

# WorkKeys® Talent Assessment User Guide: Making the Most of Your Results

---



**ACT**® WorkKeys®  
Assessments

# Table of Contents

---

<i>Part I. Introduction</i> .....	1
<i>What Is Personality Testing?</i> .....	1
<i>Frequently Asked Questions about Personality Testing</i> .....	1
<i>About the WorkKeys Talent Assessment</i> .....	3
<i>Sample Instructions and Items</i> .....	4
<i>Talent Assessment Score Reports</i> .....	5
<i>A Note for Career Coaches</i> .....	10
<i>Part II. Using Your Talent Assessment Results</i> .....	11
<i>About This Guide</i> .....	12
<i>Step 1: Review Your Report</i> .....	12
<i>Step 2: Link Talent to Behavior</i> .....	13
<i>Step 3: Identify Target Behaviors for Improvement</i> .....	15
<i>Step 4: Develop an Action Plan for Target Behaviors</i> .....	17
<i>Behavioral Areas</i> .....	20
<i>Planning &amp; Organizing</i> .....	20
<i>Persistence</i> .....	22
<i>Responsibility</i> .....	23
<i>Initiative</i> .....	24
<i>Communication</i> .....	25
<i>Working with Others</i> .....	26
<i>Following Rules</i> .....	28
<i>Organizational Citizenship</i> .....	29
<i>Stress Management</i> .....	30
<i>Adaptability</i> .....	31

<i>Part III. Personality Scales</i> .....	32
<i>Carefulness</i> .....	32
<i>Cooperation</i> .....	32
<i>Creativity</i> .....	33
<i>Discipline</i> .....	33
<i>Goodwill</i> .....	34
<i>Influence</i> .....	35
<i>Optimism</i> .....	35
<i>Order</i> .....	36
<i>Savvy</i> .....	36
<i>Sociability</i> .....	37
<i>Stability</i> .....	38
<i>Striving</i> .....	38
<i>References</i> .....	41
<i>Appendix: Guidelines for Setting Goals</i> .....	43

## Part I. Introduction

The WorkKeys® Talent Assessment measures a set of twelve personality characteristics that reflect a spectrum of behaviors and attitudes that are common in the workplace. These personality characteristics are important for two reasons. First, they are associated with a variety of work outcomes, such as job performance, organizational citizenship, counterproductive work behaviors, and teamwork. Second, they vary in importance depending on job demands and job complexity. Accordingly, when an organization seeks to hire and develop quality employees, it is important to consider personality.

The following sections present general information about personality tests as well as information specific to the WorkKeys Talent Assessment.

### What Is Personality Testing?

Personality inventories are tests used to measure an individual's personality characteristics. These behavior or temperament characteristics can facilitate or impede a person's ability to successfully interact with others, achieve goals, solve problems, manage workers, etc.

Personality tests can provide substantial utility in predicting work performance, and organizations have incorporated them into their employee selection and promotion process. Experts estimate that approximately 60 percent of organizations use workplace assessments, with personality tests included in that estimate (Meinert, 2015). In a coaching and development context, personality testing is used to enhance self-knowledge, identify strengths and weaknesses, and enhance team effectiveness (Cacioppe, 1998; McClure & Werther, 1993).

### Frequently Asked Questions about Personality Testing

#### ***Are personality tests reliable?***

The reliability of a test reflects the stability of test results over time and across diverse settings. Research has reported that personality tests display moderate to high internal consistency reliability, meaning how well each item relates independently to the rest of the items on a scale and how they relate overall (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). The internal consistency reliability of the Talent Assessment scales ranges from .81 to .89 (mean = .85), which puts all of them in the high reliability range. Further information on the reliability of the Talent Assessment can be found in the Technical Guide.

## ***Are personality tests valid?***

Validity refers to the degree to which empirical evidence and theory support the adequacy and appropriateness of conclusions drawn from assessment scores. In the case of personality assessments, studies have shown that properly designed and administered personality tests are valid predictors of many aspects of job performance, including quality and quantity of work, teamwork, leadership, turnover, absenteeism, counterproductive work behaviors, and organizational citizenship/helping behaviors. (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Ones, Viswesvaran, & Dilchert, 2005; Roberts et al., 2007; Sackett et al., 2017; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998).

Specific to the Talent Assessment, research indicates that the test measures the same broad themes as those captured by other well-validated personality inventories, such as those based on the Five Factor Model of personality. Further, validity estimates from research done with the Talent assessment suggest that this assessment is predictive of a range of work-related behaviors, such as task performance, productivity, prosocial/organizational citizenship behaviors, teamwork, counterproductive behaviors, and others. Detailed criterion and construct validity evidence is presented in the Technical Guide.

## ***Can people develop their personality?***

Although early psychologists thought that personality became “set like plaster” (James, 1890/1950), more recent work has noted that personality is dynamic and flexible; it continues to change and adapt as people age. Some of these patterns appear to follow certain developmental trends, such as people becoming more organized and diligent as they get older and face roles that require more responsibility (Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000; Srivastava et al., 2003;). In other cases, studies show that people can make substantial changes in their personalities if they are engaged in some sort of intervention or systemic effort targeting behavioral change (Roberts et al., 2017). This means that individuals can help to shape how their personality develops over time to better adapt to environmental challenges and/or changing roles (Kautz et al., 2014). The Talent assessment can be a helpful measurement tool to assist individuals in leveraging their strengths and improving on areas that could benefit from further development in work settings.

## ***Can someone cheat on a personality test?***

In general, research has shown that “fakeability” usually has small impact on the validity of personality tests in most settings, and especially in low-stakes settings, such as training and development contexts (Ones et al., 2007). More recent research suggests that people are somewhat more likely to exaggerate their positive attributes in high-stakes settings, such as in hiring and promotion contexts (Hu & Connelly, 2021). Although most people tend to respond honestly when completing personality inventories, the Talent Assessment has built-in features that flag scores of respondents whose response patterns are inconsistent or unusual. Thus, the Talent Assessment reports provide a note for employers to use caution when

interpreting scores that have been flagged as they may not be an accurate reflection of a test taker's characteristics.

### ***How do job applicants react to personality tests?***

In low-stakes contexts, people seeking formative feedback find taking a personality assessment helpful. In high-stakes contexts (e.g., selection), research based on opinion surveys of job applicants shows that the majority of respondents perceived personality testing as an appropriate selection procedure. When asked to rank order their overall impression of various selection procedures from positive to negative, personality tests consistently ranked in the middle (i.e., neutral), below interviews and above honesty testing (Coyne & Bartram, 2002; Gilliland & Steiner, 2012).

### ***What about adverse impact claims against personality tests?***

Adverse impact refers to the likelihood that a selection tool systematically selects members of one demographic group over another. In terms of adverse impact, research on personality testing has shown small to insignificant differences between demographic groups (Hough, 1998; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). Personality tests are rarely implicated in adverse impact claims. Consistent with the research literature, analyses using WorkKeys Talent scale scores suggest that the Talent Assessment does not result in significant adverse impact. Additional information is provided in the Technical Guide.

## **About the WorkKeys Talent Assessment**

This section introduces the WorkKeys Talent Assessment and the personality characteristics it measures. Sample instructions and items are presented along with sample reports.

### ***What Is the WorkKeys Talent Assessment?***

The Talent Assessment is an online personality measure that contains 165 items. Consistent with other personality measures, the assessment is written at a fifth-grade reading level and can be completed by most individuals in approximately thirty minutes.

### ***What Does the Talent Assessment Measure?***

The Talent Assessment is designed to measure twelve work-relevant personality characteristics. The assessment is based on facets of the Five Factor Model of personality as well as concepts from emotional intelligence; both of these are well-known and empirically-supported models that describe human personality and behavior and that have been repeatedly associated with important work behaviors and outcomes (Roberts & Yoon, 2022). Table 1 provides brief definitions of each of the Talent Scales. Part III of this document provides more detailed definitions and interpretive information.

