their external appearances and actions. But for psychologists, personality includes:

- External appearances and behaviour
- The inner awareness of self as a permanent organizing force, and
- The particular organization of measurable traits, both inner and outer.

Personality is an individual difference that lends consistency to a person's behaviour. Personality is defined as a relatively stable set of characteristics that influence an individual's behaviour. For our purposes, you should think of personality as the sum total of ways in which an individual reacts and interacts with others.

## **1.2 Categories of Personality**

A personality trait may be defined as an enduring attribute of a person that appears constantly in a variety of situations. Describing an individual's behaviour in terms of personality has proved to be a tough job. However, attempts are made to identify the basic personality types.

Carl Jung proposed two-part theory of personality. According to it, he type casts all profile into two compartments.

### **1. Extroversion and Introversion**

Extraversion (also "extroversion") is marked by pronounced engagement with the external world. Extraverts enjoy being with people, are full of energy, and often experience positive emotions. They tend to be enthusiastic, action-oriented individuals who are likely to say "Yes!" or "Let's go!" to opportunities for excitement. In groups they like to talk, assert themselves, and draw attention to themselves.

Introverts lack the exuberance, energy, and activity levels of extraverts. They tend to be quiet, low-key, deliberate, and less dependent on the social world. Their lack of social involvement should not be interpreted as shyness or depression; the introvert simply needs less stimulation than an extravert and more time alone to re-charge their batteries.

### **Sample Extraversion Items**

- I am the life of the party.
- I don't mind being the centre of attention.
- I feel comfortable around people.
- I start conversations.
- I talk to a lot of different people at parties.
- I am quiet around strangers. (reversed)
- I don't like to draw attention to myself. (reversed)
- I don't talk a lot. (reversed)

- I have little to say. (reversed)
- I keep in the background. (reversed)

Jung explains that at the base, the personality has four dimensions – thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition.

- a) **Thinking:** It includes logical, reasoning, rational and analytical.
- b) **Feeling:** Refers to the interpretations of a thing or event on a subjective scale (emotional effect)
- c) **Sensation:** It deals with perception of a thing in general sense (factual and concrete)
- d) **Intuition:** It is based on unconscious inner perception of the potentialities or events or things.

## 2. Type A / B Personalities

Meyer Friedman, an American cardiologist, noticed in the 1940's that the chairs in his waiting room got worn out from the edges. They hypothesized that his patients were driven, impatient people, who sat on the edge of their seats when waiting. They labelled these people "Type A" personalities. Type A personalities are workaholics, always busy, driven, somewhat impatient, and so on.

Type B personalities, on the other hand are laid back and easy going. "Type A personality" has found its way into general communication.

**Type A Personality:** Type A behaviour pattern is a complex of personality and behavioural characteristics, including competitiveness, time urgency, social status, insecurity, aggression, hostility and a quest for achievements. Type A personality individual is "aggressively involved in a chronic, incessant struggle to achieve more and more in less and less time, and if required to do so, against the opposing efforts of other things or other persons".

**Type A Personalities:**

- i. Are always moving, walking, and eating rapidly;
- ii. Feel impatient with the rate at which most events take place;
- iii. Strive to think or do two or more things simultaneously;
- iv. Cannot cope with leisure time; and
- v. Are obsessed with numbers, measuring their success in terms of how much of everything they acquire.

The alternative to the Type A behaviour pattern is the Type B behaviour pattern. People with Type B personalities are relatively free of the Type A behaviours and characteristics. Type B personalities are "rarely harried by the desire to obtain a wildly increasing number of things or participate in an endless growing series of events in an ever decreasing amount of time".

**Type B Personality:**

- i. Never suffer from a sense of time urgency with its accompanying impatience;
- ii. Feel no need to display or discuss either their achievements or accomplishments unless such exposure is demanded by the situation;
- iii. Play for fun and relaxation, rather than to exhibit their superiority at any cost; and
- iv. Can relax without guilt.

Organizations can also be characterized as Type A or Type B organizations. Type A individuals in Type B organizations and Type B individuals in Type A organizations experience stress related to a misfit between their personality type and the predominant type of the organization.

**3. Agreeableness – Disagreeableness**

Agreeableness reflects individual differences in concern with cooperation and social harmony. Agreeable individuals value getting along with others. They are therefore considerate, friendly, generous, helpful, and willing to

compromise their interests with others. Agreeable people also have an optimistic view of human nature. They believe people are basically honest, decent, and trustworthy.

Disagreeable individuals place 'self-interest' above getting along with others. They are generally unconcerned with others well-being, and therefore are unlikely to extend themselves for other people. Sometimes their scepticism about others motives causes them to be suspicious, unfriendly, and uncooperative.

Agreeableness is obviously advantageous for attaining and maintaining popularity. Agreeable people are better liked than disagreeable people. On the other hand, agreeableness is not useful in situations that require tough or absolute objective decisions. Disagreeable people can make excellent scientists, critics, or soldiers.

There is some criticism on the use of the terms altruism-egoism in this context. Evolutionary Biology has extensively researched the mechanisms of altruism and concluded that agreeableness differs fundamentally from altruism.

