



## Five Factor Personality Model of Leadership

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### Abstract:

*How well do we understand basic personality differences among the people at workplace? Understanding personality structures and their dynamics is helpful for personal professional development as well as to cultivate relationships with your associates. Read this article to gain an understanding of the basics of personality and five factor personality model of leadership.*

**Keywords:** *FFPM, Leadership, Model, Personality, Professional development*

### 1. What are Big Five Personality Traits?

Over the past 25 years, a consensus has emerged among researchers regarding the basic factors that make up what we call personality. Psychologists now believe that of all the various methods for classifying personality dimensions, only one stands out as the most statistically robust: the Big Five. These factors, commonly called the Big Five, are neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness.

**N** = Neuroticism = Need for stability, negative emotionality

**E** = Extraversion = Positive emotionality, sociability

**O** = Openness = Originality, imagination

**A** = Agreeableness = Accommodation, adaptability

**C** = Conscientiousness = Consolidation, will to achieve, goal-oriented

Table below provides the description, attributes and explanations for each of the factors listed above. These five personality factors are the most reliable for differentiating personality traits. The Big Five synonym clusters appear to account for most differences among individual personalities, describing five universal dimensions. We score a high, low or mid-range rating in each dimension and interpretations of the scores is given below:

**Table 1. Personality Traits**

Big Five Personality Traits				
N	Neuroticism	N refers to one's need for stability or negative emotionality. The N score estimates the point at which the flight-or-fight response is triggered.	Reactive/ High	Very reactive and prefers a stress-free workplace, have a shorter "trigger" and can't take much stress before feeling it.
			Responsive / Med.	Responsive and tend to be calm, secure and steady under normal circumstances. Have a moderate threshold

				for handling workplace stress.
			Resilient/ Low	Very calm and relatively unaffected by stress that usually burdens others, have a longer fuse and can take abundant amounts of stress before showing the signs.
<b>E</b>	<b>Extraversion</b>	E refers to one's extraversion. This factor describes comfort levels with external stimuli.	Extravert/ High	Likes to be in the thick of the action, prefer to be around other people, is talkative, enthusiastic, sociable and fun-loving. May not be a good listener as tends to dominate the conversation.
			Ambivert / Med.	Move easily from working with others to working alone, have moderate threshold for sensory stimulation and may tire of it after a while.
			Introvert/ Low	Prefers to be away from noise and stimulation, like working alone, is serious, quiet, private person. May be considered as loner by others.
<b>O</b>	<b>Openness</b>	O refers to one's originality, imagination or openness to new experiences. Reflects level of curiosity versus comfort with familiar territory.	Explorer/ High	Appetite for new ideas and activities, gets easily bored, have many broad interests. Curious, introspective and reflective, seeking new experiences and thinking about the future. May be considered impractical or unrealistic by others.
			Moderate / Med.	Somewhat down to earth, considers new way of doing something if convinced. Not known for creativity or curiosity, but appreciates innovation and efficiency.
			Preserver/ Low	Prefer familiar territory, more practical, down to earth and comfortable with repetitive activities. May be considered

				conservative, narrow in thinking by others.
<b>A</b>	<b>Agreeableness</b>	A refers to one's accommodation ability, negotiation, agreeableness or adaptability. Estimate of point at which person gets tired of being defiant and turns to acts of submission.	Adaptor/ High	Tends to accommodate the wishes and needs of others, is tolerant, humble and accepting. May be considered as naïve, submissive and conflict-averse by others.
			Negotiator / Med	Can shift between competitive and cooperative situations and usually push for a win-win strategy.
			Challenger/ Low	Tends to cater to his or her own personal priorities, relate to authority by being skeptical, tough, guarded, persistent and competitive. May be considered as hostile, rude, self-centered or combative by others.
<b>C</b>	<b>Conscientiousness</b>	C refers to one's consolidation, conscientiousness, will to achieve or goal-oriented. Capacity to focus attention on sustained, repetitive, goal focused behavior.	Focused/ High	Tends to consolidate energy, time and resources. Works in disciplined, dependable, linear, sequential manner, with a strong will to achieve goals.
			Balanced / Med	Keep work demands and personal needs in balance. Can switch from focused activities to spontaneous tasks.
			Flexible/ Low	Prefers multitasking and spontaneous work, approaches goals in a relaxed, spontaneous, open-ended way. Can be considered casual about responsibilities or unorganized by others.

## 2. Study to Examine Big Five Personality Dimensions

To assess the links between the Big Five and leadership, Judge, Bono, Ilies, and Gerhardt (2002) conducted a major meta-analysis of 78 leadership and personality studies and found a strong relationship between the Big Five traits and leadership.

This model of leadership was result of a study to examine the relationship between the “Big Five” personality dimensions (neuroticism, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and openness) with respect to career success. A sample of few hundred employees was surveyed in a diverse set of occupations and organizations. Hierarchical regression analysis was used to examine the incremental variance contributed by the five personality traits after controlling for several career-related variables.

Results showed that, extraversion was related positively to salary level, promotions, and career satisfaction and that neuroticism was related negatively to career satisfaction. Agreeableness was related negatively only to career satisfaction and openness was related negatively to salary level. It was confirmed as expected that having certain personality traits is associated with being an effective leader.

### **3. Is the Big Five personality assessment valid?**

Researchers have pointed to reliability studies that are consistent enough to approach the status of law and for the corporate world; this model provides a reliable, standard vocabulary with which to discuss personality differences. Although the Big Five model gives us a uniform language based on standard definitions, but the fact remains that a combination of forces shape an individual. The Five Factors can be thought as being the main infrastructure as human individuality is too complex for any one system to explain adequately.

This personality assessment can be practically applied to identify the needs of a specific role prior to selecting or appointing a leader and performing a match of factors to determine success of the individual in the role.

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