

LAP Leadership, Attitude, Performance ...making learning pay!

Emotional Intelligence LAP 9 Performance Indicator: EI:018

You've Got Personality

Personality Traits in Business

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PAGE**

**Your unique personality
Traits worth developing
Three steps toward change**

So What?

Both Amir and Felicia were hired to work at the community pool for the summer. Amir always shows up on time, while Felicia is frequently late. When gate traffic is slow, Amir tidies up the concession stand, while Felicia makes phone calls to her friends. Sometimes, their boss asks them to work about an hour late. Amir readily agrees, while Felicia says she's busy and can't stay. At the end of the summer, the pool manager gives Amir a promotion and a raise for next year but doesn't encourage Felicia to apply. Can you understand why?

Each person has his/her own set of personality traits and others are not. Some are several desirable traits and some are not. Are you considering a career in business? Keep reading to learn more about the personality traits you should cultivate for success.

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Personality Traits

Your personality

You may have heard the term “trait” before without understanding what it means. A **trait** is a personal characteristic expressed by a regular pattern of behavior. When you act in certain ways consistently over a period of time, those actions become associated with you; they become part of the personality that you project to others. Let's say you're stressed today, and you lose your temper with your little sister. This doesn't mean that losing your temper is one of your personality traits. It's only part of your personality if you do it over and over again.

Types of traits

There are three general types or categories of personal traits—physical, mental, and emotional. **Physical traits** include such characteristics as age, gender, race, height, weight, hair color, eye color, and build. You can describe a person's physical traits just by looking at him/her. **Mental traits** are associated with your intellectual abilities—remembering, comprehending, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. **Emotional traits** involve your attitudes, feelings, values, and temperament.

Objectives:

- A** Describe desirable personality traits in business.
- B** Describe steps that can be taken to change undesirable personality traits.

A trait is a personal characteristic expressed by a regular pattern of behavior.





Study the following list of desirable personality traits. As you read, try to determine where your own strengths and weaknesses lie.

Dependability

Being **dependable** means you are reliable, and you do what you say you will do. It also means you show up for work on time every day (unless you have a valid reason for being absent or late). Dependable people honor their commitments and obligations. If they have a deadline at work, they meet it. They comply with the rules (written and unwritten), carry their own weight, and avoid imposing on other people.

Industriousness

Industriousness is being ready, willing, and able to work hard. Industrious people care about and take pride in the quality of their performance. There is no room for laziness in a business career. No one ever achieves success by taking short cuts or just "sliding by." You can demonstrate industriousness by showing up at work prepared to take on any task that might come your way. Also, treat each work task as if it's important, even if you don't think it is. Taking care of the little things will prove to your supervisors that you are ready for increased responsibility.

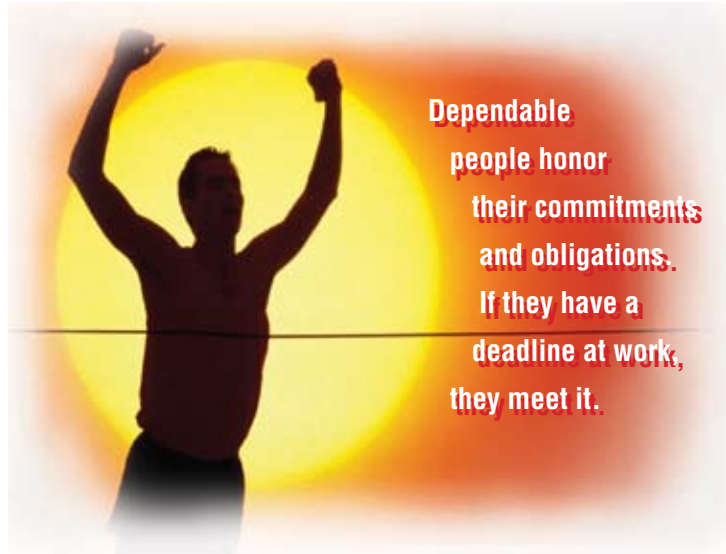


Honesty and integrity

Honest people set high personal standards for their own behavior. Others can rely on them to be trustworthy, to be fair, and to keep their promises. If you want to be known for your integrity, be yourself. Learn to present a real image, and avoid lies and falsehood in all forms. Don't listen to or spread gossip, and never betray a confidence. When trust is broken, it is very hard to earn back.



At work, honesty and integrity also involve maintaining company confidentiality and respecting company property. As an employee, you may have information about your company that shouldn't be made public. Perhaps it's information about a new product in development or an upcoming merger. Your company will expect you to keep this news to yourself until the appropriate time. You can respect company property by treating it with care and using it for work purposes only.



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The Gray Zone

Some personality traits may help you get ahead in business, but they may not be the most desirable traits. For example, in a high-pressure sales job, you may be working for commission and need to make all the sales you can get. Aggressiveness may help you make more sales, but is it necessarily a desirable trait? Or perhaps you're working as an attorney, and to win a case, you need to be aggressive. You know that does the end information for

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Alteration in action

You can start changing undesirable traits by first listing at least three that you would like to change. Then, rank the traits in order of how important it is to you to change them. Remember that when attempting change, it is important to concentrate on only one trait at a time. After all, change isn't easy. You don't want to become overwhelmed. The trait you most want to change should be the first you try to alter. There will be time to work on the other ones later.

Think of things that you can do (or not do, as the case may be) to change the undesirable trait that you have identified. Write these down to help you keep track. Each time you carry out one of these actions, place a checkmark beside it. At the end of each week, count the number of checkmarks you have for each activity and re-evaluate how the trait is affecting your life, your work, and your relationships.

Remember, for change to occur you need to—

1. Identify your undesirable personality traits.
2. Determine which trait you most want to change.
3. Consciously try to change it by:
 - a. Listing things that you can do to change it.
 - b. Keeping a record of the progress you make.

Summary

Undesirable traits can be changed. First, you must recognize your undesirable traits. Second, you must want to change them. Third, you must take action.

Make It Pay!

Throughout the next week, pay attention to the personality traits that you exhibit—at work, at school, and at home. Write them down in your notebook. At the end of the week, list the positive traits you possess that give you strengths in certain areas? What areas do you need to improve? Choose what you feel is your best trait and also the trait you most need to improve.

"I'm really glad I took the steps to organize myself. I'm accomplishing more in a shorter amount of time!"



1. List some undesirable personality traits.
2. Describe the three steps you can take to change undesirable personality traits.

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