

# **Which traits envisage job performance?**

## **(A study of OCEAN)**

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### **Abstract:**

This study explored the influence of OCEAN: The Five Factors towards Job performance. The five factor model, commonly known as the Big Five, is one of the most researched models of personality traits. The model provides a great synopsis of everyday personality and how it relates to the workplace. The theory being that there are five major trait categories that depict our personality. The study is to examine on how personality affects the job performance in organizations. In theory, job performance of an individual is the function of skills, knowledge, motivation, and abilities directed to role prescribed behavior, for example formal job responsibilities (Rose, et. al, 2010). Big Five Personality will cause an effect on employee's job performance.

### **Introduction:**

What is Personality?

Personality has been naturally defined as possession of a particular set of characteristics possessed by people which influences their behavior and reactions in different circumstances along with their motivation level to respond to difficulties at the workplace.

The researchers analyzed a large set of data on job interviews to find out which personality traits companies look for when they're hiring. Much of the data came from an analysis of structured job interviews, in which employers assess candidates for particular personality traits in order to make sure they're a good fit for the job and overall work environment. For example, a company

that is hiring a salesperson would want to assess job candidates for the traits of extraversion and friendliness to make sure they're likely to work well with customers.

While most employers evaluate job candidates on their skills and experience, many companies are increasingly using personality measures to determine whether the aspirant is a good fit. According to a survey from the Society for Human Resource Management, nearly 20% of employers say they use some type of personality test as part of the hiring process.

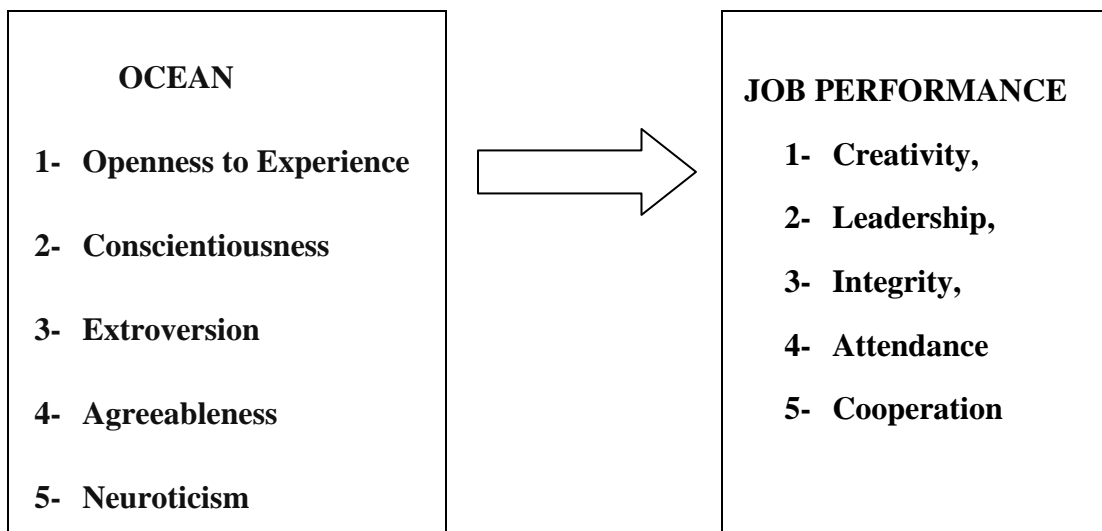
For years, psychologists turned to cognitive ability, brainpower, as interpreter of job performance. Smarter people were considered more likely to succeed on the job. But intelligence is only part of the narrative.

Other important factors in job performance - creativity, leadership, integrity, attendance and cooperation — are related to personality, not intelligence.

When psychologists are trying to determine what kind of personality someone has, they look at the "Big Five": whether someone is an extravert; whether they are agreeable; whether they are conscientious; whether they're emotionally stable; and whether they're open to experience.

### **Theoretical Perspective: OCEAN (Big Five Personality Traits) And Job Performance**

**The general theoretical model of the current study is shown in Figure:**



### 1- Openness to Experience

Openness to experience has been described as the depth and complexity of an individual's mental life and experiences (John & Srivastava, 1999). Openness to experience concerns an individual's willingness to try to new things, to be at risk, and the ability to think out of the box.

