

The Psychology of Power

Welcome! The presentation will commence at 2.05

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SACS CONSULTING



ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY MEASUREMENT AND CONSULTING

What is SACS?

- Organisational psychology business
 - Psychological testing, Wellbeing surveys, 360° feedback
 - Organisational and individual development – coaching, career transition management, workforce planning, change management
 - Recruitment process design and delivery
- Scientist practitioner model – <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Andrew-Marty>
- Evidence based approach to people management.

SACS offerings

Organisational Psychology Measurement and Consulting

PSYCHOMETRIC ASSESSMENT

Evidence based work-place assessments with easy to understand reports

360 DEGREE FEEDBACK

A short evidence based survey which supports leadership development and optimisation

ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING SURVEYS

Psychological measurement of engagement, stress, stressors, diversity climate and more

HIGH PERFORMANCE MODELLING

Customised reports that indicate whether a candidate should progress based on agreed success factors

RECRUITMENT OPTIMISATION

Expert advice on candidate attraction and candidate evaluation using best practice methods

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CENSUS

Measure diversity and inclusion within a workforce

IN-HOUSE EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

Presentations and workshops specifically tailored to the needs of each organisation

INDIVIDUAL COACHING

Customised coaching to support individual and organisational goals at all levels of seniority

GROUP FACILITATION

Facilitation for large or small groups from team leaders to executives

CAREER TRANSITION MANAGEMENT

A customised coaching program to help individuals make their next career move

Objectives

1. What is Power?
2. What is it that causes people to acquire power?
3. Neuroscience of power
4. Where does it come from – can personality predict power?
5. Values and power
6. Avoiding the negatives of power at work

Your objectives...

Objectives

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The Psychology of Power

“Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely”

Sir John Dalberg-Acton



What is Power?

- “An individual’s capacity to modify others’ states by providing or withholding resources or administering punishments” (Keltner, Guenfeld, Anderson, 2003)
- Resources can be social - friendship, opportunities, knowledge
- Or material - money, economic opportunity, job termination, physical harm
- The value of the power is reflected in how dependent the individual is on those resources
- The principle of least interest.

Raven's 6 bases of power

- **Reward**
 - Promise of rewards (monetary or otherwise)
- **Coercion**
 - Punishment or intimidation “Do the job as I say or you will be fired”
- **Legitimate or Position power**
 - Holding a status of authority e.g., boss, Minister, mother, surgeon, etc.
- **Expert**
 - Being an expert in the field... “you must know that I know the best way to handle this situation
- **Referent**
 - Admiration or desire to be similar to; the power holder can use similarity of background and identification as means of enforcing their power
- **Informational**
 - Influence through passing on or withholding information and how this is delivered. Can be used by people in low or high status roles.

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Historical rises to power

What causes them to rise from power, from nowhere?

Hitler

- Came from a position of no advantage
- Exceptional public speaker
- Willingness to use violence in advancing his objectives.
- Was given position of power (Chancellor) by those who thought he could be controlled

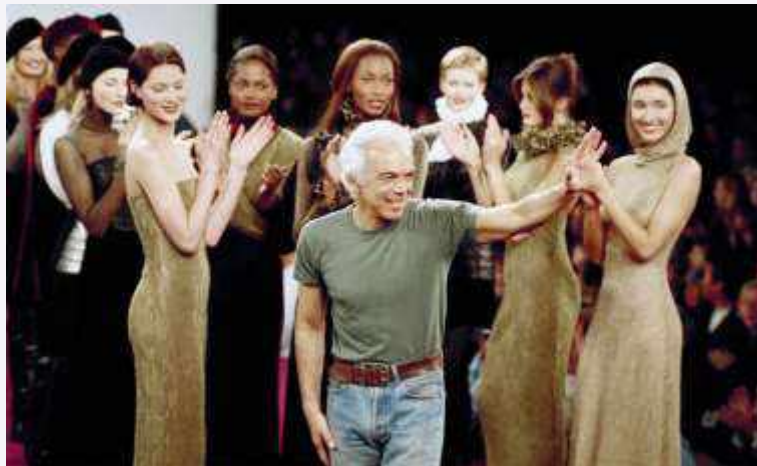


Diocletian

- Born Rome (approx) AD 240, into poverty
- Rose swiftly through military ranks finally to emperor
- A reformist – and yes, he did oppress Christians
- Interestingly, one of the very few who chose to give away power.



