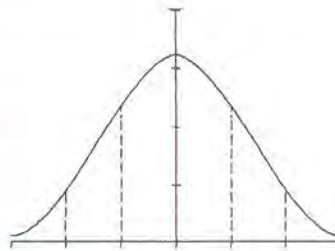


16 PF Newsletter

In this article, Ken Rawling considers the nature of control as a personality variable and says why he thinks it should be re-introduced into society.



BETTER CONTROL

Like many of the terms used in occupational testing, the word 'control' is given different meanings by different authors and publishers. The table below provides a frame of reference for this important area of personality and gives examples of scales that (in this author's opinion) measure each aspect of it.

Not all of the scales listed as examples are *called* control, but they all incorporate control into their definitions. [Eg the MBTI Judging preference, which is 'correlated with attempts to create order in the environment, as shown in correlations with scales such as control.' (MBTI® Manual, Third Edition, page 183)]

Three types of control	Examples of scales
CONTROL OF SELF Cognitive Affective Interpersonal	16PF Factor G Rule-Consciousness 16PF4 Factor Q ₃ Self-Sentiment FIRO C _w Wanted Control
CONTROL OF OTHERS	OPQ Concept R1 Persuasive OPQ Concept R2 Controlling FIRO C _e Expressed Control
CONTROL OF EVENTS	16PF5 Factor Q ₃ Perfectionism HJ17 Scale 12 Responsive - Organised MBTI® Judging/Perceiving

Control of self can be divided into three closely related areas. The kind of moral control exercised by 16PF Factor G+ (all versions) seems to me to be primarily cognitive in nature, in contrast to the control of emotions and anti-social behaviour exercised by Factor Q₃ (all versions except 16PF5), aptly described by Karson and O'Dell as 'the ability to bind anxiety'.

It may seem odd to classify the FIRO wanted Control scale in the self-control category, but I would argue that a disposition to accept control from others - for whatever reasons - is an important source of self-control.

It is also true to say that, for many people, self-control stems from feelings of empathy and connectedness to others, [a point of view expressed very clearly by a Youth Project Leader in one of the few intelligent contributions to the recent debate about the murder of Damilola Taylor (Channel 4 News, 29 November 2000).]

The authors of personality questionnaires are slightly reticent about referring to the second area of control as 'control

over others', but this is essentially what it means. Perhaps we should call this type of control 'influence', to make it clear that it includes consensual and participative styles of control, not just directive and autocratic ones.

The OPQ Persuasive scale has been included in this category because a disposition to persuade people and win them over to your point of view [by putting forward convincing arguments and

presenting things to best advantage] is just as much a form of control as a disposition to take responsibility for people and provide them with leadership and inspiration.

The third area of control represents the whole area of time management and control over events: organising and scheduling them, managing the sequence in which they occur, and creating order and structure in some aspect of the external environment. People who have high levels of this kind of control like to impose a preconceived plan or structure on events rather than responding to them as they occur.

For this frame of reference to be a meaningful and useful way of understanding control, the three facets should be much more independent of each other than the scales that comprise them. This does seem to hold true for Control of Others and Control of Events. The correlations between FIRO expressed Control and MBTI Judging, for example, are usually found to be low or non-significant, whereas the correlations between scales within the Control of Events area such as 16PF5 Factor Q₃ and Judging are usually found to be .5 or above. The distinction between Control of Events and Control of Self is less clear-cut, but it is still a useful distinction to make in individual cases.

Different people obviously can be 'controlled' by different aspects of control. It is quite possible to be highly organised without being particularly self-controlled, or to be very self-controlled and rule-following without having much interest in controlling others.

And there is a great paradox about control that needs to be taken into account in trying to gain a better understanding of it. Those of us who develop our own internal standards to govern our behaviour as well as/instead of 'internalising the rules of the milieu in which we function' are classified by the 16PF and

NEW VENUE - The Naval Club, 38 Hill St Mayfair, W1

- ① 6th February AM: Temperament & Motivation - SHL
6th February PM: Unusual Profiles
- ② 17th May AM: Creativity & Innovation - Dr Patterson
17th May PM: Servant Leadership - Madeline McGill
- ③ 20th June: To be arranged

other personality questionnaires as less controlled, but this is somewhat debatable. We may simply have higher standards than society at large (not difficult nowadays), or we may take the view that referring to our own standards as well as other people's enables us to look at a wider range of options and produce more tailored solutions. Surely the quality of the control is more important than where the control comes from?

I do believe that we have seen a dramatic decline in the value attached to control during the last few decades, starting harmlessly enough with the events of the early 1960's, but progressing to the point where Britain is beginning to look like an experiment in the creation of a control-free society. (Except that the absence of control in some areas, usually the most important ones, is juxtaposed with high levels of control in others: Class A drugs are changing hands in the shopping precinct, but I am given the third degree by my pharmacist when I try to buy a packet of Sudafed).

