5

Personality and Values

MyManagementLab®
⭐ Improve Your Grade!

When you see this icon ⭐, visit **mymanagementlab.com** for activities that are applied, personalized, and offer immediate feedback.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Describe personality, the way it is measured, and the factors that shape it.
2. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality framework and the Big Five Model.
3. Discuss how the concepts of core self-evaluation (CSE), self-monitoring, and pro- active personality contribute to the understanding of personality.
4. Describe how the situation affects whether personality predicts behavior.
5. Contrast terminal and instrumental values.
6. Describe the differences between person–job fit and person–organization fit.
7. Compare Hofstede's five value dimensions and the GLOBE framework.

⭐ Chapter Warm-up

If your professor has chosen to assign this, go to the Assignments section of **www.mymanagementlab.com** to complete the chapter warm-up.

PERSONALITY

Why are some people quiet and passive, while others are loud and aggressive? Are certain personality types better adapted than others for certain jobs? Before we can answer these questions, we need to address a more basic one: what is personality?

What Is Personality?

When we speak of someone's personality, we use many adjectives to describe how they act and seem to think; in fact, research participants used 624 distinct adjectives to describe people they knew.[1] As organizational behaviorists, however, we organize characteristics by overall traits describing the growth and development of a person's personality.

DEFINING PERSONALITY   For our purposes, think of **personality** as the sum of ways in which an individual reacts to and interacts with others. We most often describe personality in terms of the measurable traits a person exhibits.

Early work on personality tried to identify and label enduring characteristics that describe an individual's behavior including shy, aggressive, submissive, lazy, ambitious, loyal, and timid. When someone exhibits these characteristics in a large number of situations and they are relatively enduring over time, we call them **personality traits**.[2] The more consistent the characteristic over time and the more frequently it occurs in diverse situations, the more important the trait is in describing the individual.

ASSESSING PERSONALITY   Personality assessments have been increasingly used in diverse organizational settings. In fact, 8 of the top 10 U.S. private companies and 57 percent of all large U.S. companies use them,[3] including Xerox, McDonald's, and Lowe's.[4] Schools such as DePaul University have also begun to use personality tests in their admissions process.[5] Personality tests are useful in hiring decisions and help managers forecast who is best for a job.[6]

MEASURING RESULTS   The most common means of measuring personality is through self-report surveys in which individuals evaluate themselves on a series of factors, such as "I worry a lot about the future." In general, when people know their personality scores are going to be used for hiring decisions, they rate themselves as about half a standard deviation more conscientious and emotionally stable than if they are taking the test to learn more about themselves.[7] Another problem is accuracy; for example, a candidate who is in a bad mood when taking a survey may very well receive inaccurate scores.

CULTURE AND RATINGS   Research indicates our culture influences the way we rate ourselves. People in individualistic countries (see Chapter 4) like the United States and Australia trend toward self-enhancement, while people in collectivistic countries (see Chapter 4) like Taiwan, China, and South Korea trend toward self-diminishment. Self-enhancement does not appear to harm a person's career in individualistic countries, but it does in collectivist countries, where humility is valued. Interestingly, underrating (self-diminishment) may harm a person's career in both collectivistic and individualistic communities.[8]

SELF-REPORTS AND OBSERVER-RATINGS   Observer-ratings surveys provide an independent assessment of personality. Here, a coworker or another observer does the rating. Though the results of self-reports and observer-ratings surveys are strongly correlated, research suggests observer-ratings surveys predict job success more than self-ratings alone.[9] However, each can tell us something unique about an individual's behavior, so a combination of self-reports and observer-ratings predicts performance

Personality
The sum total of ways in which an individual reacts to and interacts with others.

Personality traits
Enduring characteristics that describe an individual's behavior.

better than any one type of information. The implication is clear: Use both self-reports and observers-ratings (per SS) of personality when making important employment decisions.

PERSONALITY DETERMINANTS An early debate centered on whether an individual's personality is the result of heredity or environment. Personality appears to be a result of both; however, research tends to support the importance of heredity over environment. **Heredity** refers to factors determined at conception. Physical stature, facial features, gender, temperament, muscle composition and reflexes, energy level, and biological rhythms are either completely or substantially influenced by parentage—by your biological parents' genetic, physiological, and inherent psychological makeup. The heredity approach argues that the ultimate explanation of an individual's personality is the molecular structure of the genes, located on the chromosomes. This is not to suggest that personality never changes. For example, people's scores on dependability tend to increase over time, as when young adults start families and establish careers. Personality is also more changeable in adolescence and more stable among adults.[10] However, strong individual differences in dependability remain; everyone tends to change by about the same amount, so their rank order stays roughly the same.[11]

Heredity
Factors determined at conception; one's biological, physiological, and inherent psychological makeup.

PERSONALITY FRAMEWORKS

Throughout history, people have sought to understand what makes individuals behave in myriad ways. Many of our behaviors stem from our personalities, so understanding the components of personality helps us predict behavior. Important theoretical frameworks and assessment tools, discussed next, help us categorize and study the dimensions of personality.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
A personality test that taps 4 characteristics and classifies people into 1 of 16 personality types.

The **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** is the most widely used personality-assessment instrument in the world.[12] It is a 100-question personality test that asks people how they usually feel or act in situations. Respondents are classified as extraverted or introverted (E or I), sensing or intuitive (S or N), thinking or feeling (T or F), and judging or perceiving (J or P):

- **Extraverted (E) versus Introverted (I).** Extraverted individuals are outgoing, sociable, and assertive. Introverts are quiet and shy.
- **Sensing (s) versus Intuitive (N).** Sensing types are practical and prefer routine and order, and they focus on details. Intuitives rely on unconscious processes and look at the "big picture."
- **Thinking (T) versus Feeling (F).** Thinking types use reason and logic to handle problems. Feeling types rely on their personal values and emotions.
- **Judging (J) versus Perceiving (P).** Judging types want control and prefer order and structure. Perceiving types are flexible and spontaneous.

The MBTI describes personality types by identifying one trait from each of the four pairs. For example, Introverted/Intuitive/Thinking/Judging people (INTJs) are visionaries with original minds and great drive. They are skeptical, critical, independent, determined, and often stubborn. ENFJs are natural teachers and leaders. They are

relational, motivational, intuitive, idealistic, ethical, and kind. ESTJs are organizers. They are realistic, logical, analytical, and decisive, perfect for business or mechanics. The ENTP type is innovative, individualistic, versatile, and attracted to entrepreneurial ideas. This person tends to be resourceful in solving challenging problems but may neglect routine assignments.

