



PDA *International*

DISCOVERING & EMPOWERING TALENT

PDA Personal Development Analysis



PDA Indicator Studies

Introduction

This material has been designed with the purpose of providing PDA users and Analysts solid grounds, which are based on field studies and monitored samples. This allows trusting the analysis and a better interpretation of the indicators. The PDA Assessment was developed over 15 years ago and since then has been successfully used to help individuals know and understand themselves and others. A lot has been written about the PDA Assessment's theory and history. It was born from a publication of Psychologist, Inventor and Theorist Dr William Moulton Marston in 1928. The PDA Assessment earned international consolidation as a tool that solidly supports recruiting and people management processes. Time has proven that this is a low cost, easy to use and fast to apply tool that is very useful to enhance self-knowledge as well as to learn about talents and predict behavioural styles in individuals and work teams.

This study is a deep analysis of each of the PDA Assessment® Indicators. We will share some cases and experiences that will allow PDA users and Analysts to strengthen their knowledge about the Self-control Axis and the PDA Assessment® Indicators.

Studies on the Energy Balance Indicator (EB):

The very first studies have shown that employees are sensitive to the way in which their leaders and organisations treat them. When employees perceive that the company they work for pays attention to their efforts, their performance results in better sustained productivity despite facing adverse conditions at work. In fact, experts in motivation and behavioural aspects have come to establish "economic values" to measure employees' motivation. It is not surprising that well motivated employees tend to hold better attendance records and longer stays in the organisation than less motivated employees. Since absenteeism and low productivity are costly for most organisations, every contribution that strengthens employees' motivation can have economic value.

The Energy Balance (EB) is a very sensitive variable in the motivation of the employee who wishes to be considered and valued in the workplace. The EB is the result of the proportion between the Energy Level (EL) value expressed in the Natural Profile and the activity value expressed in the Role Profile:

$$EB = \frac{\text{Role Profile Balance}}{\text{Natural Profile Balance}}$$

Natural Profile Balance

When the EB is below 39%, the person's self-concept (observed in the Natural Profile) shows higher sensitivity than the social role (observed in the Role Profile). When the EB is between 39-21%, discouragement and low self-esteem are observed; it is inferred that the person might be demotivated. An EB below 20% indicates the discouragement the person falls into due to the treatment received from the organisation. Very often, the individual has already updated his/her CV to start sending it out.

The EB can also be seen as the investment of energy people feel the current situation requires from them. It is expressed as the consequence of the Energy Level of the Natural Profile and the Energy Level of the Role Profile. A low EB suggests that employees perceive their job demands less energy than the one they have to offer. Sometimes, a low EB is observed in employees who are "contemplating the next promotion beyond their current job."

More often, when the EB is low, discouragement and the sense of lack of consideration from the organisation are observed. When a low EB continues during long periods of time, it can cause problems and negative results both for the individual and the organisation. In the case of individuals, their self-esteem will probably decrease and even affect and damage their self-concept. In the case of organisations, they can be affected because the potential of people is not being used properly, and this will affect employees' productivity significantly. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the EB because this will help enhance the employee's self-esteem and his/her contribution to the organisation.

When the EB is between 40-50%, in general, people are satisfied with the Energy Level that they consider the current situation demands. It is likely that their performance meets the expectations of the job. It is common to observe this EB level in old employees who achieve successful results.

These employees should only be relocated if it is necessary for the organisation, or due to the employees' interest.

When the EB is between 50-60%, it is likely that people feel motivated to achieve the objectives they believe are consistent with the expectations of the organisation. During an interview, individuals with an EB within this range normally enjoy work challenging situations in which they think that effort is supported and acknowledged.

When the EB is between 61-70%, it means that individuals perceive that the energy requirements of the current situation - observed in the Role Profile - are more than the ones they perceive in their self-concept - observed in the Natural Profile. This indicates that they perceive that the current situation demands a larger investment of energy than their own energy level.

When people's EB is between 71-79%, it is possible that the aspirational level is extremely high but that it has demanding goals which are still reachable.

A sense of unreality appears when the EB exceeds 80%. Individuals now see aspirations beyond their reach. Very often, they think that others' expectations are incredibly high and this compensates with an interior trend to set unreachable goals.

Some EB examples will now be explored:

1. A participant of a recent PDA Analyst Certification Seminar brought a dozen PDA Reports as practise examples. Those 12 PDA Assessments had been administered to employees of a company known for having a plant with "low technology" that was seriously being considered for closing. The employees of this plant were making a great effort to increase productivity but were not obtaining successful results.

Nine of the twelve PDA Reports showed an EB below 39%. One of the other three Reports indicated 40%. It was the Plant Manager's Report, who had already been transferred to another industrial plant within the same organisation.

2. As part of an internal team of a consulting programme, the Operations Vice President of a company completed the PDA Assessment. The Natural Profile was 90, 20, 30, 60, and a 56% Energy Level. The Role Profile was 90, 40, 30, 40, and a 56% Energy Level. The VP's EB was below 20%. Six months earlier, due to a reorganisation originated by the Board of Directors, the same Operations VP had lost his authority over three main departments. His co-workers described him, from their own perspectives, as someone who had "lost enthusiasm".
3. Natural Profile: 10, 40, 60, 90, and a 29% Energy Level. Role Profile: 10, 70, 30, 90, and a 49% Energy Level. The person's EB was above 80%. This is a 25-year-old person who requested

to undertake the Executive development programme offered by the company. Admission to the programme requires an MBA, and this employee has still not obtained his four-year university degree. This young man is currently working extra hours in a new position that is key to the success of an entire project. Although the project proved the need of an additional person, the employee with a high EB level did not perceive the significance, although the project was already delayed according to the schedule. In his personal life, the employee has been married for two years, has a baby and his wife is pregnant. The couple has recently bought a new car and a house.

The actions that Analysts must take based on this EB vary with the EB level. The first recommended action - as when observing other PDA variables - is to verify precision when comparing the behaviour of individuals and their perception of the situation.