**Sample Agreeableness Items**

- I am interested in people.
- I feel others emotions.
- I have a soft heart.
- I make people feel at ease.
- I sympathize with others feelings.
- I take time out for others.
- I am not interested in other people's problems. (reversed)
- I am not really interested in others. (reversed)
- I feel little concern for others. (reversed)
- I insult people. (reversed)

#### **4. Conscientiousness**

Conscientiousness concerns the way in which we control, regulate, and direct our impulses. Impulses are not inherently bad; occasionally time constraints require a snap decision, and acting on our first impulse can be an effective response. Also, in times of play rather than work, acting spontaneously and impulsively can be fun. Impulsive individuals can be seen by others as colourful, fun-to-be-with, and zany. Conscientiousness includes the factor known as Need for Achievement (NAch).

The benefits of high conscientiousness are obvious. Conscientious individuals avoid trouble and achieve high levels of success through purposeful planning and persistence. They are also positively regarded by others as intelligent and reliable. On the negative side, they can be compulsive perfectionists and workaholics. Furthermore, extremely conscientious individuals might be regarded as stuffy and boring. Unconscientious people may be criticized for their unreliability, lack of ambition, and failure to stay within the lines, but they will experience many short-lived pleasures and they will never be called stuffy (i.e. dull, boring, unimaginative).

#### **Sample Conscientiousness Items**

- I am always prepared.
- I am exacting in my work.
- I follow a schedule.
- I get chores done right away.
- I like order.
- I pay attention to details.
- I leave my belongings around. (reversed)
- I make a mess of things. (reversed)
- I often forget to put things back in their proper place. (reversed)
- I shirk my duties. (reversed)

**5. Neuroticism**

Neuroticism, also known inversely as Emotional Stability, refers to the tendency to experience negative emotions. Those who score high on Neuroticism may experience primarily one specific negative feeling such as anxiety, anger, or depression, but are likely to experience several of these emotions. People high in Neuroticism are emotionally reactive. They respond emotionally to events that would not affect most people, and their reactions tend to be more intense than normal. They are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening, and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult. Their negative emotional reactions tend to persist for unusually long periods of time, which means they are often in a bad mood. These problems in emotional regulation can diminish a neurotic's ability to think clearly, make decisions, and cope effectively with stress.

At the other end of the scale, individuals who score low in Neuroticism are less easily upset and are less emotionally reactive. They tend to be calm, emotionally stable, and free from persistent negative feelings. Freedom from negative feelings does not mean that low scorers experience a lot of positive feelings; frequency of positive emotions is a component of the Extraversion domain.

**Sample Neuroticism Items**

- I am easily disturbed.
- I change my mood a lot.
- I get irritated easily.
- I get stressed out easily.
- I get upset easily.
- I have frequent mood swings.
- I often feel blue.
- I worry about things.



- I am relaxed most of the time. (reversed)
- I seldom feel blue. (reversed)

## **6. Openness to Experience**

Openness to Experience describes a dimension of personality that distinguishes imaginative, creative people from down-to-earth, conventional people. Open people are intellectually curious, appreciative of art, and sensitive to beauty. They tend to be, compared to closed people, more aware of their feelings. They therefore tend to hold unconventional and individualistic beliefs, although their actions may be conforming (see agreeableness). People with low scores on openness to experience tend to have narrow, common interests. They prefer the plain, straightforward, and obvious over the complex, ambiguous, and subtle. They may regard the arts and sciences with suspicion, regarding these endeavours as abstruse or of no practical use. Closed people prefer familiarity over novelty; they are conservative and resistant to change.

## **1.4 Self Image**

The 'self-image' is derived from Carl Roger's 'Self-Theory.' According to him, the 'self' consists of all the perceptions, ideas, values and features that characterize 'I' or 'Me'. It includes 'what I am' and 'What I can do.' Roger defines the self concept as "an organised, consistent, conceptual gestalt composed of perceptions of the characteristics of the I or Me and the perceptions of the relationships of I or Me to these perceptions." An individual with a strong, positive self-concept is quite likely to view the world differently from the one whose self-concept doesn't necessarily mean or reflect reality: an individual may be highly successful or respected, yet views himself a failure.

**Self-image is:**

- How you regard yourself.
- The mental picture of how you believe you appear to others.
- How you picture your physical self.
- How you believe others see you physically.
- Your idea (positive or negative, rational or irrational) of how you present yourself to others and how you are subsequently judged by them.
- A personal assessment of your character, personality, skills, abilities, and other attributes.
- A powerful internal mechanism influencing how you feel about yourself.
- An accumulation of scripts you have been given (consciously or otherwise) and have learned well throughout

**What is involved in creating a self-image?**

**Your self-image is developed by how you assess the following factors in your personhood:**

- Physical appearance.
- Shape of your body.
- Accomplishments. in academics.
- Achievement in athletics.
- Social skills.
- Value system.
- Skills, abilities and competencies.
- Relationship with family, relatives, siblings, peer group, and others.
- Behavior in social and professional situations.
- Background and environment from which you came.
- Roles played in life at school, home, work and in the community.
- Jobs and job titles held.
- Goals, ambitions and aspirations for the future.

**How does your self-image affect you?****It is from your self-image that you:**

- Develop labels for yourself.
- Develop scripts as to how you believe you should act to fit the image.

