



PERSONALITY SCALES—THE WHO AND THE WHY

SCALE	DEFINITION	TIP
Independence	The desire to work with a high degree of independence	Make a few, small decisions without talking to others first. If these are received positively, try something a little bolder.
Preference for Limited Structure	A preference for tasks and situations with little formal structure	Think of a time when a lack of structure provided a good result or increased your creativity. Think of the strategies you used then and apply them to a current situation.
Nonconformity	A preference for acting in unique ways; an interest in being perceived as unique	Be willing to advocate new or unpopular decisions. Don't wait for others to agree with you first or get your boss's approval. Take a stand for things you really believe in even if you're not sure others will like them. Be willing to be the "lone voice" for causes that are important to you.
Risk Acceptance	A willingness to pursue an idea or a desired goal even when the probability of succeeding is low	Feed your competitive spirit. Think about the upside (rather than the downside) of taking risks, going for small wins at the beginning and building your way up to more challenging ones. Develop options for how you might perform better against competitors by adopting riskier, more innovative solutions.
Action Orientation	A tendency to show initiative, make decisions quickly, and feel impatient for results	Are you a procrastinator? Whether it is because you thrive on doing things at the last minute, have a perfectionist streak in you that holds up projects until everything is just right, or have a tendency to analyze things to death, procrastinating can seriously sidetrack productivity. Break tasks into smaller pieces, and commit to doing them in small increments, even when you're slightly uncomfortable with the pace.
Passion	A tendency to experience one's work as exciting and enjoyable rather than tedious and draining	Set aside an hour or so to go somewhere quiet and peaceful where you won't be disturbed. Think about—and perhaps write about—the times and situations in which you feel "in the flow," when you're working on something so engaging and interesting that you almost lose track of time. What is it you're doing during those times? Are you solving tricky problems? Envisioning exciting new possibilities? Working side-by-side with a highly energized team? Helping others? Think about ways in which you can incorporate more of those activities into your work.
Need to Achieve	The desire to achieve at a high level	Top achievers often seek out problems that have the greatest strategic importance to the organization and find ways to contribute in those areas. Maybe you need to take additional classes or attain some type of certification. Expanding your capabilities in this way may require investing your own money or time.

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SKILLS SCALES—THE WHAT AND THE HOW

SCALE	DEFINITION	TIP
Future Focus	The ability to think beyond the immediate situation and plan for the future	Cultivate a long-term mindset as you interact with others. Challenge them to connect their ideas and projects to the organization’s strategy for the future, and talk about the implications down the road for decisions you’re making today.
Idea Generation	The ability to generate multiple and novel ideas, and to find multiple approaches for achieving goals	Challenge yourself to get “right-brained” in order to generate novel ideas. First, write down a question (e.g., how could we innovate our business model?) or a problem (e.g., how can we compete with organizations with more resources?). Then, visit an art museum or view an image gallery on-line. While keeping your question in mind, select an image that intrigues you. Ask yourself how the image relates to the question. Be open to whatever comes up, no matter how surprising or unexpected. You can also try this with a friend or colleague, as you’ll find you will build on each other’s associations.
Execution	The ability to turn ideas into actionable plans; the ability to implement ideas well	Effective follow-through is important. At the beginning of the week, make a list of activities required to bring closure on certain projects. Refer to this list throughout the week, and make sure unfinished business doesn’t fall off the radar screen. Establish checkpoints and milestones to monitor progress on key goals.
Self-Confidence	A general belief in one’s ability to leverage skills and talents to achieve important goals	Spend some time thinking about who you are and where you want to go. List your top three major accomplishments of the last few years. Why were you successful with these? Transfer the steps you took then and apply them to current projects. By applying your strengths to future situations, you increase the likelihood of repeating past successes.
Optimism	The ability to maintain a generally positive attitude about various aspects of one’s life and the world	Keep track of your inner dialogue when faced with adversity, and look for patterns. Try to interrupt these negative thoughts and concentrate on something else. Analyze the thoughts. Are they really true? Do they hold up under scrutiny, or are you just going down a negative path without really looking at the full picture?
Persistence	The ability to bounce back quickly from disappointment, and to remain persistent in the face of setbacks	Demonstrating stamina despite setbacks or obstacles is a key factor. Rather than getting easily discouraged, keep the end goal in mind at all times. Try different strategies before you give up on the entire initiative. Realize, too, that setbacks may cause you to procrastinate even more. When this happens, re-energize yourself by involving others, deliberately take a break to re-focus, or do fun activities you know will re-charge your batteries.
Interpersonal	A high level of sensitivity to and concern for the well-being of those with whom one works	It takes a lot of curiosity to be a good listener. Sometimes what you think you already know might actually be your biggest enemy. Shift your goal from helping, persuading, or solving to simply understanding or learning. It takes great effort to really tune into the other person’s point of view and focus on understanding what he or she has to say without judging, formulating a response in your head, or, worse, immediately giving advice.