One problem with the MBTI is that the model forces a person into one type or another; that is, you're either introverted or extraverted. There is no in-between. Another problem is with the reliability of the measure: When people retake the assessment, they often receive different results. An additional problem is in the difficulty of interpretation. There are levels of importance for each of the MBTI facets, and separate meanings for certain combinations of facets, all of which require trained interpretation that can leave room for error. Finally, results from the MBTI tend to be unrelated to job performance.

The Big Five Personality Model

The MBTI may lack strong supporting evidence, but an impressive body of research supports the **Big Five Model**, which proposes that five basic dimensions underlie all others and encompass most of the significant variation in human personality.[13] Test scores of these traits do a very good job of predicting how people behave in a variety of real-life situations[14] and remain relatively stable for an individual over time, with some daily variations.[15] These are the Big Five factors:

- **Conscientiousness.** The **conscientiousness** dimension is a measure of reliability. A highly conscientious person is responsible, organized, dependable, and persistent. Those who score low on this dimension are easily distracted, disorganized, and unreliable.
- **Emotional stability.** The **emotional stability** dimension taps a person's ability to withstand stress. People with emotional stability tend to be calm, self-confident, and secure. High scorers are more likely to be positive and optimistic; they are generally happier than low scorers. Emotional stability is sometimes discussed as its converse, neuroticism. Low scorers (those with high neuroticism) are hypervigilant and vulnerable to the physical and psychological effects of stress. Those with high neuroticism tend to be nervous, anxious, depressed, and insecure.
- **Extraversion.** The **extraversion** dimension captures our comfort level with relationships. Extraverts tend to be gregarious, assertive, and sociable. They are generally happier and are often ambitious.[16] On the other hand, introverts (low extraversion) tend to be more thoughtful, reserved, timid, and quiet.
- **Openness to experience.** The **openness to experience** dimension addresses the range of a person's interests and their fascination with novelty. Open people are creative, curious, and artistically sensitive. Those at the low end of the category are conventional and find comfort in the familiar.
- **Agreeableness.** The **agreeableness** dimension refers to an individual's propensity to defer to others. Agreeable people are cooperative, warm, and trusting. You might expect agreeable people to be happier than disagreeable people. They are, but only slightly. When people choose organizational team members, agreeable individuals are usually their first choice. In contrast, people who score low on agreeableness can be cold and antagonistic.

Big Five Model
A personality assessment model that taps five basic dimensions.

Conscientiousness
A personality dimension that describes someone who is responsible, dependable, persistent, and organized.

Emotional stability
A personality dimension that characterizes someone as calm, self-confident, and secure (positive) versus nervous, depressed, and insecure (negative).

Extraversion
A personality dimension describing someone who is sociable, gregarious, and assertive.

Openness to experience
A personality dimension that characterizes someone in terms of imagination, sensitivity, and curiosity.

Agreeableness
A personality dimension that describes someone who is good natured, cooperative, and trusting.

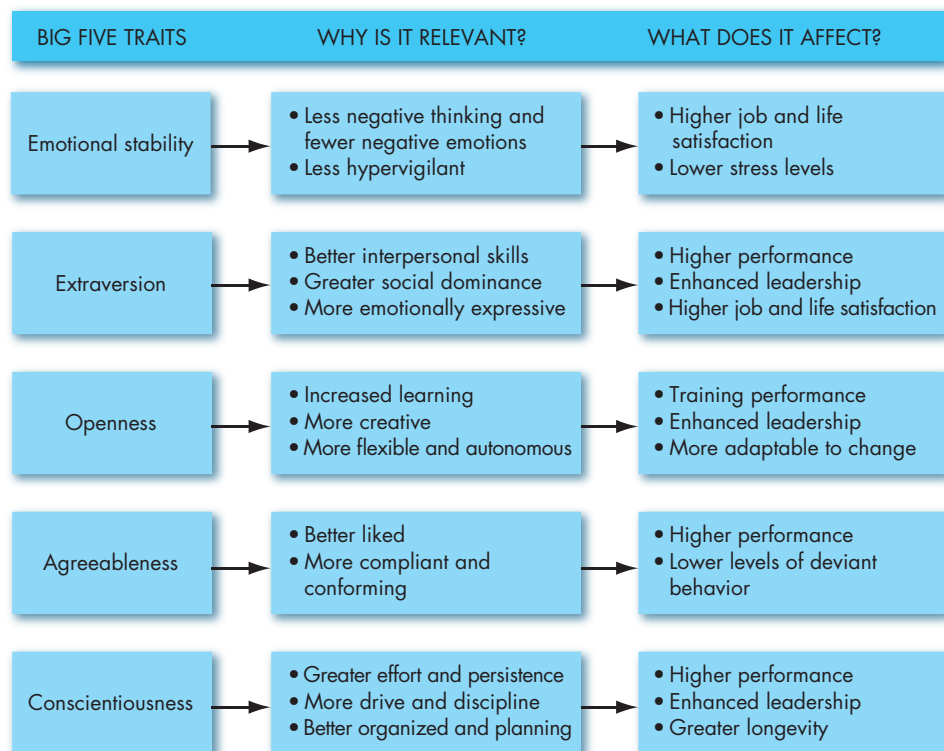### How Do the Big Five Traits Predict Behavior at Work?

There are many relationships between the Big Five personality dimensions and job performance,[17] and we are learning more about them every day. Let's explore one trait at a time, beginning with the strongest predictor of job performance—conscientiousness.

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS AT WORK   Conscientiousness is key. As researchers recently stated, "Personal attributes related to conscientiousness and agreeableness are important for success across many jobs, spanning across low to high levels of job complexity, training, and experience."[18] Employees who score higher in conscientiousness develop higher levels of job knowledge, probably because highly conscientious people learn more (conscientiousness may be related to GPA),[19] and these levels correspond with higher levels of job performance. Conscientious people are also more able to maintain their job performance when faced with abusive supervision, according to a study in India.[20]

Like any trait, conscientiousness has its pitfalls. Highly conscientious individuals can prioritize work over family, resulting in more conflict between their work and family roles (termed work-family conflict).[21] They may also become too focused on their own work to help others in the organization,[22] and they don't adapt well to changing contexts. Furthermore, conscientious people may have trouble learning complex skills early in a training process because their focus is on performing well rather than on learning. Finally, they are often less creative, especially artistically.[23]

Despite pitfalls, conscientiousness is the best overall predictor of job performance. However, the other Big Five traits are also related to aspects of performance and have other implications for work and for life. Exhibit 5-1 summarizes these other relations.

