



Personality Tests - 2021 preparation

Personality Assessment – In a nutshell

- **Personality assessments** work to identify an individual's 'fit' to a job. They often predict retention rates and thus employers tend to use these often
- The most popular and well-established **model of personality is known as the Big 5** – this is the same model behind [SHL's OPQ](#), [Kenexa's OPI](#), [Hogans HPI](#) and our [Work Personality Questionnaire \(WPQ\)](#)
- It is important to answer as honestly as possible. Employers will normally follow up with an interview to explore any areas of mis-fit (concern)

Personality Tests

Personality assessments are not tests and should be referred to as questionnaires. Regardless of this, most individuals recognise 'Personality' assessments as tests and we have therefore chosen to use the title of this page as such. Major test publishers such as SHL refer to their personality tools as **questionnaires** and inventories. At Graduates First, we refer to our personality tool (WPQ) as a questionnaire.

Unlike [ability tests](#), in personality assessments there are no right or wrong answers. *Personality questionnaires* assess an individual's preferences in the work place. Individuals do not get extra marks for having a particular preference as such, and referring to a personality assessment as a test can give the impression that there are right or wrong **answers**. This could be unethical and is inappropriate in selection as the important factor to consider is the individual's fit to the job role.

The moment one can suggest personality is a good-fit or a poor-fit is when a job context is applied. For example, an individual who has a preference to be an innovative, independent thinker who dislikes rules, may not be ideal in a banking role where high regulation requires adherence to established processes.

Personality questionnaires are best described as measures of 'typical' performance as they tend to determine how one behaves typically, across a range of situations.

Video: What do Personality Tests Measure? (SHL OPQ, Big 5 OCEAN Model)

The Big 5 Model of Personality

All personality assessments that are developed by Occupational Psychologists for use in work are in line with a widely accepted model of personality known as the 'Big 5'. These are 5 high-order factors of personality that have emerged from decades of research and have become accepted as a standard. Enormous amounts of research has demonstrated the reliability and validity of the Big 5. [SHL's OPQ](#) also falls into the big 5 traits, and [GF's Work Personality Questionnaire \(WPQ\)](#) also contains 5 factors which underpin the Big 5 model.

Continue reading below the video.

Our video below explains how employers use personality questionnaires and how you can present your best self:

Video: How Employers use Personality Questionnaires to Hire You | Guide for Big 4, Banks, Tech, FMCG

Normative Personality Questionnaires

Personality questionnaires are often presented most commonly in a '[normative](#)' format although '[ipsative](#)' formats are becoming more popular. Individuals complete the assessment by identifying which items they most disagree or agree with, and their scores

are determined subsequently once they are compared to a relevant norm group (see '[Glossary](#)' for more information).

Normative personality assessments are still used in recruitment and rightly so. Although the issue of 'cheating' is high on the agenda with ability tests, this is not as much the case with personality; information identified as a result of a personality assessment is often verified through a conversation with the candidate. Further still, profile interpreters can identify profiles that give cause for concern, particularly when considering the 'social desirability' scale. This scale provides an indication on how one has portrayed themselves (favourably or critically) in comparison to the 'norm' group.

Ipsative Personality Questionnaires

Ipsative versions of personality have emerged, although challenges around (required) statistical assumptions being satisfied have proved difficult for some. Some employers have also been concerned about the transparency of 'normative' questions and are therefore more attracted to 'Ipsative' questionnaires. In order to combat concerns around cheating, the implementation of 'Ipsative' has been a successful remedy for those candidates intending to distort their responses.

Our [WPO personality questionnaire](#) has been developed by [previous SHL consultants](#) who have years of experience in designing and developing psychometric assessments. It provides a detailed report similar to what employers would see. A FREE personalised feedback report elaborates on your self-perception, something that employers look at too.

Video: How to Pass Personality Questionnaires | 5 Personality Test Tips

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