

# DECISION MAKING AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

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# Goals for today

- Learn about individual differences that affect decision – making and thinking styles
- Learn more about individual cognitive strengths and preferences

# Persuasion and influencing

Please assess yourself and others using a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

I am someone who... / This person is someone who...

1. Tends to be quiet.
2. Is compassionate, has a soft heart.
3. Tends to be disorganized.
4. Worries a lot.
5. Is fascinated by art, music, or literature.
6. Is dominant, acts as a leader.
7. Is sometimes rude to others.
8. Has difficulty getting started on tasks.

## Persuasion and influencing

Please assess yourself and others using a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

I am someone who / This person is someone who

9. Tends to feel depressed, blue.

10. Has little interest in abstract ideas.

11. Is full of energy.

12. Assumes the best about people.

13. Is reliable, can always be counted on.

14. Is emotionally stable, not easily upset.

15. Is original, comes up with new ideas.

## Persuasion and influencing

Calculate your scores:

A:  $1R + 6 + 11$

B:  $2 + 7R + 12$

C:  $3R + 8R + 13$

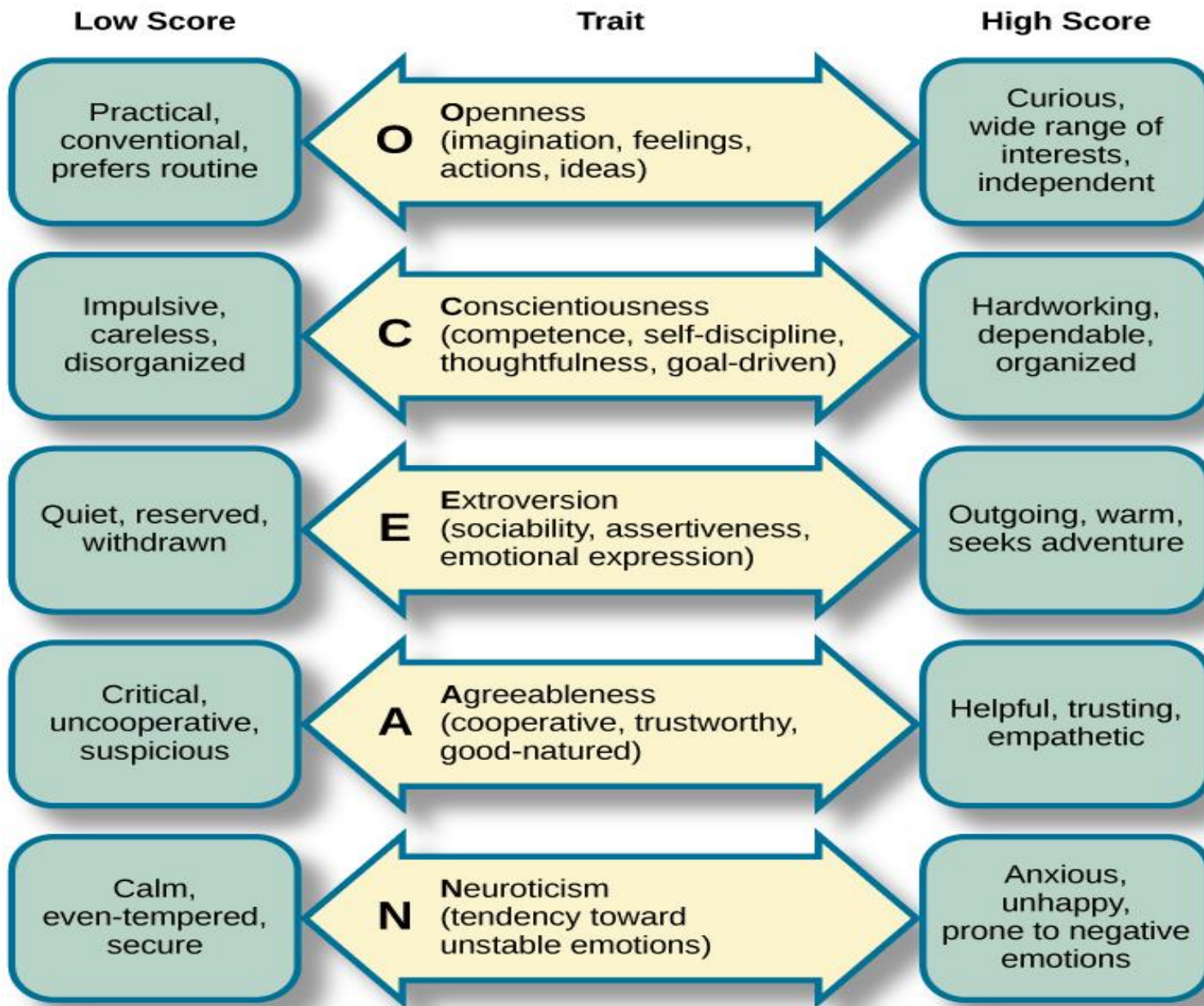
D:  $4 + 9 + 14R$

E:  $5 + 10R + 15$

- Source: Soto, C., John, O. (2017). Short and extra-short forms of the Big Five Inventory–2: The BFI-2-S and BFI-2-XS. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 68, p. 69-81)

# The Big Five Model

Trait	Description
<b>O</b> penness	Being curious, original, intellectual, creative, and open to new ideas.
<b>C</b> onscientiousness	Being organized, systematic, punctual, achievement-oriented, and dependable.
<b>E</b> xtraversion	Being outgoing, talkative, sociable, and enjoying social situations.
<b>A</b> greeableness	Being affable, tolerant, sensitive, trusting, kind, and warm.
<b>N</b> euroticism	Being anxious, irritable, temperamental, and moody.



# Personality's alphabet (Wilt, Revelle, 2019)

- *Personality may be conceptualized as an abstraction to describe and explain patterns of affect, behavior, cognition, and desire - the “ABCDs” of personality- over time and space*