- EB between 30-79% may not require any action; it depends on the situation.
- EB below 30%, and mostly above 20%, often indicates the need to (1) increase challenge at work and opportunities to obtain achievements, and (2) communicate openly with employees and acknowledge their achievements.
- EB over 80% normally suggests talking with employees in order to (1) redesign the position and tasks to provide more realistic objectives and demands, and (2) train or offer advice to employees to encourage them to have a more realistic level of aspirations.

When looking at the EB, Analysts must strictly act in accordance to the work situation and based on the interests and approval of employees and organisations.

Studies that enrich the interpretation of the Energy Level

Concept

PDA International understands that the Energy Level is the *supply of energy available in an individual* that contributes, to a great extent, to the general efficiency of the person's organism. This definition reflects the fact that we all have certain energy and organisms that generate said energy and that enable the display of the behavioural criteria that defines life. The more energy we possess in a given time, the farther we are from coma and death. When our reserve of energy is reduced due to work excess, we have to restore that supply by resting and, if the reserve of energy is affected and reduced by illnesses, we must restore it by taking complete rest and medicine. The energy level displays individual differences in our state of alertness, sensitivity, resistance at work and general efficiency of behaviour when dealing with the demands of daily life.

It is important to emphasise that this supply of energy or "liveliness" (which we call Energy Level) is totally different to the source of behaviour to which we refer when talking about how active or energetic a person appears to be. The latter indicates the way in which the person consumes or uses the available supply of energy. There isn't a necessarily direct relationship between the amount of energy a person has available and the way in which the person consumes it. Even when two individuals seem to display a similar amount of energy, they can differ in the capacity they have to maintain their behaviour during prolonged periods of time. In this way, "proactive" characteristics versus "reactive or receptive" characteristics that can differentiate people, are not related to the Energy Level concept. On the other hand, they are related to the Proactive or Reactive Axes.

It is worth mentioning that measuring the Energy Level is different from measuring the Intellectual Quotient or IQ. We can find individuals who have the intellectual ability to perform in demanding environments at doctorate level, but can be effective and efficient only during some hours or only a day a week. In contrast, we can understand that other individuals, without the level of intelligence or equivalent education achievements, can be efficient or effective during many hours running in their environments or settings. We can meet people with a moderate IQ who are very efficient when treating with their particular environments. On the other hand, we can also meet individuals who possess higher intelligence levels, but lose their efficiency or "run out of gas" after they get along, during periods of moderate effort, in tasks according to their intellectual abilities. Regardless the intelligence we measure, we also find that it is feasible to observe individuals in situations where they have too much to offer; as well as it is possible to see people in situations where they have very little vitality. For example, people who are perceived as problematic (constantly sticking their nose into other people's businesses, where they are not expected and where their bosses would rather they didn't get into) have often resulted in individuals whose positions had yet not demanded all the vitality they possess.

Of course, some sides of intelligence reflect the level of supply of energy or vitality of people in ways that contribute to efficient work performance. Such capacities are part when achieving

inventiveness flashes to solve long-existing problems with new ideas or to correct, in a fast and correct way, defective mechanical operations. These are some of the manifestations of intelligent behaviour that derive, largely, in a high Energy Level.

Another foundation within the concept of Energy Level lies in the fact that Marston considered vitality and efficiency as an innate characteristic in the physical composition of people. Marston arrived to this conclusion due to the abundant differences known between the individuals who displayed the inevitable consequences (according to him) of variable amounts of vitality. An example of what he meant is seen in the too common phenomenon of promoting people to their levels of incompetence. Apparently, the origin of this is largely due to the businesses and industry tendency to continue to promote people until they are finally assigned jobs where they are required to deal with higher levels of complexity and alertness demand, more knowledge and vitality than their innate supply of energy can allow them to manage successfully.

In relation to this, the vitality herein mentioned is not the kind that merely involves the ability to show muscular force during long periods of time. On the other hand, we refer to the ability to maintain productivity at work (whether intellectual or physical). This attribute is also related to aspects such as professional hierarchy and lack of illnesses.

The more demanding and full of responsibility the position is, the more pressure and work hours the job will impose. In this way, while people are promoted in the professional world, the energy and resistance they must have at work to bear the demands of every subsequent level is higher. Therefore, the number of sick days per year is reduced, according to statistics for progressively higher employment in the professional hierarchy. In effect, people who work more time and receive the heaviest pressures are those who miss less time at work due to illnesses.

It seems that people with higher innate energy (available to be used to resist to common illnesses) occupy progressively higher levels in the professional scale. Even doctors (also in a high level of occupational hierarchy) tend to be considerably less prone to illnesses than most of us - who are exposed to less potential infections than them.

Marston also believed that creative individuals who come up with genuinely new ideas generally express a high innate Energy Level through their ability to order associations or possible causeeffect relations of large multitudes of known facts, whereas others (with lower supply of innate energy) are unable to cleverly integrate in the same way. Marston also observed that individuals who have more accidents tend to be those who show low Energy Levels. The conclusion was that these accidents generally occurred due to a lower state of alertness, coordination and knowledge of the risks implied in the lowest levels of vitality or by the Energy Level that said people possess.

These are only some of the manifestations of the individual differences in the vitality or Energy Level that led Marston to develop the concept of Energy Level included in the PDA Report. When we see individuals that are rough, rude and show unproductive or negative qualities of several kinds, it is assumed that they lack an innate supply of energy. These people need to show their

particular behaviour pattern in a more sociably desirable and advantageous manner. They only lack the necessary vitality to make good use of their particular behaviours.

Given the correct opportunities and a problem-free mental condition, people who display their behavioural style in a productive, refined, sociably accepted and positive manner, are assumed to possess the adequate level of basic and vital energy. Such individuals are often described as possessors of a lower level of culture.

In contrast, people with high energy levels tend to have a more precise behavioural style, which is relatively distinguishable. These individuals generally show themselves as so intelligent and versatile in efficient behaviours that others refer to them as "geniuses" or "brilliant people".

This is then the global nature of what we herein refer to as "Energy Level". To make an adequate interpretation of the Energy Level values, it is essential to understand the nature of the measurement of our Energy Level.

