



The benefits of a self-aware organization

Section one

Introduction

If you love taking assessments, you may already be sharing the results of your PI Behavioral Assessment with your friends and urging them to take the assessment too. If you're more skeptical, you may be wondering about the science of a tool that can tell you so much about yourself, so quickly.

Here at The Predictive Index, we invite you to bring your skepticism to the conversation. In fact, we're about to make the case for why you should invite everyone you work with to join you on this journey of self-discovery and self-awareness. We figure some of them are skeptics too, so we'll give you all the detail you need to convince them to come along.

Section one

Psychometrics

Honestly, we love when people ask questions about our methodology. The PI Behavioral and Cognitive Assessments are based on a mountain of real, rigorous, peer-reviewed science. We love guiding people through it, and teaching them how to use the resulting people data insights as a map for their work relationships.

Our assessments—and all of the behavioral patterns and Reference Profiles that come from them—are grounded in decades of road-tested psychological research. They grew out of two very well-established, well-researched areas of psychology:

- **Personality psychology**—This seeks to understand and measure enduring characteristics and traits that drive human behavior.
- **Cognitive psychology**—This seeks to understand and measure how the brain processes information, including memory, reading, and problem-solving.

A high self-awareness score

was the strongest predictor of overall success in leadership.

**GREEN PEAK PARTNERS AND
CORNELL UNIVERSITY**

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Additionally, the PI assessments draw from two related sub-fields:

- **Psychometrics**—This is the science of actually measuring mental capacities and processes.
- **Industrial and organizational psychology**—This is a field specifically devoted to the science of the workplace, including employee selection, performance management, leadership, coaching, training effectiveness, etc.

Our behavioral assessment—which dates back 60 years and has been certified by the EFPA—is a four-factor test. It measures four factors:

1. Dominance
2. Extraversion
3. Patience
4. Formality

Your answers form a pattern, and from that pattern, we're able to match you to the most likely Reference Profile (there are 17).

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There are no right or wrong answers on this assessment, and no good or bad outcomes. Great employees and leaders exist in every Reference Profile (and sadly, so do not-so-great employees and leaders.) The point of the PI Behavioral Assessment is not to pigeon-hole anyone, but to gain knowledge and understanding—of ourselves and of our co-workers.

Why should we bother with tests like these? What can they really tell us?

A lot, as it turns out. Reference Profiles are a particularly valuable tool for helping us to develop EQ (emotional intelligence). In fact, Reference Profiles contribute directly to all five of the key factors that underpin EQ:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Empathy
- Relationship management
- Effective communication

Emotional intelligence is one of the strongest predictors of success, so understanding ourselves and our coworkers is a direct path to better performance.

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Reference Profiles can help us at work to:

- **Build self-awareness.** Sometimes it takes an objective third-party to alert us to things we haven't noticed about ourselves, or to help us to better communicate our goals and needs to others. And our people management study taught us that 99.99 percent of respondents think it's important that managers are self-aware.
- **Practice positive psychology.** For decades, psychologists sought only to diagnose abnormal pathologies and to find problems, but the advent of positive psychology has organizations, teams, and individuals taking a closer look at what's working well, and trying to replicate it.
- **Manage to our strengths.** Playing to your strengths at work just makes sense. We call it working "in preference." When we align people's innate behavioral drives with the right projects and teams, we set ourselves up for success. Scientific assessments help clearly articulate and quantify those behavioral drives.

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THE SELF-AWARE INDIVIDUAL

Section two

The self-aware individual

Maybe the first question you asked when you read your Reference Profile was “Is this true?” The next question is often “How can I use this information?”

Your behavioral report is a goldmine of information that can help you to better identify your own needs at work. It may give you insight into how others see you, or it may give you a new awareness of yourself. Scholars tell us self-awareness can increase our communication and confidence, it can make us better leaders, it can help our decision-making, and it can even predict job performance.

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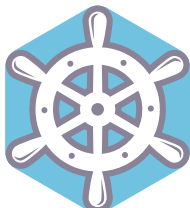
**So how can you put this new insight to work for you immediately?
Here are a few ways:**

See yourself through the eyes of others.