EXHIBIT 5-1
Model of How Big Five Traits Influence OB Criteria

BIG FIVE TRAITS	WHY IS IT RELEVANT?	WHAT DOES IT AFFECT?
Emotional stability	• Less negative thinking and fewer negative emotions • Less hypervigilant	• Higher job and life satisfaction • Lower stress levels
Extraversion	• Better interpersonal skills • Greater social dominance • More emotionally expressive	• Higher performance • Enhanced leadership • Higher job and life satisfaction
Openness	• Increased learning • More creative • More flexible and autonomous	• Training performance • Enhanced leadership • More adaptable to change
Agreeableness	• Better liked • More compliant and conforming	• Higher performance • Lower levels of deviant behavior
Conscientiousness	• Greater effort and persistence • More drive and discipline • Better organized and planning	• Higher performance • Enhanced leadership • Greater longevity

EMOTIONAL STABILITY AT WORK Of the Big Five traits, emotional stability is most strongly related to life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and low stress levels. People with high emotional stability can adapt to unexpected or changing demands in the workplace.[24] At the other end of the spectrum, neurotic individuals who are unable to cope with these demands may experience burnout.[25] These people also tend to experience work-family conflict, which can affect work outcomes.[26]

EXTRAVERSION AT WORK Extraverts perform better in jobs with significant interpersonal interaction. They are socially dominant, "take charge" people.[27] Extraversion is a relatively strong predictor of leadership emergence in groups. Some negatives are that extraverts are more impulsive than introverts, are more likely to be absent from work, and may be more likely than introverts to lie during job interviews.[28]

OPENNESS AT WORK Open people are more likely to be effective leaders—and more comfortable with ambiguity. They cope better with organizational change and are more adaptable. While openness isn't related to initial performance on a job, individuals higher in openness are less susceptible to a decline in performance over a longer time period.[29] Open people also experience less work-family conflict.[30]

AGREEABLENESS AT WORK Agreeable individuals are better liked than disagreeable people; they tend to do better in interpersonally oriented jobs such as customer service. They're more compliant and rule abiding, less likely to get into accidents, and more satisfied in their jobs. They also contribute to organizational performance by engaging in organizational citizenship behavior (OCB; see Chapter 1).[31] Disagreeable people, on the other hand, are more likely to engage in counterproductive work behavior (CWB; see Chapter 3), as are people low in conscientiousness.[32] Low agreeableness also predicts involvement in work accidents.[33] Lastly, agreeableness is associated with lower levels of career success (especially earnings), perhaps because highly agreeable people consider themselves less marketable and are less willing to assert themselves.[34]

In general, the Big Five personality factors appear in almost all cross-cultural studies,[35] including China, Israel, Germany, Japan, Spain, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, and the United States. However, a study of illiterate indigenous people in Bolivia suggested the Big Five framework may be less applicable when studying the personalities of small, remote groups.[36]

The Dark Triad

With the exception of neuroticism, the Big Five traits are what we call socially desirable, meaning we would be glad to score high on them. They also have the most verifiable links to important organizational outcomes. Researchers have identified three other socially *undesirable* traits, which we all have in varying degrees and which are also relevant to organizational behavior (OB): Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. Owing to their negative nature, researchers have labeled these the **Dark Triad**—though they do not always occur together.[37]

The Dark Triad may sound sinister, but these traits are not clinical pathologies hindering everyday functioning. They might be expressed particularly strongly when an individual is under stress and unable to moderate any inappropriate responses. Sustained

Dark Triad
A constellation of negative personality traits consisting of Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy.

high levels of dark personality traits can cause individuals to derail their careers and personal lives.[38]

MACHIAVELLIANISM   Hao is a young bank manager in Shanghai. He's received three promotions in the past four years and makes no apologies for the aggressive tactics he's used. "My name means clever, and that's what I am—I do whatever I have to do to get ahead," he says. Hao would be termed Machiavellian.

Machiavellianism
The degree to which an individual is pragmatic, maintains emotional distance, and believes that ends can justify means.

The personality characteristic of **Machiavellianism** (often abbreviated *Mach*) is named after Niccolo Machiavelli, who wrote in the sixteenth century on how to gain and use power. 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 manipulate more, win more, are persuaded less by others, but persuade others more than do low Machs.[39] They are more likely to act aggressively and engage in CWBs as well. Surprisingly, Machiavellianism does not significantly predict overall job performance.[40] High-Mach employees, by manipulating others to their advantage, win in the short term at a job, but lose those gains in the long term because they are not well liked.

Machiavellian tendencies may have ethical implications. One study showed high-Mach job seekers were less positively affected by the knowledge that an organization engaged in a high level of corporate social responsibility (CSR; see Chapter 3),[41] suggesting that high-Mach people may care less about sustainability issues. Another study found Machs' ethical leadership behaviors were less likely to translate into followers' work engagement because followers see through these behaviors and realize they are cases of surface acting.[42]

Narcissism
The tendency to be arrogant, have a grandiose sense of self-importance, require excessive admiration, and have a sense of entitlement.