Measurement

To begin with, it is important to understand that the value of the Energy Level obtained through the PDA Assessment is a good measurement. However, it is not a perfect measurement of what we call Energy Level. (No "test" qualification is a perfect measurement). A perfect measurement would provide a real interpretation of the amount of energy in people's organisms. The same happens when we test the voltage level in a car battery to see if it is 12 volts, 11 volts, etc. What we have is an indirect measurement of the level of vitality, state of alertness, knowledge and energy that individuals possess. This derives from the fact that the four main Axes of the PDA Assessment were designed as measurements of the complete model of behavioural impulses that constitute human concept.

Have in mind that there are individual differences between people regarding the parasympathetic or sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system; as well as balance-related types within their endocrine gland systems. Some individuals are naturally parasympathetic or hypoactive and are thus calm, manageable, immutable and slowly move forward around our world. Other more hyperactive "likeable" people are those who are in a hurry and bustling amongst us. Likewise, each of us has a characteristic perspective of life in this world. Some of us incline to see something threatening, antagonistic, unfavourable, hostile or bad much sooner than others when looking at particular situations of our daily lives. In contrast, other individuals tend to see something safe, favourable or friendly when looking at the same daily vital circumstances or situation.

In consequence, the PDA Assessment was designed based on the following premise: (1) The extent to which people function and (2) the characteristic perspectives of life are the only necessary operative basis to produce and explain the great variety of behavioural styles observed in people. This is true because these two characteristics act reciprocally in such a way that they are integrated by four fundamental components of behavioural direction (or Axes) that, in several

force combinations, produce an almost infinite variety of possible ways in which we can use our energy daily.

Therefore, it is assumed that the productivity of people who respond to the words on the PDA Form is characteristic of their global sensitivity of the world that surrounds them. At the same time, this global level of sensitivity is seen as dependent of the supply of vitality or energy that individuals have when completing the PDA Form.

We now encounter a practical problem related to the measurement of the Energy Level with the PDA Assessment: the fact that it derives at a particular moment. Individuals may or may not "be at the peak" of their supply of energy when responding to the words contained in the PDA Form. As you know, temporary declines occur during the optimal supply of individual energy as consequence of fatigue or illness. These declines in the Energy Level (EL) are displayed in the way in which people function, even when completing the form of an assessment. We have often heard people say that they were really tired when completing the form and "just couldn't select all the words" as they would usually do or had previously done when they "felt well".

It is also known that Energy Level values were very restricted in cases where individuals were afraid of completing the Form and chose the evasive tactic of saying so little about them as possible by selecting the number of words they considered acceptable. (The Pattern Profile is normally significant in these cases, although the Energy qualification is not.) Of course, this can be the result of a poor administration and could be described as the result of feelings of coercion of the person who completes the PDA Form. There can even be times when individuals feel they must complete the Form and do it without interest, although not in an openly evasive way. This causes a trend in the response that is much lower than it would be if the administration was carried out according to the principle of completing the PDA Form in a completely voluntary way. Approaching a person and saying: "Hey, complete this!" is clearly a bad administration of the PDA Assessment. Lastly, you can also receive completely different reactions under these conditions. Some individuals adopt the method of selecting all the words, except very few, when completing the PDA Assessment, in order to mark their stance and are therefore successful in masking themselves in front of the person who asked them to complete the form.

Interpretation

How are the Energy Level values interpreted? This refers to PDA Analysts' interest in the Energy value for describing individuals' behaviour in qualitative terms. The PDA profile of individuals shows the most noticeable qualities or characteristics of their behavioural style. However, the Energy Level value indicates how much "energy" there is behind the behavioural style of the person, according to how it is indicated in the pattern profile of the PDA Report. The more energy people have, the more likely it will be to see them shine, prepared and fast to "get ready". The less energy in their behavioural trends, the more likely it will be to see them more confused, muddled, slow to "get ready", and forgetful.

The indirect aspect of our measurement of the Energy Level and the corrections that must be made when special factors are found in the situation should not allow to dissimulate this fact: most Energy values are very useful indicators of an extremely important component within the total composition of the people who complete the PDA Form. In consequence, it is adequate that the interpretation of the Energy Level values are firstly useful for describing the global efficiency with which individuals behave in the style they are more prone to display and, secondly, for judging the compatibility with the demands of a given job position.

Studies on the Profile Intensity Indicator

The Profile Intensity (PI) is obtained when combining the value of the highest Axis of the PDA Graph with the value of the lowest Axis, considering only the four main Axes, that is, excluding the Selfcontrol Axis. These two Axes, that appear on the extremes of the Graph and are used to compute the PI, clearly describe the most relevant characteristics of the PDA profile and define the greatest difference between the Axes on the PDA Graphs of the individual.

Since standard error of measurement also exists in relation to each vector, we can be more confident in the interpretation of a PDA Graph with a higher PI (as long as it doesn't exceed 80%), than in the interpretation of a PDA Graph with a lower PI.

As can be observed, we don't trust a pattern profile very much when the PI is 80% or higher, because if it exceeds this range, there could be some inconsistency. We also have little confidence in a narrow PDA Graph that has a PI below 30%, since this figure indicates possible inconsistencies. If the PI falls to 20% or less, it is directly inconsistent; no prominent behavioural trend is expressed through the Axes.

We insist in being cautious when interpreting a PI above 80% because, according to our studies, only about 3% of the assessed individuals will obtain such a high percentage in their PI, and almost most of those cases show a low consistency level of the report. When looking at a PI of above 80% – even when the profile consistency level is high – we tend to observe a wide magnitude of the behaviours suggested by the two Axes that appear on the extremes of the profile. In general, we observe that high PI values are related to intense extreme Axes (EA <20 or >80) and interpretations that, based on these intense EA, describe characteristics as hostility, superficiality, indifference, dependence, ethical rigidity, frustration, belligerence, tension, negativity or emotionality, among others.

When the PI is between 30-80%, that is, when it is not too high nor too low, the report delivers a clear and consistent indication of the distinction of the possible behaviour of the person.