<b>If your self-image label is:</b>	<b>Then your script says you should:</b>
Fat	overeate and not exercise
drunk	drink to excess
intelligent	be a good problem solver and decision maker
thin	control your eating and exercise habits, always look chic
competent	be able to handle life's challenges with confidence, be successful in your endeavors
friendly	be easy to get to know, sociable, outgoing
negative	always see the dark, pessimistic side of life
handsome/beautiful	have the looks that appeal to others, trendy fashions and hairstyle, pay close attention to physical self
compulsive	act in a compulsive way
depressed	act in a depressed way
loser	act like a loser
winner	act like a winner

**Self Esteem Quiz**

***Take the self esteem quiz below and learn how to improve your level of self-acceptance.***

**Kick the Approval Habit by Thelma Mariano**

Years ago I based my feelings of self-worth on performance and how much I could achieve in school or in business. When I turned to professional writing, my internal rating system focused on the number of sales. But guess

what? My need for external approval was a bottomless pit. I could never get enough.

Since then I worked on my personal development and have gradually gone from being self-critical to self-accepting.

Many of us look outside ourselves to gain a sense of our own value, through:

- what others think of us
- our performance through education, work or sports
- how we look (e.g. thin, , well-dressed)
- how wealthy we appear (including status symbols)
- how we compare to others

Unfortunately, we can lose favour with the people we are trying to impress, our performance may suffer or our looks fade. And even sizeable assets can take a beating on the stock market.

The only true source of approval is found within. The more we accept ourselves, the more easily we will believe praise when it comes from external sources.

Self-acceptance means acknowledging our positive qualities as well as our little “quirks,” paying attention to our feelings and allowing ourselves to be different. When we truly know and appreciate ourselves, we trust our own judgment and create a life that is meaningful to us.

The questionnaire below will help you determine your OWN level of self-acceptance.

**How Self-Accepting are you ?**

1. I allow myself to make mistakes, realizing that we all learn from failure.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often

2. My value as a person depends greatly on what others think of me.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often
3. Whether I'm celebrating a success or getting through a rough period, I "reward" myself in self-defeating ways, e.g. overeating, drinking too much, or going on a spending spree when I am already in debt.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often
4. I have trouble asking others for favours and tend to apologize a lot.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often
5. I'd rather keep an unsatisfactory item than return it to the store. In a restaurant I'll eat a meal, even if it isn't what I ordered, rather than return it to the waiter.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often
6. I berate myself for saying or doing the wrong thing, calling myself "stupid."  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often
7. I would do something against my better judgment rather than risk another person's disapproval.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often
8. When I look at myself in the mirror, I see only my flaws.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often
9. I think of how my life would improve if only I were smarter or better looking.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often
10. I graciously accept compliments and praise instead of tossing them aside.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often
11. I do things which nurture, strengthen and relax my body.  
a) never or hardly at all   b) sometimes   c) frequently   d) very often

12. I am able to accept my vulnerable feelings like sadness, fear or anxiety.  
a) never or hardly at all b) sometimes c) frequently d) very often
13. When I need comfort, I am able to turn to friends or family and let them know how I feel.  
a) never or hardly at all b) sometimes c) frequently d) very often
14. I am comfortable expressing my angry feelings.  
a) never or hardly at all b) sometimes c) frequently d) very often
15. I am able to assert my needs and wants with family members, colleagues or my partner.  
a) never or hardly at all b) sometimes c) frequently d) very often
16. I recognize and value my need for solitude or "quiet time."  
a) never or hardly at all b) sometimes c) frequently d) very often
17. I actively pursue and maintain friendships with people I truly like.  
a) never or hardly at all b) sometimes c) frequently d) very often
18. I balance my life with pleasure and fun, recognizing that I work harder when I am well rested.  
a) never or hardly at all b) sometimes c) frequently d) very often

**Scoring**

Now add up all your points as shown below.

question 1: a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4

questions 2 through 9: a-4, b-3, c-2, d-1

questions 10 through 18: a-1, b-2, c-3, d-4

**Results****1 – 18 Poor**

You rely heavily on other people's opinions and find it hard to assert yourself in your professional or personal life. You are so anxious to please others that you often ignore your own needs and wants. You are also prone to

rewarding yourself in self-destructive ways (e.g. overeating). It is important for you to do things that will nurture you – such as reading a book, swimming, walking in nature or just listening to music.

**19 – 36 Fair**

Although you make sure that you honour your commitments to others, you are often self-critical and overly demanding of yourself. You are quick to blame yourself when things go wrong. Learn to be more tolerant of your own mistakes and pay less attention to what others may think. You do manage to find time for what's important in your life, which gives you a feeling of satisfaction.

**37 – 54 Good**

You know who you are and what you need to be happy and usually are willing to take the time to do something that will fulfill you. You are always trying to improve yourself and surround yourself with supportive friends or family. You see your strengths but may need to learn to work with your weaknesses. For example, you may have a short attention span and work best in spurts. By recognizing this and giving yourself frequent breaks, you will be more productive.

**55 – 72 Excellent**

Congratulations! You have a deeply developed sense of self and are self-nurturing. You respect your own feelings as well as those of others and have no qualms about turning to friends or family when you are in need of comfort. You are patient with yourself. If you feel a resistance to doing something, you get to the root of your feelings instead of forcing yourself to go ahead. You lead a healthy, well-balanced life.