I am travelling into London by train from one of the airports. Well before we reach the inner suburbs, every flat surface beside the track and every reachable part of every building alongside it is covered in graffiti. The sides of the track and the embankments and the paths and gardens and open spaces backing onto the railway line are littered with drinks cans, aerosols, plastic bottles and containers, plastic sheeting, fast food waste, and dozens of other kinds of rubbish, together with occasional larger items such as broken lavatories and supermarket trolleys (not to mention the conveniently-placed concrete slabs and gas cylinders and other debris left behind after track repairs).

The state of the country is reflected in the view from the train window, and the view from the train window provides an analogy for the three areas of control. Uncontrolled personal behaviour (in this case, defiling the environment with litter) is matched by a lack of influence control (persuading people not to do so) and event control (clearing up the mess), by huge numbers of individuals and organisations.

I can guess from the expressions on the faces of some of the continental passengers, which of them are visiting 'cool Britannia' for the first time. I think to myself: you ain't seen nothing yet....

So, yes, I would like to see a change in social attitudes towards control. It would have to be the right kind of control, of course, and subject to all the usual controls, but I think it would be a good thing. Better control would help to protect people from themselves and from each other, and it would make it easier for people to apply themselves and realise their potential. I think a lot of people might be in favour of it.

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The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® and FIRO-B are available from Oxford Psychologists Press Ltd., Lambourne House, 311-321 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7JH.

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The OPQ is published by Saville & Holdsworth Ltd., 3 AC Court, High Street, Thames Ditton, Surrey KT7 0SR.

16PF Forms 4 and 5 are published by ASK, Hanover House, 2-4 Sheet Street, Windsor, Berks. SL4 1BG.

The HJ17 is published by Hatfield Jefferies, Cardinal House, The Green, Hampton Court, Surrey, KT8 9BW

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Active Listening When A++ Meets M++

If it's confession time, and New Year resolution time, then I have an admission to make. I have long been aware that my active listening skills are not what they should be. Last year I made two resolutions. First, that this was going to be my year of political incorrectness. In that I have succeeded magnificently, upsetting a number of people in the process. The second was that I would improve my active listening skills.

Most of us will know the theory of active listening even if we find the practice pretty hard. We know that we need to respond positively to what people are saying, making it clear to them that we are paying attention. Phrases such as "... so what you are saying is..." and a "... let me check that I've understood so far..." This reassures your listener that in spite of your glassy-eyed look you are interested in what he or she has to say and that you have been listening. Even NCGs (non committal grunts) are good conversational lubricants and serve as monosyllabic confirmation that you are not on another planet.

But active listening is all very well for those whose A, E, and M scores are around the middle of the scale. What do you do if one party is almost off the end of the A scale and the other almost off the end of the M scale? Ah, I hear you say, the A+ chap is talking a load of rubbish anyway, so you can safely switch off and let him prattle on. Would that it were so!

I chose the visit of an old friend to test and improve my active listening skills, and I knew it would be a sore trial. The trouble is, he's so interesting, and that sparks off all sorts in my mind. I thought if I could demonstrate active listening skills with him, well... When at home he is so desperate for conversation that he says he actually invites the Jehovah's Witnesses in. Two hours later they leave exhausted. But no doubt with a different perspective on their religious beliefs. He can be that persuasive.

During his five-day visit he treated us to long expositions on subjects as diverse as philosophy, the Kray brothers and gang warfare; the character of the Spanish people and the idiosyncrasies of their language; poetry, how much he dislikes Hughes and Eliot but loves Philip Larkin and Wendy Cope; Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling; his wartime experiences shovelling coke at four ton an hour in the merchant navy to achieve the Board of Trade record; how the oldest profession operated in Bristol during WW2; falconry and how he trained his kestrel; how when principal of his prep school he insisted that his boys came back from field trips covered in mud as proof that they had enjoyed themselves; his tussles with the schools inspectorate; the problems of teaching Latin to young boys who had just discovered the delights of the flesh; going on the judo mat with a ferocious man called Black Ben from the Gorbals area of Glasgow (he had a hairy chest like that of a gorilla.) I could go on. And on.

On the Saturday we drove down the M1 to a classic car show. The traffic was heavy, a fact to which he was completely oblivious, not being a car driver. (On his own admission he has not yet emerged from the nineteenth century, and has just about mastered the telephone.)

Imagine the scene:

I am in the middle lane of the M1. A large lorry behind is intimidating me by flashing his lights. I'm doing seventy for God's sake. There is an erratic driver on the inside lane, a car in front of me, and Michael Schumacher is about to cut in from the outside lane. I am also looking for a signpost for the next junction. That's more than enough going on in the external world to demand my attention. But I'm M+ and so I like to do my thinking and planning on car journeys. Even worse, other people's comments spark ideas that I run through my head - but they won't know about it. (Perhaps an M+ should never be

on the M1.)