NARCISSISM   Sabrina likes to be the center of attention. She often looks at herself in the mirror, has extravagant dreams about her future, and considers herself a person of many talents. Sabrina is a narcissist. The trait is named for the Greek myth of Narcissus, a youth so vain and proud he fell in love with his own image. In psychology, **narcissism** describes a person who has a grandiose sense of self-importance, requires excessive admiration, and is arrogant. Narcissists often have fantasies of grand success, a tendency to exploit situations and people, a sense of entitlement, and a lack of empathy.[43] However, narcissists can be hypersensitive and fragile people.[44] They also may experience more anger.[45]

While narcissism seems to have little relationship to job effectiveness or OCB,[46] it is one of the largest predictors of increased CWB in individualistic cultures—but not in collectivist cultures that discourage self-promotion.[47] Narcissists commonly think they are overqualified for their positions.[48] When they receive feedback about their performance, they often tune out information that conflicts with their positive self-perception, but they will work harder if rewards are offered.[49]

On the bright side, narcissists may be more charismatic than others.[50] They also might be found in business more often than in other fields. They are more likely to be chosen for leadership positions, and medium ratings of narcissism (neither extremely high nor extremely low) are positively correlated with leadership effectiveness.[51] Some evidence suggests that narcissists are more adaptable and make better business decisions than others when the issue is complex.[52] Furthermore, a study of Norwegian bank employees found those scoring high on narcissism enjoyed their work more.[53]

PSYCHOPATHY Psychopathy is part of the Dark Triad, but in OB, it does not connote clinical mental illness. In the OB context, **psychopathy** is defined as a lack of concern for others, and a lack of guilt or remorse when actions cause harm.[54] Measures of psychopathy attempt to assess motivation to comply with social norms, impulsivity, willingness to use deceit to obtain desired ends, and disregard, that is, the lack of empathic concern for others.

> **Psychopathy**
> The tendency for a lack of concern for others and a lack of guilt or remorse when actions cause harm.

The literature is not consistent about whether psychopathy is important to work behavior. One review found little correlation between measures of psychopathy and job performance or CWB. Another found antisocial personality, which is closely related to psychopathy, was positively related to advancement in the organization but unrelated to other aspects of career success and effectiveness.[55] Still other research suggests psychopathy is related to the use of hard influence tactics (threats, manipulation) and bullying work behavior (physical or verbal threatening).[56] The cunning displayed by people who score high on psychopathy may thus help them gain power in an organization but keep them from using it toward healthy ends for themselves or their organizations.

OTHER TRAITS The Dark Triad is a helpful framework for studying the three dominant dark-side traits in current personality research, and researchers are exploring other traits as well. One emerging framework incorporates five additional aberrant compound traits based on the Big Five. First, *antisocial* people are indifferent and callous toward others. They use their extraversion to charm people, but they may be prone to violent CWBs and risky decision making. Second, *borderline* people have low self-esteem and high uncertainty. They are unpredictable in their interactions at work, are inefficient, and may have low job satisfaction.[57] Third, *schizotypal* individuals are eccentric and disorganized. In the workplace, they can be highly creative, although they are susceptible to work stress. Fourth, *obsessive-compulsive* people are perfectionists and can be stubborn, yet they attend to details, carry a strong work ethic, and may be motivated by achievement. Fifth, *avoidant* individuals feel inadequate and hate criticism. They can function only in environments requiring little interaction.[58]

OTHER PERSONALITY ATTRIBUTES RELEVANT TO OB

As we've discussed, studies of traits have much to offer the field of OB. Now we'll look at other attributes that are powerful predictors of behavior in organizations: core self-evaluations, self-monitoring, and proactive personality.

Core Self-Evaluation (CSE)

As discussed in Chapter 3, core self-evaluations (CSEs) are bottom-line conclusions individuals have about their capabilities, competence, and worth as a person. People with positive CSEs like themselves and see themselves as effective and in control of their environment. Those with negative CSEs tend to dislike themselves, question their capabilities, and view themselves as powerless over their environment.[59] Recall that CSEs relate to job satisfaction, because people who are positive on this trait see more challenge in their jobs and actually attain more complex jobs.

People with positive CSEs perform better than others because they set more ambitious goals, are more committed to their goals, and persist longer in attempting to reach them. People who have high CSEs provide better customer service, are more popular

coworkers, and may have careers that begin on better footing and ascend more rapidly over time.[60] They perform especially well if they feel their work provides meaning and is helpful to others.[61] Therefore, people with high CSEs may thrive in organizations with high CSR.

Self-Monitoring

Zoe is always in trouble at work. Although she's competent, hardworking, and productive, she receives average ratings in performance reviews, and seems to have made a career out of irritating her bosses. Zoe's problem is that she's politically inept and unable to adjust her behavior to fit changing situations. As she says, "I'm true to myself. I don't remake myself to please others." Zoe is a low self-monitor.

Self-monitoring
A personality trait that measures an individual's ability to adjust his or her behavior to external, situational factors.

      Self-monitoring describes an individual's ability to adjust behavior to external, situational factors.[62] High self-monitors show considerable adaptability in adjusting their behavior to external situational factors. They are highly sensitive to external cues and can behave differently in varying situations, sometimes presenting striking contradictions between their public personae and their private selves. Evidence indicates high self-monitors pay closer attention to the behavior of others and are more capable of conforming than are low self-monitors.[63] Low self-monitors like Zoe can't disguise themselves in that way. They tend to display their true dispositions and attitudes in every situation; hence, there is high behavioral consistency between who they are and what they do.

Proactive Personality

Did you ever notice that some people actively take the initiative to improve their current circumstances or create new ones? These are proactive personalities.[64] Those with a **proactive personality** identify opportunities, show initiative, take action, and persevere until meaningful change occurs, compared to others who generally react to situations. Proactive individuals have many desirable behaviors that organizations covet. They have higher levels of job performance[65] and do not need much oversight.[66] They are receptive to changes in job demands and thrive when they can informally tailor their jobs to their strengths. Proactive individuals often achieve career success.[67]

Proactive personality
People who identify opportunities, show initiative, take action, and persevere until meaningful change occurs.

      Proactive personality may be important for work teams. One study of 95 R&D teams in 33 Chinese companies revealed that teams with high average levels of proactive personality were more innovative.[68] Proactive individuals are also more likely to exchange information with others in a team, which builds trust relationships.[69] Like other traits, proactive personality is affected by the context. One study of bank branch teams in China found that if a team's leader was not proactive, the potential benefits of the team's proactivity became dormant, or worse, their proactivity was suppressed by the leader.[70] In terms of pitfalls, one study of 231 Flemish unemployed individuals found that proactive individuals abandoned their job searches sooner. It may be that proactivity includes stepping back in the face of failure.[71]

PERSONALITY AND SITUATIONS

Earlier we discussed how research shows heredity is more important than the environment in developing our personalities. The environment is not irrelevant, though. Some personality traits, such as the Big Five, tend to be effective in almost any environment or

situation. However, we are learning that the effect of particular traits on behavior depends on the situation. Two theoretical frameworks, situation strength and trait activation, help explain how this works.