- Affect
- Behavior
- Cognition
- Desire



# Personality's alphabet (Wilt, Revelle, 2019)

Please make an educated guess about the trait that is described below and its level:

Affect - Love excitement

Behavior - Make some noise

Cognition - Come up with a solution right away

Desire - Demand to be the center of interest

# Personality's alphabet (Wilt, Revelle, 2019)

Please make an educated guess about the trait that is described below and its level:

Affect - Dislike routine (R)

Behavior - Return borrowed things

Cognition - Seldom notice details

Desire - Want everything to be "just right"

# Personality's alphabet (Wilt, Revelle, 2019)

Please make an educated guess about the trait that is described below and its level:

Affect - Have frequent mood swings

Behavior - Barge in on conversations

Cognition - Am easily confused

Desire - Want things done my way

# Personality's alphabet (Wilt, Revelle, 2019)

Please make an educated guess about the trait that is described below and its level:

Affect - Sympathize with others' feelings

Behavior - Comment loudly about others (R)

Cognition - Believe that others have good intentions

Desire - Want to mean something to others

# Personality's alphabet (Wilt, Revelle, 2019)

Please make an educated guess about the trait that is described below and its level:

Affect - Love beautiful things

Behavior - Ask questions that nobody else does

Cognition - Think deeply about things

Desire - Seek explanations of things

# Individual differences and affecting people's decisions

- Imagine that you would like to influence decision of a person who is characterized by the following personality profile:
  - Medium Extroversion
  - High Conscientiousness
  - Low Neuroticism
  - High Openness
  - Medium Agreeableness
- In groups please prepare a presentation of your selected idea to that person.

# Predicting personality from digital footprints

- An important recent scientific contribution in the field of communication and personality
- Youyou, Kosinski, Stillwell (2015). *Computer-based personality judgments are more accurate than those made by humans*. Proceedings of the National Academy of Science.