### 1.5 Improving the Level of Self-acceptance

There are a number of ways to do this. Several are listed below:

- **Journal**

So often we act according to logic or what we feel we “should” do and ignore our feelings. Journaling will help you get in touch with your emotion and give you a safe place to let things out. By regularly listening to yourself in this way, you will feel freer to be yourself and more self-accepting.

- **Acknowledge and Follow your Life Values**

Determine your most cherished values and define how you can achieve them in your current life (e.g. autonomy, creativity, fitness, communication, learning, personal growth, love and affection). By taking even the smallest step towards your inner values and goals, you grow in self-acceptance.

- **Search for the Gold**

We all seem to know our weaknesses or flaws but rarely consider our strengths. Find ten things you admire about yourself, relating to your personality or abilities – e.g. resourceful, articulate, good with children, can make people laugh, sensitive to others’ feelings. Write these down and consult the list whenever you feel “down” on yourself.

In our image-conscious society, many of us are obsessed with appearance. An exercise that can help you to accept your physical self: when you look at yourself in the mirror, instead of focusing on what’s wrong (large nose, frizzy hair), find three positive things to say about your appearance. For example you have good skin, white teeth or nicely developed calves. If you have a poor self-image, you will at first find this a challenge. Put your observations on paper and watch the list grow!



Remember that someone meeting you for the first time sees the WHOLE person and he or she is unlikely to be focused on your flaws. Also you cannot realize the effect of your dazzling smile or the warmth in your eyes.

- **Change your Self-talk**

Pay close attention to your thoughts – observe whenever you are being harsh or critical of yourself. In particular avoid generalizations, e.g. after making a mistake you say to yourself, “I can never get anything right.” Replace self-criticism with kindness: ask yourself if you’re tired or stressed and what you can do to feel better.

- **Allow yourself to Fail**

It’s OK to rate your performance in various activities but NOT to base your feelings of self-worth on how well or badly you do. You are an imperfect but lovable human being who needs encouragement, not self-condemnation, to keep going. Give yourself points for effort! Then determine what went wrong and how you can do better next time.

- **Surround yourself with Supportive Friends or Mentors**

Beware of those who do not respect you or your values and discourage you from doing what makes you happy. If family members fall into this category, you need to cultivate friends who accept you as you are and give the support you need.

Valuing and honouring your true self will increase your self-confidence. When you are confident in who you are and what you can do, you are more likely to take the steps you need to achieve a fulfilling life.

## **1.6 Factors Affecting Personality Development**

What determines personality? Of all the complexities and unanswered questions in the study of human behaviour, this question may be the most difficult. People are enormously complex; their abilities and interests and

attitudes are diverse. An early argument in personality research was whether an individual's personality was the result of heredity or environment. Was the personality predetermined at birth, or was it the result of the individual's interaction with his or her environment? Personality appears to be a result of both influences. Additionally, today we recognize another factor - the situation. The problem lies in the fact that cognitive and psychological processes, plus many other variables, all contribute to personality. The determinants of personality can perhaps best be grouped in five broad categories: biological, cultural, family, social and situational.

1. **Biological Factors:** The study of the biological contributions to personality may be studied under three heads:

a) **Heredity:** Heredity refers to those factors that were determined at conception. Physical stature, facial attractiveness, sex, temperament, muscle composition and reflexes, energy level, and biological rhythms are characteristics that are considered to be inherent from one's parents. The heredity approach argues that the ultimate explanation of an individual's personality is the molecular structure of the genes, located in the chromosomes.

Research on animals has showed that both physical and psychological characteristics can be transmitted through heredity. But research on human beings is inadequate to support this viewpoint. However, psychologists and geneticists have accepted the fact that heredity plays an important role in one's personality.

b. **Brain:** The second biological approach is to concentrate on the role that the brain plays in personality. Though researchers have made some promising inroads, psychologists are unable to prove empirically the contribution of the human brain in influencing personality. The most recent and exciting possibilities come from the

work done with electrical stimulation of the brain (ESB) and split-brain psychology. Preliminary results from the electrical stimulation of the brain (ESB) research indicate that a better understanding of human personality and behaviour might come from a closer study of the brain. Work with ESB on human subjects is just beginning. There seem to be definite areas in the human brain that are associated with pain and pleasure. This being true, it may be possible physically to manipulate personality through ESB.

- c. **Biofeedback:** Until recently, physiologists and psychologists felt that certain biological functions such as brainwave patterns, gastric and hormonal secretions, and fluctuations in blood pressure and skin temperature were beyond conscious control. Now some scientists believe that these involuntary functions can be consciously controlled through biofeedback techniques. In BFT, the individual learns the internal rhythms of a particular body process through electronic signals that are feedback from equipment that is wired to the body. From this biofeedback, the person can learn to control the body process in question. More research is needed on biofeedback before any definitive conclusions can be drawn, but its potential impact could be extremely interesting for the future.
- d. **Physical features:** A vital ingredient of the personality, an individual's external appearance, is biologically determined. The fact that a person is tall or short, fat or skinny, black or white will influence the person's effect on others and this in turn, will affect the self-concept. Practically all would agree that physical characteristics have at least some influence on the personality. According to Paul H Mussen, "a child's physical characteristics may be related to his approach to the social environment, to the expectancies of others,

and to their reactions to him. These, in turn, may have impacts on personality development."