Situation Strength Theory

Imagine you are in a meeting with your department. How likely are you to walk out, shout at a colleague, or turn your back on everyone? Probably highly unlikely. Now imagine working from home. You might work in your pajamas, listen to loud music, or take a catnap.

Situation strength theory proposes that the way personality translates into behavior depends on the strength of the situation. By *situation strength*, we mean the degree to which norms, cues, or standards dictate appropriate behavior. Strong situations show us what the right behavior is, pressure us to exhibit it, and discourage the wrong behavior. In weak situations, conversely, "anything goes," and thus we are freer to express our personality in behavior. Personality traits better predict behavior in weak situations than in strong ones.

Situation strength theory
A theory indicating that the way personality translates into behavior depends on the strength of the situation.

COMPONENTS OF SITUATION STRENGTH   Researchers have analyzed situation strength in organizations in terms of four elements:[72]

1. *Clarity*, or the degree to which cues about work duties and responsibilities are available and clear—jobs high in clarity produce strong situations because individuals can readily determine what to do. For example, the job of janitor probably provides higher clarity about each task than the job of nanny.
2. *Consistency*, or the extent to which cues regarding work duties and responsibilities are compatible with one another—jobs with high consistency represent strong situations because all the cues point toward the same desired behavior. The job of acute care nurse, for example, probably has higher consistency than the job of manager.
3. *Constraints*, or the extent to which individuals' freedom to decide or act is limited by forces outside their control—jobs with many constraints represent strong situations because an individual has limited discretion. Bank examiner, for example, is probably a job with stronger constraints than forest ranger.
4. *Consequences*, or the degree to which decisions or actions have important implications for the organization or its members, clients, supplies, and so on—jobs with important consequences represent strong situations because the environment is probably heavily structured to guard against mistakes. A surgeon's job, for example, has higher consequences than a foreign-language teacher's.

ORGANIZATIONAL SITUATIONS   Some researchers have speculated that organizations are, by definition, strong situations because they impose rules, norms, and standards that govern behavior. These constraints are usually appropriate. For example, we would not want an employee to feel free to engage in sexual harassment, follow questionable accounting procedures, or come to work only when the mood strikes.

The elements of situation strength are often determined by organizational rules and guidelines, which adds some objectivity to them. However, the perception of these rules influences how the person will respond to the situation's strength. For instance, a person who is usually self-directed may view step-by-step instructions (high clarity) for a simple task as a lack

of faith in his ability. Another person who is a rule follower might appreciate the detailed instructions. Their responses (and work attitudes) will reflect their perception of the situation.[73]

Creating strong rules to govern diverse systems might be not only difficult but also unwise. In sum, managers need to recognize the role of situation strength in the workplace and find the appropriate balance.

Trait Activation Theory

Trait Activation Theory (TAT)
A theory that predicts that some situations, events, or interventions "activate" a trait more than others.

Another important theoretical framework toward understanding personality and situations is **Trait Activation Theory (TAT)**. TAT predicts that some situations, events, or interventions "activate" a trait more than others. Using TAT, we can foresee which jobs suit certain personalities. For example, a commission-based compensation plan would likely activate individual differences because extraverts are more reward-sensitive, than, say, open people. Conversely, in jobs that encourage creativity, differences in openness may better predict desired behavior than differences in extraversion. See Exhibit 5-2 for specific examples.

TAT also applies to personality tendencies. For example, a recent study found people learning online responded differently when their behavior was electronically monitored. Those who had a high fear of failure had higher apprehension from the monitoring than others, and consequently learned significantly less. In this case, a feature of the environment (electronic monitoring) activated a trait (fear of failing), and the combination of the two meant lowered job performance.[74] TAT can also work in a positive way. One study found that, in a supportive environment, everyone behaved prosocially, but in a harsh environment, only people with prosocial tendencies exhibited them.[75]

Together, situation strength and trait activation theories show that the debate over nature versus nurture might best be framed as nature *and* nurture. Not only do both affect behavior, but they interact with one another. Put another way, personality and the situation both affect work behavior, but when the situation is right, the power of personality to predict behavior is even higher.

Detail Orientation Required	Social Skills Required	Competitive Work	Innovation Required	Dealing with Angry People	Time Pressure (Deadlines)
Jobs scoring high (the traits listed here should predict behavior in these jobs)					
Air traffic controller	Clergy	Coach/scout	Actor	Correctional officer	Broadcast news analyst
Accountant	Therapist	Financial manager	Systems analyst	Telemarketer	Editor
Legal secretary	Concierge	Sales representative	Advertising writer	Flight attendant	Airline pilot
Jobs scoring low (the traits listed here should not predict behavior in these jobs)					
Forester	Software engineer	Postal clerk	Court reporter	Composer	Skincare specialist
Masseuse	Pump operator	Historian	Archivist	Biologist	Mathematician
Model	Broadcast technician	Nuclear reactor operator	Medical technician	Statistician	Fitness trainer
Jobs that score high activate these traits (make them more relevant to predicting behavior)					
Conscientiousness (+)	Extraversion (+) Agreeableness (+)	Extraversion (+) Agreeableness (–)	Openness (+)	Extraversion (+) Agreeableness (+) Neuroticism (–)	Conscientiousness (+) Neuroticism (–)

EXHIBIT 5-2

Trait Activation Theory: Jobs in Which Certain Big Five Traits Are More Relevant

Note: A plus (+) sign means individuals who score high on this trait should do better in this job. A minus (–) sign means individuals who score low on this trait should do better in this job.

VALUES

Having discussed personality traits, we now turn to values. Values are often very specific and describe belief systems rather than behavioral tendencies. Some beliefs or values reflect a person's personality, but we don't always act consistently with our values. Is capital punishment right or wrong? Is a desire for power good or bad? The answers to these questions are value-laden.

Values represent basic convictions that "a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence."[76] Values contain a judgmental element because they carry an individual's ideas about what is right, good, or desirable. They have both content and intensity attributes. The content attribute says a mode of conduct or end-state of existence is *important.* The intensity attribute specifies *how important* it is. When we rank values in terms of intensity, we obtain that person's **value system**. We all have a hierarchy of values according to the relative importance we assign to values such as freedom, pleasure, self-respect, honesty, obedience, and equality. Values tend to be relatively stable and enduring.[77]

Values lay the foundation for understanding attitudes and motivation, and they influence our perceptions. We enter an organization with preconceived notions of what "ought" and "ought not" to be. These notions contain our interpretations of right and wrong and our preferences for certain behaviors or outcomes. Regardless of whether they clarify or bias our judgment, our values influence our attitudes and behaviors at work.

