

FACTOR N: PRIVATENESS

FACTOR N IS A PRIMARY CONTRIBUTOR TO THE GLOBAL SCALE EXTROVERSION WITH HIGH SCORERS BEING MORE INTROVERTED AND NON-DISCLOSING AND LOW SCORERS BEING MORE OPEN AND FORTHCOMING

High scorers:

Individuals with high Factor N scores do not reveal their thoughts or feelings readily. Some deliberately wear a “mask” to hide or cover themselves and project a specific image. They are intent on presenting that image and avoid anything that may go against it. For others, they simply do not talk about themselves.

Researchers note that high scorers are actually very shrewd and sophisticated. They observe human nature and understand the impact of their actions on others. They are adept at predicting and interpreting the motives and reactions of others. They strategically use their social skills; good manners and appropriate etiquette to avoid offending and ingratiate themselves to others in an effort to achieve their goals. They can also be very calculating and use their guarded demeanor to avoid being taken advantage of.

Extremely high scorers (9-10):

Individuals with extremely high Factor N scores can severely limit their ability to develop close relationships. Since they are so adept at withholding personal information, they are difficult to get to know. They are often times so practiced at exhibiting the façade that it is automatic and exhibited regardless of who they are interacting with. Individuals with an extremely high Factor N score use their discretion as a defense mechanism against people who are controlling and manipulative. Unfortunately, it can also become a barrier to intimacy and the development of fulfilling relationships.

Low scorers:

People with low Factor N scores are very open and have no problem speaking of private matters. They show no hesitation in sharing their personal information with anyone who will listen. They are also open to receiving information from others. They have a genuine interest in both giving and accepting emotional nurturing from people.

Another view of low scorers is that they are naive about human nature. Their willingness to talk to anyone about anything reflects a level of unsophistication and a lack of concern with impressing others and making a good impression. This direct style can cause them to be seen as tactless or thoughtless.

Extremely low scorers (1-2):

People with extremely low scores may be unaware of how they come across to others or what others might do with the information they reveal. This limited insight may cause them to be taken advantage of or manipulated.

DESCRIPTORS FOR FACTOR N (PRIVATENESS)

LOW	HIGH
Forthright, open	Private, discreet
Revealing of personal matters	Diplomatic, non-disclosing
Self-disclosing, unguarded	Guarded, calculating
Genuine, artless	Socially sophisticated
Emotionally involved	Emotionally detached

How the Other 16PF Factors (Primary Scales) Impact Factor N

When considering any factor on the 16PF Questionnaire, it is important to remember that correlations exist between factors. These correlations contribute to an individual's rule consciousness and help us gain a true or clearer view of the individual.

Factors that correlate with a negative Factor N are a positive Factor A (warmth), Factor F (liveliness), Factor H (social boldness) and with a negative Factor Q2 (self-reliance).

Occupational Impact

A high N score is a very desirable trait in occupations that require a level of formality and privacy such as a secretary, accountant or clerk. Those with high N scores may also be drawn to occupations that require diplomacy such as public relations manager, therapist or attorney. In sales roles a higher score on this dimension is highly advantageous as it suggests an ability to play their cards "close to the vest" and aids in better negotiation skills. In managerial roles where diplomacy, weighing your words or keeping company information confidential is critical, a higher score is beneficial.

Salespeople who score lower on this dimension are too open and disclosing meaning they are generally too revealing and tend to either dominate the conversation as they are never quiet enough to listen effectively, they like to hear themselves talk and have never understood or learned the "power of silence". They tend to alienate people because they can never listen long enough or as well as they should. In managerial roles, the manager who is more open and revealing may inadvertently say things that need not be repeated but will do well in areas requiring that people be kept informed and up to date. Both require a delicate balance as either high or low scores can have a negative impact in the wrong situation.

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