

# The 16PF® Questionnaire

The **16PF® Questionnaire** is used by organizations and human resource professionals to assess the 16 personality factors identified forty years ago by Dr. Cattell. The assessment measures levels of **Warmth, Reasoning, Emotional Stability, Dominance, Liveliness, Rule-Consciousness, Social Boldness, Sensitivity, Vigilance, Abstractedness, Privatness, Apprehension, Openness to Change, Self-Reliance, Perfectionism and Tension.**

Five additional global factors are also measured: **Extraversion, Anxiety, Tough-Mindedness, Independence, and Self-Control.** The 16PF® administration time is approximately 35 - 50 minutes.

## Use the 16PF® To:

- ✚ Plan for precise work and career performance objectives.
- ✚ Assess management style.
- ✚ Provide effective training for career development.

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### Warmth (A)

**Low A: Reserved, impersonal, distant, formal.** They tend to be reserved and cautious about involvement and attachment. They tend to like solitude, often focusing attention on intellectual, mechanical, or artistic pursuits, where they can be quite effective. Low scorers can be uncomfortable in situations that call for emotional closeness or extensive interaction.

**High A: Warm, caring, soft-hearted, and generous.** They tend to have an intrinsic interest in people and they often seek situations that call for closeness with other people. Their friends describe them as sympathetic and comforting. Extreme scorers may be seen as gullible, and may be uncomfortable in situations where close relationships are inaccessible.

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### Reasoning (B)

**Low B:** They are less able to solve verbal and numerical problems of an academic nature. This can indicate lower intellectual ability, but it is also related to educational level. Low scores can also result from a range of problems affecting concentration and motivation.

**High B:** They are more able to solve verbal and numerical problems of an academic nature. This is often indicative of intellectual ability, but is also related to educational level. This index should not replace full-length measures of cognitive ability.

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### Emotional Stability (C)

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**Low C: Reactive, easily upset, temperamental.** They tend to feel a lack of control over life's challenges and to react to life rather than making adaptive or proactive choices. For some test takers, reactivity can reflect current life stressors; for others, it may characterize their way of life.

**High C: Calm, stable, mature, unruffled.** They tend to take life in stride and to cope with day-to-day life and its challenges in a calm, balanced, adaptive way. They tolerate frustration well, can delay gratification, and don't let emotions obscure realities. Extreme scorers may tend to avoid "negative" feelings or use strong defenses like denial.

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### Dominance (E)

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**Low E: Deferential, modest, submissive.** They tend to accommodate others' wishes, and are cooperative and agreeable. They are likely to avoid conflict by acquiescing to the wishes of others, and they are willing to set aside their own wishes and feelings. Extreme deference can disappoint those who wish for a more forceful or participating response from them.

**High E: Assertive, forceful, competitive.** They tend to be vocal in expressing their opinions and wishes. While dominance can create a commanding, take-charge social presence, at times it can be seen as overbearing, stubborn or argumentative. For example, dominant people who are also Warm (A) may be more thoughtful than reserved people.

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### Liveliness (F)

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**Low F: Serious, quiet, reflective, cautious.** Though they may not be the life of the party or the most entertaining person in a group, their quiet attentiveness can make them reliable and mature. At the extreme, they can inhibit their spontaneity, sometimes to the point of appearing constricted.

**High F: Carefree, enthusiastic, spontaneous, energetic.** They are high spirited and stimulating and drawn to lively social situations. Extreme scores may reflect an impulsive or unreliable quality. They may find it hard to rein in their enthusiasm in situations that call for restraint or decorum.

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### Rule-Consciousness (G)

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**Low G: Expedient, non-conforming.** They may not worry about conventions, obligations, or following rules and regulations. This may be because they lack internalized standards or simply because they follow unconventional values.

**High G: Rule-conscious, dutiful, scrupulous.** They tend to be proper and conscientious, and conform to conventional cultural standards. At the extreme, they can be perceived as inflexible, moralistic, or self-righteous.

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### Social Boldness (H)

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**Low H: Shy, socially timid, threat-sensitive, easily embarrassed.** They find speaking in front of groups to be difficult, and may feel intimidated when facing stressful situations of an interpersonal nature. However, they may be sensitive listeners, who are more aware of risks in situations.

**High H: Socially bold, outgoing, gregarious, adventuresome.** They tend to boldly initiate social contacts, be fearless in the face of new or intimidating social settings, and to be risk-takers seeking adventure. Extreme scorers may be thick-skinned or attention seeking.

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### Sensitivity (I)

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**Low I: Tough, realistic, logical, unsentimental.** They focus more on how things work than on aesthetics or refined sensibilities, and may be so concerned with utility and objectivity that they exclude emotions from consideration. Because they don't tend to allow vulnerability, extreme low scorers may have trouble in situations that demand awareness of feelings.