**Table 1 Characteristics Measured by the WorkKeys Talent Assessment**

Talent Scales	Corresponding Personality Dimension
<i>Carefulness</i> – the tendency to think and plan carefully before acting or speaking.	Conscientiousness
<i>Discipline</i> – the tendency to be responsible, dependable, and follow through with tasks without becoming distracted or bored.	
<i>Order</i> – the tendency to be neat and well-organized.	
<i>Stability</i> – the tendency to maintain composure and rationality in situations of actual or perceived stress.	Emotional Stability
<i>Optimism</i> – the tendency toward having a positive outlook and confidence in successful outcomes.	
<i>Cooperation</i> – the tendency to be likable and cordial in interpersonal situations.	Agreeableness
<i>Goodwill</i> – the tendency to be forgiving and to believe that others are well-intentioned.	
<i>Sociability</i> – the tendency to enjoy being in other people’s company and to work with others.	Extraversion
<i>Influence</i> – the tendency to impact and dominate social situations by speaking without hesitation and often becoming a group leader.	
<i>Striving</i> – the tendency to have high aspiration levels and to work hard to achieve goals.	
<i>Creativity</i> – the tendency to be imaginative and to think “outside the box”.	Openness
<i>Savvy</i> – the tendency to read other people’s motives, understand office politics, and anticipate the needs and intentions of others.	Emotional Intelligence

**Sample Instructions and Items**

Individuals who take the Talent Assessment will see instructions and test items (Table 2) which are similar to the following:

*Instructions:* Listed below are statements you might use to describe your behaviors, feelings, and other characteristics. Read each statement and indicate how well it describes you by filling in the appropriate oval preceding each statement.

Read each statement carefully, but do not spend too much time deciding on any one answer. Although some statements may seem similar, answer each without considering your other answers.

**Table 2 Sample Test Items**

Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I like coming up with imaginative solutions.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's hard for me to read social cues.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I am punctual.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I usually stay calm, even in stressful situations.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I am skeptical of other people's motives.

## Talent Assessment Score Reports

The WorkKeys Talent Assessment is a tool that measures a range of personality characteristics relevant to workplace behaviors and attitudes. Three reports are available: an Examinee Report, an Employer Report, and a List Report. The features of each of the reports are described below.

**Examinee Report.** The Examinee Report provides detailed information on an examinee. For each individual who completes the Talent Assessment, this report includes scores on each of the twelve Talent scales. Score reports include a graphical representation of the respondent's scores on each Talent scale, as well as interpretive information about what each scale score means.

**Employer Report.** The Employer Report provides similar information to that found in the Examinee Report. Minor wording differences in this report reflect the fact that it is intended for an employer.

**List Report.** The List Report catalogs all examinees who have been assessed during a given time period. This report includes the examinee name, partial identification number associated with each person tested, the primary occupation (if provided) for the examinee, and the date each person completed the assessment.

Figures 1 through 3 feature an example Examinee Report. The top of page one contains the examinee's name, date that the assessment was completed and other basic identifying information. Below the identifier information is the WorkKeys Talent Assessment profile, which shows the percentile rank scores (percentiles) of the examinee. A percentile is a score that indicates the rank of the examinee compared to others, using a hypothetical group of 100 examinees. A percentile of 25, for example, indicates that the examinee's test performance equals or exceeds 25



out of 100 examinees on the same measure; a percentile of 87 indicates that the examinee equals or surpasses 87 out of 100 (or 87% of) examinees. Note that this is not the same as a “percent”; that is to say a percentile of 87 does not mean that the examinee answered 87% of the questions “right.” Percentiles are derived from raw scores using the norms obtained from a large sample of individuals who have completed the Talent Assessment. For more details on norms, consult the Technical Guide.

Based on the examinee’s scale scores, the Talent Assessment profile also provides interpretive statements for the Talent scales. (See Figures 2 and 3 for example interpretive statements). These interpretive statements are sorted into three categories, according to an examinee’s scores:

- “Capitalize on Individual Strengths” for high scores (76<sup>th</sup> to 99<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- “Continue to Cultivate Individual Skills” for moderate scores (26<sup>th</sup> to 75<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- “Construct Plans for Individual Improvement” for low scores (1<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> percentile)

This portion of the report may assist with an examinee’s development plan and/or job placement. More details are provided in Part II of this guide.

The Employer Report is very similar to the Examinee report. Minor differences in wording are used throughout the report to tailor the results to employers.

Some individuals may respond to the items without careful consideration of the content, without reading them, or in a deliberate attempt to distort the scores. As a result, the responses may be inconsistent. For instance, because some of the items are evaluated in such a way that low scores reflect positive answers (i.e., reverse keyed), an individual who responds by selecting the same response (e.g., “strongly disagree”) to a large portion of items will trigger a warning. If an individual responds to the items regardless of content, the system will flag the Employer Report with an exclamation mark and feature the following message:

“The responses provided by this individual appear to be inconsistent. Please use caution when interpreting these scores.”

