



TRUITY



# BIG FIVE IN THE WORKPLACE

*Gain insight into yourself and your team to  
work together more effectively*

**A Presentation Guide for Trainers and Managers**

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# Introduction

*Welcome to Big Five in the Workplace!*

**When it comes to workplace dynamics, an ideal workspace is one where productivity is high, communication is open, tasks are performed with confidence, and every team member feels valued and understood.**

One way to achieve that is through the power of the Big Five. The most widely used and extensively researched model of personality, the Five Factor Model, as it is officially known, helps people understand themselves and others better. More importantly, researchers have demonstrated time and again that the Big Five is predictive of real-world behavior. This means it can help you understand why your team members behave the way they do and the best way to work, communicate and problem-solve with them.

Our comprehensive Big Five Personality Test builds on this well-proven system. Often used for personal development, it offers valuable insight to improve self-awareness and growth. However, your work team can also benefit greatly from taking the test as a group and learning about the foundational traits that drive decision-making, priorities, and interactions. This presentation guide will help you do that, bringing an extra dimension of insight to your team building and professional development.

Get ready to **unlock the power**  
of your work team!

# Before You Begin

This guide is designed for team leaders, trainers and human resources professionals who have used Truity's Big Five Personality Test for their work teams. Paired with your team's Big Five reports and our slide presentation, it will give you the essential information needed to explain the Big Five model inside a business setting and run a workshop for your team.

**As a facilitator, you should have a general understanding of the principles of personality type, but you do not need to be an expert.** The information contained in this guide will teach you everything you need to know to lead a successful Big Five workshop for a team.

## The complete kit comprises two parts:

1. This study guide to help you learn about the Big Five's principles in advance of the session, including sample activities and discussion questions.
2. A slideshow to provide a visual component to your presentation.

## Prepare for your workshop:

1. Have your team members take Truity's Big Five Personality Test and review their reports.
2. Read this guide in advance of the workshop to help you get up to speed with the basic concepts of the Big Five and to decide if you want to include any activities and discussion questions in your workshop.
3. Make a copy of the workshop slides to create a slideshow for your team.



Understanding the Big Five is like the skeleton key to unlocking human potential in the workplace. It isn't about putting labels on people, but seeing each person as a unique individual with valuable contributions to offer, no matter how they may differ from you or others.

# What Is The Big Five?

The Big Five model evaluates personality across five dimensions. Some use the acronym "OCEAN" to remember the five dimensions:

- **O**penness
- **C**onscientiousness
- **E**xtraversion
- **A**greeableness
- **N**euroticism

Each dimension exists on a continuum, and everyone who takes Truity's Big Five personality assessment receives a percentage score for each of the five dimensions. The scores range from 0% (meaning the total absence of the trait) to 100% (meaning the strongest possible presence of the trait).

Where other personality systems aggregate scores and place individuals into types or categories ("Type One" in the Enneagram or "ISTJ" in the Myers and Briggs system, for example), the Big Five has no such labels. That would be impossible, since no two people will have exactly the same percentage combinations across the five dimensions.

In this guide, we are focusing on "high" and "low" presentations of each dimension as a way to help people recognize themselves and their teammates in the trait descriptions. Even then, it is important to understand that a "high" or "low" score will manifest differently in each individual. For example, a highly Conscientious person with high Agreeableness traits will use their Conscientiousness differently than someone with a similar level of Conscientiousness but a lower Agreeableness score. The first may be motivated to work hard for the good of the team, while the second may be motivated by personal success and competition.

So keep an open mind and encourage your team to do the same!

# Key Points

## **There Is No Right or Wrong Style**

There are no “good” or “bad” scores on the Big Five. Personality preferences represent natural styles of interacting with people, information and the environment. There is no right or wrong way to do that, just different styles.

The more we learn about people with different styles from our own, the more we can appreciate the value they bring to the team. Other people’s strengths are often our weaknesses, and vice versa. The more we can respect and value different styles, the more likely it is that teams will become well-rounded and effective.

## **The Five Dimensions Are Super Traits**

You can think of the five dimensions as “super traits” of personality. Each dimension is like a bucket holding a set of sub-traits that tend to occur together. The sub-traits are more specific aspects of each dimension that provide a more detailed and nuanced description of our personalities.

For example, someone who has a high Openness score might be described as creative, imaginative, curious, progressive and unconventional. Someone who has a high score in Extraversion might be described as outgoing, sociable, talkative, upbeat and friendly. These sub-traits give us a better understanding of the overall dimension and how it shows up in our workplace behaviors.