If personality characteristics were completely dictated by heredity, they would be fixed at birth and no amount of experience could alter them. But personality characteristics are not completely dictated by heredity. There are other factors also which influence personality.

2. **Cultural Factors:** Among the factors that influence personality formation is the culture in which we are raised, early conditioning, norms prevailing within the family, friends and social groups and other miscellaneous experiences that impact us. Traditionally, cultural factors are usually considered to make a more significant contribution to personality than biological factors. The culture largely determines attitudes towards independence, aggression, competition, cooperation and a host of other human responses. According to Paul H Mussen, "each culture expects, and trains, its members to behave in ways that are acceptable to the group. To a marked degree, the child's cultural group defines the range of experiences and situations he is likely to encounter and the values and personality characteristics that will be reinforced and hence learned." Culture requires both conformity and acceptance from its members. There are several ways of ensuring that members comply with the dictates of the culture. The personality of an individual to a marked extent is determined by the culture in which he or she is brought up. It follows that a person reared in a western culture has a different personality from a person reared in Indian culture.
3. **Family Factors:** While the culture generally prescribes and limits what a person can be taught, it is the family, and later the social group, which selects, interprets and dispenses the culture. Thus, the family probably has the most significant impact on early personality development. A

substantial amount of empirical evidence indicates that the overall home environment created by the parents, in addition to their direct influence, is critical to personality development. For example, children reared in cold, un-stimulating homes are much more likely to be socially and emotionally maladjusted than children raised by parents in a warm, loving and stimulating environment.

The parents play an especially important part in the identification process, which is important to the person's early development. According to Mischel, the process can be examined from three different perspectives.

- i. Identification can be viewed as the similarity of behaviour including feelings and attitudes between child and model.
- ii. Identification can be looked at as the child's motives or desires to be like the model.
- iii. It can be viewed as the process through which the child actually takes on the attributes of the model.

From all three perspectives, the identification process is fundamental to the understanding of personality development. The home environment also influences the personality of an individual. Siblings (brothers and sisters) also contribute to personality.

4. **Social Factors:** There is increasing recognition given to the role of other relevant persons, groups and especially organizations, which greatly influence an individual's personality. This is commonly called the socialization process. Socialization involves the process by which a person acquires, from the enormously wide range of behavioural potentialities that are open to him or her, those that are ultimately synthesized and absorbed. Socialization starts with the initial contact between a mother and her new infant. After infancy, other members of

the immediate family – father, brothers, sisters and close relatives or friends, then the social group: peers, school friends and members of the work group - play influential roles.

Socialization process is especially relevant to organizational behaviour because the process is not confined to early childhood, taking place rather throughout one's life. In particular, evidence is accumulating that socialization may be one of the best explanations for why employees behave the way they do in today's organizations.

5. **Situational Factors:** Human personality is also influenced by situational factors. The effect of environment is quite strong. Knowledge, skill and language are obviously acquired and represent important modifications of behaviour. An individual's personality, while generally stable and consistent, does change in different situations. The varying demands of different situations call forth different aspects of one's personality. According to Milgram, "Situation exerts an important pressure on the individual. It exercises constraints and may provide push. In certain circumstances, it is not so much the kind of person a man is, as the kind of situation in which he is placed that determines his actions". We should therefore not look at personality patterns in isolation.

### Self Assessment Questions

1. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to those factors that were determined at conception.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ starts with the initial contact between a mother and her new infant.

### 1.7 Defence Mechanisms

A defence mechanism is a technique used to defend against anxiety and to maintain self-esteem, but it involves self-deception and the distortion of reality. We use defence mechanisms to protect ourselves from failure and

from guilt arousing desires or actions. All of us use defence mechanisms to some degree; it is only their overuse that is considered abnormal.

1. **Repression:** According to Freud, repression is the most important and frequently used defence mechanism. Repression operates in two ways:
  - a. It can remove painful or threatening memories, thoughts, ideas or perceptions from consciousness and keep them in the unconscious.
  - b. It can prevent unconscious but disturbing sexual and aggressive impulses from breaking into consciousness.
2. **Projection:** We use projection when we attribute our own undesirable impulses, thoughts, personality traits or behaviour to others, or when we minimize the undesirable in ourselves and exaggerate it in others. Projection allows us to avoid acknowledging our unacceptable traits and thereby to maintain our self-esteem, but it seriously distorts our perception of the external world. For example, (1) A sexually promiscuous wife may accuse her husband of being unfaithful. (2) A dishonest man may think everyone is out to cheat him.
3. **Denial:** is a refusal to acknowledge consciously or to believe that a danger or a threatening condition exists. For example, (1) Smokers use denial when they refuse to admit that cigarettes are a danger to their health. (2) Many people who abuse alcohol and drugs deny that they have a problem. Yet denial is sometimes useful as a temporary means of getting through a crisis until a more permanent adjustment can be made, such as when people initially deny the existence of a terminal illness.
4. **Rationalization:** Occurs when we unconsciously supply a logical, rational, or socially or personally acceptable reason rather than accept the real reason for an action or event. Rationalization can be used to justify past, present, or future behaviours or to soften the disappointment

connected with not attaining a desired goal. When we rationalize, we make excuses for – or justify – our failures and mistakes.