An individual who is high in openness to experience is likely someone who has a love of learning, enjoys the arts, engages in a creative career or hobby, and likes meeting new people (Lebowitz, 2016a).

An individual who is low in openness to experience probably prefers routine over variety sticks to what they know and prefers less abstract arts and entertainment.

### 2- Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is a trait that can be described as the propensity to control impulses and act in socially and morally acceptable ways, behaviors that facilitate goal-directed behavior (John & Srivastava, 1999). Conscientious people excel in their ability to delay satisfaction, work within the rules, and plan and organize effectively and effeciently.

Someone who is high in conscientiousness is likely to be successful in school and in their professional career, to stand out in leadership positions, and to determinedly pursue their goals with determination and foresight (Lebowitz, 2016a).

A person who is low in conscientiousness is much more likely to procrastinate, to be erratic, impulsive, and impetuous

### 3- Extroversion

This trait has two dimensions: extroversion and introversion. It concerns where an individual interact with others. In general, extroverts draw energy or "recharge" from interacting with others, while introverts get tired from interacting with others and replenish their energy from privacy.

People high in extroversion tend to seek out opportunities for social relations, where they are often the “life of the party.” They are comfortable with others, gregarious, and prone to action rather than contemplation (Lebowitz, 2016a).

People high in introversion are more likely to be people “of few words,” people who are quiet, introspective, aloof, and thoughtful.

#### **4- Agreeableness**

This trait concerns how well people get along with others. While extroversion concerns sources of energy and the pursuit of interactions with others, agreeableness concerns your orientation to others. It is a construct that rests on how you generally interact with others.

People high in agreeableness tend to be well-liked, respected, and responsive to the needs of others. They likely have few enemies, are sympathetic, and affectionate to their friends and loved ones, as well as sympathetic to the plights of strangers (Lebowitz, 2016a).

People on the low end of the agreeableness continuum are less likely to be trusted and liked by others. They tend to be heartless, blunt, rude, ill-tempered, antagonistic, and sarcastic. Although not all people who are low in agreeableness are cruel or abrasive, they are not likely to leave others with a warm fuzzy feeling.

#### **5- Neuroticism**

Neuroticism is the one Big Five trait in which a high score indicates more negative traits. Neuroticism is not a factor of meanness or incompetence, but one of confidence and being comfortable in one’s own skin. It encompasses one’s emotional stability and general temper.

Those high in neuroticism are generally given to anxiety, sadness, worry, and low self-esteem. They may be temperamental or easily angered, and they tend to be self-conscious and unsure of themselves (Lebowitz, 2016a).

Individuals who score on the low end of neuroticism are more likely to feel confident, sure of themselves, and adventurous. They may also be brave and unencumbered by worry or self-doubt.

## **Which personality traits are most significant?**

In a new study published in the journal *Perspectives in Psychological Science*, psychologists Paul R. Sackett and Philip T. Walmsley of the University of Minnesota analyzed several large data sets of hiring and job performance information to find out which personality attributes organizations appreciate most.

Sackett and Walmsley used a well-established model for measuring personality known as the Big Five as the theoretical basis for their study. In the Big Five model, an individual's personality can be depicted using measures of OCEAN: conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion, and openness to experience.

After crunching the numbers, Sackett and Walmsley found that conscientiousness—which involves being dependable, persevering, and orderly—was by far the most highly sought after personality attribute for job applicants. Agreeableness—being cooperative, flexible and tolerant—was the second most prized personality trait.

To find out, the researchers looked at the relationship between personality traits and three work performance criteria: whether an employee is able to complete their work to satisfaction, how often an employee goes above and beyond at work, and how often they engage in negative behaviors.

Again, conscientiousness and agreeableness came out on top. In the analysis, conscientiousness was the trait most closely associated with overall job performance, with agreeableness coming in second.

The researchers found that overall attributes related to conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability were considered important for a wide variety of jobs from construction to health care.

## **Conclusion:**

“In conclusion, findings provide strong evidence that attributes related to Conscientiousness and Agreeableness are highly essential for workforce readiness across a variety of occupations that require a variety of training and experience qualifications,” write Sackett and Walmsley.

Although conscientiousness is, on average, the most highly appreciated attribute, the researchers caution that specific professions may have different rankings for personality traits. However, Sackett and Walmsley also advise that knowing which traits are highly valued generally could be useful information for students or people who haven't yet decided on specific career goals.

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