More contemporary examples



What is it that allows people to acquire power?

- Cognitive ability (Judge et al., 2004)
- Extraversion
- Conscientiousness (Judge et al., 2002)
- Low emotional instability
- Physical attractiveness, but only in men (Anderson et al., 2001)
- Breaking the rules (Van Kleef et al., 2011)
- Looking “right” – e.g., Rule and Ambady 2008
- Perception of success – financial status, etc
- Values match with followers (Schwartz, 1997)
- Health – e.g., Singh-Manoux et al., 2005.

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Neuroscience of power

- **Perspective taking (Galinsky et al., 2006)**
 - Asked to draw an 'E' on their forehead, those primed with higher power tended to draw the 'E' from own perspective. Those with low power drew it from the other's perspective.
- **Individuals primed with higher power**
 - Showed reduced accuracy in social judgment
 - Relied too heavily on their own perspective
 - Were unable consider others' perspective
- **Power distorts our visual perception – influencing how we see others (Yap et al., 2013)**
 - More powerful = underestimate others' size (height) in photos and face to face
 - Less powerful = overestimate others' size

Neuroscience of power

- Power decreases interpersonal sensitivity (Hogeveen et al., 2014)
- When one person observes another in action, the mirror neurons respond, empathising with them
- High powered individuals demonstrate decreased sensitivity to the actions of others and therefore decreased empathy and compassion
- Overall: Power decreases people's ability to consider how others think, feel and see the world.

Neuroscience of power

- Moral Hypocrisy (Lammers et al., 2010)
 - High powered individuals are less tolerant of cheating, however more likely to cheat e.g. when reporting tax earnings, breaking speeding laws
- Individuals who feel more powerful were more likely to dehumanize others (attributing animal traits to low-powered individuals) (Gwinn et al., 2013)

Neuroscience of power

- Power causes people to behave as though they have orbitofrontal lobe damage – causing overly impulsive and insensitive behaviours (Keltner, 2010)
- The “Power Paradox”:
 - “Power simplifies our thinking. We tend to see things in terms of our own self-interest, and it makes us more impulsive. We forget our audience in service of gratifying our own impulses.”
 - High-power individuals are more likely to speak out of turn, interrupt others, tease people in a humiliating fashion.

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Some interesting findings

- Individuals differ on their extent to which they seek to dominate others and control resources and outcomes (Fiske & Berdahl, 2015)
- Leaders who crave more power are:
 - less able to handle stress and conflict in their group (Fodor, 1985)
 - prefer those who are ingratiators but do not respect them (Operario & Fiske, 2001)
 - produce more negative self-views among subordinates (Fiske & Berdahl, 2015)
- Personality affects how an individual chooses to use their power
 - for example high achievement correlates with tighter control strategies (Raven, Freeman & Haley, 1982)
 - high authoritarianism results in more coercive tactics (Fiske & Berdahl, 2015)
 - produce more negative self-views among subordinates (Fiske & Berdahl, 2015)
- In interview situations (a power situation) dominant people preferred socially capable candidates, whereas non dominant people preferred capable candidates (Fiske & Berdahl, 2015; Operario & Fiske, 2001).