When the PI is below 20%, it indicates that this graph shows practically no characteristic behavioural tendencies. The force expressed through the most prominent Axis on the graph is extremely close to the force expressed through the least pronounced Axis, which implies that the individual's behavioural tendencies cannot be observed or described. So, a PDA graph with a PI below 20% will result in an "Invalid Report" which cannot be used to interpret or predict behaviours.

Studies on the Axis Intensity Indicator

To begin with, the Axis Intensity (AI) Indicators are determined through an internal calculation made by the system when dividing the values of every Axis by the Mean (M) value. In order to obtain the M, the system adds the internal value of the high extreme Axis and the internal value of the low extreme Axis and divides it by two.

$$AI = \frac{\text{Internal value of the Axis}}{Mc}$$

Mc

AIs measure the extent to which people's behaviours, as measured by each Axis, are "distinguished" in their average on the four Axes.

AIs express the ipsative nature (mean) of the PDA Graph. The expected behaviour of people is not predicted by the "absolute" magnitude of the Axes, but by the magnitude of the Axes when comparing it with the average of the four Axes of their graph.

The normal range of the AI (including the Self-control Axis) is 20-80%. Most employees and applicants (approximately 68%), will fall within this expected range. Only 15% of the people who complete the PDA Assessment will obtain an AI above 80% or below 20% on a given Axis. While we ascend on the AI above 80%, the percentage of those who understand and obtain such a high value quickly decreases (see table 1).

	TABLE				
	R	E	P	N	S
AI 85% or higher	7,5%	5,4%	5,6%	5,2%	8,2%
AI 90% or higher	1,5%	0,6%	0,9%	3,5%	1,9%
AI 95% or higher	0,2%	0,2%	0,0%	1,5%	0,5%

Likewise, when we descend on the AI below 20%, the percentage of those who understand and obtain such a low value quickly decreases (see table 2).

	TABLE				
	R	E	P	N	S
AI 15% or lower	6,5%	5,0%	6,0%	4,9%	10,5%
AI 10% or lower	0,6%	0,4%	0,8%	0,3%	3,8%
AI 05% or lower	0,0%	0,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,7%

AIs below 20% or above 80% shall be indicated as "potential conflict areas" on the PDA Graphs. This is to show that these intense Axes must receive the interpretation attention they deserve.

PDA Analysts who interpret PDA Graphs containing one or more extreme Axes (AI below 20% or above 80%), must integrate the four Axes but must lay emphasis on the interpretation on the intense axis or axes.

The following describes the characteristics and particularities of the Intense Axes:

Risk Axis

AI <20% - In general, a sense of failure or giving up is present. These individuals often feel "swept away" by the forces of the environment more than their own.

AI >80% - At this level, risk becomes aggression. It can indicate hostility or a fighting spirit.

Extroversion Axis

AI <20% - There can be isolation. These individuals may tend to avoid others or feel uncomfortable among other people.

AI >80% - At this level, social tact becomes "manipulation" and shallowness.

Patience Axis

AI <20% - Anxiety, permanent urgency and constant change are indicated.

AI >80% - It is likely that there is certain apathy and difficulty when dealing with unexpected changes.

Conformity to Norms Axis

AI <20% - This is the Axis of extreme measures, stubbornness, obstinate behaviours and constant nonconformity.

AI >80% - High dependency to the ideas and decisions of others are observed, as well as obedience and high conformity to structure, rules and procedures.

Self-control Axis

AI <20% - Lack of premeditation is suggested. This means that these individuals will hardly assess the impact or consequences of their actions. In certain occasions, they can be uncontrolled and emotional.

AI >80% - Extremely conservative and ethical values are observed, as well as a strong rigid moral.

The Self-control Axis has a tendency – within AI >20% and <80% – of attenuating the negative aspects of the extreme Axis described above, as long as the AI falls within 10-20% or 80-90%.

When two or more Axes are intense, the adequate integrations of each Axis must also be emphasised. This means that if the AI of the Extroversion Axis is 83% and the AI of the Patience Axis is 18%, kindness and extreme social dynamism are indicated.

Studies on the Profile Modification Indicator

The Profile Modification (PM) is defined when comparing the tendencies expressed in the Natural Profile – which self-concept – with the tendencies expressed in the Role Profile – which define the current role. The system simply calculates and obtains this comparison. The Profile Modification is expressed below the graphs, between the Natural and Role Profiles. Prior to the systematization of the tool, the PM was calculated through the PDA Correlation Tables, which consisted of extensive numerical tables that included all the possible combinations. Analysts had to look for the combinations manually and compare the pattern profiles obtained for the Natural and Role

Profiles.

The PM measures the magnitude in which people's perception of the behaviour required by the current position – or most situations – is consistent with their self-concept. In other words, the PM ratio informs us the current modification individuals are making on their behavioural style in order to adapt and adjust what they perceive the role requires.

This index is mainly interpreted as the result of a healthy flexibility when adapting to the role, in contrast to rigidity and inflexibility.

When the PM reaches or exceeds 80%, it suggests rigidity. If this PM occurs with a PS of 100, 70, 30, 10 in an executive position, PS of 70, 100, 30, 00 in sales or PS of 40, 70, 80, 00 in service, then we might be facing something more than mere inflexibility. These people could be tending to adopt a way of acting that is somewhat incoherent with their previous and most typical self-concept. This is particularly possible if the PI in the Natural and Role Profiles are within 80% and the EL are also near 80%. Even if all these conditions do not occur simultaneously, it is likely that these individuals have no intention of adjusting and adapting to the expectations of others or to the situations that appear. These people will more likely feel resentful to criticism or the behavioural demands of the position.

When the PM is 70-80%, although individuals are rigid in their behaviour, they can somehow adapt despite the circumstances.

The desired range for the PM is 20-69%. Most of us fall within this range of behavioural variability. This range describes healthy and flexible people who are under low pressure to adapt their self-concept to the demands of the role.