Figure 1. Examinee Report, Page One

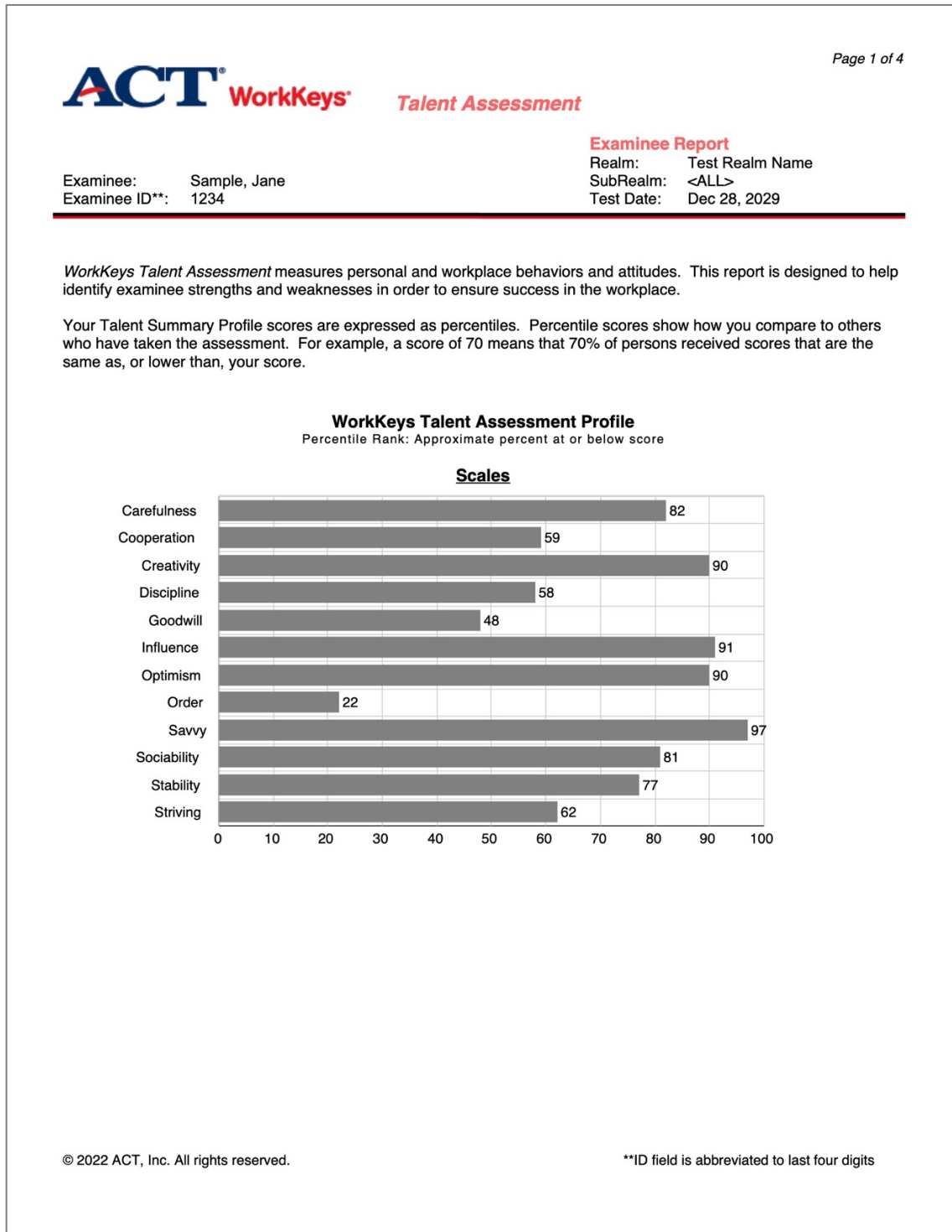


Figure 2. Examinee Report, Page Two

Page 2 of 4

**ACT** WorkKeys<sup>®</sup> Talent Assessment

Examinee: Sample, Jane  
Examinee ID\*\*: 1234

**Examinee Report**  
Realm: Test Realm Name  
SubRealm: <ALL>  
Test Date: Dec 28, 2029

---

### Capitalize on Individual Strengths

These are your areas of strength, as measured by this assessment.

Percentile	Scale Definitions
97	<p><b>Savvy: Tendency to read other people's motives, understand office politics, and anticipate the needs and intentions of others.</b></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are highly-attuned to the motives of others. You can perceive what others may be thinking or feeling, and adapt well to social situations as a result. Your high level of perception usually leads to appropriate action in different social and professional settings.</p>
91	<p><b>Influence: Tendency to impact and dominate social situations by speaking without hesitation and often becoming a group leader.</b></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are assertive in most social situations. You tend to command the respect of your peers and are usually willing to lead group discussions and projects. You are socially influential and are able to command attention of coworkers and management with relative ease.</p>
90	<p><b>Creativity: Tendency to be imaginative and to think "outside the box."</b></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are intellectually curious, reflective, and open to new ideas. You are imaginative and enjoy exploring complex ideas that can lead to innovation.</p>
90	<p><b>Optimism: Tendency toward having a positive outlook and confidence in successful outcomes.</b></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you feel satisfied and have a positive general outlook. You are certain that your future is bright and have confidence in yourself in almost any situation. You feel secure about your competence and abilities in workplace settings.</p>
82	<p><b>Carefulness: Tendency to think and plan carefully before acting or speaking.</b></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are cautious, deliberate, and pay close attention to detail in the workplace. You tend to think carefully before acting or speaking. You always consider the consequences of your actions, and your decisions are usually well thought-out.</p>
81	<p><b>Sociability: Tendency to enjoy being in other people's company and to work with others.</b></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are social, outgoing, and enjoy being with and working with others. You are comfortable engaging people in a variety of social situations. You are expressive, and can build connections with people in general, as well as your colleagues.</p>
77	<p><b>Stability: Tendency to maintain composure and rationality in situations of actual or perceived stress.</b></p> <p>Your responses indicate that you maintain your composure and temper, even when faced with highly stressful situations. Your conduct tends to remain calm and even-tempered, and you feel confident in your ability to handle the pressure and</p>

© 2022 ACT, Inc. All rights reserved. \*\*ID field is abbreviated to last four digits

Figure 3. Examinee Report, Page 3

Page 3 of 4

**ACT** WorkKeys<sup>®</sup> Talent Assessment

Examinee:	Sample, Jane	<b>Examinee Report</b>
Examinee ID**:	1234	Realm: Test Realm Name
		SubRealm: <ALL>
		Test Date: Dec 28, 209

---

stress of working under deadlines.

**Continue to Cultivate Individual Skills**

These are your areas in which your skills could benefit from additional development.

Percentile	Scale Definitions
<b>62</b>	<p><i>Striving: Tendency to have high aspiration levels and to work hard to achieve goals.</i></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are generally driven and ambitious. You tend to strive for competence in your work, although you may not consistently work hard to achieve your desired results. You have a good sense of direction in life and at work, and are usually motivated to achieve your goals.</p>
<b>59</b>	<p><i>Cooperation: Tendency to be likable and cordial in interpersonal situations.</i></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you get along with others most of the time. You tend to be agreeable and cooperative in dealing with coworkers in most situations.</p>
<b>58</b>	<p><i>Discipline: Tendency to be responsible, dependable, and follow through with tasks without becoming distracted or bored.</i></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are usually committed to your duties. You tend to take responsibility and can usually be relied upon to get your job done on time. You can be distracted at times, but can persist through unanticipated difficulties until the task is done.</p>
<b>48</b>	<p><i>Goodwill: Tendency to be forgiving and to believe that others are well-intentioned.</i></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you normally treat others kindly and are willing to lend your support to coworkers when you can. You usually trust that others are well intentioned, and you treat colleagues with compassion when you feel they deserve it.</p>

**Construct Plans for Individual Improvement**

These are areas that you will definitely need to develop further in order to improve your skills.

Percentile	Scale Definitions
<b>22</b>	<p><i>Order: Tendency to be neat and well organized.</i></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are often not organized, and your physical surroundings can be untidy and disordered. You may find it challenging to maintain a neat and structured professional environment.</p>

© 2022 ACT, Inc. All rights reserved. \*\*ID field is abbreviated to last four digits

If an examinee is flagged, it is up to the employer to decide how to proceed. Depending on the situation, an employer may wish to re-administer the Talent Assessment after talking with the examinee. In such a case, it may be useful to emphasize to examinees the importance of paying attention to the questions and being forthcoming and honest in their responses.

The administration platform can produce a List Report for all persons who have taken the WorkKeys Talent Assessment for the same organization during a specified period of time. The List Report includes identifier details for the organization including:

- Report for: Name of the organization
- Site: Location or division of the organization (if organization has multiple sites)
- Report Date: When the report was generated
- The List Report also includes information on filters applied to the results, as well as the sort order of results:
  - Date Range: Results filtered by date range of assessment administration
  - Occupation Code: Results filtered by occupation code, if applicable
  - Sort by: Results sorted in a specified order

The List Report details the examinee's name, the last four digits of a unique identification number, and the date the assessment was completed.

List Reports can also be generated through filtering functions in the system. Filters may be used to narrow down the larger pool of examinees based on specific criteria.

As with the other Talent reports, exceptions are flagged with exclamation points to note that results may be less accurate due to an examinee's pattern of responses on the assessment.

## **A Note for Career Coaches**

Part II of this document is designed to guide individuals toward taking an active role in developing their behaviors to be more successful at work. The guide can be implemented in a small group setting or as a self-directed activity. Part III contains additional information about the Talent Personality Scales that both examinees and coaches might find useful in interpreting the results of the Talent Assessment. The Appendix features a list of "Guidelines for Setting Goals" that can be useful for individuals who are new to setting professional development goals.

## Part II. Using Your Talent Assessment Results

The WorkKeys Talent assessment will help you to identify your strengths so you can highlight them when talking to potential employers and identify areas you need to work on changing to be more attractive to employers. The purpose of this guide is to help you to take an active role in using your WorkKeys Talent Assessment Results, with guidance from your coach. Through training and conscious effort, you can change your workplace behaviors. In other words, you can learn to behave differently and become more successful at work.