5. **Regression:** Sometimes, when frustrated or anxious, we may use regression and revert to behaviour that might have reduced anxiety at an earlier stage of development. For example, an adult may have a temper tantrum, rant and rave or throw things.
6. **Reaction Formation:** is at work when people express exaggerated ideas and emotions that are the opposite of their disturbing, unconscious impulses and desires. In reaction formation, the conscious thought or feeling masks the unconscious one. For example, a former chain smoker becomes irate and complains loudly at the faintest whiff of cigarette smoke.
7. **Displacement:** Occurs when we substitute a less threatening object or person for the original object of a sexual or aggressive impulse. For example, if your boss makes you angry, you may take out your hostility on your wife.
8. **Sublimation:** With sublimation, we re-channel sexual or aggressive energy into pursuits or accomplishments that society consider acceptable or even praiseworthy. For example, an aggressive person may re-channel the aggression and become a football player. A boxer with a 'bad guy' image, like 'Iron' Mike Tyson, might talk of becoming an evangelist. Freud viewed sublimation as the only completely healthy ego defence mechanism.

## 1.8 Personality Characteristics in Organizations

Managers should learn as much as possible about personality in order to understand their employees. Hundreds of personality characteristics have been identified. We have selected eight characteristics because of their particular influences on individual behaviour in organizations. They are:



1. Locus of Control
2. Machiavellianism
3. Self-esteem
4. Self-efficacy
5. Self-monitoring
6. Positive / Negative Affect
7. Risk Taking

### **1. Locus of Control**

Some people believe they are masters of their own fate. Other people see themselves as pawns of fate, believing that what happens to them in their lives is due to luck or chance. An individual's generalized belief about internal (self) versus external (situation or others) control is called locus of control.

a. **Internals:** Those who believe they control their destinies have been labelled internals. Internals (those with an internal locus of control) have been found to have higher job satisfaction, to be more likely to assume managerial positions, and to prefer participative management styles. In addition, internals have been shown to display higher work motivation, hold stronger beliefs that effort leads to performance, receive higher salaries and display less anxiety than externals (those with an external locus of control).

b. **Externals:** Externals are those individuals who believe that what happens to them are controlled by outside forces such as luck or chance. Externals prefer a more structured work setting and they may be more reluctant to participate in decision-making. They are more compliant and willing to follow directions.

Research on locus of control has strong implications for organizations. A large amount of research comparing internals with externals has consistently shown that individuals who rate high in externality are less

satisfied with their jobs, have higher absenteeism rates, are more alienated from the work setting, and are less involved on their jobs than internals. Why are externals more dissatisfied? The answer is probably because they perceive themselves as having little control over those organizational outcomes that are important to them. Knowing about locus of control can prove valuable insights to managers. Because internals believe that they control what happens to them, they will want to exercise control in their work environment. Allowing internals considerable voice in how work is performed is important. Internals will not react well to being closely supervised. Externals, in contrast, may prefer a more structured work setting, and they may be more reluctant to participate in decision-making.

Therefore, internals do well on sophisticated tasks - which includes most managerial and professional jobs – that require complex information processing and learning. Additionally, internals are more suited to jobs that require initiative and independence of action. In contrast, externals should do well on jobs that are well structured and routine and where success depends heavily on complying with the directions of others.

## **2. Machiavellianism**

Niccolo Machiavelli was a sixteenth century Italian statesman. He wrote "The Prince", a guide for acquiring and using power. The primary method for achieving power that he suggested was manipulation of others. Machiavellianism then is a personality characteristic indicating one's willingness to do whatever it takes to get one's way. An individual high in Machiavellianism is pragmatic, maintains emotional distance and believes that ends can justify means. "If it works, use it", is consistent with a high-Mach perspective.

High-Machs believe that any means justify the desired ends. They believe that manipulations of others are fine if it helps achieve a goal. Thus, high-

Machs are likely to justify their manipulative behaviour as ethical. They are emotionally detached from other people and are oriented towards objective aspects of situations.

R Christie and F.L Geis, have found that high-Machs flourish

- a. When they interact face-to-face with others rather than indirectly.
- b. When the situation has a minimum number of rules and regulations, thus allowing latitude for improvisation, and
- c. When emotional involvement with details irrelevant to winning distracts low-Machs.

A high-Mach individual behaves in accordance with Machiavelli's ideas, which include the notion that it is better to be feared than loved. High-Machs tend to use deceit in relationships, have a cynical view of human nature and have little concern for conventional notions of right and wrong. They are skilled manipulators of other people, relying on their persuasive abilities. High-Machs are suitable in jobs that require bargaining skills or where there are substantial rewards for winning (example: commissioned sales).

### **3. Self-esteem**

Self-esteem is an individual's general feeling of self-worth. Individuals with high self-esteem have positive feelings about themselves, perceive themselves to have strength as well as weaknesses, and believe their strengths are more important than their weaknesses. Individuals with low self-esteem view themselves negatively. They are more strongly affected by what other people think of them, and they compliment individuals who give them positive feedback while cutting down people who give them negative feedback.