## **The Dimensions Are a Continuum**

It’s also important to remember that no one falls 100% on one side of each continuum at all times and that behavior may shift along that continuum. While our overall preferences and natural tendencies stay relatively stable throughout our lives, many of us are able to use different approaches as needed depending on the situation or environment.

# Why Learn About the Big Five?

As the Big Five is the only personality model to gather scientific consensus in personality psychology, we can be very confident in our understanding of each dimension and its relationship to behavior. In fact, the Big Five has been found to be predictive of a wide variety of outcomes, including job performance, leadership effectiveness, relationship satisfaction and even health and well-being. That's why it can be such a valuable tool for understanding and managing your team.

Here are some of the many ways the Big Five Personality Test can help your team:

- Drive better teamwork, so you operate like a well-oiled machine.
- Increase respect for each other's strengths and better support each other's blind spots.
- Work more harmoniously and resolve conflicts quickly.
- Communicate with impact and understanding.
- Optimize role assignments by matching tasks to personality traits.
- Improve how projects are ideated, planned and implemented.
- Incorporate diverse perspectives when brainstorming and decision making.
- Personalize strategies for managing stress.
- Enhance self-awareness, so when things go wrong, you can take corrective action.
- Identify potential areas for personal growth and development.

# The Big Five Dimensions of Personality

## Big Five Traits at a Glance

Trait	High in Trait Characteristics	Low in Trait Characteristics
<b>Openness</b>	Imaginative Curious Creative Adventurous Progressive	Conventional Practical, Traditional Conforming Down-to-earth
<b>Conscientiousness</b>	Hardworking Responsible Orderly Reliable Determined	Spontaneous Impulsive Carefree Flexible Easy-going
<b>Extraversion</b>	Outgoing Talkative Energetic Enthusiastic Sociable	Reserved Quiet Calm Private Low-key
<b>Agreeableness</b>	Friendly Cooperative Empathetic Compassionate Harmonious	Competitive Independent Assertive Self-reliant Decisive
<b>Neuroticism</b>	Anxious Sensitive Risk-averse Insecure Reactive	Stable Calm Self-assured Resilient Even-tempered

# Openness: The Innovators and Visionaries

**Openness describes a person's curiosity and their appetite for new experiences and ideas.**

The Openness spectrum runs from:

- High Openness - Imaginative, outside-the-box thinkers who are willing to explore unconventional paths and are always on the lookout for new ways to solve a problem.
- Low Openness - Practical, here-and-now thinkers who stick to what they know and prefer traditional ways of doing things.

## High Openness

Highly Open people are curious about the world and others. Fascinated with novelty, they have a natural desire to learn new things and to do old things in new and untested ways.

In the workplace, people high in Openness tend to:

- Brainstorm lots of new plans and ideas.
- Enjoy thinking outside the box.
- Ask lots of "why" and "what if" questions.
- Solve problems in new and creative ways.
- Challenge traditional methods and assumptions.
- Appreciate diverse perspectives.
- Have a wide range of interests and specialties—they're Renaissance types.
- Take the bird's eye view not the worm's eye view.
- Be easily bored with mundane tasks or when stuck in a routine.

## Low Openness

People with low Openness, sometimes referred to as Closed, possess a focused and practical approach to life and work. Grounded in reality and the here-and-now, they excel in environments that value consistency, structure and proven methods.

In the workplace, people who score low in Openness tend to:

- Be practical and detail-oriented, ensuring tasks are completed efficiently.
- Prefer traditional methods that have been tried and tested.
- Excel in environments with clear rules and predictable routines.
- Value concrete facts and proven data over abstract ideas.
- Maintain stability and order through systematic approaches.
- Have a keen eye for detail and an ability to identify potential issues.
- Enjoy opportunities for specialization where they can master specific skills and areas of expertise.
- Thrive in environments that minimize chaos and uncertainty.

## **The Impact of Openness in the Workplace**

Openness is an important component of workplace innovation, but it comes with its own set of challenges.

Having lots of Openness on a team creates a culture where ideas flow freely, new methods are embraced, and change is welcomed—but ideas may not get a reality check and important practical details may be missed. Having little Openness on a team creates a culture where rules are followed, practical matters are taken care of and attention is paid to important details—but innovation and creativity may be stifled.

A mix of high and low Openness can ensure that new ideas are generated but also properly vetted for feasibility and implementation.

# Conscientiousness: The Organizers and Executors

**Conscientiousness refers to a person's level of organization, responsibility, dependability and self-discipline.**

The Conscientiousness spectrum runs from:

- High Conscientiousness - Hardworking and reliable team members who put plans into action and get things done.
- Low Conscientiousness - Laid-back team members who are good in a crisis but may find it difficult to stick to schedules or follow through on tasks.