To facilitate behavior change, the WorkKeys Talent Scales have been linked to 10 behavioral areas or groupings of behaviors. Your WorkKeys Talent Assessment results are a starting point for determining the behavioral areas that you may benefit from working on. The steps in this guide are designed to help you take an active role in changing your work-relevant behavior. Your actions will include:

- Learning about the Talent Scales shown on your Talent Assessment Examinee Report;
- Exploring the relationship between Talent Scales and Behavioral Areas relevant to success in the workplace;
- Identifying your behavioral strengths and challenges based on your assessment results; and
- Developing a specific plan to change your workplace behavior.

### **What's in it for you?**

- Recognize work-related behaviors that employers value
- Become more aware of your work-relevant behaviors
- Identify personal strengths and areas for development
- Leverage your strengths to help you perform better at work
- Work on developing areas that may be challenging for you in the workplace
- Adopt behaviors that will help you become more successful at work and may lead to a higher-level job

## About This Guide

This guide covers four steps to help you interpret and use the information from your Examinee Report:

- 1) Review your Examinee Report
- 2) Link Talent to behavior
- 3) Identify target behaviors for improvement
- 4) Develop an action plan for target behaviors

In addition, this guide contains recommendations to the ACT® WorkKeys® Curriculum courses to help individuals master the skills essential to success in the workplace. The WorkKeys Curriculum is anchored by decades of research.

## Step 1: Review Your Report

It is important to review your Talent Assessment results to determine your strengths and challenges. These are likely to have the greatest impact on your behavior. Look at the graph on the first page and identify the scales where you have high scores and scales where you have lower scores.

Read through the entire report carefully. The Talent Assessment profile provides interpretive statements for the Talent scales. The interpretive statements for your strengths (i.e., shown in green) describe how someone strong on this scale may think or act, and interpretive statements for areas where you have opportunities for improvement (i.e., shown in red) describe how someone lower on this scale may think or act. You will find this information helpful when interviewing and developing plans for improvement. A popular interview question is to ask you to name three of your challenges and three of your strengths.

**Figure 4. Example of an Area of Strength and an Area for Improvement**

Percentile	Scale Definitions
<b>97</b>	<p><b>Savvy: Tendency to read other people's motives, understand office politics, and anticipate the needs and intentions of others.</b></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are highly-attuned to the motives of others. You can perceive what others may be thinking or feeling, and adapt well to social situations as a result. Your high level of perception usually leads to appropriate action in different social and professional settings.</p>
<b>22</b>	<p><b>Order: Tendency to be neat and well organized.</b></p> <p>Your responses suggest that you are often not organized, and your physical surroundings can be untidy and disordered. You may find it challenging to maintain a neat and structured professional environment.</p>

**As you review your Examinee Report, think about...**

- Nearly every person can be characterized in terms of having strengths (high scores) and areas for development (low scores).
- Understand that, with effort and practice, you can develop behaviors that can help you succeed at work.

## **Step 2: Link Talent to Behavior**

By understanding how your personality impacts your workplace behaviors and taking action to change your behavior, you can improve your job performance. Each of the Talent Scales are linked to behavioral areas. These links are shown on the **Behavioral Opportunities Worksheet** on the next page in the first and last columns. This worksheet will help you identify your strengths and areas for improvement and link them to specific behavioral areas. This information can be used to develop plans for improvement.

Complete the Behavioral Opportunities worksheet on the next page. Start with the scales listed in green on your report. Find the first Talent Scale in green on your score report and place an x in the Strengths (i.e., green) column. For example, if the Carefulness scale is in green on your score report, place an x in the green column on the same row. Complete this process for all the scales.



## Behavioral Opportunities Worksheet

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Examinee Report identifies the Talent scales that are strengths that you can capitalize on in green, areas you can continue to cultivate in yellow, and areas where you can make plans for improvement in red. On the worksheet below, find the Talent Scale on your score report and place an x in the column with the matching color. For example, if the Carefulness scale is in yellow on your score report, place an X in the yellow Continue to Cultivate box.

Talent Scales	Strengths	Continue to Cultivate	Plan for Improvement	Behaviors Associated with Talent Scales
Carefulness				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning &amp; Organizing</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Following Rules</li> </ul>
Cooperation				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Others</li> <li>• Following Rules</li> <li>• Adaptability</li> </ul>
Creativity				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning &amp; Organizing</li> <li>• Initiative</li> </ul>
Discipline				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistence</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Following Rules</li> </ul>
Goodwill				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Others</li> <li>• Organizational Citizenship</li> </ul>
Influence				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiative</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Working with Others</li> </ul>
Optimism				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistence</li> <li>• Organizational Citizenship</li> <li>• Stress Management</li> </ul>
Order				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning &amp; Organizing</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> </ul>
Savvy				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiative</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Working with Others</li> </ul>
Sociability				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Working with Others</li> </ul>
Stability				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Others</li> <li>• Stress Management</li> <li>• Adaptability</li> </ul>
Striving				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistence</li> <li>• Initiative</li> </ul>

### Step 3: Identify Target Behaviors for Improvement

As we said previously, by understanding how your personality impacts your workplace behaviors and taking action to change your behavior, you can improve your job performance. The purpose of this step is to identify the behaviors you need to work on improving.

Use the Behavioral Opportunities Worksheet you completed in Step 2 to identify the behaviors you can work on improving in the table below.

1. Identify the rows in the Plan for Improvement (i.e., red) column that have an X and circle the behaviors listed in the last column of that row.
2. In the table below, put a check each time a behavior appears in a circle.

<b>Behaviors Associated with Talent Scales</b>	<b>Behaviors Circled on the Behavioral Opportunities Worksheet</b>
Planning & Organizing	
Persistence	
Responsibility	
Initiative	
Communication	
Acting Appropriately	
Working with Others	
Following Rules	
Organizational Citizenship	
Stress Management	

3. Identify the three behavioral areas with the most checkmarks in the table above.
4. Think about your behavior in the workplace and feedback you may have received about your job performance.
  - a. Are there specific behavioral areas that you may benefit from working on?

- b. Are there behavioral areas that may be more relevant to success in your current job or important for the job you want?
5. Taking all this information into consideration, select the one behavioral area you want to work on first. You will use this in the next step. After you have become effective at the new behavior, you are encouraged to come back and identify additional behavioral areas to develop.

**Consider these things as you decide on a Behavioral Area to work on.**

As you decide on which Behavioral Area to work on, consider the job you are currently in or working toward. The tasks required to perform a job may have an impact on how important each Behavioral Area is to the job. For example:

- A Customer Service Representative is required to interact with clients all day long. Therefore, “Working with Others” is very important to this job.
- A Computer Programmer may only interact with a few people for brief periods of time during the day. “Working with Others” is still relevant to the job, but it may not be as important for job success as “Planning and Organizing.”

At the same time, keep in mind that most jobs require each of the Behavioral Areas included in this guide. Regardless of which behavioral area you pick, you are likely to experience some benefit in the workplace as you make improvements.

**Please Note:** It is possible that a Behavioral Area will show up as both a strength and an area for improvement based on the different Talent Scales to which a behavioral area is linked. This is especially true for Working with Others, which is linked to six of the Talent Scales.

For example, both Sociability and Cooperation are linked to Working with Others. A person may have Sociability listed as a strength and Cooperation listed as an area for improvement. Based on the strength of Sociability, the person may already enjoy and seek out opportunities to interact with others. However, based on the area for improvement of Cooperation, the person may want to work on being willing to compromise when working in groups.

## Step 4: Develop an Action Plan for Target Behaviors

Now that you have identified a behavioral area to work on, it is important to clearly define and document how you are going to change your behavior in that area. This guide provides a blank **Action Plan for Target Behavior** to help you do just that. The following page contains an example of what a completed “Action Plan for Target Behavior” may look like.