Those readers who did Eng. Lit. with their psychology studies may remember James Joyce's stream of consciousness style, or a version of it called *interior monologue*. I'll try to recall the occasion in that vein. This is what it was like for an M+:

Alec: Did you know that our archers at Agincourt used bows that were made from Spanish wood?

Me: No. (*For God's sake, Alec, the bandit behind me is about three feet off my bum. But that's interesting. Don't know much about Agincourt.*)

Alec: Oh yes. You see at the time we couldn't meet the demand from our own resources. The long bow had dominated the battlefield for around four hundred years. Certainly up to the 15th century.

Me: Just a sec, Alec. Is that a turning up there?

Alec: (Ignoring me.) Guess how many archers Henry V had at Agincourt?

Me: No idea. (*I need to think about the meeting on Monday. I should be doing that rather than thinking about Agincourt. Fat chance. Remember the active listening. You're ignoring him.*)

Alec: He had 7,500. Amazing. And he had another 2,500 men-at-arms. The army was depleted by dysentery, you know. So then Henry decided to head back for England. Had difficulty crossing the Somme.

Me: Well he would, with all that dysentery. Just a second Alec, we turn off here. (*Must try to keep up the active listening.*)

Alec: In the end he was down to 5,000 archers. But he won.

Me: *Turning coming up.* What's this, mate?

Alec: 1415.

Me: Is it that time already?

Alec: That's the date. You said, What's the date? 1415. Agincourt.

Me: (*Funny, I don't think I ever saw Henry V. Olivier. Must have done. Seen dozens of clips from it. And the speech. "...lend me your ears." He should have said "Not just your ears. . . ." Perhaps he was into active listening too. Alec's moved on from Agincourt. Sounds like we're at the battle of Corunna, now.*)

Alec: Not a lot of people know that.

Me: What?

Alec: Corunna. 1809. The French had 20,000 men and we had only 15,000.

Me: *Active listening's going to pot. Must make an effort.* Tell me about that, Alec. *Hypocrisy.* Just a minute, did you see that signpost? *Damn, I think we've missed the turning.*

Alec: . . . and you see our men marched 250 miles through harsh winter conditions.

Me: (*I remember marching 25 miles. When was that? Few years ago now.*)

Me: What about their weapons? (*That'll keep him going. Give me thinking time. And I need to look out for the next fuming. No use relying on Alec.*)

Alec: Dreadful. Their guns kept overheating. They had to piss on them to cool them down.

Me: I never learned that in history. Why was it kept a secret?

Alec: You didn't read the right books, matey.

Me: *True. But then I didn't go to Ampleforth and St John's College, Cambridge. But I've been to Eton and the House of Lords - only in connection with work, unfortunately.*

The journey continued in the same manner, with Alec quoting me fascinating scraps of history and his wry observations on life, and me trying to practice active listening, whilst driving up and down the M1 and attending a classic car show. If it's tough for an A++ to stop talking it's just as tough for an M++ to be an active listener. Tougher, because the A++ is probably interested largely in his own chatter - he's a transmitter, after all - and the M++ posing as an active listener, is trying to be a receiver, in addition to adopting his usual thinking style of randomly pecking at ideas and words like a

When E+ meets E- or F+ and F-

Write a piece - short or long - on one of the above. The Editor would love to hear from you - and he really will listen ...

free range hen.

I had to say that my effort at active listening on that occasion might have just about scraped a C- in a very low-level examination.

Having written the above several days ago, I rang Alec last night. I grumbled about the weather. "It's been so wet here," I said, "the animals were going through the village two by two. And it's horribly dark."

"It's been worse," he said.

"When?" I asked, foolishly adopting my active listening style again.

"In 535 AD, everywhere was completely dark for two years as a result of volcanic ash."

I had no answer to that, other than "Really?" (But that's OK: that's active listening with a touch of politesse.)

Alec continued, "And around the time of the Black Death..." He was away. I didn't think I could face the Black Death so soon after the Christmas period - which is a sort of Living Death for consultants who seek work in corporations.

But it seemed nothing could now save me from a full exposition of the Black Death to be followed most probably, by the Great Fire of London. Then, miraculously, a voice from deepest Agaland:

"Dinner's ready".

Thank God.

So the second of last year's resolutions was less successful. But the political incorrectness, rebelling against the Thought Police... now that's something I can really warm to. That's my first resolution again this year. For my second resolution I shall develop Selective-Hearing Disorder. Or just revert to it.

Editor

I've said it before and I'll say it again... Looking beyond the obvious in the profile

Are you in danger of becoming a 16PF bore? You know the sort of conversation: "As soon as I saw A+, E+, and F+, I just knew he was the sales type. And when that was coupled with O- and Q-, well, it was obvious, wasn't it?"