## High Conscientiousness

Highly Conscientious people are committed to their companies, teams, careers, clients, and work responsibilities. They want to be the best at what they do and will work extremely hard to produce high-quality results.

In the workplace, those with high conscientiousness often:

- Develop plans for everything and follow their plan.
- Work on tasks in an orderly manner.
- Hit every deadline, even if they have to stay late to get everything done.
- Continually refine and polish their work so it is the best it can be.
- Have a lot of willpower—they plow through tasks that others may give up on.
- Get things off their to-do list as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- Work too hard and resent others for not working as diligently as they do.

## Low Conscientiousness

People with low Conscientiousness are adaptable and able to go with the flow, offering a counterbalance to the tightly-wound schedule of a high-Conscientiousness colleague. They thrive in dynamic environments and are often seen hopping from task to task.

In the workplace, people who score low in Conscientiousness have a tendency to:

- Be open to change and spontaneity.
- Juggle multiple tasks at once.
- Work open-endedly with no clear start or end points.
- Prefer actions in the moment over tasks that will have pay-off later.
- Adapt on the fly—a huge asset in fast-moving situations.
- Struggle with tasks that require detailed planning or rigid schedules.

## **The Impact of Conscientiousness in the Workplace**

Conscientious people are the clockwork engines that keep the corporate machine running smoothly. They approach tasks methodically, are persistent in achieving goals and do what they say they will—no excuses. We all sleep better at night knowing the Conscientious team members are on the job with their lists checked and tasks completed.

However, having an excess of Conscientiousness on a team can create challenges when it comes to flexibility and adaptability. The work output may be excellent, but the team may get stuck chasing perfection to the point where spontaneous, and potentially better, ideas may be suppressed, and the fun parts of the job are overlooked.

On the other hand, having little Conscientiousness on a team leads to a more relaxed and adaptable environment with room for last-minute pivots—but important deadlines may be missed and tasks may go unfinished.

A balanced mix of high and low Conscientiousness can ensure that goals are achieved with foresight and precision, while still allowing room for adaptability and spontaneity.

# Extraversion: The Energizers and Engagers

**Extraversion describes the degree to which a person is energized by things outside themselves—people, environments and other stimuli.**

The Extraversion spectrum runs from:

- High Extraversion - Warm, outgoing and lively people who seek social interaction and time spent with others.
- Low Extraversion - Reserved, calm and quiet people who find peace in solitude and choose their social interactions carefully.

## High Extraversion

People with high Extraversion are energized by whatever is going on the outside. With a strong preference for being around others, they naturally gravitate toward teamwork, networking and collaboration.

In the workplace, Extraverted people tend to:

- Prioritize activities that involve others.
- Enjoy speaking in groups
- Find any excuse to strike up a conversation.
- Think out loud and bounce ideas off other people.
- Get involved—Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) is real for this group.
- Trust others and show a lot of positive feelings toward them.
- Seek public recognition for their work and accomplishments.
- Do it first and think about it later.

## Low Extraversion

People with low Extraversion—Introverts—find their energy from within. They tend to be introspective, analyzing problems with thoughtful care. While they may not speak up in large meetings, when they do, it is often with insightful contributions. They enjoy working on detailed, solitary tasks and can be relied upon to get focused work done.

In the workplace, those low in Extraversion tend to:

- Work alone as much as possible.
- Interact with others in a calm, reserved and low-key way.
- Keep their opinions to themselves until their thoughts are fully formed.
- Prefer being still or in one place.
- Be skeptical of others until they get to know them.
- Prioritize intimate conversations over large-group interactions.
- Choose their words carefully.

## **The Impact of Extraversion in the Workplace**

Teams with high Extraversion levels usually have a lively and enthusiastic atmosphere, with open communication and strong social ties—but team members may compete with each other for the spotlight and talk in circles around each other.

Teams with low Extraversion levels are better equipped to handle quiet, focused work and deliver results in socially isolating situations—but they may be skeptical of each other and keep thoughts to themselves, which can stymie teamwork.

Balance is key and a mix of both high and low Extraversion can lead to an extremely well-rounded team, as long as both sides are willing to compromise and embrace the strengths of the other.

# Agreeableness: The Team Players and Collaborators

**Agreeableness is the "niceness" dimension of the Big Five system. It describes the degree to which someone puts the needs of others ahead of self-interest or bottom-line goals.**

The Agreeableness spectrum runs from:

- High Agreeableness - Helpful, accommodating and tolerant individuals who are great at building relationships, diffusing conflicts and supporting others—the consummate team players.
- Low Agreeableness - People who follow the beat of their own drum and stand their ground, even at the risk of hurting others' feelings—strong-willed individualists.