1. On the first row of the Action Plan for Target Behavior, list the behavioral area you selected to work on.
2. Turn to the page in this guide that describes your selected behavioral area. Descriptions of each behavioral area and their ideal behaviors and related courses begin on page 20 of this guide.
3. Read the definition of the behavioral area you have selected. Use the definition to write at least one Specific Goal for the Target Behavior on your action plan.
4. Review the list of “Ideal Behaviors to Try” for the behavioral area. Identify at least three Behaviors to Practice on or think of your own relevant behavior to practice. The Behavior to Practice should be something you would benefit most from working on.
5. Write a specific Behavior to Practice on your action plan.
6. Review the list of Related WorkKeys Curriculum and identify the courses you believe will benefit you the most. Write those courses in the WorkKeys Curriculum section of your action plan.
7. Determine deadlines for completing each WorkKeys Curriculum course you identified on your action plan.
8. List any resources you may need to help you achieve your goal. Some examples might include a personal planner/calendar or a group/team to join.

---

## Example of a completed “Action Plan for Target Behavior”

---

Your Name: Chris Smith

Date: 4/17/20xx

**Behavioral Area** Working with Others

**Specific Goal for Target Behavior**

- Be willing to collaborate and compromise to get the job done.
- Keep an open mind when others present ideas that are different from mine.
- Determine a way to integrate ideas to achieve the team goals.

**Behaviors to Practice**

- Strive to effectively work with others to accomplish tasks and solve problems.
- Be willing to collaborate and compromise to get the job done.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others who may be different from you.
- Remain open-minded about differences in values, customs, perspectives, and ideas.
- Recognize diversity and show respect for people regardless of race, gender, disability, lifestyle, or viewpoint.
- Try to keep personal negative feelings from entering into discussions with others.
- Calmly and openly discuss conflict and try to work toward a collaborative solution.
- Focus disagreements on tasks, products, procedures, and specific behaviors and not on the other person.

**WorkKeys Curriculum**

Course: Teamwork

Course: Customer Service

Course: Problem Solving Strategies

Course: Business Communications

**Deadline Date**

May 5

May 7

May 9

May 14

**Resources Needed to Accomplish Goal**

A team or group to practice the behavior with

Identify training opportunities to learn teamwork skills

---

## Action Plan for Target Behavior

---

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Behavioral Area**

**Specific Goal for Target Behavior**

**Behaviors to Practice**

**WorkKeys Curriculum**

**Deadline Date**

**Resources Needed to Accomplish Goal**

## Behavioral Areas

Behaviors are divided into three broad categories and the 10 more specific Behavioral Areas that are important for work success and relevant across a broad range of jobs.

Motivation & Work Effort	Interpersonal Effectiveness	Acting Appropriately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Planning &amp; Organizing</li><li>▪ Persistence</li><li>▪ Responsibility</li><li>▪ Initiative</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Communication</li><li>▪ Working with Others</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Following Rules</li><li>▪ Organizational Citizenship</li><li>▪ Stress Management</li><li>▪ Adaptability</li></ul>

Each behavioral Area is defined below, along with behaviors to try that can help you become more successful in this area and WorkKeys Curriculum courses that can help you to develop your workplace behaviors.

### Motivation & Work Effort

Motivation and work effort include personal characteristics that help individuals to succeed at work by focusing and maintaining energies on goal-directed activities.

#### Planning & Organizing

Identifying necessary steps and devising plans for solving problems and achieving objectives. Having a sense of time management, organization, and prioritization.

## Behaviors to Try:

- Use organizational tools to keep track of the tasks you need to do (e.g., daily to do lists, calendars).
- Write down your goals, being as clear and specific as possible.
- Make sure your goals are challenging, but attainable.
- Break goals down into smaller more manageable steps or tasks.
- Identify the resources you need to complete your tasks.
- Set appropriate deadlines for tasks.
- Schedule specific times to work on different tasks.
- Set priorities for tasks based on importance, due dates, and other relevant factors
- Don't overload your schedule with too many tasks.
- Review your goals on a regular basis and monitor your progress toward goal attainment.
- Plan ahead for potential problems.
- Identify possible problems that may interfere with completing tasks or achieving goals.
- Identify and evaluate possible solutions to problems.
- Organize and maintain information in a systematic fashion.
- Use a coding system to keep track of things (e.g., colored highlighters, colored sticky notes).
- Carry a pen and note card/pad to write down ideas related to tasks.
- Adopt systems for keeping track of materials and assignments.
- Maintain a neat and organized work environment.

## Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

### Course: Work Discipline

- Time Management
  - Organization & Planning
  - Setting & Managing Priorities
  - Overcoming Procrastination
  - Managing Tasks & Projects
- Self-Management
  - Setting & Achieving Goals
  - Balancing Work & Personal Responsibilities
  - Managing Emotions & Behaviors
  - Coping with Stress & Change



## Persistence

Working diligently and efficiently to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Maintaining a high level of effort at work, staying focused, managing distractions, and overcoming obstacles.

### Behaviors to Try:

- Break goals or tasks down into smaller more manageable steps.
- Make sure your goals are challenging, but attainable.
- Set realistic deadlines for tasks.
- Schedule specific blocks of time to work on tasks.
- Stay focused on the task at hand.
- When possible, create an environment that minimizes distractions (e.g., noise).
- Finish the tasks that you start.
- Monitor your progress toward completing tasks and goals.
- Alternate between different tasks to avoid getting bored.
- Personally celebrate your small successes or completion of tasks.
- Avoid negative thinking and work on having a positive attitude.
- Look for the “bright side” of seemingly negative events.
- View setbacks and challenges as opportunities to improve.

### Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

#### Course: Work Discipline

- Time Management
  - Organization & Planning
  - Setting & Managing Priorities
  - Overcoming Procrastination
  - Managing Tasks & Projects
- Self-Management
  - Setting & Achieving Goals
  - Balancing Work & Personal Responsibilities
  - Managing Emotions & Behaviors
  - Coping with Stress & Change

#### Course: Problem Solving Strategies

- Problem Solving Strategies
- What is Problem Solving?
- Problem Solving Methods
- Compartmentalizing
- Common Concepts
- Other Problem-Solving Models

## Responsibility

Taking ownership for the quality of assigned tasks, paying close attention to detail, and holding oneself accountable. Accepting responsibility for progress, for meeting deadlines on assigned work, and for consequences of actions and decisions impacting work.

### Behaviors to Try:

- Accept ownership of assigned tasks, holding yourself accountable for completing the tasks.
- Accept that it is up to you to make progress on your tasks.
- Identify the consequences your actions and decisions may have on your work or the progress of others.
- Strive to meet or exceed standards for the tasks you are working on.
- Show up on time to work or appointments.
- Strive to finish tasks on time.
- Admit when you make a mistake and take steps to correct the mistake.
- Don't blame others when you make mistakes.
- Keep supervisor and others informed of progress, issues and potential problems.
- Take pride in a job well done.

### Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

#### Course: Work Discipline

- Time Management
  - Organization & Planning
  - Setting & Managing Priorities
  - Overcoming Procrastination
  - Managing Tasks & Projects
- Self-Management
  - Setting & Achieving Goals
  - Balancing Work & Personal Responsibilities
  - Managing Emotions & Behaviors
  - Coping with Stress & Change

## Initiative

Understanding when work needs to be done and voluntarily initiating appropriate action, even when it is not part of his/her job. Being a self-starter and showing enthusiasm for pursuing opportunities to develop skills (e.g., appropriate professional development.)

### Behaviors to Try:

- Work on tasks that you know how to do without being told to do them.
- Recognize when work needs to be done and volunteer to help, even if the tasks are not part of your assigned tasks.
- Volunteer for projects and committees.
- Look for opportunities to develop your work-related skills.
- Seek and accept feedback on ways to improve your performance on tasks.
- Be willing to ask questions to better understand a task.
- Gather information from multiple sources and consider other points of view when evaluating ideas, processes, or solutions.
- Identify multiple potential solutions to problems.
- Make a list of pros and cons before deciding on a solution.
- Learn to use new technology or new skills to facilitate completing tasks.

### Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

#### Course: Work Discipline

- Time Management
  - Organization & Planning
  - Setting & Managing Priorities
  - Overcoming Procrastination
  - Managing Tasks & Projects
- Self-Management
  - Setting & Achieving Goals
  - Balancing Work & Personal Responsibilities
  - Managing Emotions & Behaviors
  - Coping with Stress & Change

## Interpersonal Effectiveness

Interpersonal effectiveness includes Interpersonal factors that influence individuals' successful integration or adaptation into their organization and work environment.

### Communication

Expressing information clearly, effectively, and accurately, through speaking, writing, or nonverbal behaviors, in a manner suitable to the intended audience. Using active listening skills to understand information from others.

#### Behaviors to Try:

- Convey information as clearly as possible (e.g., think about the logical order of the information, the details that should be included, and examples).
- Use facts to support a solution or idea and influence the opinions of others.
- Break complex concepts down into smaller simpler pieces of information when explaining things to others.
- Alter your language, tone, and/or method of communication delivery (e.g., written, verbal) depending on the person or group you are communicating with.
- Listen carefully to others by focusing on what the speaker is saying, asking clarifying questions and repeating back information to ensure understanding.
- Maintain appropriate eye contact during interpersonal communication. Learn to interpret body language and other nonverbal communication.
- Use verbal and non-verbal cues to help interpret the situation.
- Practice your writing skills checking for clarity, emphasis, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Adapt your writing style based on the audience.
- Learn to feel comfortable in addressing large groups of people.

#### Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

##### Course: Business Communications:

- Effective Business Communications
  - Email and Phone Communications
  - Participating in Meetings
  - Internet and Social Media
  - Problem Solving and Negotiation
  - Making Effective Presentations
  - Communicating Across Cultures
- Interpersonal Communications:
  - The Communication Process
  - Presenting Yourself to Others
  - Active Listening
  - Nonverbal Communication
  - Communication Barriers
  - Handling Conflict

## Working with Others

Working cooperatively and constructively with others, encouraging teamwork, and resolving conflicts effectively. Being helpful, showing consideration for others, and remaining open-minded about social and cultural differences.

### Behaviors to Try:

- Strive to effectively work with others to accomplish tasks and solve problems.
- Be willing to collaborate and compromise to get the job done.
- Negotiate the best solution for the group, and not for a specific individual or you.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others who may be different from you. Remain open-minded about differences in values, customs, perspectives, and ideas.
- Recognize diversity and show respect for people regardless of race, gender, disability, lifestyle, or viewpoint.
- Try to keep personal negative feelings from entering into discussions with others.
- Calmly and openly discuss conflict and try to work toward a collaborative solution.
- Focus disagreements on tasks, products, procedures, and specific behaviors and not on the other person.
- Provide help and support to others as needed.
- Speak about others in a positive manner and avoid negative comments.
- Project confidence when interacting with others.
- Show appreciation for the work others do to achieve the team goals.
- When you need to provide feedback, be respectful of the other person and try to include some positive comments along with the area for improvement.
- Introduce yourself to employees that you often see but don't know.
- Consider how your actions or words may impact others before you do things.

### Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

#### Course: Teamwork

- Team Membership
- Team Missions and Goals
- Building Team Relationships
- Participating in Team Meetings
- Effective Communication
- Team Types
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Managing Team Conflict

## Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

### **Course: Customer Service**

- Customer Service Basics
- Serving Customers in Person
- Serving Customers by Phone
- Serving Customers Online
- Handling and Resolving Complaints
- Dealing with Difficult Customers
- Service Excellence

### **Course: Problem Solving Strategies**

- Problem Solving Strategies
  - What is Problem Solving?
  - Problem Solving Methods
  - Compartmentalizing
  - Common Concepts
  - Other Problem-Solving Models

### **Course: Business Communications:**

- Effective Business Communications
  - Email and Phone Communications
  - Participating in Meetings
  - Internet and Social Media
  - Problem Solving and Negotiation
  - Making Effective Presentations
  - Communicating Across Cultures
- Interpersonal Communications:
  - The Communication Process
  - Presenting Yourself to Others
  - Active Listening
  - Nonverbal Communication
  - Communication Barriers
  - Handling Conflict

## Acting Appropriately

Acting appropriately includes cognitive and affective processes used to monitor, regulate, and control behavior in the workplace.

## Following Rules

Following organizational rules, policies, and procedures. Behaving ethically and demonstrating appropriate behaviors, as well as control over potentially negative behaviors.

### Behaviors to Try:

- Learn about and follow workplace rules, policies, and procedures.
- Learn about and follow safety rules and procedures.
- Refrain from demonstrating negative behaviors and control impulses.
- Behave ethically, do the right thing, and follow social conventions.
- Identify and react appropriately to unethical situations.

### Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

#### Course: Work Discipline

- Time Management
  - Organization & Planning
  - Setting & Managing Priorities
  - Overcoming Procrastination
  - Managing Tasks & Projects
- Self-Management
  - Setting & Achieving Goals
  - Balancing Work & Personal Responsibilities
  - Managing Emotions & Behaviors
  - Coping with Stress & Change

## Organizational Citizenship

Publicly endorsing, supporting, and promoting organizational objectives. Showing loyalty and expressing satisfaction regarding the organization.

### Behaviors to Try:

- Learn more about your organization's vision, values, mission and goals.
- Find out more about your organization history.
- Share with others your organization's positive accomplishments.
- Show loyalty by publicly endorsing, supporting, and promoting your organization's objectives or goals.
- Refrain from making critical or negative comments about your organization to others in public or on social media.

### Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

#### Course: Teamwork

- Team Membership
- Team Missions and Goals
- Building Team Relationships
- Participating in Team Meetings
- Effective Communication
- Team Types
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Managing Team Conflict



## Stress Management

Working effectively, even under stressful conditions. Recognizing and responding appropriately to stress. Managing negative feelings and finding appropriate ways to express such feelings.

### Behaviors to Try:

- Learn to identify the signs that you are under stress (e.g., headache, backache, worrying, irritability).
- Learn helpful coping strategies and ways to manage your responses to stress at work.
- Strive to make progress on tasks even though you may be experiencing stress.
- Recognize and find constructive ways to express and respond to the negative feelings stress can cause (e.g., calmly talking with a coworker).
- Balance your work with leisure activities.
- Engage in healthy activities outside of work to reduce stress (e.g., exercise, eat healthy, get plenty of sleep).
- If you are in an intense situation, wait until you calm down to respond. Try taking a walk.
- Keep an overall positive outlook while working through possible solutions to problems.
- Maintain self-control when personally criticized, verbally attacked or provoked.

### Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

#### Course: Work Discipline

- Time Management
  - Organization & Planning
  - Setting & Managing Priorities
  - Overcoming Procrastination
  - Managing Tasks & Projects
- Self-Management
  - Setting & Achieving Goals
  - Balancing Work & Personal Responsibilities
  - Managing Emotions & Behaviors
  - Coping with Stress & Change

## Adaptability

Adapting to changing work conditions, including client/customer/management needs, due dates, and work priorities. Approaching work tasks flexibly.

### Behaviors to Try:

- Accept that change is part of life and the workplace. Do not avoid or put up barriers to change in the workplace.
- Adjust your plans and activities in response to changes at work (e.g., management and customer needs, due dates, and priorities).
- Flexibly accept that change happens and sometimes it impacts your assignments and tasks.
- Learn to adjust your behavior based on the situation you are in.
- Focus on solving problems, rather than complaining about them.
- Demonstrate openness to new organizational structures, procedures, and technology.
- Show support for innovation and changes that are made to improve the organization's effectiveness.