No, I've never actually heard anyone talk *quite* like that - but I bet many of us have thought something on those lines when we have seen a similar profile. But we need to be reminded

SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL

The Editor welcomes contributions from members either as letters or as articles on the use of the 16PF.

Case histories, unusual assignments, as well as unusual profiles are welcome.

When submitting material, please enclose a 3 1/2" disk together with the printed copy. This saves re-typing and minimises the risk of mistakes.

occasionally of the danger of jumping to easy conclusions.

Here is a set of sten scores (16PF5) for a recent client:

A=4; B=8; C=4; E=5; F=3; G=4; H=3; I=5; L=7; M=4; N=4; O=7; Q₁=8; Q₂=10; Q₃=9 Q₄=5.

Global Factors: - Introversion = 3; Anxiety = 7; Tough Poise = 5; Independence = 6; Control = 7; Self-esteem = 4; Social adjustment = 3.

Hands up those who would give him a chance as a salesman? No one? Shame on you! Well, I must admit that I would have hesitated making such a recommendation myself, and that is because most of us carry a stereotypical view of the salesperson. The first thing to consider is: What is being sold? There is a world of difference for example between selling double-glazing, selling aeroplanes, and selling transformers. Or in the case of my client, selling computer and cable television systems.

"I'm not really a people person," he said, when he came to me for career counselling. "I've always liked solving technical problems, but I must admit I'm enjoying this job more than I thought I would. I've only been doing it about four months, and I have no intention of staying in it for very long, although with commission, I'm earning far more now than I've ever done."

Further probing gave me the insight into his success. "I always plan my calls," he said. He did his homework thoroughly, and although he didn't have the salesman's patter (that might have been a handicap anyway) he focused on practical solutions and paid attention to detail. He made sure that the installation people followed up his calls.

"I went to a client this week who complained that he had heard nothing since I saw him a month ago. I raised the matter at a sales meeting this morning, but I wasn't moaning. I just said that whatever the reason for the delay, the installation was now urgent. I said, 'We don't want to sit around apportioning blame. Someone else can do that. I just wanted the job completed.'"

He was task-centred, and a listener. His clients were likely to find his enjoyment of solving technical problems appealing. Now is it really surprising that he is already a successful salesman? How often have you found yourself inwardly groaning as the salesman rabbits on? Perhaps like me, you want less on football, less on traffic jams and house prices, and a lot more on solid factual information. Then you'll give him your order.

I have two further anecdotes regarding selling. At one point in a previous employment I assessed a number of our best representatives dealing with architects and specifiers. The man who was consistently the best over several years was quiet and reserved. In feeding back his 16PF4 results I probed around his score of E = 5. His comment? "How can you sell anything unless you listen very carefully to what the customer actually wants?"

My last point concerns again, a works-based technical specialist, who seldom stops talking. Factor A = 9, if I remember correctly. A friendlier chap you could not wish to meet. We sometimes meet by accident when carrying out our

Acknowledgement

The 16PF User Group gratefully acknowledges financial support from ASE NFER - NELSON, directed at defraying the production costs of the Newsletter. The Newsletter remains independent, and views expressed do not necessarily represent the views of ASE NFER - NELSON, or the Editor.

dog-walking duties. I was delighted when he told me of his promotion - still technical problem solving but on the customer's site and coupled with selling opportunities covering territory from Birmingham to the North of England. He could now wear a suit, he said, and he had the use of a company car. He no longer had to start work at 8.00 a.m. For some reason our paths didn't cross again for a few months. When we next met, I asked about the new job.

"I gave it up," he said. He must have noticed my expression of surprise. "Well it was so lonely," he said. "There was no one to talk to. You sit in the car all morning, then have a chat with the customer, and then drive all the way home again. Dreadfully lonely. I don't know how anyone can put up with it."

David Roberts
Editor

POSTPONED USER GROUP MEETING

The speaker still standing on platform 3 has been re-scheduled to arrive in London next May...

Unfortunately our November meeting had to be cancelled since so many people had travel problems at that time. Whether things will be much better by the time you read this is a moot point. It was disappointing because Madeline MCGill was due to talk in the morning about her recent experiences in USA and Fiona Patterson (author of the Innovation Potential Inventory) was to talk about creativity and innovation. The news story a day or so beforehand that it had taken one passenger 9 hours to travel from London to Nottingham did nothing to aid our cause.

The speakers are now re-scheduled for May, by which time we hope the trains are running normally. On the other hand, if they set off now...

NOMINATIONS FOR CHAIRMAN

The annual general meeting will be held after the next User Group meeting on 5th February. Brian Sullivan, will be standing down, having acted as our chairman for five years and nominations are invited. Nomination papers will be sent out with notification of the details of the February meeting.

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