## High Agreeableness

People with high Agreeableness are your work friends. They prioritize getting along with others and believe that the team is at its best when everyone is in perfect harmony. Supportive and compassionate, they are the ones you can always count on when the chips are down, as they tend to have a strong sense of community and loyalty.

In the workplace, those who score high in Agreeableness often:

- Go out of their way to help others, even without being asked.
- Are the first to volunteer for team-building activities (and probably plan them too).
- Are genuinely interested in others' well-being—they likely know your coffee order by heart.
- Avoid confrontational situations but are effective negotiators when necessary.
- Demonstrate empathy and emotional intelligence in their interactions.
- Put the needs of the group ahead of bottom-line results.

## Low Agreeableness

Individuals who score low on Agreeableness are not misanthropes who avoid workplace friendships at all costs—far from it. It's just that, where an Agreeable person will put the needs of the team first, a low-Agreeable person prioritizes their own goals or those of the company or client.

In the workplace, those with low Agreeableness tend to:

- Do their thing, not the team's thing.
- Be competitive with themselves and others.
- Stand up for the best decision, even if it makes them unpopular.
- Challenge ideas and speak their mind.
- Make decisions without consulting others.
- Focus more on the needs of the company or project than the individual.

## **The Impact of Agreeableness in the Workplace**

Agreeableness is the trait of social connection and harmony. People who score high on this dimension want to get along with everyone and be liked. They go out of their way to avoid upsetting others and are willing to compromise, or back down altogether, if it will keep the peace.

Teams with high Agreeableness levels are cooperative, harmonious, kind and empathetic—but they may have trouble making tough decisions and holding others accountable when necessary.

Low Agreeableness teams are better equipped to speak their minds, challenge poor decisions and put the needs of the company above their personal relationships—but there may be a lack of trust or cohesion within the group.

A mix of high and low Agreeableness personalities is critical to ensure opinions are expressed and properly debated, but with tact, and that the team is balancing facts and feelings in decision-making.

# Neuroticism: The Realists and Worriers

**Neuroticism is the trait of operating on “high alert.” It is associated with emotional sensitivity, cautiousness and vulnerability to stress.**



**A Note on Neuroticism:** The term “neuroticism” is often viewed negatively in everyday language, so it’s important to be sensitive when discussing it as one of the Big Five dimensions. Those who scored high in Neuroticism may be reluctant to admit it, for fear that they will be judged or labeled as neurotic. Make sure to emphasize with the group that there are no good or bad Big Five traits and that scoring high or low for each trait has both strengths and weaknesses. If you feel discussion of this trait may be a concern to some members of the group, consider avoiding discussions or activities where everyone is asked to share how they scored for Neuroticism.

The Neuroticism spectrum runs from:

- High Neuroticism - Sensitive, emotionally responsive, and cautious individuals who are attuned to team dynamics and excel at anticipating risk. Vigilant and detail-oriented, they tend to be prepared for worst case scenarios.
- Low Neuroticism - Calm, cool and collected individuals who don't sweat the small stuff or worry too much about hypothetical scenarios; resilient team members who have a positive outlook on life.

## High Neuroticism

High Neuroticism scorers have a low tolerance for stress. They operate on high alert every day and have little emotional resilience. This can cause them to worry over everyday issues and overthink things. However, those same characteristics can make them excellent at anticipating problems and preventing risks before they happen.

In the workplace, those who score high in Neuroticism tend to:

- Be prepared for the worst-case scenario.
- Question their abilities and require reassurance.
- Have an awareness of potential risks, spotting possible issues earlier than others.
- Be sensitive to team morale, often providing support where needed.
- Struggle to get back on track when they are knocked off course.
- Have dramatic responses to stress, possibly presenting as overly anxious, self-pitying, angry or moody when overwhelmed.
- Be diligent and thorough about locating errors, both their own or others'.

## Low Neuroticism

Individuals who score low on Neuroticism tend to be relaxed most of the time. Like anyone, they may experience discomfort in stressful situations, but they can usually bounce back quickly. They tend not to worry excessively about future scenarios and can balance the good and bad parts of their workday with grace.

In the workplace, those who score low in Neuroticism often:

- View problems as temporary and isolated.
- Embrace challenges and see the positives in changes at work.
- Stay composed when confronted with new experiences, adversity or criticism.
- Be confident in their skills and work product.
- Be rational about what could go wrong.
- Quickly bounce back from setbacks.