Likelihood to sexually harass (LSH)

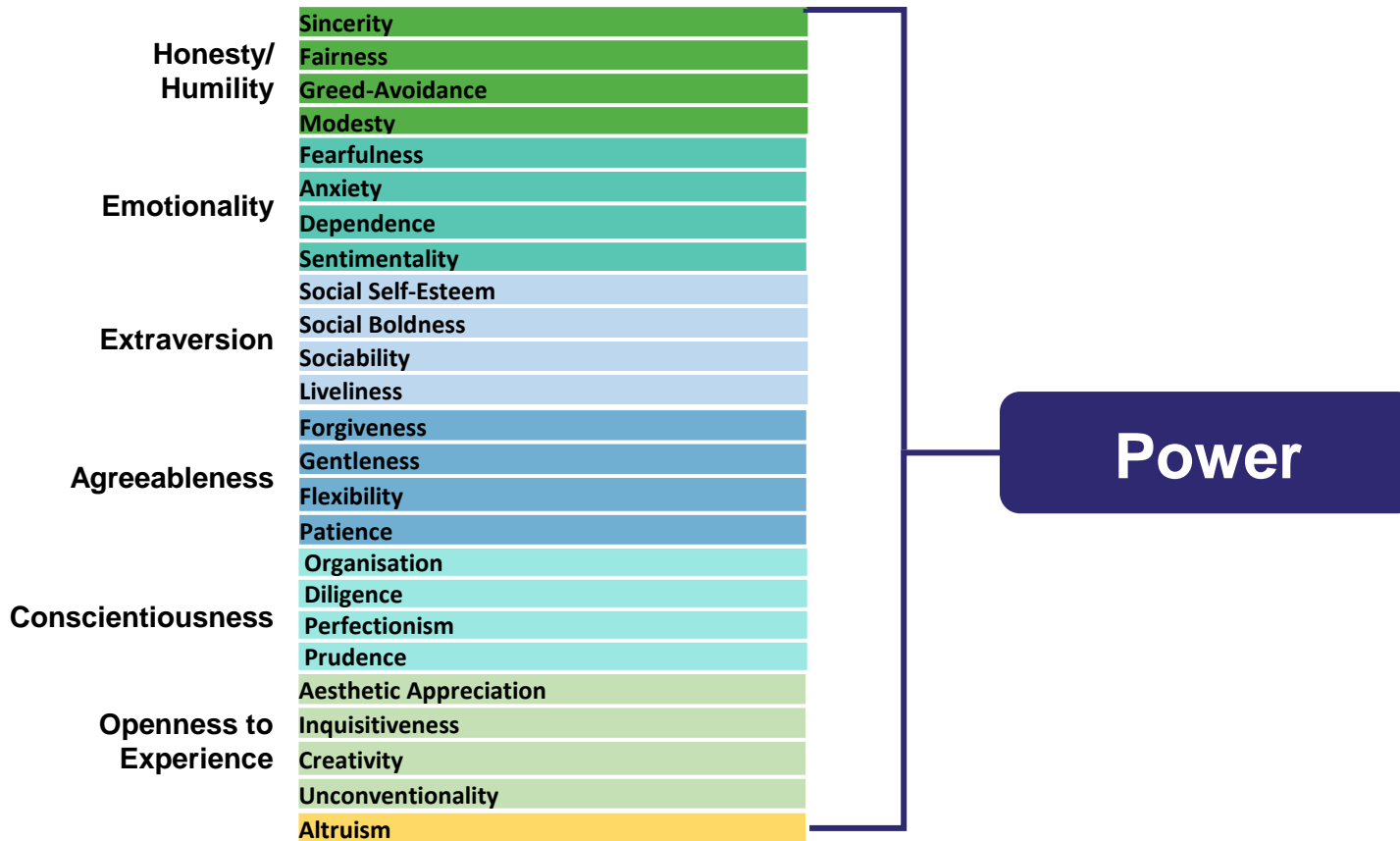
- A range of psychological indicators identified, the most easily measured of which is the Honesty/Humility scale of the HEXACO Personality Inventory
- LSH & Power are linked (Bargh et al., 1995)
 - Power is linked to sexual motivation in LSH individuals.
 - Men who are high on LSH are more likely to find a woman attractive if primed with thoughts of power. They tend to be unaware that this is the cause of the attraction.
 - The implication is that men high in LSH can be an inherent sexual harassment risk as they rise to positions of power.