When the PM is below 20% people perceive the need to act in a way that it is considerably different to their Natural Profile. When the PM is below said range, people are making a genuine effort to act in ways that relate to the role, although doing so is equally costly and uncomfortable for them. When the PM coefficient is strongly negative, such as below 10%, the effort for performing in the role tends to produce a considerable stress that can manifest

in stress, pain, irritability or any other form of noticeable discontent. If this situation continues and persists during a considerable time, the Natural Profile tends to move towards the perception of the role, resembling the Role Profile, at least temporarily. This could cause conflict in the Natural Profile, in the self-concept. Then one could expect that the Natural Profile continues to change towards the aspects of the Role Profile.

In summary, the PM ratio allows assessing the current level of consistency between the Natural and Role Profiles. Within the 20-69% range, there is a normal proportion of flexibility between the Natural and Role Profiles. When the PM is below 20%, individuals are modifying many aspects of their behavioural style, which could confirm a high level of stress due to the great amount of changes required.

In the case of candidates, the Role Profile can be affected by the previous job or by the candidates' perception of the position they are applying for. If candidates are hired, the PDA Assessment should be administered again about six months later. In general, six months is enough time for the Role Profile to express the individual's perception of the new position's requirements.

Studies on the Decision-making Indicator

As we already know, the Decision-making Indicator is measured by comparing the Risk Axis value with the Norms Axis value.

$$DM = \frac{RA}{NA}$$

NA

The Decision-making (DM) Indicator measures the extent to which people are unable to decide between two opposing areas of a given behaviour. When the Risk Axis and the Norms Axis have almost the same pronunciation, the DM range is 20-80%, and it indicates that people hesitate between facing a situation and being exposed (force proposed by the Risk Axis) and not facing and avoiding said situation (force proposed by the Norms Axis). When the activity of the sympathetic nervous system is contrasted with the parasympathetic nervous system, people seem tense and nervous, they can get sick with ease, have irregular sleep habits, can daydream and direct all the energy towards their interior. Thus, when the DM Indicator is 50%, we generally observe hesitation and uncertainty in the behaviour of the individuals whose PDA Graphs we are interpreting. This hesitation and uncertainty is called "tension or conflict when making decisions," and we can describe three types of conflicts when making decisions:

1. Basic tension or conflict.
2. Role tension or conflict.
3. Tension or conflict between patterns.

Basic conflict appears when we observe a value of 50% on the Natural Profile graph. We conclude that the origins of this conflict are born in the private area, at home or with the family. As Analysts, we must not get involved in people's personal conflicts. We can simply mention the fact expressed by the PDA Graph, explain that certain hesitation is interpreted when they make decisions, and recommend that they "do something about it."

Role conflict appears when we observe a value of 50% on the graph on the Role Profile. This suggests that these people are somewhat confused as to what they understand is expected from them regarding their job position. Often, there are confusing signs on the level on which decision-making is allowed in the important areas of work behaviour. This type of conflict can be quickly solved through mutual consulting with people and their supervisors. If this is observed in candidates, the Role conflict can be the result of the demands of their previous job or the reason why they are looking for a new job.

Tension or conflict between patterns occurs when there are extreme differences between the decision-making style in the Natural and Role Profiles. Said conflict generates certain difficulties in PDA Analysts to decipher the exact behavioural trends: Is it the tendency shown on the Natural Profile or the extremely different tendencies shown on the Role Profile?

These "conflicts" or tension don't necessarily indicate that there is a terrible chronic problem. Most normal individuals experience conflicts as part of life's experiences. Conflict can occur through many different events that place people at the centre of a dilemma: "do or not do something", "do it one way (taking certain risks) or do it another way (gathering more information to ensure that it will be done as it must be done)." In fact, the psychological definition of conflict is "the opposition of two forces or impulses that cannot be simultaneously satisfied."

It is important to take into account that sometimes, if nothing is made about it and if the situation that drive people to this "tension or conflict" doesn't change, then such conflict can continue and persist.

Studies that help understand Conflict in the Decision-making style

When analysing the Decision-making Indicator in detail, we would like to go in depth in the concept of "conflict", since the "measurement or proportion of the conflict" has been considered the basis for an "alert signal" that is extremely important when interpreting the PDA Assessment. Thus, due to the queries we receive from PDA Analysts regarding this sensitive subject, we understand that it is necessary to incorporate a review of our ideas on "Conflict when making decisions."

Definition:

We consider that "Conflict when making decisions" is the state of confusion or indecision that a person experiences when the Risk Axis and the Norms Axis have the same strength. "Conflict" is observed when the decision-making style displays a 50% intensity either in the Natural or Role Profiles, or when there is an ample difference or lack of similarity between both decision-making styles.

When there is conflict in the Natural Profile there could be a distortion of the natural tendencies of the person. Conflict in the Natural Role indicates that the person could be going through personal issues; that is, marital or financial problems, etc., or could be dealing with a work problem that affects the person's personal life. Personal confusion appears when completing the PDA Form and, therefore, although this indicator does not affect the Consistency Indicator, the Analyst may not see a true clear picture of the authentic natural trends of the person.

Conflict in the Role Profile indicates that the individual is confused about the situation perceived by the Role to succeed. Specifically, the person seems to be uncertain and doubt the degree to which he/she can take the initiative, assume certain responsibilities and take charge of certain matters; that is, make decisions in a proactive manner versus not doing these things and consulting policies or authorities before acting. When conflict exists in the Role Profile it must be duly addressed with the person in order to soften counter-productive effects. Most managers don't realize or become aware that their employee is going through this problem. In general, the matter can be solved with an open conversation between the employee and supervisor.

When comparing the perceptions of the decision-making style on the Natural Profile and the decision-making style on the Role Profile, an important difference is observed, this is what we call "Conflict between Profiles". Specifically, due to the confusion created by the differences between both decision-making styles, the individual won't have a clearly defined position when facing problems, and doubt and hesitation will be observed. This is normally corrected when a person is relocated in a position that is more compatible with his/her natural behavioural trends.

Theory

Marston was fully conscious of what he thought the CR measured. In the first place, he stated that the Risk Axis and Norms Axis were independent measurements for the "sympathetic" and "parasympathetic" qualities of behaviour.