# Predicting personality from digital footprints

- Authors compared the accuracy of human and computer-based personality judgments, using a sample of 86,220 volunteers who completed a 100-item personality questionnaire. They showed that:
  - ✓ computer predictions based on a digital footprint (Facebook Likes) are more accurate than those made by the participants' Facebook friends
  - ✓ computer models showed higher interjudge agreement
  - ✓ computer personality judgments had a higher power of accurately predicting life outcomes such as substance use, political attitudes, and physical health



- Michal Kosinski's speech (9:50)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NesTWiKfpD0>

# Predicting personality



- Source: Park et al. (2014). Automatic personality assessment through social media language. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*
- You can see 100 words which are associated with high levels of extroversion
- The bigger the font, the stronger the connection
- Color indicates how often a word appeared
- There are also 6 most frequent topics or related groups of words (in green)
- N = 71 556



## Youyou, Kosinski, Stillwell (2015)

„Automated, accurate, and cheap personality assessment tools could affect society in many ways: marketing messages could be tailored to users’ personalities; recruiters could better match candidates with jobs based on their personality; products and services could adjust their behavior to best match their users’ characters and changing moods (...) Furthermore, in the future, people might abandon their own psychological judgments and rely on computers when making important life decisions, such as choosing activities, career paths, or even romantic partners. It is possible that such data-driven decisions will improve people’s lives.”

## Youyou, Kosinski, Stillwell (2015)

“However, knowledge of people’s personalities can also be used to manipulate and influence them. Understandably, people might distrust or reject digital technologies after realizing that their government, internet provider, web browser, online social network, or search engine can infer their personal characteristics more accurately than their closest family members. We hope that consumers, technology developers, and policymakers will tackle those challenges by supporting privacy-protecting laws and technologies, and giving the users full control over their digital footprints.”

# Affecting peoples' decisions

- Cambridge Analytica claims to have developed effective ways of influencing voters' decisions by strategically adjusting communication to their personality profiles.
- "Today in the United States we have somewhere close to four or five thousand data points on every individual ... So we model the personality of every adult across the United States, some 230 million people."
  - *Alexander Nix, suspended CEO of Cambridge Analytica, October 2016, Sky News*

## Affecting peoples' decisions

- It is not clear what Cambridge Analytica actually did and whether it was successful.
- They claimed to have built their personality profiles using the OCEAN (or Big Five) model.
- It is the most widely used approach to personality in social science.

# Jungian approach to individual differences

- MBTI
- Extended Disc behavior styles
- Insight Discovery model



Activity – what they want to achieve and what they want to avoid

# Maximizing versus Satisficing

# Robert Sternberg and Theory of Mental Self-Government: Thinking Styles

The theory of mental self-government holds that styles of thinking can be understood in terms of constructs from our notions of government. On this view, the kinds of governments we have in the world are not merely coincidental, but rather are external reflections or mirrors of ways in which we can organize or govern ourselves. According to this theory, people can be understood in terms of the functions, forms, levels, scope, and leanings of government. People do not exhibit just one style or another, but they do have preferences across various kinds of tasks and situations.

Source: <http://www.robortjsternberg.com/thinking-styles>

# Robert Sternberg and Theory of Mental Self-Government: Thinking Styles and their elements

- **Functions** (legislative, executive, and judicial)
- **Forms** (monarchic, hierarchic, oligarchic, and anarchic)
- **Levels** (local and global)
- **Scope** (internal and external)
- **Leanings** (liberal and conservative)

# Robert Sternberg and Theory of Mental Self-Government: Thinking Styles and their elements

- **Functions** (legislative, executive, and judicial)
- *Legislative*. The legislatively oriented person has a predilection for tasks, projects, and situations that require creation, formulation, planning of ideas, strategies, products, and the like. This kind of individual likes to decide what to do and how to do it, rather than to be told.
- *Executive*. The executively oriented individual has a predilection for tasks, projects, and situations that provide structure, procedures, or rules to work with, and that, although modifiable, can serve as guidelines to measure progress. Whereas the legislatively oriented individual likes to decide what to and how to do it, the executively oriented person will often prefer to be told what to do, and will then give it his or her best shot at doing it well.
- *Judicial*. The judicially oriented individual has a predilection for tasks, projects, and situations that require evaluation, analysis, comparison–contrast, and judgment of existing ideas, strategies, projects, and the like. This individual tends to be evaluative of others, sometimes on the basis of minimal information.

Source: <http://www.robertjsternberg.com/thinking-styles>

# References

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- Judge, T., Locke, E., Durham, C. (1997). The dispositional causes of job satisfaction: A core evaluations approach. *Research in Organizational Behavior* 19: 151–188