Lee and Ashton's HEXACO

1. Honesty-Humility	3. Extraversion	5. Conscientiousness
Sincerity	Social Self-Esteem	Organization
Fairness	Social Boldness	Diligence
Greed Avoidance	Sociability	Perfectionism
Modesty	Liveliness	Prudence
2. Emotionality	4. Agreeableness	6. Openness to Experience
Fearfulness	Forgiveness	Aesthetic Appreciation
Anxiety	Gentleness	Inquisitiveness
Dependence	Flexibility	Creativity
Sentimentality	Patience	Unconventionality
		7. (Interstitial scale)
		Altruism

Personality predicting power

Personality



Model Summary

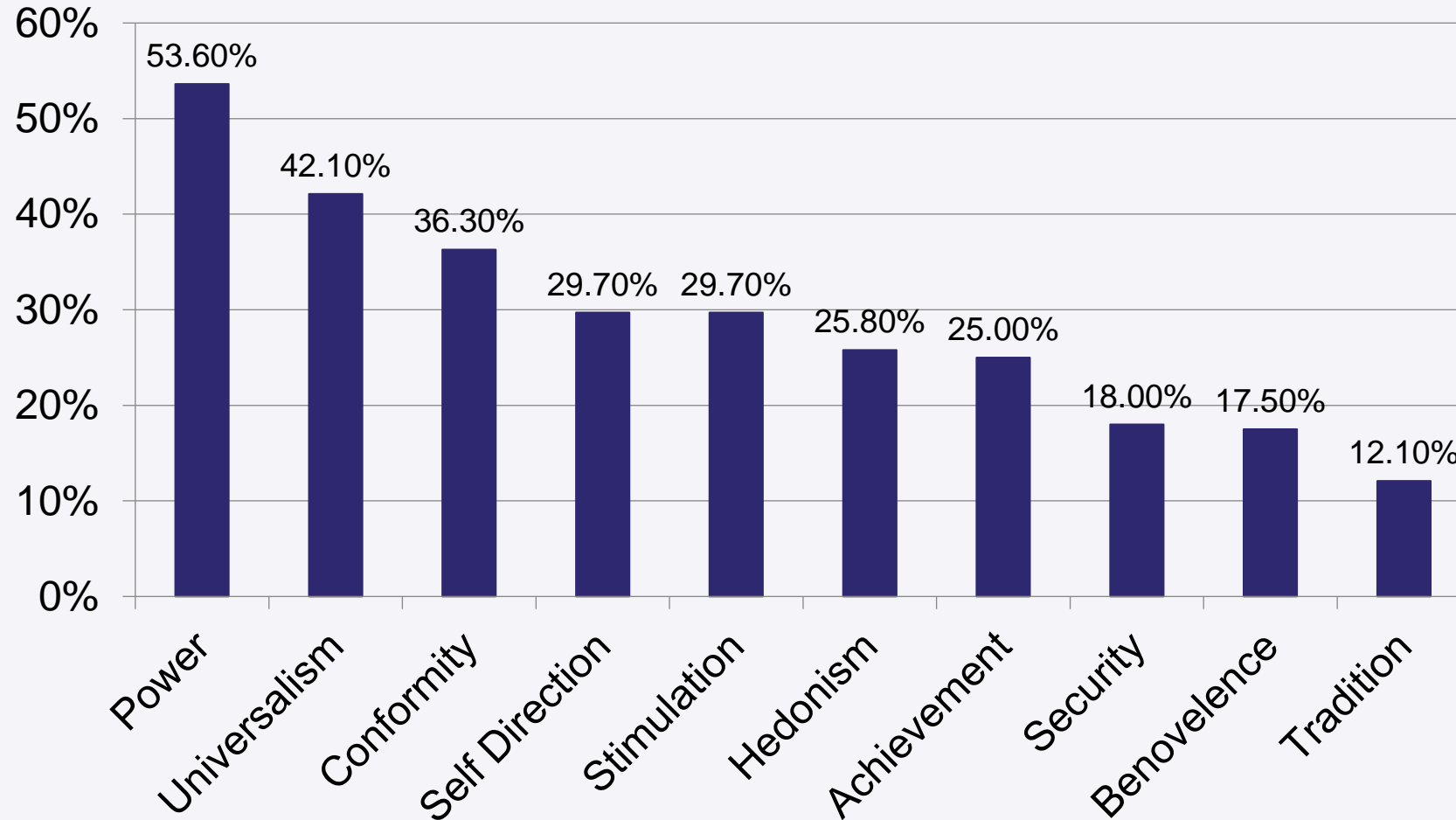
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.739 ^a	.545	.536	.55436