## The Impact of Neuroticism in the Workplace

It's easy to assume that healthy teams will have low Neuroticism scores, but that's not necessarily the case. People who register highly on the Neuroticism scale are realistic about the world they live in, and they are aware of what is happening in their environment. They can anticipate and manage problems better than someone who is more gung-ho or overly optimistic on the team.

Teams with high Neuroticism levels also tend to bring a level of emotional intelligence to team dynamics. They can notice subtle signs of distress in others and provide emotional support when needed—but they may have trouble keeping strong emotions in check or rolling with the punches when things go wrong.

Low Neuroticism teams are more resilient. They are less risk-averse because they worry less about potential failure and are better able to cope with change and conflict—but they may struggle to anticipate potential issues and take necessary precautions.

A mix of personalities is critical to ensure that upside potential is balanced with downside risks. Teams that are too homogenous in Neuroticism levels, at either end of the spectrum, can miss opportunities or be blindsided by unexpected problems.

# Using the Big Five for Communication and Teamwork

**“If everyone gives one thread, the poor man will have a shirt.”**

**- Old Russian proverb**

People in most every occupation and walk of life have to work and make decisions collaboratively. Communication and teamwork are most effective when:

- Team members' strengths and roles are defined, so everyone knows what each person brings to the table.
- Each person is supported in using their unique strengths to achieve the team's goals.
- Everyone feels trusted and respected, and in turn trusts and respects their teammates.
- Team members communicate clearly and openly.

The Big Five can help on all of these fronts. In the tables on the following pages, we break down the typical teamwork and communication style for each dimension, both those who are high in each dimension and those who are low. You'll learn what each type contributes to the team, how they communicate, and strategies you can use to work optimally with them.

## High Openness Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Generating ideas.</li> <li>● Brainstorming creative solutions.</li> <li>● Solving complex problems.</li> <li>● Thinking outside the box.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Paying attention to detail.</li> <li>● Completing mundane tasks.</li> <li>● Following rules and processes.</li> <li>● Focusing on results.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Open and enthusiastic.</li> <li>● Abstract, metaphorical language.</li> <li>● Lots of stories and ideas but few concrete details.</li> <li>● Easily side-tracked.</li> <li>● May talk too much and not give everyone a chance to contribute.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow time for them to ask questions during meetings.</li> <li>● Encourage exploration and idea generation, but also push for practical solutions.</li> <li>● Give them flexibility in their work; limit the number of repetitive and monotonous tasks.</li> <li>● Provide structure, guidance and check-ins to help them stay on track.</li> <li>● Give a reality check to their unconventional ideas.</li> </ul>

## Low Openness Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implementing established processes.</li> <li>● Maintaining consistency and structure.</li> <li>● Delivering realistic solutions.</li> <li>● Making sure decisions are practical.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adapting to change.</li> <li>● Embracing new ideas.</li> <li>● Generating innovative solutions.</li> <li>● Working in uncertain or ambiguous conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Practical and solution-driven.</li> <li>● Focused on real-life details.</li> <li>● Stick to a clear purpose or agenda.</li> <li>● Keep discussions relevant and goal-oriented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide detailed instructions and context for tasks, so they know exactly what they are doing and why.</li> <li>● Keep the pace of work steady and consistent; try not to change goals or deadlines once a plan is set.</li> <li>● Avoid vague and ambiguous language when communicating.</li> <li>● Offer clear decisions and solutions; not “maybes” or dozens of possible options.</li> <li>● Include practical examples where possible.</li> </ul>

## High Conscientiousness Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starting projects off on the right foot.</li> <li>Organizing tasks efficiently.</li> <li>Meeting deadlines.</li> <li>Keeping track of details and logistics.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapting to unexpected changes.</li> <li>Taking risks.</li> <li>Delegating tasks to others.</li> <li>Accepting criticism or feedback on their processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Precise and to the point.</li> <li>Focused on goals and outcomes.</li> <li>Share facts more than opinions.</li> <li>Limited small talk and relationship building.</li> <li>Keep conversations on track.</li> <li>Can be hard to read.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide ample resources and information to support their planning.</li> <li>Be punctual and reliable; do what you say you will.</li> <li>Keep shared work spaces tidy and organized.</li> <li>Help them prioritize when perfectionism might cause delays.</li> <li>Trust they will deliver the plan as promised; don't micromanage, it will only add stress.</li> </ul>

