

Understanding your Personal Qualities

Your personal qualities are the characteristics that make you who you are. As well as the knowledge and skills that you are able to bring to your work, your personal qualities define how you will go about applying yourself to a role or task. Learning how to identify and make best use of your personal qualities is an important part of being able to develop both personally and professionally.

What is it?

Your personality can make the difference between poor and great performance for both for yourself and your team – whether or not you’re consciously aware of how your personality is affecting your work.

Before you think this is all getting a bit too warm and fuzzy, it is worth picking up a copy of the Quarries Regulations 1999 because under Regulation 2(1) it states that:

“competent” in relation to a person means a person with sufficient training, experience, knowledge and other qualities to enable him properly to undertake the duties assigned to him, and “competence” shall be construed accordingly

Therefore personal qualities are an important ingredient in defining competence. Often overlooked alongside the rather easier to identify skills and knowledge criterion demonstrated by qualifications and training.

Some examples of personal qualities that employers look at are:

- Perseverance
- Self-discipline
- Ambition
- Attitude to risk
- Learning styles
- Extrovert vs introvert
- Confidence
- Flexibility
- Work ethic
- Positive mental attitude

Getting to Know Yourself

There are a number of tools and techniques available to help you get to grips with your own personal qualities:

Feedback

- Ask others about how they see you
- Use your appraisal with your line manager to help inform you
- 360 degree appraisals, where colleagues give you feedback on aspects of your performance and personality can be very powerful

Diagnostic Tools

There are a number of self-diagnostic tools available that can give you insights into aspects of your personality. Some that you might find useful are:

- **Psychometric Tests:** Myers Briggs Type indicator (MBTI), Clarity 4D and the California Psychological Inventory are just three amongst many tests available to help tease out aspects of your personality.
- **Learning Styles:** various tests and questionnaires are available to help you to better understand the way you prefer to learn. The Honey and Mumford model suggests four learning styles: Activist, Theorist, Reflector and Pragmatist.
- **Team Role:** in a team situation, which sort of role do you prefer to play and how does this change in different situations. Belbin's Team Role Inventory is useful in exploring these.
- **Leadership style:** there are several well-established models that seek to describe styles of leadership. Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model is one place to start, it looks at how your own style could or should change depending on the circumstances you find yourself in.

Coaches and Mentors

Enlisting the support of a coach or mentor can really help you to reflect upon your own performance and approach to work. This doesn't have to be a formal arrangement and can take place outside of work. A good coach will help you to better understand what drives you and how your personality traits can help or hinder the achievement of your goals.

Why is it important to me?

As a professional in the quarrying industry, it is important that you understand your own attributes and how they impact on you doing your job. Having an insight into the attitudes, behaviours and preferences of others helps to build teams and leads others towards successful performances. Understanding your own and others' personality traits can help with problem solving, particularly where the problem is rooted in behaviours.

IQ believes that understanding your personal qualities is an important skill for professionals working in the quarrying and minerals products industry. It features on our **Skills Wheel** which captures all the key skill and knowledge areas we believe are vital to successful career development in the industry.

Where Next?

A number of tools are referenced in the diagnostic tools list. For further reading on these please refer to the following websites:

Psychometric Tests

Myers Brigg: www.myersbriggs.org

Clarity 4D: www.clarity4d.com

California Psychological Inventory: www.cpp.com

Learning Styles

Honey and Mumford: https://www.open.edu/openlearn/ocw/pluginfile.php/629607/mod_resource/content/1/t175_4_3.pdf

Team Roles

Belbin: www.belbin.com

Leadership Styles

Blanchards Situational Leadership Model:
www.free-management-ebooks.com/faqld/leadtheory-06.htm

Further industry specific guidance on leadership and workforce engagement can be found at the QNJAC website:

<http://www.qnjac.co.uk/qnjac-guidance/leadership-and-workforce-engagement>

How Teams Work

Refer to the IQ Factsheet '**How Teams Work**' within the Engagement, Influence & Impact segment of the Skills Wheel.

Institute of Quarrying

IQ supports professionals working within the quarrying and minerals products industry through membership and training. These factsheets are produced across a range of topics to share ideas and best practice. Further information can be found via the resources section on the IQ website www.quarrying.org.