Best predictors of Power	Beta weights
(HH) Greed Avoidance	-.360
Altruism	-.176
(HH) Modesty	-.165
(A) Flexibility	-.127
(HH) Sincerity	-.102

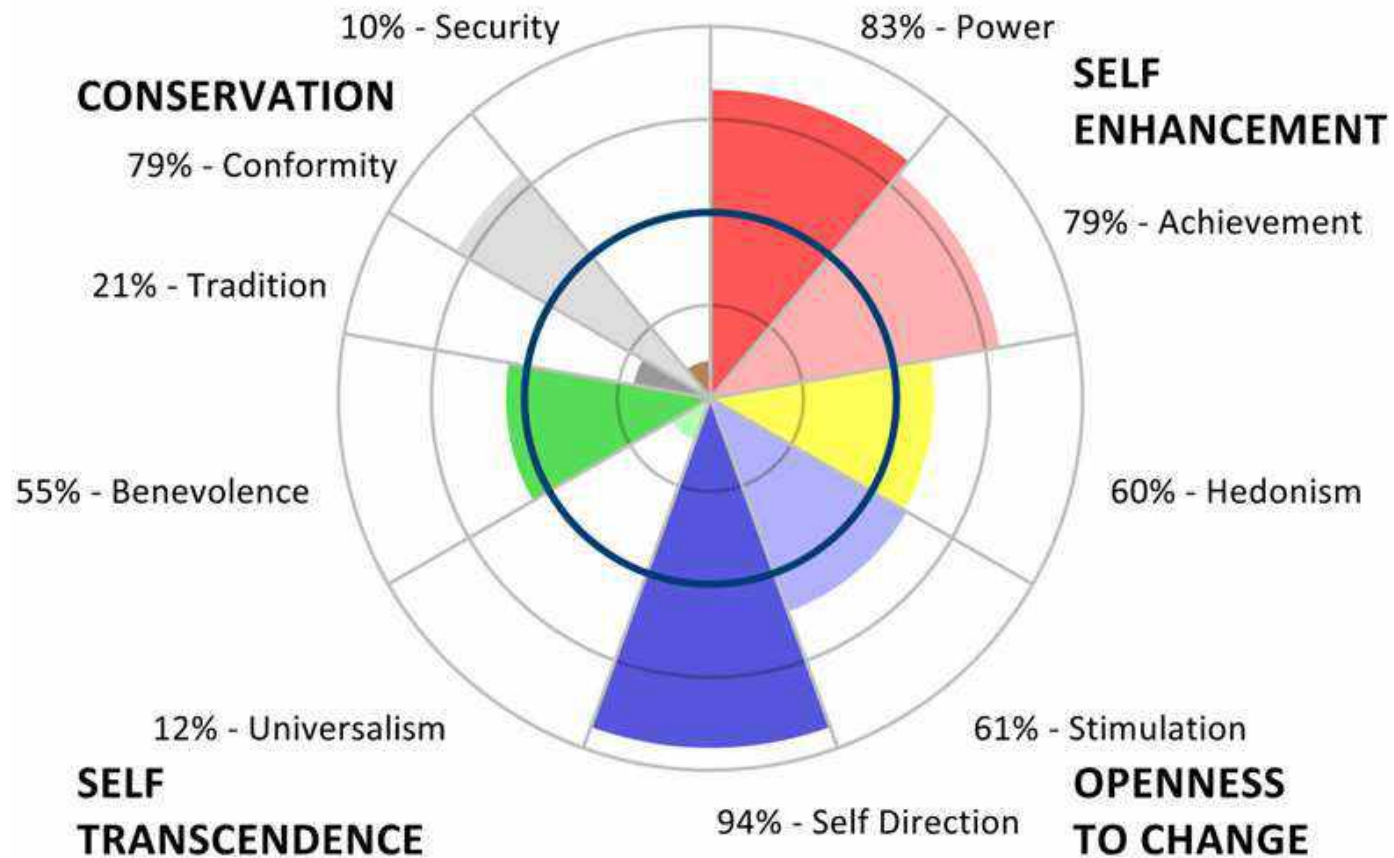
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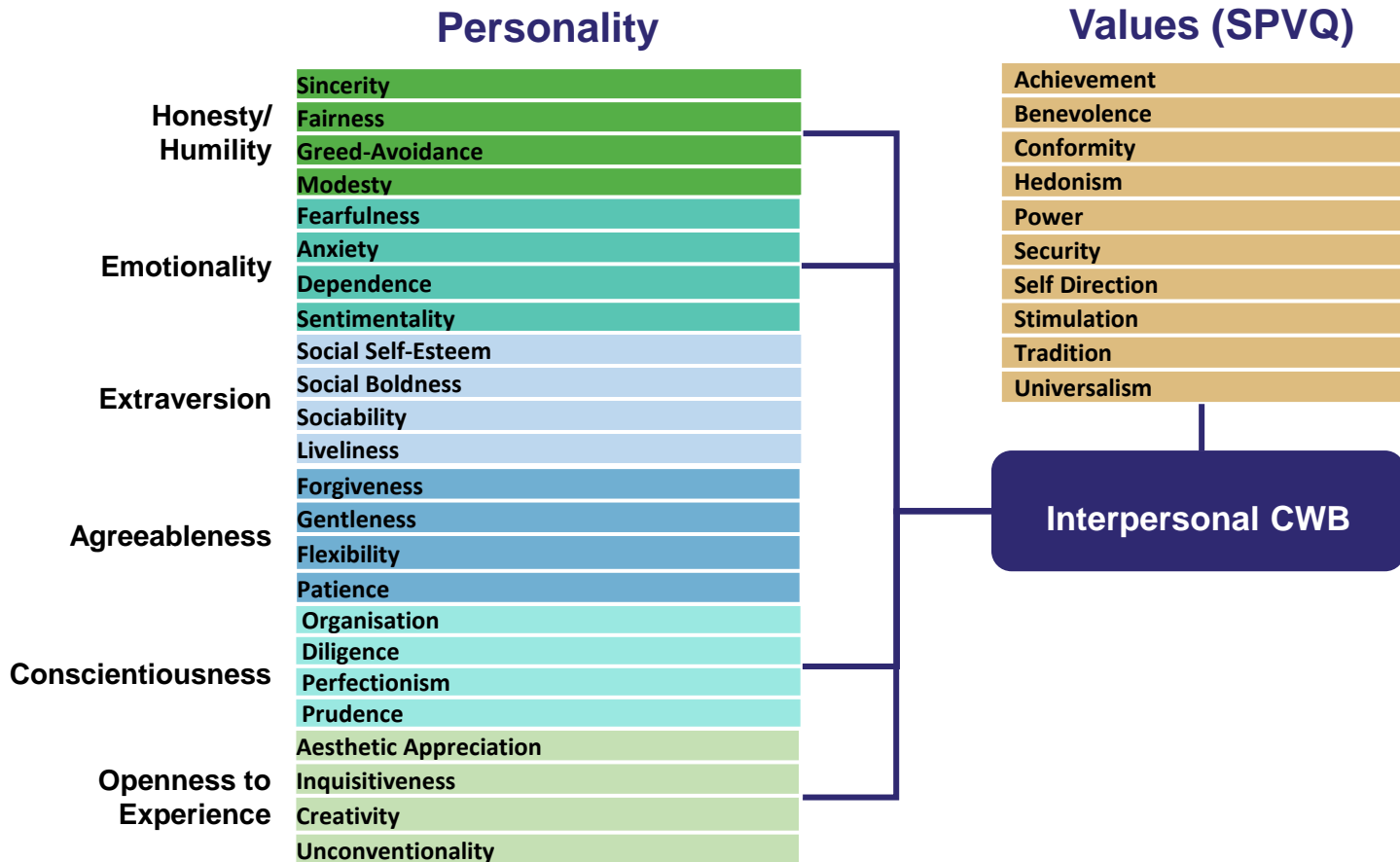
Personality predicting values