## Low Conscientiousness Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being flexible.</li> <li>Breaking rules when necessary.</li> <li>Adapting to new situations.</li> <li>Guiding the team through crisis and chaos.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sticking to plans.</li> <li>Following through on projects.</li> <li>Keeping track of details.</li> <li>Prioritizing tasks effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relaxed and casual.</li> <li>Open to spontaneous discussions.</li> <li>Easily side-tracked into different topic areas.</li> <li>May forget to share details.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow space for understanding and repeat important details if needed.</li> <li>Use visuals or examples to clarify information.</li> <li>Break large projects into small, manageable tasks with clear deadlines to help them stay on track.</li> <li>Set up check-ins to review progress and priorities.</li> <li>Provide written instructions and follow-ups after conversations, so there's no room for confusion.</li> </ul>

## High Extraversion Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Building relationships and networks.</li> <li>● Leading group discussions.</li> <li>● Motivating team members.</li> <li>● Keeping energy levels high.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Listening to others without interrupting.</li> <li>● Working in isolation or silence.</li> <li>● Focusing on tasks that require sustained concentration.</li> <li>● Chasing recognition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lively and outgoing.</li> <li>● Think out loud.</li> <li>● Favors talking over written communication.</li> <li>● May interrupt others or dominate conversations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allow them to work on teams, in spaces where they can interact.</li> <li>● Give opportunities to lead meetings or for public speaking.</li> <li>● Give time and space for them to share ideas with people—even a 10-minute conversation can make them feel connected.</li> <li>● Allow time for chit-chat but interrupt where necessary to ensure the work gets done.</li> <li>● Provide immediate feedback and recognition for their contributions.</li> </ul>

## Low Extraversion Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on individual tasks.</li> <li>● Reflecting thoughtfully on ideas before sharing.</li> <li>● Unique insights through careful observation.</li> <li>● Working alone.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sustained social interactions and networking.</li> <li>● Engaging in group discussions.</li> <li>● Responding quickly in high-energy environments.</li> <li>● Making themselves heard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quiet and reserved.</li> <li>● Think before speaking.</li> <li>● Prefer one-on-one conversations and written communication.</li> <li>● May speak and react slowly; needs time to process before sharing their thoughts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Offer quiet spaces or areas for focused work.</li> <li>● Don't interrupt them if they clearly need privacy—schedule a meeting instead and provide the agenda beforehand.</li> <li>● Give them time to think before asking for their input.</li> <li>● Provide detailed information and clear expectations so they can plan and prepare.</li> <li>● Avoid putting them on the spot in group settings.</li> </ul>

## High Agreeableness Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Building and maintaining positive relationships.</li> <li>● Resolving conflicts peacefully.</li> <li>● Supporting and uplifting team members.</li> <li>● Reaching consensus decisions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Giving constructive criticism or feedback.</li> <li>● Standing up for their own opinions.</li> <li>● Saying “no” to additional responsibilities or tasks.</li> <li>● Putting their own needs first.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Friendly and warm.</li> <li>● Inclusive and supportive language.</li> <li>● Good at listening.</li> <li>● Sensitive to others' needs.</li> <li>● May bend to the will of a more dominant voice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assign team projects and group tasks where they can collaborate.</li> <li>● Frame requests as team efforts rather than individual goals.</li> <li>● Offer constructive feedback in a gentle, supportive manner; verbally recognize when they've done a good job.</li> <li>● Provide clear, specific expectations and deadlines to avoid over accommodation</li> <li>● Create a safe environment for them to express disagreements or concerns.</li> </ul>

## Low Agreeableness Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Making tough decisions.</li> <li>● Providing honest and direct feedback.</li> <li>● Avoiding biased or emotionally-driven decisions.</li> <li>● Removing group-think.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Balancing the needs of others with their own goals.</li> <li>● Maintaining positive relationships in times of conflict.</li> <li>● Collaborating on group projects without taking over.</li> <li>● Compromising.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Candid and straightforward.</li> <li>● Abrasive or blunt at times.</li> <li>● Use facts and logic rather than emotions.</li> <li>● May tell people what to do, even when that's not their role.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be direct and straightforward in communication, avoiding unnecessary small talk.</li> <li>● Provide data to support your arguments as they will be skeptical of claims without evidence.</li> <li>● Allow them to play devil's advocate and challenge decisions, but encourage them to do so constructively.</li> <li>● Teach them strategies for expressing disagreement respectfully and constructively.</li> <li>● Give them autonomy to do things their way.</li> </ul>

## High Neuroticism Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identifying potential risks and issues.</li> <li>● Preparing for worst-case scenarios.</li> <li>● Watching for changes in the vital signs of the team.</li> <li>● Taking a realistic view.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintaining a positive outlook in difficult situations.</li> <li>● Taking criticism or failure personally.</li> <li>● Controlling their emotions during high-pressure situations.</li> <li>● Adapting quickly to changes or setbacks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Emotional and sensitive.</li> <li>● Defensive and critical.</li> <li>● Take criticism poorly.</li> <li>● May withdraw when stressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide a structured and predictable work environment.</li> <li>● Offer clear expectations and feedback to manage their tendency to worry.</li> <li>● Allow time to process information and make decisions.</li> <li>● Offer positive reinforcement and reassurance to boost their confidence.</li> <li>● Give constructive criticism in a supportive manner.</li> </ul>

