Personality questionnaires

Why are they used?

Personality tests are used to determine your typical reactions and attitudes to a range of situations. They ask about your preferences and try to identify how well you get on with others, your normal reaction to stressful situations, or your feelings about the kind of people you like to work with. They assess how you do things, rather than how well you perform tasks, and help the selector to find out your style and way of doing things. Most organisations will use the questionnaire in conjunction with your application form, interview and other information to make decisions rather than in isolation.

How does it work?

It is unlikely that these questionnaires will be timed (or indeed have right or wrong answers). Don’t let this lack of exam conditions fool you - some employers will know precisely what they are looking for in terms of an ideal personality, and it is up to you to meet their expectations. Don’t think too long about your answers, as your first reaction to a question is often the most accurate.

How should I answer?

It is unwise to try to fake the answers - these questionnaires usually have some type of internal checking where the same question is asked with different wording early and late in the test to try to detect dishonest answers. You may also be interviewed about your answers, and dishonesty may be found out during the interview. Ultimately, there is little point in pretending to be the kind of employee a firm is looking for if you are not right for them. Find something else you will enjoy doing!

Example Personality Tests

- **What animal are you?** - tells you your personality type and suggest some careers that would fit your personality
- **Team Technology** - the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) - discover your personality type
- **The Keirsey Temperament Sorter** - personality questionnaire with instant feedback on personality types
- Another good **Myers-Briggs test**
- **BBC Personality Test** - this is a full personality test based on the five-factor model, a system of classifying personality traits
- **Personality Test Center** – free, professionally developed tests
- **outofservice.com** - fun personality tests
Situational Judgement Tests

*Situational Judgement Tests* (SJTs) allow recruiters to gain an insight into the candidate’s decision-making within the relevant environment. SJTs also give candidates clear understanding of the role and kind of work situations they may encounter. There is usually a minimum cut-off score.

A typical question may ask *"If you saw your line manager stealing at work, what would you do?"* and then there would be three options to choose from.

These tests are becoming increasingly common and are used by Accenture, PWC, McDonald's and many others.