### Related WorkKeys Curriculum Courses:

#### Course: Work Discipline

- Time Management
  - Organization & Planning
  - Setting & Managing Priorities
  - Overcoming Procrastination
  - Managing Tasks & Projects

#### Course: Teamwork

- Team Membership
- Team Missions and Goals
- Building Team Relationships
- Participating in Team Meetings
- Effective Communication
- Team Types
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Managing Team Conflict

## Part III. Personality Scales

The WorkKeys Talent Assessment measures 12 Personality Scales that are important for success at work. This section contains a description of each scale, why it is important to work contexts, and the behaviors that are related to each scale score. Table 3, at the end of this section, provides a crosswalk of the scales to behavioral areas and the WorkKeys Curriculum courses that can help individuals develop the workforce behaviors relevant to each scale.

### Carefulness

The tendency to think and plan carefully before acting or speaking.

#### Why is this important?

Paying attention to details and maintaining a cautious, deliberate pace help ensure that work is accurate and completed on time. Hasty decisions and a lack of understanding of how actions affect others leads to flawed work, missed deadlines, and the need to complete tasks a second time.

#### Behaviors related to scores

- Low scorers may be hasty, impulsive, and often speak and act without considering consequences.
- High scorers are likely to be cautious, deliberate, and able to control their impulses, and they usually consider the consequences of their words, actions, and decisions.

#### Relevant Behavioral Areas

Motivation & Work Effort	Acting Appropriately
Planning & Organizing Responsibility	Following Rules

### Cooperation

The tendency to be likable and friendly in interpersonal situations.

#### Why is this important?

Working as part of a team is an essential part of nearly every job, and that means learning to work cooperatively. Being successful requires the ability to set aside personal feelings and collaborate with people at work.

### Behaviors related to scores

- Low scorers may be somewhat contrary, irritable, and uncooperative.
- High scorers are likely to be agreeable, friendly, and easy to work with.

### Relevant Behavioral Areas

Interpersonal Effectiveness	Acting Appropriately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Working with Others</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Following Rules</li><li>▪ Adaptability</li></ul>

## Creativity

The tendency to be imaginative and to think “outside the box.”

### Why is this important?

Remaining open to new ideas and changing conditions in the workplace inspires new solutions. The ability to innovate is based on imagination, curiosity, and a willingness to explore alternatives to “tried and true” approaches that are less than fully successful.

### Behaviors Related to Scores

- Low scorers tend to be less open-minded, less reflective, and less flexible.
- High scorers are likely to be intellectually curious, open-minded, and imaginative. They enjoy brain teasers and philosophical arguments.

### Relevant Behavioral Areas

Motivation & Work Effort
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Planning &amp; Organizing</li><li>▪ Initiative</li></ul>

## Discipline

The tendency to be responsible, dependable, and follow through with tasks without becoming distracted or bored.

### Why is this important?

Monitoring and maintaining progress toward short- and long-term goals is essential to staying engaged with work and contributing to the success of the team. Adopting goal-oriented behaviors will also increase chances of success.

### Behaviors Related to Scores

- Low scorers tend to be more easily discouraged and are less reliable and less dependable.
- High scorers are likely to be responsible and reliable when it comes to getting the job done.

### Relevant Behavioral Areas

Motivation & Work Effort	Acting Appropriately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Persistence</li><li>▪ Responsibility</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Following Rules</li></ul>

## Goodwill

The tendency to be forgiving and to believe that others are well-intentioned.

### Why is this important?

Trust is an essential part of effective relationships in a high-performance workplace. Gaining trust requires honesty, positive thinking, and a willingness to focus on the best qualities of coworkers.

### Behaviors Related to Scores

- Low scorers may be selfish, suspicious, and skeptical of others.
- High scorers are likely to be trusting, kindhearted, and altruistic.

### Relevant Behavioral Areas

Interpersonal Effectiveness	Acting Appropriately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Working with Others</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Organizational Citizenship</li></ul>

## Influence

The tendency to impact and dominate social situations by speaking without hesitation and often becoming a group leader.

### Why is this important?

An assertive demeanor in work settings helps gain the respect of coworkers and commands their attention. Voicing opinions and ideas as part of group discussions and projects provides successful people with greater visibility at work and creates a sense of leadership.

### Behaviors related to scores

- Low scorers prefer to keep in the background and rarely offer opinions to others in social situations.
- High scorers are likely to be assertive, persuasive, and socially ascendant.

### Relevant Behavioral Areas

Motivation & Work Effort	Interpersonal Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Initiative</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Communication</li><li>▪ Working with Others</li></ul>

## Optimism

The tendency toward having a positive outlook and confidence in successful outcomes.

### Why is this important?

An upbeat view of the future and confidence in personal abilities contribute to high work performance and ongoing improvement. Successful people feel secure about their competence, believe the future is bright, and maintain confidence in their ability to contribute.

### Behaviors related to scores

- Low scorers may be more inclined to feel pessimistic, view others in a negative light, or be dissatisfied with life.
- High scorers are likely to feel satisfied and upbeat and generally have a brighter outlook on life.

## Relevant Behavioral Areas

Motivation & Work Effort	Acting Appropriately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Persistence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Organizational Citizenship</li><li>Stress Management</li></ul>

## Order

The tendency to be neat and well-organized.

### Why is this important?

Maintaining a neat and structured work area contributes to higher productivity and projects a professional image to superiors and coworkers. Well-organized surroundings are commonly associated with logical thinkers who rely on proven methods of managing work.

### Behaviors related to scores

- Low scorers may be untidy and less methodical, and may keep their things cluttered.
- High scorers are likely to be neat and tidy, and to keep things in their proper places.

## Relevant Behavioral Areas

Motivation & Work Effort
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Planning &amp; Organizing</li><li>Responsibility</li></ul>

## Savvy

The tendency to read other people's motives, understand office politics, and anticipate the needs and intentions of others.

### Why is this important?

The ability to perceive what others think or feel provides insight into their motives and behaviors in the workplace. This helps successful people identify an appropriate response, adapt their behavior to different situations, and maintain their self-confidence.

### Behaviors related to scores

- Low scorers may be more oblivious to the motives of others and adapt less easily to changes in social and political situations.
- High scorers are likely to be able to predict the motives of others and may adapt more easily to differing social and political situations.

### Relevant Behavioral Areas

Motivation & Work Effort	Interpersonal Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Initiative</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Communication</li><li>▪ Working with Others</li></ul>

## Sociability

The tendency to enjoy being in other people's company and to work with others.

### Why is this important?

People who are social, outgoing, and enjoy working with others are skilled at building strong connections in the workplace. People who tend to dislike social situations and prefer to work alone can be challenged when they need to interact with customers and coworkers.

### Behaviors related to scores

- Low scorers may be shy or reserved; they may prefer to work alone and usually do not seek (or even avoid) social situations.
- High scorers are likely to be outgoing, gregarious, and willing to participate in work and team activities.

### Relevant Behavioral Areas

Interpersonal Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Communication</li><li>▪ Working with Others</li></ul>



## Stability

The tendency to maintain composure and rationality in situations of actual or perceived stress.

### Why is this important?

The ability to maintain composure contributes to consistent, reliable performance in fast-paced work settings. Keeping an even temper and a sense of confidence helps manage the pressure of stressful situations. Nervousness and irritability affect the performance and confidence of coworkers.

### Behaviors related to scores

- Low scorers may feel more nervous and experience more self-doubt when in stressful situations.
- High scorers are generally calm and even tempered, and feel capable in stressful situations.

### Relevant Behavioral Areas

Interpersonal Effectiveness	Acting Appropriately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Working with Others</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Stress Management</li><li>▪ Adaptability</li></ul>

## Striving

The tendency to aspire to high levels of success and work hard to achieve goals.

### Why is this important?

Personal drive and ambition are highly valued by employers because these qualities are usually associated with people who consistently work hard to achieve desired results. Their clear sense of direction in life and in work gives them energy to reach their goals.