## Low Neuroticism Team Members

What They Bring To Teams	How They Communicate	How To Work With Them
<p><b>Excel at:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staying calm and level-headed under pressure.</li> <li>● Maintaining a positive outlook.</li> <li>● Focused on solutions instead of problems.</li> <li>● Bouncing back after setbacks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Struggle with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Empathizing with more emotional colleagues.</li> <li>● Recognizing the potential risks in a project.</li> <li>● Expressing emotions or vulnerability to others.</li> <li>● Estimating the risk of burnout and stress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Calm and level-headed.</li> <li>● Even-tempered.</li> <li>● Clear and rational, even under pressure.</li> <li>● Consistent communication style, regardless of the situation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assign them roles that require staying cool under pressure, or ask them to lead and model that behavior to others.</li> <li>● Use them as a calming influence during stressful times.</li> <li>● Encourage them to say how they feel as they may not naturally express worry or doubt.</li> <li>● Use their composed demeanor to help resolve conflicts or provide a balanced view.</li> <li>● Encourage them to take the team's pulse occasionally as they may miss nuances in emotionally charged situations.</li> </ul>

# Workshop Activities and Discussion Prompts

These optional activities are designed to make a team discussion or workshop more interactive and fun, helping participants see the five dimensions in action to better grasp the concepts. Feel free to modify them as needed to accommodate your specific group and the time you have available.

With all of the activities and discussions, be sensitive to the fact that some team members may not feel comfortable openly sharing their test results and their natural tendencies with a group, especially a group that includes coworkers. Make sure to check in with the group regularly to emphasize that there are no good and bad scores on the test and no right or wrong style. Scoring high or low for any of the Big Five dimensions has both strengths and challenges, so no set of scores is better than any other.

## Opening Activity: Who Am I?

This is a good activity to start with, as it helps participants see how their tendencies may differ from others on their team, priming them for a discussion of the Big Five dimensions.

Read the statements below to the group and have them respond in a way that provides a visual indication of how many people identify with each statement. For example:

- Have people stand if they agree with a statement or remain sitting if they do not.
- Ask people to move to one side of the room or the other, depending on whether they agree or not.
- Have people arrange themselves along a spectrum from one end of the room to the other, with those who agree strongly with the statement far to one side, those who disagree strongly with the statement on the opposite end, and those who are neutral in the middle.

Make sure to let the group know that none of the statements below represent behavior or tendencies that are inherently good or bad, they just show us where we naturally fall on the spectrum for each dimension and illustrate our preferences for the workplace.

### Statements:

- I enjoy meeting new people and trying new things.
- I don't like following the rules if they don't make sense to me, especially if I can see a way of doing it better.
- I am organized and tidy.
- I stay late to finish work if necessary, even if it means missing out on other plans.
- I easily get annoyed or frustrated with people who don't follow through on their promises.
- I am comfortable being the center of attention and speaking in front of large groups.
- I don't like speaking up at meetings, even if I have something valuable to contribute.

- I tend to cooperate with others rather than compete against them.
- I often go out of my way to help others, even when it might not benefit me directly.
- I am easily overwhelmed by too many tasks or changes in my routine.
- I am cool as a cucumber under pressure.
- I often worry about the future and what could go wrong.

#### **Discussion points:**

- What did you notice during this activity?
- Did you notice any patterns in your responses?
- Did you notice other people standing up for statements that you didn't stand up for, and did that surprise you?

## **Discussion Questions for Each Dimension**

As you review each of the five dimensions with your group, it is good to check in with them after each dimension to round out their understanding and impressions of the dimension. Ask the group if they relate to the high or low description of each dimension and how they feel their style brings value to their work. See below for a set of sample questions for each dimension.

#### **Openness:**

- For those high in Openness, how well does that type description fit you?
- For those low in Openness, how well did that description fit you?
- Those of you who scored in the middle, what do you identify with from both the high and low descriptions?
- What aspects of your high or low Openness style make you good at your job?

#### **Conscientiousness**

- For those high in Conscientiousness, how well does that type description fit you?
- For those low in Conscientiousness, how well did that description fit you?
- Those of you who scored in the middle, what do you identify with from both the high and low descriptions?
- What aspects of your high or low Conscientiousness style make you good at your job?