**High I: Emotionally sensitive, intuitive, cultured, sentimental.** High scorers are attuned to sensitive feelings, and thus are empathetic, sympathetic, and tender-minded. They tend to be artistic and refined in their interests and tastes. Extreme scorers may be so focused on subjective aspects of situations that they overlook more functional aspects.

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### Vigilance (L)

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**Low L: Trusting, unsuspecting, forgiving, accepting.** They tend to be easy-going and expect fair treatment and good intentions from others, and to have trusting relationships. However, extremely low scorers may be taken advantage of because they do not give enough thought to others' motivations.

**High L: Vigilant, suspicious, distrustful, wary.** They tend to be attentive to others' motives and intentions and sensitive to being misunderstood or taken advantage of. They may be unable to relax their vigilance, and at the extreme their mistrust may have an aspect of animosity.

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### Abstractedness (M)

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**Low M: Grounded, practical, concrete.** They tend to focus on practical, observable realities of their environment and may be better at working on a specific solution than at imagining possible solutions. Extreme scorers may be so concrete in their focus, unimaginative, or literal that they "miss the forest for the trees."

**High M: Abstracted, imaginative, idea-oriented, contemplative.** They are more oriented to abstract ideas than to external facts and practicalities. Being focused on thinking, imagination and fantasy, high scorers generate many ideas and theories and are often creative. Extreme scorers can be so absorbed in thought that they can be absentminded and impractical.

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### Privateness (N)

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**Low N: Forthright, self-revealing, transparent.** They tend to be open, artless, and transparent. They are willing to talk about themselves readily, even about fairly personal matters. They tend to "put all their cards on the table", and to be genuine and unguarded. At the extreme, they may be forthright in situations where it might be more astute to be circumspect or tactful.

**High N: Private, discreet, non-disclosing.** They tend to be guarded, and reluctant to disclose personal information, and "play their hand close to their chest." They may be tactful, diplomatic and calculating regarding others' motives. At the extreme, they maintain their privacy at the expense of developing few close relationships.

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### Apprehension (O)

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**Low O: Self-assured, unworried, complacent.** They tend to be self-confident and untroubled by self-doubt. While this may make them more resilient in stressful situations, at the extreme, the person's confidence may be unshaken, even in situations that call for self-evaluation and self-improvement. The extreme low score may reflect an avoidance of anything negative about the self.

**High O: Apprehensive, self-doubting, guilt-prone.** They tend to worry about things and to feel anxious and insecure. These feelings may be in response to current life events or they may be characteristic. While worrying can help the person anticipate dangers, be sensitive to others' reactions, and anticipate consequences of actions, it can also be painful and make a poor social impression on others.

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### Openness to Change (Q1)

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**Low Q1: Traditional, attached to familiar, resistant to change.** They tend to stick to traditional ways of doing things. They prefer what's predictable and routine, and so they don't tend to challenge the status quo. At the extreme, they may not initiate or be open to change, even when the situation calls for it.

**High Q1: Open-to change, experimenting, freethinking.** They tend to be open-minded and innovative, and seek ways to improve the status quo. They enjoy experimenting, and tend to think critically or question authority. Extreme scorers may find it hard to "leave well enough alone."

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### Self-Reliance (Q2)

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**Low Q2: Group-oriented, affiliative.** They tend to prefer being around other people, and enjoy social groups and working in teams. At the extreme, they may not be effective in situations where they need to function independently or where others are giving poor direction or advice.

**High Q2: Self-reliant, solitary, individualistic.** They enjoy spending time alone and prefer to rely on their own thinking and judgment. While self-reliant people are autonomous in their thoughts and actions, extreme scorers may be uncomfortable working collaboratively or neglect interpersonal consequences of their actions.

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### Perfectionism (Q3)

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**Low Q3: Tolerates disorder, unexacting, casual, lax.** They tend to be comfortable leaving things to chance, tending to be spontaneous rather than planful, organized, and structured. Extreme scorers may seem flexible and spontaneous, but they may also seem unorganized, unprepared, or undisciplined.

**High Q3: Perfectionistic, self-disciplined, goal-oriented.** They tend to be organized, plan ahead, persevere, and work conscientiously. They are most effective in organized and structured situations, and may find it hard to deal with unpredictability. At the extreme, they may be seen as inflexible or preoccupied with tasks.

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#### **Tension (Q4)**

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**Low Q4: Relaxed, placid, tranquil, patient.** They are laid back, easy-going, and composed. They are not easily upset or aroused, and frustrations rarely bother them. At the extreme, their low level of arousal can make them unmotivated. That is, because they are comfortable, they may be disinclined to change or push themselves.

**High Q4: Tense, driven, high energy, impatient.** They tend to have a lot of drive, to be high strung, and to be fidgety when made to wait. A certain amount of tension is necessary to focus effectively and can motivate action. However, extremely high tension can lead to impatience and irritability. The source of tension should be explored when scores are extremely high.