While values can sometimes augment decision making, at times they can cloud objectivity and rationality.[78] Suppose you enter an organization with the view that allocating pay on the basis of performance is right, while allocating pay on the basis of seniority is wrong. How will you react if you find the organization you've just joined rewards seniority and not performance? You're likely to be disappointed—this can lead to job dissatisfaction and a decision not to exert a high level of effort because "It's probably not going to lead to more money anyway." Would your attitudes and behavior be different if your values aligned with the organization's pay policies? Most likely.

⭐ WATCH IT

If your professor has assigned this, go to the Assignments section of **mymanagementlab.com** to complete the video exercise titled **Honest Tea: Ethics—Company Mission and Values**.

Terminal versus Instrumental Values

How can we organize values? One researcher—Milton Rokeach—argued that we can separate them into two categories. One set, called **terminal values**, refers to desirable end-states. These are the goals a person would like to achieve during a lifetime. The other set, called **instrumental values**, refers to preferable modes of behavior, or means of achieving the terminal values. Each of us places value on both the ends (terminal values) and the means (instrumental values). Some examples of terminal values are prosperity and economic success, freedom, health and well-being, world peace, and meaning in life. Examples of instrumental values are autonomy and self-reliance, personal discipline, kindness, and goal-orientation. A balance between terminal and instrumental values is important, as well as an understanding of how to strike this balance.

Values
Basic convictions that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence.

Value system
A hierarchy based on a ranking of an individual's values in terms of their intensity.

Terminal values
Desirable end-states of existence; the goals a person would like to achieve during his or her lifetime.

Instrumental values
Preferable modes of behavior or means of achieving one's terminal values.

Generational Values

Researchers have integrated several analyses of work values into groups that attempt to capture the shared views of different cohorts or generations in the U.S. workforce.[79] You will surely be familiar with the labels—for example, baby boomers, gen xers, millennials—some of which are used internationally. It is important to remember that while categories are helpful, they represent trends... not the beliefs of individuals.

Though it is fascinating to think about generational values, remember these classifications lack solid research support. Early research was plagued by methodological problems that made it difficult to assess whether differences actually exist. Reviews suggest many of the generalizations are either overblown or incorrect.[80] True differences across generations often do not support popular conceptions of how generations differ. For example, the value placed on leisure has increased over generations from the baby boomers to the millennials and work centrality has declined, but research did not find that millennials had more altruistic work values than their predecessors.[81] Generational classifications may help us understand our own and other generations better, but we must also appreciate their limits.

LINKING AN INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONALITY AND VALUES TO THE WORKPLACE

Thirty years ago, organizations were concerned with personality in order to match individuals to specific jobs. That concern has expanded to include how well the individual's personality *and* values match the organization. Why? Because managers today are less interested in an applicant's ability to perform a *specific* job than with his or her *flexibility* to meet changing situations and maintain commitment to the organization. Still, one of the first types of fit managers look for is person–job fit.

Personality–job fit theory
A theory that identifies six personality types and proposes that the fit between personality type and occupational environment determines satisfaction and turnover.

Person–Job Fit

The effort to match job requirements with personality characteristics is described by John Holland's **personality–job fit theory**, one of the more proven theories in use internationally.[82] The Vocational Preference Inventory questionnaire contains 160 occupational titles. Respondents indicate which they like or dislike, and their answers form personality profiles. Holland presented six personality types and proposed that satisfaction and the propensity to leave a position depend on how well individuals match their personalities to a job. Exhibit 5-3 describes the six types, their personality characteristics, and examples of congruent occupations for each.

There are cultural implications for person–job fit that speak to workers' expectations that jobs will be tailored to them. In individualistic countries where workers expect to be heard and respected by management, increasing person–job fit by tailoring the job to the person increases the individual's job satisfaction. However, in collectivistic countries, person–job fit is a weaker predictor of job satisfaction because people do not expect to have jobs tailored to them, so they value person–job fit efforts less. Therefore, managers in collectivistic cultures should not violate cultural norms by designing jobs for individuals; rather they should seek people who will likely thrive in jobs that have already been structured.[83]

Type	Personality Characteristics	Congruent Occupations
Realistic: Prefers physical activities that require skill, strength, and coordination	Shy, genuine, persistent, stable, conforming, practical	Mechanic, drill press operator, assembly-line worker, farmer
Investigative: Prefers activities that involve thinking, organizing, and understanding	Analytical, original, curious, independent	Biologist, economist, mathematician, news reporter
Social: Prefers activities that involve helping and developing others	Sociable, friendly, cooperative, understanding	Social worker, teacher, counselor, clinical psychologist
Conventional: Prefers rule-regulated, orderly, and unambiguous activities	Conforming, efficient, practical, unimaginative, inflexible	Accountant, corporate manager, bank teller, file clerk
Enterprising: Prefers verbal activities in which there are opportunities to influence others and attain power	Self-confident, ambitious, energetic, domineering	Lawyer, real estate agent, public relations specialist, small business manager
Artistic: Prefers ambiguous and unsystematic activities that allow creative expression	Imaginative, disorderly, idealistic, emotional, impractical	Painter, musician, writer, interior decorator

EXHIBIT 5-3
Holland's Typology of Personality and Congruent Occupations

Person–Organization Fit

We've noted that researchers have looked at matching people to organizations and jobs. If an organization has a dynamic and changing environment and needs employees who are able to readily change tasks and move easily between teams, it's more important that employees' personalities fit with the overall organization's culture than with the characteristics of any specific job.

Person–organization fit essentially means people are attracted to and selected by organizations that match their values, and they leave organizations that are not compatible with their personalities.[84] Using the Big Five terminology, for instance, we could expect that extraverts fit well with aggressive and team-oriented cultures; people high on agreeableness match better with a supportive organizational climate; and highly open people fit better in organizations that emphasize innovation rather than standardization.[85] Following these guidelines when hiring should yield employees who fit better with the organization's culture, which should, in turn, result in higher employee satisfaction and reduced turnover. Research on person–organization fit has also looked at whether people's values match the organization's culture. A match predicts job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and low turnover.[86]

In pursuit of fit, it is more important than ever for organizations to manage their image online since job seekers view company websites as part of their pre-application process. Applicants want to see a user-friendly website that provides information about company philosophies and policies. For example, millennials in particular may react positively when they perceive an organization is committed to work–life balance. The website is so important to the development of perceived person–organization fit that improvements to its style (usability) and substance (policies) can lead to more applicants.[87]

Person–organization fit
A theory that people are attracted to and selected by organizations that match their values, and leave when there is not compatibility.