Schwartz Values



Personality and Values predicting Interpersonal CWB



Model Summary

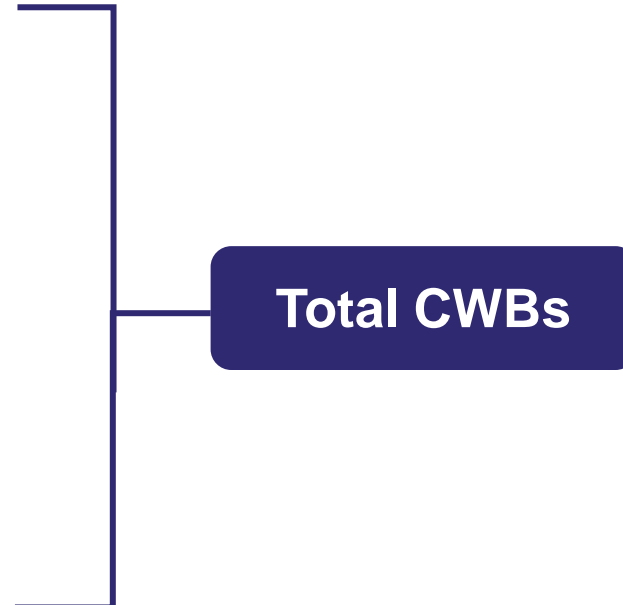
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.645 ^a	.416	.399	.39716

Best predictors of Interpersonal CWB	Beta weights
Personality – (EX) Sociability	-0.141
Personality – (HH) Modesty	-0.135
Values – (SPVQ) Conformity	-0.132
Personality – (HH) Fairness	-0.116
Personality – (A) Forgiveness	-0.113

Values predicting Total CWBs

Values (SPVQ)

Achievement
Benevolence
Conformity
Hedonism
Power
Security
Self Direction
Stimulation
Tradition
Universalism



Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.426 ^a	.181	.175	.38295

Best predictors of Total CWBs	Beta weights
Conformity	-.280
Power	.230
Benevolence	-.111
Self Direction	.106

Nature and Nurture

OUTCOMES

- Quality and Quantity of work
- Quality and Quantity of work relationships

NATURE	NURTURE
<p>Intelligence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal• Numerical• Abstract <p>Integrity</p> <p>Personality e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Honesty-Humility• Emotionality• Extraversion• Agreeableness• Conscientiousness• Openness	<p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Abilities <p>Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge• Qualifications <p>Attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Style• Attitudes• Values

Nature versus nurture

**Nature:
Personality**

Example:
An individual has high levels
of Conscientiousness

**Nurture:
Values**

High Power
They will focus their
conscientiousness effort on
dominating both resources
and people

High Benevolence
They will focus their
conscientiousness effort on
the welfare of those close to
them

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Recruitment and promotion?