### **Behaviors related to scores**

- Low scorers are not as likely to be attached to their work, are less motivated, and place a lower priority on hard work.
- High scorers are likely to strive for competence in their work, have a sense of direction in life, and be ambitious.

### **Relevant Behavioral Areas**

#### **Motivation & Work Effort**

- Persistence
- Initiative

**Table 3. Crosswalk of Talent Scales and Associated Behaviors with Relevant WorkKeys Curriculum Courses**

<b>Personality Dimension</b>	<b>Talent Scales</b>	<b>Behaviors Associated with Talent Scales</b>	<b>WorkKeys Curriculum Courses</b>
<b>Conscientiousness</b>	<b>Carefulness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning &amp; Organizing</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Following Rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work Discipline</li> </ul>
	<b>Discipline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistence</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Following Rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem Solving Strategies</li> <li>• Work Discipline</li> </ul>
	<b>Order</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning &amp; Organizing</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work Discipline</li> </ul>
<b>Agreeableness</b>	<b>Cooperation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Others</li> <li>• Following Rules</li> <li>• Adaptability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Problem Solving Strategies</li> <li>• Business Communication</li> <li>• Work Discipline</li> </ul>
	<b>Goodwill</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Others</li> <li>• Organizational Citizenship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Problem Solving Strategies</li> <li>• Business Communication</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional Stability</b>	<b>Stability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Others</li> <li>• Stress Management</li> <li>• Adaptability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Problem Solving Strategies</li> <li>• Business Communication</li> <li>• Work Discipline</li> </ul>
	<b>Optimism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistence</li> <li>• Organizational Citizenship</li> <li>• Stress Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem Solving Strategies</li> <li>• Work Discipline</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>	<b>Savvy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiative</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Working with Others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work Discipline</li> <li>• Business Communication</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Problem Solving Strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Openness</b>	<b>Creativity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning &amp; Organizing</li> <li>• Initiative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work Discipline</li> </ul>
<b>Extroversion</b>	<b>Sociability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Working with Others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Communication</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Problem Solving Strategies</li> </ul>
	<b>Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiative</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Working with Others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work Discipline</li> <li>• Business Communication</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Problem Solving Strategies</li> </ul>
	<b>Striving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistence</li> <li>• Initiative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem Solving Strategies</li> <li>• Work Discipline</li> </ul>

## References

- Barrick, M. R. & Mount, M. K. (1991). The Big Five personality dimensions and job performance: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, 44, 1–26.
- Cacioppe, R. (1998). An integrated model and approach for the design of effective leadership development programs. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 19, 44–53.
- Coyne, I., & Bartram, D. (2002). Assessing the effectiveness of integrity tests: A review. *International Journal of Testing*, 2, 15–34.
- Gilliland, S. & Steiner, D. (2012). Applicant Reactions to Testing and Selection. Book chapter in N. Schmitt (Ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Personnel Assessment and Selection*. Doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199732579.013.0028
- Hough, L. M. (1998). Personality at work: Issues and evidence. In M. Hakel (Ed.), *Beyond multiple choice: Evaluating alternatives to traditional testing for selection* (pp. 131–159). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Hu, J., & Connelly, B. S. (2021). Faking by actual applicants on personality tests: A meta-analysis of within-subjects studies. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 29(3-4), 412-426.
- Kautz, T., Heckman, J. J., Diris, R., Ter Weel, B., & Borghans, L. (2014). Fostering and measuring skills: Improving cognitive and non-cognitive skills to promote lifetime success. National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series. Retrieved from <http://www.nber.org/papers/w20749>
- McClure, L., & Werther, W. (1993). Personality variables in management development interventions. *Journal of Management Development*, 12(3), 39–47.
- Meinert, D. (2015). What do personality tests really reveal? The Society for Human Resource Management. Retrieved from <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/pages/0615-personality-tests.aspx>
- Ones, D. S., Dilchert, S., Viswesvaran, C., & Judge, T. A. (2007). In support of personality assessment in organizational settings. *Personnel psychology*, 60(4), 995-1027.
- Ones, D. S., Viswesvaran, C., & Dilchert, S. (2005). Personality at work: Raising awareness and correcting misconceptions. *Human Performance*, 18(4), 389–404.
- Roberts, B. W., & DelVecchio, W. F. (2000). The rank-order consistency of personality traits from childhood to old age: a quantitative review of longitudinal studies. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126(1), 3-25.
- Roberts, B. W., Kuncel, N. R., Shiner, R., Caspi, A., & Goldberg, L. R. (2007). The power of personality: The comparative validity of personality traits, socioeconomic status, and cognitive ability for predicting important life outcomes. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 2(4), 313-345.
- Roberts, B. W., Luo, J., Briley, D. A., Chow, P. I., Su, R., & Hill, P. L. (2017). A systematic review of personality trait change through intervention. *Psychological Bulletin*, 143(2), 117-141.

- Roberts, B.W., & Yoon, H.J. (2022). Personality Psychology. *Annual Review of Psychology, 73*:1, 489-516.
- Sackett, P. R., Lievens, F., Van Iddekinge, C. H., & Kuncel, N. R. (2017). Individual differences and their measurement: A review of 100 years of research. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 102*(3), 254–273.
- Schmidt, F. L., & Hunter, J. E. (1998). The validity and utility of selection methods in personnel psychology: Practical and theoretical implications of 85 years of research findings. *Psychological Bulletin, 124*, 262-274.
- Srivastava, S., John, O. P., Gosling, S. D., & Potter, J. (2003). Development of personality in early and middle adulthood: Set like plaster or persistent change?. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(5), 1041-1053.
- Viswesvaran, C. & Ones, D. S. (2000). Measurement error in “Big Five Factors” personality assessment: Reliability generalization across studies and measures. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 60*, 224–235.

## Appendix: Guidelines for Setting Goals

### 1. Set goals you are committed to achieving

- Set goals that you are truly committed to achieving. You tend to be more motivated and more willing to put in effort to achieve goals that you feel a strong connection to.
- List the reasons why you want to achieve the goal. This can help you to clarify your own thinking about the goal.
- Ensure your goals fit with your values. This will help to improve your commitment to the goal.

### 2. Set challenging but realistic goals

- Create goals that will challenge you and require effort to achieve.
- If a goal is too difficult to achieve, you may become discouraged. Set lower-level goals first and strive toward ultimately achieving the higher-level goal.
- Ensure your goals are within your control to accomplish. If they rely too much on things outside of your control, then you are less likely to be able to accomplish them.

### 3. Write down your goals using positive words

- Write down your goals to help make them real. It provides you with something to refer to on a regular basis.
- Use positive words to frame your goals. That will help you to stay focused on what you want to achieve, rather than what you want to avoid.

### 4. Be specific. Break the goal down into smaller steps

- Clearly define what you want to achieve. How will you know when the goal is achieved? You may want to close your eyes and really picture achieving the goal in your head. If a goal is too vague, you may not know what to do to achieve the goal.
- Break a goal down into smaller steps so you have clearer information on what needs to be done to achieve a goal. Smaller steps may provide you with additional incentive along the way to achieving the overall goal.

### 5. Set deadlines and determine resources needed to achieve the goal

- Set target dates for completion of your goals. Each of the steps should have some guidelines on when that step should be completed.
- List the resources needed to achieve the goal. If the resources are not available, it will make it hard to achieve the goal.

### 6. Monitor progress

- On a regular basis, go back to your list of goals and review what you committed to working on.
- Monitor your progress in achieving the goal to ensure you are responding and adapting to any problems you encounter along the way.
- When possible, keep notes on the progress you are making on each of the goals. This can help motivate you to continue to work on your goals.
- Seek feedback from others on your progress toward your goals.
- Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of your goal-related activities based on self-reflection and feedback from others.