Other Dimensions of Fit

Although person–job fit and person–organization fit are considered the most salient dimensions for workplace outcomes, other avenues of fit are worth examining. These include *person–group fit* and *person–supervisor fit*. Person–group fit is important in team settings, where the dynamics of team interactions significantly affect work outcomes. Person–supervisor fit has become an important area of research since poor fit in this dimension can lead to lower job satisfaction and reduced performance.

Power distance
A national culture attribute that describes the extent to which a society accepts that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally.

Individualism
A national culture attribute that describes the degree to which people prefer to act as individuals rather than as members of groups.

Collectivism
A national culture attribute that describes a tight social framework in which people expect others in groups of which they are a part to look after them and protect them Collectivistic countries/cultures in which people see themselves as interdependent and seek community and group goals. Collectivistic values are found in Asia, Africa, and South America, for example.

Masculinity
A national culture attribute that describes the extent to which the culture favors traditional masculine work roles of achievement, power, and control. Societal values are characterized by assertiveness and materialism.

All dimensions of fit are sometimes broadly referred to as person–environment fit. Each dimension can predict work attitudes, which are partially based on culture. A recent meta-analysis of person–environment fit in East Asia, Europe, and North America suggested the dimensions of person–organization and person–job fit are the strongest predictors of positive work attitudes and performance in North America. These dimensions are important to a lesser degree in Europe, and they are least important in East Asia.[88]

CULTURAL VALUES

Unlike personality, which is largely genetically determined, values are learned. They are passed down through generations and they vary by cultures. As researchers have sought to understand cultural value differences, two important frameworks have emerged from Geert Hofstede and the GLOBE studies.

Hofstede's Framework

One of the most widely referenced approaches for analyzing variations among cultures was done by Geert Hofstede.[89] Hofstede surveyed more than 116,000 IBM employees in 40 countries about their work-related values and found managers and employees varied on five value dimensions of national culture:

- **Power distance. Power distance** describes the degree to which people in a country accept that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally. A high rating on power distance means large inequalities of power and wealth exist and are tolerated in the culture, as in a class or caste system that discourages upward mobility. A low power distance rating characterizes societies that stress equality and opportunity.
- **Individualism versus collectivism. Individualism** is the degree to which people prefer to act as individuals rather than as members of groups and believe in an individual's rights above all else. **Collectivism** emphasizes a tight social framework in which people expect others in groups of which they are a part to look after them and protect them. In OB, we tend to refer to the terms in the framework of individualist(ic) and collectivist(ic) countries/cultures.
- **Masculinity versus femininity.** Hofstede's construct of **masculinity** is the degree to which the culture favors traditional masculine roles such as achievement, power, and control, as opposed to viewing men and women as equals. A high masculinity rating indicates the culture has separate roles for men and women, with men dominating the society. A high **femininity** rating means the culture sees little differentiation between male and female roles and treats women as the equals of men in all respects.
- **Uncertainty avoidance.** The degree to which people in a country prefer structured over unstructured situations defines their **uncertainty avoidance**. In cultures scoring high on uncertainty avoidance, people have increased anxiety about uncertainty and ambiguity and use laws and controls to reduce uncertainty. People in cultures low on uncertainty avoidance are more accepting of ambiguity, are less rule oriented, take more risks, and more readily accept change.

- **Long-term versus short-term orientation.** This typology measures a society's devotion to traditional values. People in a culture with **long-term orientation** look to the future and value thrift, persistence, and tradition. In a **short-term orientation**, people value the here and now; they also accept change more readily and don't see commitments as impediments to change.

How do different countries score on Hofstede's dimensions? Exhibit 5-4 shows the ratings of the countries for which data are available. For example, power distance is higher in Malaysia than in any other country. The United States is very individualistic; in fact, it's the most individualistic nation of all (closely followed by Australia and Great Britain). Guatemala is the most collectivistic nation. The country with the highest masculinity rank by far is Japan, and the country with the highest femininity rank is Sweden. Greece scores the highest in uncertainty avoidance, while Singapore scores the lowest. Hong Kong has one of the longest-term orientations; Pakistan has the shortest-term orientation.

Research across 598 studies with more than 200,000 respondents has investigated the relationship of Hofstede's cultural values and a variety of organizational criteria at both the individual and national levels of analysis.[90] Overall, the five original culture dimensions were found to be equally strong predictors of relevant outcomes. The researchers also found measuring individual scores resulted in much better predictions of most outcomes than assigning all people in a country the same cultural values. In sum, this research suggests Hofstede's framework may be a valuable way of thinking about differences among people, but we should be cautious about assuming all people from a country have the same values.

The GLOBE Framework

Founded in 1993, the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) research program is an ongoing cross-cultural investigation of leadership and national culture. Using data from 825 organizations in 62 countries, the GLOBE team identified 9 dimensions on which national cultures differ.[91] Some dimensions—such as power distance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, gender differentiation (similar to masculinity versus femininity), and future orientation (similar to long-term versus short-term orientation)—resemble the Hofstede dimensions. The main difference is that the GLOBE framework added dimensions, such as humane orientation (the degree to which a society rewards individuals for being altruistic, generous, and kind to others) and performance orientation (the degree to which a society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence).

Comparison of Hofstede's Framework and the GLOBE Framework

Which framework is better, Hofstede's or the GLOBE? That's hard to say, and each has its supporters. We give more emphasis to Hofstede's dimensions here because they have stood the test of time and the GLOBE study confirmed them. For example, a review of the organizational commitment literature shows both the Hofstede and GLOBE individualism/collectivism dimensions operated similarly. Specifically, both frameworks showed organizational commitment tends to be lower in individualistic countries.[92] Both frameworks have a great deal in common, and each has something to offer.

Femininity
A national culture attribute that indicates little differentiation between male and female roles; a high rating indicates that women are treated as the equals of men in all aspects of the society.