Research on self-esteem (SE) offers some interesting insights into organizational behaviour.

- i. High-SEs: People with High SEs

- Believe they possess more of the ability they need in order to succeed at work.
- Individuals with high SE will take more risks in job selection and are more likely to choose unconventional jobs.
- They are more satisfied with their jobs,

ii. Low-SEs: People with low SEs

- Are more susceptible to external influence.
- They depend on the receipt of positive evaluations from others.
- They tend to be concerned with pleasing others and therefore, are less likely to take unpopular stands.
- They are less satisfied with their jobs.

Self-esteem may be strongly affected by situations. Success tends to raise self-esteem, whereas failure tends to lower it. Given that high self-esteem is generally a positive characteristic; managers should encourage employees to raise their self-esteem by giving them appropriate challenges and opportunities for success.

#### **4. Self Efficacy**

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief that he or she is capable of performing a task. The higher your self-efficacy, the more confidence you have in your ability to succeed in a task. So, in difficult situations, we find that people with low self-efficacy are more likely to slacken their effort or give up altogether, whereas those with high self-efficacy will try harder to master the challenge. In addition, individuals high in self-efficacy seem to respond to negative feedback with increased effort and motivation; those low in self-efficacy are likely to reduce their effort when given negative feedback.

Individuals with high self-efficacy believe that they have the ability to get things done, that they are capable of putting forth the effort to accomplish the task, and that they can overcome any obstacles to their success. There are four sources of self-efficacy:

- Prior experiences.
- Behaviour models - witnessing the success of others.
- Persuasion from other people and
- Assessment of current physical and emotional capabilities.

Believing in one's own capability to get something done is an important facilitator of success. There is strong evidence that self-efficacy leads to high performance on a wide variety of physical and mental tasks. Managers can help employees develop their self-efficacy. This can be done by providing avenues for showing performance, and rewarding an employee's achievements.

### **5. Self-monitoring**

A characteristic with great potential for affecting behaviour in organizations is self-monitoring. Self-monitoring refers to an individual's ability to adjust his or her behaviour to external situational factors.

High self-monitors pay attention to what is appropriate in particular situations and to the behaviour of other people, and they behave accordingly. Low self-monitors, in contrast are not as vigilant to situational cues, and act from internal states rather than paying attention to the situation. As a result, the behaviour of low self-monitors is consistent across situations. High self-monitors, appears to be more unpredictable and less consistent because their behaviour varies with the situation. High self-monitors are capable of presenting striking contradictions between their public persona and their private self. Low self-monitors can't disguise themselves this way.

**6. Positive/Negative Affect:** Individuals who focus on the positive aspects of themselves, other people, and the world in general are said to have positive affect. In contrast, those who accentuate the negative in themselves, others, and the world are said to possess negative affect. Employees with positive affect are absent from work less often. Individuals with negative affect report more work stress. Negative individual affect produces negative group affect and this leads to less cooperative behaviour in the work group. Managers can do several things to promote positive affect, including allowing participative decision making and providing pleasant working conditions.

**7. Risk-taking:** People differ in their willingness to take chances. This propensity to assume or avoid risk has been shown to have an impact on how long it takes managers to make a decision and how much information they require before making their choice. High-risk-taking managers make more rapid decisions and use less information in making their choices than low-risk-taking managers.

While, it is generally correct to conclude that managers in organizations are risk averse, there are still individual differences on this dimension. As a result, it makes sense to recognize these differences and even to consider aligning risk-taking propensity with specific job demands. For example, a high-risk-taking propensity may lead to more effective performance for a stockbroker but these personality characteristics might prove a major obstacle for an auditor.

### **Self Assessment Questions**

3. An individual's generalized belief about internal versus external control is called \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is a personality characteristic indicating one's willingness to do whatever it takes to get one's way.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ is an individual's general feeling of self-worth.
6. What are the four sources of self-efficacy?

### **1.9 Factors that Determine our Attitude**

Are we born with attitudes or do we develop them as we mature? What are the factors that form our attitudes?

If you have a negative outlook on life because of your environment, can you change your attitude? Most of our attitude is shaped during our formative years.

There are primarily three factors that determine our attitude.

- Environment
- Experience
- Education

Let's evaluate each of the factors individually.

#### **RMA – It's the Only Way**

I believe that if you have the RMA (Right Mental Attitude) your dreams can become true. Therefore, I have taken the eight letters in the word attitude and created eight, "I Can" principles (ideas) that can help you achieve your goals in life. (Remember a goal is a dream not yet realized).

#### **A – Always Believe in Yourself**

No one can make you feel inferior unless you let them. So like yourself and others will like you. You are a wonderful, unique individual, and you can do whatever you want to do. If you believe in your ability, others will too. Believing in yourself is a very important factor in succeeding at whatever you do. When you believe and have confidence in yourself, you CAN do anything.

**T – Think Positively in Any Situation**

Positive thinking is a form of thought, which always looks for the best results from the worst conditions. It is possible to look for something to build on; it is possible to expect the best for yourself even though things look bad, and the remarkable fact is that when you look for the good, you are likely to find it.

**T – Try Again if Things Go Wrong**

Many things will go wrong during the course of your life. It's important to know and understand this so you can allow for them.