Basic conflict is the primary concept, which is presumably measured by the decision-making level in the Natural Profile. Logical inferences regarding this kind of conflict can be summarized as follows. *

Basically, conflict is a mental state that stops the individual, at least temporarily, from choosing among different alternatives to act. In simple words, it is impossible for the person to make the decision he/she is required to make and thus faces a dilemma. Even more, there is always a decision involved when a person "faces a conflict."

It doesn't matter if individuals initially perceive the alternatives they face as attractive or unacceptable. Once they feel they are incapable of choosing among them, they perceive the situation as threatening, antagonistic or unfavourable. More over, since the person can only (1) take one particular course of action, or (2) give up and not choose any alternative, it is easy to understand why conflict only involves the Risk and Norms Axes.

When there is conflict (DM = 50%), we observe a very tiring process that consumes large amounts of energy in an unsuccessful fight to decide what to do. Furthermore, this tension, hesitation and ambiguity can come to change the potential behaviour of the person, even beyond the changes that can be expected when observing the Natural Profile on the PDA. The person's ability to perform successfully tends to deteriorate and reduce, even in situations where the person generally performs well.

Although the people who relate to this person cannot really be aware of the impact or consequences of the "conflict", the basic indecision will characterize the individual and will be displayed to such extent that it will be observed and perceived by others. This person is generally recognized as indecisive. Unlike these cases, people with certain "tension" in their making-decision style who don't display "conflict", are generally recognized as individuals who can vary the time they take when making decisions or the trust they have in themselves when expressing their decisions. These differences are indicated in the person's decision-making range.

Although a person may not be going through a personal situation that stops him/her from making a decision, this individual could be experiencing some conflict, which leads to a state of "confusion." In such cases, people struggle between "confronting and releasing from the pressure they feel" and "satisfying external demands" which are incoherent from their points of view.

When this kind of conflict is related to the job responsibilities (Role Profile Graph), as it often occurs, it indicates that the individual is confused about the limits and decision-making spaces, authority and accountability he/she has. In general, this is due to the lack of clear communication and the type of relationship with the manager. This explains why the manager needs only to clarify the demands of the role by reviewing and discussing the person's decision-making space and authority, in order to clearly describe the individual's responsibilities. Once people can clearly understand what is expected from them, they release the confusion that generates conflict in the Role Profile on their PDA Report.

However, the solution is not always so simple. There are times when clarifying the position's demands is not enough, and the person needs to be relocated. Likewise, some positions do expose people to continuous conflict. Not all individuals can respond correctly to such characteristic. For instance, it can be expected that someone working in a certain position acts boldly and decisively, and is also extremely careful and demanding when dealing with critical details. Such combination of expectations imposes a demand in which behavioural dispositions collide. Thus, it is sometimes necessary to "redefine the position." Maybe what is currently an extremely conflictive position results in two different positions between which tasks are reassigned so that there are no incompatibilities among the new two positions and, thus, tension and conflict are solved.

It seems absolutely reasonable that conflict in the Role Profile and between both profiles persist if the conditions and circumstances that produce them remain unchanged. Likewise, personal issues and conflict in the Natural Profile shall persist until the individual makes a decision or action in order to solve it. When the time comes, the decision or action taken may or may not have positive and satisfactory consequences for the individual. However, since the person is conflict-free, he/she can quickly opt among new alternatives within the available ones. However, we believe that the last type of conflict can last for long periods of time if no decision or action is made in that regard. We mention this because we know that some people spend their entire lives in what can be called "a perpetual state of conflict."

First Study on the Self-control Axis: Observations and guidelines for its interpretation

During a 10-year period, the team at PDA International has assessed, interpreted and studies thousands of PDA Reports. Due to the large volume and nature of our projects, we can confirm that we have had the opportunity to observe Marston's theory in action. We consider it is important that we share the way in which we work in our projects – whether they are Recruiting or Skills Management and Development – because it is the basis that supports the studies and conclusions presented in this document.

Many times, our projects require compatibility studies of employees and candidates with a wide variety of positions. These compatibility studies are subsequently validated through interviews that are supervised with managers at the Clients' companies. We also verify the references provided by candidates. As part of the assessment processes, candidates also complete an extensive study that includes in-depth questions with open answers to be interpreted, which add extremely valuable information. The purpose of these extensive studies is to obtain information that can be added to their behavioural profile, which is obtained through the PDA Report and Graphs. When we assess employees who are actively working on a job position, we also ask their managers and supervisors to provide written reports that describe and identify their specific behavioural characteristics, the skills they observe, their achievements and/or problems in their daily performance. Some Clients often provide surveys that measure attitude aspects of their employees and records of analysis of positions that have been written by the employees. Our Consultants have frequently had the opportunity to discuss specific cases with managers or supervisors in depth. Based on the analysis of all this objective, descriptive and gathered information, we assume the commitment to measure, describe, confirm and validate the particular characteristics, aspects and skills described on each item of the PDA Assessment.

It is important to mention that there might not have been enough time to carry out a controlled research or to create a systematic record of all our observations, but we have concentrated on some of the main dimensions of the PDA, which, from our perspective, seemed to require in-depth description and analysis. One of the dimensions we consider needs to be described more deeply is the Self-control Axis. At the beginning of our experience, we were not fully satisfied with our skills to interpret the Self-control Axis, although we regularly studied and referred to all the information contained in the instructions. We had the wrong impression that the Self-control Axis was only about a special category of behaviour related to ethics, moral and conformity to the socially accepted rules. From the beginning, we found that the Self-control Axis was a valuable measurement of a mature social adjustment and expected and accepted conservative values. However, even at that time, it proved to have a much more complete or general impact on the behavioural style of individuals that the one we were able to explain. Through our studies and a progressive observation and inductive reasoning process, we developed a theoretical structure and a set of rules that help us broaden the information in order to

better understand what self-control is and how its impact on daily behaviour should be interpreted. We have the impression that other Analysts have reached similar conclusions.

