

Personality



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The Big Five Personality Traits The Big Five Personality Traits Introduction “Trait” refers to an individual’s regular patterns of feelings, thoughts, or actions that make them peculiar to others. A natural characteristic determines the behavioral pattern of an individual. However, psychologists have identified big five personality traits that are used for describing an individual’s behavior. They include extraversion, conscientiousness, openness, agreeableness, and Neuroticism (Costa and McCrae, 1981). These traits were first suggested by Costa and McCrae (1981) based on their Five Factor Model (FFM) which they formulated in an attempt to understand the correlation between personality and the performance of an individual (Costa and McCrae, 1981). Several other researches have been conducted by other psychologists that reveal that the big five personality traits indeed impact greatly on the performance of individuals; whether academically or at the place of work. This paper will describe the Big Five personality traits and examine how these traits might contribute positively to the performance of an individual.

Extraversion

Buchanan (1998) notes that extraverts are individuals who are outgoing, enthusiastic, sociable, and very confident of themselves. They are also action-oriented and approach the material and social world with a lot of energy. Research also indicates that they prefer being with others because they are very talkative. This kind of trait can indeed contribute positively to the performance of such persons in a various ways. Firstly, it builds strong interpersonal relationships, which is good for an individual’s performance at the workplace. This is because it makes an individual fit in groups easily thereby improving their performance. Littlepage et al. (1995) noted that

extraverts participate better in teamwork compared to their introverted counterparts. Another study by Thoms, Moore, and Scot (1996) revealed that extraverts exhibit positive attitudes toward working as a team. This makes them able to accomplish their assigned tasks by engaging others in-group work. They are also said to make good leaders since they are able to rally the group toward achieving set objectives. In addition, they are very creative thereby improving their performance.

Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness pertains to how people regulate, direct, or control impulse. Conscientious people are said to be very responsible, hard working, ambitious, and thorough in whatever they do. This trait can also impact positively on a person's performance. This is because they are more likely to complete their work easily because they are hard working and strive toward the achievement of set targets. Buchanan (1998) indicated that persons with high levels of conscientiousness have a high probability of trying to complete duties successfully, irrespective of whether they are working as individuals or in groups. This was also supported by Brick et al. (1993) whose study demonstrated that correlation between performance and conscientiousness are linked by commitment to set objectives.

Openness to Experience

Those who exhibit this trait are said to be very imaginative, broad-minded, curious, and original (Buchanan, 1998). This trait has been found to contribute greatly to creative performance. This is because those who are open tend to think beyond the ordinary. The fact that they are inquisitive and determined to experiment what is happening around them makes them learn very easily. Research indicates that those with this trait perform very

well in school and other academic settings. It is for this reason that most intellects are said to possess this trait. This is because they are imaginative, curious, and broad-minded.

Agreeableness

This trait is characterized by being cooperative, generous, forgiving, and good-natured according to Buchanan (1998). Research indicates that this trait contributes so well to the performance of an individual. Firstly, it is said to make one become a good manager due to the cooperative nature of individual. It also makes one fit well within a group, since they cooperate and hate antagonism. In addition, such individuals are said to have many friends at the workplace thereby improving their self-esteem, resulting in good performance.

Neuroticism

This is a trait characterized by being anxious, withdrawn, moody, and insecure according to Thoms, Moore and Scot (1996). Such negative feelings have also been linked to positive performance by people. It is noted that individuals with this trait are afraid of failure and overreacts to any form of failure. As such, they try at all costs to do their best toward the achievement of established goals as a way of avoiding failure. Some psychologists argue that being anxious and worrisome sometimes makes them good managers since they try to rally people toward goals that avoid causing such negative thoughts. In conclusion, the big five personality traits can truly impact positively on an individual's performance. This is because they determine how an individual reacts to different situations.

References

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