One of the most revealing aspects of your [Reference Profile](#) is the unflinchingly objective view of your own behavior it offers. Confusing feedback you've had in the past may suddenly become clearer after you read your profile and see how your behavior might look to others.

Understand yourself better.

If you're a highly self-aware person already, your Reference Profile might have been full of information you already knew. But even for the most introspective among us, a profile can still hold a few surprises. For some, it's affirming to see your needs articulated so clearly. For others, there's comfort in knowing those needs are perfectly legitimate, understandable, and common.



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Find opportunities for growth.

These revelations can also highlight areas in need of self-improvement. As you look through your profile, try to identify which observations you find affirming, and which feel like opportunities for change.

Help others understand you.

Now that you see how you might be coming across, you have a real opportunity to communicate more clearly to coworkers and managers. Your report offers objective language to frame conversations with coworkers about how you like to work. For example: you can share your report directly with your peers and manager so that they can understand more about your work style.

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Set expectations and limits.

You may also want to use your report as a tool to help you set goals and boundaries. For example, you can ask your peers to give you the time you need to process information—or ask your boss for opportunities to solve problems on your own—without feeling self-conscious or needy. Your report shows that you're wired to think and work this way.

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THE SELF-AWARE COLLEAGUE

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The self-aware colleague

This is where paying it forward comes in. As Stephen Covey once said, **“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”**

The information you’ve gained about yourself is invaluable at work (and sometimes at home, too). But, if you’re like most of us, you’ve already started wondering about the Reference Profiles of those you work with. What do they need to be happy and successful at work? How are your styles compatible? Where might you both need to give more effort when working together?

If your own motivations can be misunderstood, is it possible you’re also misunderstanding some of your peers’ motivations? As valuable as understanding yourself might be—so is being able to understand everyone around you. As one study from Cornell found, “the more that team members engage in role identification exchanges early in the team’s life cycle, the better the team’s performance.”



Seek first to
understand,
then to be
understood.

STEPHEN COVEY

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The self-aware colleague

The first action many people take after reading their own PI profile is to pass the Behavioral Assessment along to work friends. **Here are a few of the benefits of knowing your co-worker's' behavioral styles:**

- Find out what make your colleagues tick.
- Play to their strengths when distributing work or responsibilities.
- See how your colleagues are similar to and different from you.
- Interpret and communicate with colleagues better.
- Avoid conflict and clear up misunderstandings.

Most of us have worked in some kind of group and team settings at work. Team environments can multiply our strengths, but they can also magnify our differences.

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Here are a few ways that understanding the profiles of colleagues can help your teams work more smoothly:

Build balanced teams.

Have you ever been on one of those combative teams that is all coaches and no players? Or one where conversations go in circles for hours, with no one willing to step up or make a decision? This happens when the team members have very similar behavioral drives. Studies show that diverse teams are smarter and more effective. This concept extends not only to race and gender, but also to behavioral personality type. Knowing everyone's Reference Profiles can help us build balanced teams, and set us up for success.

Understand team personality.

Most teams tend to take on a personality of their own. It's helpful to have information about the members of a team as we observe the team itself. It might enable us to re-create a great dynamic again (or avoid poor dynamics in the future). For example, if we're assembling an exploratory team to take risks and push past barriers, that team requires a much different mix of behavioral profiles than a team that's meant to thoughtfully research a problem.

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Assign team roles.

Another benefit of understanding behavioral profiles is that it gives us insight when it comes to assigning roles to team members. Our traits will draw us naturally to accept roles such as leader, auditor, scribe, etc. When assigning roles to team members, leaders should seek to match roles to each employee's individual style and preferences.

Team work styles

Every team tends to evolve a set of formal or informal values of its own. Knowing your team members' Reference Profiles can help you set up processes and ground rules right away. Is this a team that will hold regular meetings and adhere to an agenda? Is this a team that will prefer to set objectives and check in via email? Or is this a team that will call meetings dynamically as events occur, and quickly parse out action items? Now you can make those decisions up front in a way that makes everyone more comfortable.

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The self-aware leader

If you're a manager or leader, you probably read your behavioral report and immediately thought: **"How can I get this information for my reports?"**

Asking your team to complete the PI Behavioral Assessment is a great way to create a self-aware team—one that works both more cooperatively. When used thoughtfully, Reference Profiles can be the super-power that launches you to success.