#### **Extraversion**

- For those high in Extraversion, how well does that type description fit you?
- For those low in Extraversion (Introverts), how well did that description fit you?
- Those of you who scored in the middle, what do you identify with from both the high and low descriptions?
- What aspects of your high or low Extraversion style make you good at your job?

## Agreeableness

- For those high in Agreeableness, how well does that type description fit you?
- For those low in Agreeableness, how well did that description fit you?
- Those of you who scored in the middle, what do you identify with from both the high and low descriptions?
- What aspects of your high or low Agreeableness style make you good at your job?

## Neuroticism

- For those high in Neuroticism, how well does that type description fit you?
- For those low in Neuroticism, how well did that description fit you?
- Those of you who scored in the middle, what do you identify with from both the high and low descriptions?
- What aspects of your high or low Neuroticism style make you good at your job?

## Activity: Role Play

After team members have familiarized themselves with the five dimensions of personality, it's time to have fun with it! Have team members break into small groups, and assign each group one or more of the five dimensions. Ask them to come up with two fictional characters that embody the dimensions—one with a high score and one with a low score in that super trait. Have them act out a typical workday for their “high” character, and have their “low” character respond to it for some misunderstandings and conflict.

This activity not only allows team members to have fun and play with the five dimensions, but it also shows how personalities can clash or complement each other in the workplace. Understanding these differences can lead to better teamwork and communication.

Here are some character and scenario ideas to help get you started:

**Openness:** A high Openness creative marketer who is always coming up with new ideas wants to try a radical new ad campaign. The low Openness account manager is trying to bring them back to earth and stick to what the client brief says.

**Conscientiousness:** A high Conscientiousness project manager has everything organized down to the last detail. The low Conscientiousness software engineer thinks they should pivot to a new way of doing things, even though it would throw off the entire schedule.

**Extraversion:** An Extraverted team member has a great idea pop into their head. They walk over their Introverted co-worker's desk, interrupting their workflow, and start talking enthusiastically about the idea they just had.

**Agreeableness:** A high Agreeableness HR representative wants to add a new wellbeing subscription to the benefits package. They're trying to persuade their low Agreeableness CFO who says there's no budget for the project.

**Neuroticism:** A high Neuroticism customer service representative is struggling to stay calm during a tense situation with a difficult customer, while their low Neuroticism colleague is giving them unsolicited advice on how they could have handled the situation better.

## Closing Activity: Pet Peeves

This is a good activity to do towards the end of your workshop. Have each team member share or rant about a pet peeve or something that bothers them for 60 seconds. The pet peeve doesn't have to be work-related; in fact, it's best if it isn't, in order to avoid hurt feelings or awkwardness. For example, the issue could be how someone's pet gets hair everywhere or how often television series end with cliffhangers.

The team member rants in whatever way feels comfortable to them. They can shout, whisper or use whatever tone of voice they feel like using. The rest of the team members should listen actively without interrupting and try to identify:

- What does the speaker actually care about?
- What aspect of this issue matters to them?
- What is the underlying reason for their frustration?
- Do they want to solve the problem or just vent their feelings?
- What do these observations suggest about the team member's personality traits?

After the rant, take turns discussing and analyzing your observations. You can have as many people play the game as time allows.

## Closing Discussion Questions

Now that your team has learned that understanding each other's unique strengths and embracing your differences can create a well-rounded, high-performing and efficient team, take some time to share thoughts and reactions.

Here are some sample discussion questions:

- What did you learn today that surprised you? About yourself? About your coworkers?
- Now that you know more about the Big Five, how would you describe the aspects of your personality that make you good at your job?
- How would you describe the aspects of your personality that present challenges for you at work?
- How do you think you can use this information to make tangible improvements in your productivity or job satisfaction?
- Any other observations about today's session?

# Resources

The following articles can help you gain greater insight into the Big Five personality traits.

- [What is Openness in the Big Five Personality System?](#)
- [What is Conscientiousness in the Big Five Personality System?](#)
- [What is Extraversion in the Big Five Personality System?](#)
- [What is Agreeableness in the Big Five Personality System?](#)
- [What is Neuroticism in the Big Five Personality System?](#)
- [6 Books You Need to Read to Understand the Big Five Personality System](#)
- [Managing Remote Or Hybrid Teams? Here's What Your Personality Says About 'Productivity Paranoia'](#)
- [Introverts and Extraverts Struggle Differently with Asking for Help at Work – Here's How to Help Them](#)
- [Conscientiousness is in Free Fall, Here's What It Means for Managers](#)
- [Watch and Learn: How to Observe the Big Five Personality Traits in Other People](#)
- [Can Your Personality Change at Work?](#)