Uncertainty avoidance
A national culture attribute that describes the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and tries to avoid them.

Long-term orientation
A national culture attribute that emphasizes the future, thrift, and persistence.

Short-term orientation
A national culture attribute that emphasizes the present and accepts change.

Country	Power Distance Index	Power Distance Rank	Individualism versus Collectivism Index	Individualism versus Collectivism Rank	Masculinity versus Femininity Index	Masculinity versus Femininity Rank	Uncertainty Avoidance Index	Uncertainty Avoidance Rank	Long- versus Short-Term Orientation Index	Long- versus Short-Term Orientation Rank
Argentina	49	35–36	46	22–23	56	20–21	86	10–15		
Australia	36	41	90	2	61	16	51	37	31	22–24
Austria	11	53	55	18	79	2	70	24–25	31	22–24
Belgium	65	20	75	8	54	22	94	5–6	38	18
Brazil	69	14	38	26–27	49	27	76	21–22	65	6
Canada	39	39	80	4–5	52	24	48	41–42	23	30
Chile	63	24–25	23	38	28	46	86	10–15		
Colombia	67	17	13	49	64	11–12	80	20		
Costa Rica	35	42–44	15	46	21	48–49	86	10–15		
Denmark	18	51	74	9	16	50	23	51	46	10
Ecuador	78	8–9	8	52	63	13–14	67	28		
El Salvador	66	18–19	19	42	40	40	94	5–6		
Finland	33	46	63	17	26	47	59	31–32	41	14
France	68	15–16	71	10–11	43	35–36	86	10–15	39	17
Germany	35	42–44	67	15	66	9–10	65	29	31	22–24
Great Britain	35	42–44	89	3	66	9–10	35	47–48	25	28–29
Greece	60	27–28	35	30	57	18–19	112	1		
Guatemala	95	2–3	6	53	37	43	101	3		
Hong Kong	68	15–16	25	37	57	18–19	29	49–50	96	2
India	77	10–11	48	21	56	20–21	40	45	61	7
Indonesia	78	8–9	14	47–48	46	30–31	48	41–42		
Iran	58	29–30	41	24	43	35–36	59	31–32		
Ireland	28	49	70	12	68	7–8	35	47–48	43	13
Israel	13	52	54	19	47	29	81	19		
Italy	50	34	76	7	70	4–5	75	23	34	19
Jamaica	45	37	39	25	68	7–8	13	52		
Japan	54	33	46	22–23	95	1	92	7	80	4
Korea (South)	60	27–28	18	43	39	41	85	16–17	75	5
Malaysia	104	1	26	36	50	25–26	36	46		
Mexico	81	5–6	30	32	69	6	82	18		
The Netherlands	38	40	80	4–5	14	51	53	35	44	11–12
New Zealand	22	50	79	6	58	17	49	39–40	30	25–26
Norway	31	47–48	69	13	8	52	50	38	44	11–12
Pakistan	55	32	14	47–48	50	25–26	70	24–25	0	34
Panama	95	2–3	11	51	44	34	86	10–15		
Peru	64	21–23	16	45	42	37–38	87	9		
Philippines	94	4	32	31	64	11–12	44	44	19	31–32
Portugal	63	24–25	27	33–35	31	45	104	2	30	25–26
Singapore	74	13	20	39–41	48	28	8	53	48	9
South Africa	49	35–36	65	16	63	13–14	49	39–40		
Spain	57	31	51	20	42	37–38	86	10–15	19	31–32
Sweden	31	47–48	71	10–11	5	53	29	49–50	33	20
Switzerland	34	45	68	14	70	4–5	58	33	40	15–16
Taiwan	58	29–30	17	44	45	32–33	69	26	87	3
Thailand	64	21–23	20	39–41	34	44	64	30	56	8
Turkey	66	18–19	37	28	45	32–33	85	16–17		
United States	40	38	91	1	62	15	46	43	29	27
Uruguay	61	26	36	29	38	42	100	4		
Venezuela	81	5–6	12	50	73	3	76	21–22		
Yugoslavia	76	12	27	33–35	21	48–49	88	8		
Regions:										
Arab countries	80	7	38	26–27	53	23	68	27		
East Africa	64	21–23	27	33–35	41	39	52	36	25	28–29
West Africa	77	10–11	20	39–41	46	30–31	54	34	16	33

EXHIBIT 5-4
Hofstede's Cultural Values by Nation

Source: Copyright Geert Hofstede BV, hofstede@bart.nl. Reprinted with permission.

SUMMARY

Personality matters to OB. It does not explain all behavior, but it sets the stage. Emerging theory and research reveal how personality matters more in some situations than others. The Big Five has been a particularly important advancement, though the Dark Triad and other traits matter as well. Every trait has advantages and disadvantages for work behavior, and there is no perfect constellation of traits that is ideal in every situation. Personality can help you to understand why people (including yourself!) act, think, and feel the way we do, and the astute manager can put that understanding to use by taking care to place employees in situations that best fit their personalities.

Values often underlie and explain attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions. Values tend to vary internationally along dimensions that can predict organizational outcomes; however, an individual may or may not hold values that are consistent with the values of the national culture.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGERS

- Consider screening job candidates for conscientiousness—and the other Big Five traits, depending on the criteria your organization finds most important. Other aspects, such as core self-evaluation or narcissism, may be relevant in certain situations.
- Although the MBTI has faults, you can use it in training and development to help employees better understand each other, open up communication in work groups, and possibly reduce conflicts.
- Evaluate jobs, work groups, and your organization to determine the optimal personality fit.
- Take into account situational factors when evaluating observable personality traits, and lower the situation strength to better ascertain personality characteristics.
- The more you consider people's cultural differences, the better you will be able to determine their work behavior and create a positive organizational climate that performs well.

⭐ PERSONAL INVENTORY ASSESSMENTS

P I A
PERSONAL INVENTORY ASSESSMENTS

Personality Style Indicator

What's your personality? You've probably been wondering as you read this chapter. Take this PIA to obtain some indications of your personality style.

Go to **mymanagementlab.com** for Auto-graded writing questions as well as the following Assisted-graded writing questions:

MyManagementLab®

5-1. Do you think the personalities of businesspeople may be more alike than different?

5-2. MyManagementLab Only—comprehensive writing assignment for this chapter.