In fact, according to a joint study by researchers from Green Peak Partners and Cornell University, **a high self-awareness score was the strongest predictor of overall success in leadership.** If that isn't enough to convince you, consider this study by Korn Ferry:



There is a direct relationship between the stock market performance of an organization and the self-awareness of its leaders.

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The self-aware leader

It isn't just about self-awareness, though. A behavioral profile can also be a catalyst for important conversations with each one of your employees—helping them to articulate their needs and allowing you to customize coaching and development plans that align with their goals and strengths.

Assessments are a powerful reference point—and a consistent reminder that each employee has unique needs that must be taken into consideration.

Here are some of the ways behavioral assessments can help you to be a stronger leader:

Understand how you lead.

Use your own profile to become aware of your leadership style—with its strengths and blind spots—and be sure your team members are aware of the best way to work with you. You can compare your profile to your employees' profiles, understand how you're coming across to them, and understand when and for whom you should clarify your directions.

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Coach and develop your team.

Behavioral profiles can play a clarifying role in both coaching and giving feedback. They help you to easily manage to an employee's strengths and adjust to their communication and feedback needs. Profiles can also help you in succession planning and developmental planning—facilitating conversations with employees about their professional goals and identifying which roles may be best suited for which team members.

Bring in the right talent.

Hiring can be a challenge in any organization, and understanding the behavioral patterns of incoming candidates can help you find the right fit for a role, hire for team cohesion, and also ensure a good mix of behavioral diversity in your organization.

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THE SELF-AWARE WORKPLACE

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The self-aware workplace

Let's put all that together.

When you empower an entire team of individuals with deep insights into their own motivations and those of others, what happens? We know from studies that **high self-awareness levels in organizations lead to better decision quality, coordination, and conflict resolution.** What becomes possible with 100 percent participation across an organization?

Here are just a few outcomes you can expect when everyone in your company takes a behavioral assessment and leverages the resulting data insights:

Your employees will become more empathetic.

Human brains like complete stories, says psychologist Brené Brown, and so they tend to fill in gaps in information. Often, the way we complete those pictures is with cognitive biases. Behavioral assessments take away the guesswork and offer us real wisdom. With this deeper insight, we're able to understand our co-workers' stories and be more empathetic to their points of view.

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Your organization will have less infighting.

Healthy conflict is a part of work life. It's important to have space for disagreement and conflicting ideas. But when those disputes move from disagreement about ideas to conflict centered on behavior and personality, a workplace can quickly become toxic. Knowing the motivations and work styles of colleagues helps to head off unnecessary personal conflict. We can also better navigate any disagreements that do arise, because we understand how to communicate in a more empathetic manner that's tailored to the individuals involved.

You'll nurture a culture of trust.

Many organizations struggle with finding a way to have constructive conversations around behavior—fearing that it may become too personal or confrontational. Companies that use and share Reference Profiles give their employees permission to become more open and more vulnerable—and therefore more trusting. We become closer to our co-workers through mutual understanding, and we have permission to have conversations about behavior that we might otherwise avoid. All of this leads to a more open, nurturing culture.

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CONVINCING YOUR COLLEAGUES TO OPT IN
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Section six

How to convince your colleagues to opt in

So after all this reading, we hope you're convinced of the **value of a self-aware workplace**. How can you get your colleagues to opt in—or better yet, how can you convince your senior leaders to opt in and use behavioral assessments and people data insights in your organization? Here's a quick five-step guide:

1. Share your Reference Profile with your team and your boss.
2. Ask your best work friends to take the assessment and get the word out.
3. Use your profile as part of your conflict resolution process and suggest others take the assessment, too.
4. Post your Reference Profile at your desk and invite people to ask about it.
5. Share this guide!



Creating and nurturing a self-aware workforce is a way of continuously laying down the infrastructure to support a more engaged, more empathetic, and ultimately more productive (and successful) organization.

Explore your Reference Profile, get a few of your colleagues on board and excited—and be sure to reach out to us directly at The Predictive Index. We'd be happy to give you a tour of the platform and a walk-through of the talent optimization discipline.

Visit www.predictiveindex.com to learn more and contact us today!

