

Career Headlines

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Does Being Smart Equal Job Success?

Mom always said that personality and smarts go farther than good looks. And now some psychologists are on her side.

For years, experts said brainpower was the best way to predict job performance. Smarter people were considered more likely to succeed on the job. But intelligence is only part of the story!

Other important factors in job performance are related to personality. They include creativity, leadership, integrity, attendance, and cooperation.

When psychologists are trying to determine what kind of personality someone has, they look at the "Big Five":

- Whether someone is an extrovert
- Whether they are agreeable
- Whether they are conscientious
- Whether they're emotionally stable
- Whether they're open to new experiences



Beyond that, though, psychologists disagree. One group says that being responsible, dependable, organized and persistent is the key to success. Others say that conscientiousness reduces success in artistic and social jobs that require you to be innovative and creative.

One way to predict your job success is by evaluating how good your people skills are. As the workplace moves toward teamwork and customer service, having outstanding people skills becomes extremely important.

Another way to measure your potential job success is whether you go beyond simple job performance. The most successful people volunteer, put in extra effort, cooperate, follow rules and procedures, and support the goals of the company or organization.

For your best job performance, you need to determine if you have the personality that fits the job, not just the smarts to do the job.

Action: Analyze your personality according to the five bullets and the two underlined personality traits. Which do you need to work on so you can be more successful on the job?

Adapted from an article by Drs. Joyce Hogan, Michael Mount, and Stephan Motowidlo for the American Psychological Association.

Note to teachers: Lessons on these topics are an important feature of *It's for Real Workplace Ethics, Competitive Advantage and Job Ready Career Skills* by Career Solutions Publishing.

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