Thomas Edison's teachers called him "too stupid to learn." He made 3,000 mistakes on his way to inventing the light bulb. During his life, he held 1,093 patents.

"I think success has no rule, but you can learn a great deal from failures."  
(Jean Kerr)

You won't win if you don't begin! You must think... RMA and try again if things go wrong.

**I – Initiate a Positive Self-image**

Self-image is defined as one's concept of oneself or one's role. If you have the RMA, you'll see yourself in a positive light, which helps you to keep the right perspective (outlook) on you and your personality.

You have to love yourself before anyone else can love you. Loving yourself is a step toward being positive about yourself and others around you.

Be your own best friend. Give yourself a pat on your back when you deserve it, and encourage yourself when you're upset.

Benefits of having a positive self-image are:

- You'll feel better.
- People will respect you more.
- You'll be more confident.



- You'll be able to accept failure and learn from it.
- You won't have to worry about what others think of you.
- You'll find something good in a negative situation.
- You'll be a role model and others will follow you.

If you have the RMA, and a positive self-image, you'll be able to accomplish almost anything in life.

### **T – Trust Others and be Trustworthy**

Trust is the single most important element in any relationship whether it is between friends, family or acquaintances. However, trust is not an easy word to define.

Trust can be defined, though, in its most basic form, as an understanding that one person has with another person that neither will intentionally hurt the other. Trusting someone is having confidence in them, to be able to depend on them. You rely on and believe in that person due to their position, previous performance or experiences with them. In essence, then, trust is simply a relationship that is shared with another, a mutual bond between the two individuals in which all doubt is removed. Trust, in its highest level, is called trustworthiness.

When I think of trustworthy, I think of an internal characteristic in a person that invites complete honesty and helps them to build loving relationships with others. A trustworthy person's characteristics include: being reliable, listens well and keeps an open mind and heart. Having someone you feel is a trustworthy person is having the highest level of trust and type of relationship possible with that person. Without trust and people who are trustworthy, life would be dull and unlivable. So always trust others and be trustworthy!

**U – Understand that People Make Mistakes**

Mistake means to accept as a fact without positive knowledge and belief.

Mistake... is an error in judgment or opinion.

Let's think back to when you were a child and when you tried to walk for the first time... you fell down. You quit and said, "Well, that's failure. It's not going to work!"

Just think, you wouldn't be here now. Suppose that the first time you made an error in a simple math problem... you just quit. You would never be able to change money or go shopping or do anything.... right?

It seems that making mistakes is an essential part of growing, and if we avoid doing things because of the fear of making a mistake, we would deprive ourselves of all that is good in growth and in life.

Whatever mistakes you have made in the past, they have been a vital part of your education and simply mean that you should dust yourself off and begin again, not just quit and give up because you made a mistake and it didn't work. Every mistake that you ever made in your whole life has led you to your current state of understanding. Bless your mistakes, give thanks for them, dust yourself off and go on again. You will probably make more mistakes during your life, but you learn from every single one and no mistake is ever fatal unless you make it so.

You are not a lousy person just because you make a mistake.

"He who never made a mistake never made a discovery." (Samuel Smiles)

**D – Decide you can do anything through hope, faith and love**

Faith is a belief that does not require proof or evidence. Faith is loyalty or devotion to some person or thing. Faith has to do with the foundation, the ground on which we stand.

Love is a deep and tender feeling of affection or attachment or devotion to a person or persons. Love is being dedicated to your loved ones. Love is just being there and trusting each other.

Hope is a feeling that what is wanted will happen. Hope can be defined as faith directed toward the future. Hope is reaching out for something to come.

Happiness is our key to the future. The three major ingredients are hope, faith and love.

### **E – Enjoy Life like a Winner**

Life is the time a person is alive or exists. Winners are positive thinking people who intend to be successful in life.

With RMA you'll:

- Always remember the best things in life are free and happiness doesn't come in bottles, boxes or bags.
- Never keep secrets. Honestly share your fears, hopes and dreams.
- Give, give in, forgive and never keep score.
- Keep faith in yourself and your loved ones. Live happily.

### **1.10 Summary**

Personality of a person describes consistent emotional, thought, and behavior patterns in a person. This unit identifies different categories of personality – Extrovert, introvert, Type A and Type B, Agreeableness – Disagreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to Experience. The concept of 'Self-Image' is explained. The unit also has helped you to recognise various factors that affect personality development and their roles that contribute to personality development. You have been familiarised with the personality characteristics that you find in an organisation. These aspects of personality will help you to shape up the desired attitude that you want to inculcate, thereby improvise on your personality style.

**1.11 Terminal Questions**

1. Write the difference between introvert and extrovert personality types.
2. What are the benefits of high conscientiousness?
3. Explain the cultural factors that affect personality development.

**1.12 Answers****A. Self Assessment Questions**

1. Heredity
2. Socialization process
3. locus of control
4. Machiavellianism
5. self-esteem
6. The four sources of self-efficacy are:
  - a) prior experiences
  - b) behaviour models –witnessing the success of others.
  - c) persuasion from other people
  - d) assessment of current physical and emotional capabilities

**B. Terminal Questions**

1. Refer 1.3
2. Refer 1.3
3. Refer 1.5