The following are some of the most outstanding observations:

1. We have found that age, the pattern profile and other circumstantial factors are important and must be considered when interpreting the relationship between an Intense individual Axis and an Intense Self-control. Based on this, we can confirm that strength is important, the Axis Intensity, without the need to strictly adhere to the definitions of the scale.
2. In spite of having analysed a large number of individuals with extremely diverse behavioural characteristics, we have not found clear differences between those with a High Self-control Axis with an Axis Intensity = 0 > 50% and those with a pretty high Self-control Axis with an Axis Intensity = 0 > 80%. However, in the highest levels, when the Axis Intensity exceeds 90%, we have often discovered inflexibility, stubbornness signs, and other aspects related to an intensely High Self-control Axis.
3. With few exceptions, there is a strong trend in younger people, late adolescents and others who enter their twenties, to have a Lower Self-control Axis. However, there are quite solid evidences that confirm that, when the Self-control Axis is too low, people don't necessarily behave in an irresponsible or unfaithful manner. The answers of these young people strongly suggest that they are not impulsive but will rather often recognize themselves as shy and as lacking confidence. These young individuals are still in the adult socialization process, trying to find out "who they are and what they believe in." They can be less stable in their convictions and less consistent in their actions that older people, but there is no reason to believe that them, as a group, are prone to behave in an antisocial way. It is easy to distinguish people that age who have a High Self-control Axis, which are relatively few, since they respond to situations and adopt attitudes that are similar to those adopted by older people with a High Self-control Axis.
4. As can be imagined, individuals with a High Self-control Axis or Intensely High Self-control Axis, tend to have a pattern profile close to 100, 30, 70, 0. A High Self-control Axis seems to be "normal" and adjust to the tendencies of an "Investigator" reference profile; these individuals have control, objectivity and determination aspects that belong to and are characteristic of a High Self-control Axis. We have observed a significantly low number of people with this natural behaviour reflected by the four main Axes of the PDA Assessment, and with a Self-control Axis that is below average. These observations confirm that a High Self-control Axis is more usual and even easier to develop for certain profiles. However, the Self-control Axis seems to continue to confirm that it is an independent and separate measurement instead of a mathematical result that moves according to the four primary axes.

5. The Low and Intensely Low Self-control Axis tend to gather around the "Captivating" reference profile and occur more frequently with 00, 100, 00, 100 variations. It is uncommon to find a High or Intensely High Self-control Axis in 00, 100, 00, 100 profiles, but there are exceptions. Behaviours and the type of response of these individuals are easy to distinguish before those with the same profile and a Low Self-control Axis. People with a High Self-control Axis are individuals who show themselves as more confident, firm in their convictions, objective and more interested in personal capacity than popularity or approval. The 00, 100, 00, 100 profile is a good example of the clear differences between the two behavioural profiles that seem to be mainly determined by the influence of the Self-control Axis. Therefore, individuals who are close to this pattern profile (00, 100, 00, 100) and have a Low Self-control Axis are not sensible, diplomatic and charming, according to what is indicated by the description of the "Captivating" profile. Instead, they tend to be selfcentred, insecure and defensive. Typical or expected aspects related to this pattern profile seem to appear when the Self-control Axis is close to the average. It is important to note that the descriptions of the polar and sub-polar pattern profiles, which influence Analysts' expectations, do not consider the Self-control Axis.
6. On repeated occasions, our Consultants have documented several people who, despite having a High or Intensely High Self-control Axis, have broken solid commitments or intentionally falsified their professional qualifications. These individuals have always expressed that they had a "good" or selfish reason to explain their unethical behaviour. We still believe that most people with a High Self-control Axis have a solid sense of responsibility and a strong preference for proper social behaviour. It seems to be simple and clear. However, a person with a High Self-control Axis can also falsify information when in need to promote one's own business or career interests. A firm amoral self-concept helps justify a behaviour that is not technically honest. We now believe that a High or Intensely High Self-control Axis can, instead of always appearing as the intimate adhesion to ethical practices, even justify "vigilante justice" and, additionally, show certain reluctance to admit mistakes. Based on this, PDA International considers that, after all, the Self-control Axis is a "Self-concept Report" in itself. It is so complete and subject to the conscious action of a behavioural style as the one described by the four main Axes.
7. It is common to observe that the intensity of the Self-control Axis is different in the Natural and Role profiles. We observe that the tendency or intensity of the Self-control Axis tends to be higher in the Natural Profile, but a higher Self-control Axis in the Role Profile is also observed. These cases occur because some people can use an extra measurement of selfdiscipline, Self-control, to satisfy their jobs' demands, which make them increase the strength of the Self-control Axis in the Role Profile. We have also observed other circumstantial variations in the Self-control Axis. For example, in employees who have worked in the same company for many years and don't feel appreciated or well rewarded. This situation makes them feel demotivated, reduce

their Self-control Axis and at the same time, problems related to low self-esteem arise. People with a High Self-control Axis who are working in a new position or in one that is incompatible with their behavioural characteristics, often tend to decrease their Self-control Axis in their Role Profile. It is usual to observe individuals with "Direct conflict" in the Natural Role (DM=50%) who have an intensely High or Low Self-control Axis. For example, we have observed several recently divorced women who are now in charge of other individuals, with a very intense Selfcontrol Axis, above 90%. These women recognized the stress their current situations put them through, as well as the need to use some additional self-discipline that would help them during that hard and transitional time. These adjustments are reasonable, since the Self-control Axis is a measurement of the social adjustment people perceive. At extremely difficult or challenging times, such readjustment will be required. It is likely that those individuals who are self-confident and have a strong self-concept, turn to their selfdiscipline reserves. Less mature and poorly integrated personalities can loose control and feel unable to tolerate such a complex situation.