- Assess potential employees and promotees to see if they are likely to be able to cope with more power

Psych testing

Risk Summary

This is a brief summary of risk calculations and further explanations are provided within this report.

Area of Assessment	Risk Rating
Intelligence	High
Personality	Medium
Values	Medium
Counterproductive Work Behaviours	High
Gender	Medium
Ethnicity	High
Age	Low
Disability	Low
Safety Behaviours	Medium

Psych testing – SACS 6 Personality

Integrity-Modesty ⓘ	High is better	54	Average	Absence of Anger ⓘ	High is better	43	Low
Genuineness ⓘ	High is better	52	Average	Unlikely to Carry a Grudge ⓘ	High is better	31	Very Low
Rule Favouring ⓘ	High is better	80	Very High	Unlikely to be Harsh ⓘ	High is better	31	Very Low
Absence of Creed ⓘ	High is better	42	Low	Doesn't Have to Have Things their Way ⓘ	High is better	59	High
Absence of Arrogance ⓘ	High is better	43	Low	Slow to Anger ⓘ	High is better	52	Average
Conscientiousness ⓘ	High is better	49	Average	Emotionality ⓘ	Low is better	50	Average
Likes to be Organised ⓘ	High is better	37	Low	Threat Sensitivity ⓘ	Low is better	41	Low
Committed to Hard Work ⓘ	High is better	63	High	Anxiety ⓘ	Low is better	56	High
Detail Minded ⓘ	High is better	37	Low	Lack of Independence ⓘ	Low is better	57	High
Makes Decisions Carefully ⓘ	High is better	57	High	Overly Empathic ⓘ	Low is better	46	Average
Extraversion ⓘ	Depends on role	55	Average				
Social Confidence ⓘ	Depends on role	58	High				
Happy to be Center of Attention ⓘ	Depends on role	55	Average				
Like to be in Company ⓘ	Depends on role	56	High				
Cheerfulness and Optimism ⓘ	Depends on role	50	Average				

360 degree Feedback

- 360 degree feedback can give you an indication of whether a person is likely to fall prey to the negative effects of power and what you might need to do to optimise their leadership style.
- The most effective form for assessment of leadership is 360-degree feedback in the following format:
 - Pre-test
 - Competency development through action learning and coaching
 - Post-test (e.g., 6 months down the track)

360 degree Feedback

360 DEGREE FEEDBACK

LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS

- 1 Creates a learning environment
- 2 Supportive leadership
- 3 Fosters teamwork
- 4 Empowers others
- 5 Creates clarity about performance standards
- 6 Effective management of underperformance
- 7 Creates clarity about appropriate behaviours
- 8 Effective management of counterproductive behaviour
- 9 Celebrating success
- 10 Optimism and positivity

BACKED BY RESEARCH

SACS partnered in 2015 with Deakin University on a major study of staff engagement. From the results of this study we developed a normative 30 question questionnaire which measures the 10 most important leadership behaviours.

LEADER DEVELOPMENT

Gain evidence based development plans for participating leaders to optimise wellbeing and productivity.

STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Leadership behaviours have proven to be strong predictors of staff engagement which is an excellent predictor of work outcomes and productivity.

Good 360 degree feedback relies on a sound and ethical "governance" process. SACS will advise how to do this effectively.

360 degree Feedback

360 DEGREE FEEDBACK PROCESS



Empathy and Helen Riess

- **Empathy will help diminish the “damage” of acquiring power.**
 - Eye contact
 - Muscles of the face
 - Posture
 - Affect
 - Tone of voice
 - Hearing the whole person
 - Your response.

Conclusions

- Power is powerful in human relationships
- In general, power seeking without “protective factors” is a potential negative in leaders and colleagues
- It indicates a risk of negative behaviours such as self interest and domination
- It also tends to increase the likelihood of severe CWBs such as sexual harassment
- What you really want from people is an outcome focus, not a power focus
- You can assess for these characteristics before you hire or promote, and it’s a good idea to do so.

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