8. People with an Intensely High or Low Self-control Axis tend to respond strongly in their own and characteristic way, which is related to the strength of their self-control. These trends (the ones linked to their intense self-control) are stronger and even predominate over the behaviours that belong to a certain age or pattern profile (the pattern profile is comprised by the combination of its four main Axes). These characteristic responses can be called "behaviours of the Self-control Axis" because they are strongly related to the person's commitment to honesty, ethics, rational thinking and objective decision-making. We note this because when observing individuals with a situational Self-control Axis, that is close to the mean (PS = 50 +/- 15), it is very easy to observe and identify the behavioural trends and characteristics that reflect their pattern profile, that is, the combination of their four main Axes. This is not possible or easy with people who have an intensely High or Low Selfcontrol Axis. We refer to these individuals as people with an "Absolute Self-control Axis." We must assume that their pattern profile still operates. This means that they still display their behaviours and characteristics that are related to their four main Axes, but their behaviour seems to be very controlled, covered or altered by the intellectual control and the strong self-discipline of an intensely High Self-control Axes or by the volatility and instability of an intensely Low Self-control.

Second Study on the Self-control Axis: Observations and guidelines for its interpretation

Theoretical framework

As we continued to observe the strong and general impact of Self-control on the behavioural style of several pattern profiles, the need to develop a theoretical framework appeared. This helps provide a deeper explanation of the nature of the Self-control Axis and its functional relationship with the four main Axes. The material for this theoretical framework was already available in Marston's theory on which the PDA was developed, as well as in other well known psychological concepts. Marston's theory nominates four basic behavioural trends that are determined by perception, the autonomic nervous system and the endocrine system. Thereafter, in rough outlines, involuntary responses learnt early in life or possibly determined by life experiences or other physiological factors are generated.

Psychologists generally agree in that basic aspects of personality are formed early in childhood and that later, throughout life, new and alternative means for expressing oneself are found and assimilated. However, these don't cause a significant change on the basis of the behaviour of a "normal" and healthy person.

Marston's theory affirms that the trends of answers based or founded on the pattern profile have been defined in and conditioned by life's early stages. On the other hand, self-control aspects are learnt in a more conscious manner and become usual and consolidate in time. It is considered that the Self-control Axis measures behaviours that are learnt later in life, during the adult's socialization process.

Firstly, we observed that people with High Self-control had a generally inhibiting impact. This means that it moderates or reduces the strength in the expression of the high proactive Axes (Risk and Extroversion Axes). The trends of the primary Axes seem to remain intact, but are expressed through more mature and sociably accepted behaviours. We now believe that one of the functions of Self-control is to moderate the extreme behaviours that are generally perceived as "lack of adaptation" or incompetence in adult society. In other words, a competent behaviour can be defined as the "behaviour that works."

In the adults' world, it is hard to achieve really valuable or significant goals without appropriate planning, self-discipline and clear strategies. Uninhibited, egocentric behaviours seeking fast and superficial satisfaction belong to childhood. With time, they become useless because they no longer produce desirable results. The most basic premise of the learning theory states that "nonreinforced answers will be abandoned or modified."

PDA International considers it is interesting to compare, but not to equalise, the nature and function of the Self-control Axis with those of the Ego and Superego of the psychoanalytical theory. The ego originates from – and later controls or regulates – basic trends and instincts. The purpose or objective of the ego is to understand, treat and relate in a realistic manner

to the outside world. The superego tries to incorporate paternal and social rules directly into the individual's system of values with the purpose of eliminating instinctive and basic tendencies. The continuous function of the ego is to mediate between the primary instincts and the restrictive superego in order to facilitate the mediation and ensure that the Id tendencies are reduced through socially acceptable behaviours. "Ego strength" is generally defined as the ability of the ego to effectively deal with the demands of the id, the superego and reality. Indeed Self-control is not a direct measurement of ego or superego strength, but its impact when facing tendencies and immature/incompetent answers can approximately correspond to the combined impact of the ego and superego in primary instincts.

We have observed, but not confirmed, a strong positive correlation trend between the Self-control Axis and the level of education of people. We have the strong suspicion that innate intellectual ability facilitates the development of a High Self-control, at least for some individuals. In fact, Selfcontrol was originally developed as a line that links an intelligent person's behaviour with the corresponding planning skill. Its central meaning indicates that the behaviours that belong to a High Self-control "require rational and objective valuation of each action and its effects." This activity – with high level of cognition – can never be achieved unless individuals adopt a consistent set of rules and beliefs that allow them to make value judgements. This set of beliefs and rules will be shaped according to the values of the superego, family and society.

Some individuals with High Self-control Axis are extremely moralist and compulsive in their adherence to social behaviour rules. Others are highly objective, analytical and interested in consistency and accuracy without being concerned about moral or ethical problems. Many individuals with High Self-control seem to make an effort to maintain self-discipline and meet social adjustment rules. We suspect that individuals with a High Self-control Axis base behaviour on their underlying values. These values have been mainly learnt and adopted to provide order and meaning to life and therefore develop and strengthen their skills in order to efficiently adjust to adult's responsibilities. Without underestimating the moral and humanist value of those with a High Self-control, we believe that adherence to social and ethical rules is an adjustment strategy that efficiently facilitates competence in the broadest sense, as a "behaviour that works" and because it is approved by the adult's society.

Guidelines for Interpretation

We can mention the case of a person with the following Profile: 100, 40, 50, 10, with extremely high Risk and Self-control Axes (AI>80%). Although we observe behaviours that are clearly related to this person's High Risk, they were more contained or intellectually controlled than we expected. We soon observed also that people with a High Extroversion Axis and High Self-control expressed people-oriented behaviours in more controlled and objective terms. To certain extent, those with a High Patience Axis seemed to become more tolerant and objective. Individuals with a High Conformity to Norms Axis and a High or

extremely High Self-control Axis appeared to be more determined in their convictions and less concerned by others' approval.

Individuals with a Low Risk Axis weren't assertive and didn't take risks. However, they seemed to gain confidence and determination thanks to self-understanding and the mental maturity provided by their High Self-control. Individuals with a Low Extroversion Axis showed less scepticism and seemed to be more comfortable with social interaction. Individuals with a Low Patience Axis seemed to have better control of their anxiety and impatience thanks to the self-discipline and objectivity provided by their High Self-control. Individuals with a Low Norms Axis and a High Self-control Axis were aware of their independent nature and seemed to make an effort to adapt and be more open to other people's ideas.

We repeatedly observed all these effects in individuals with a High Self-control Axis and found a significant number of individuals who could even describe the way in which they had learnt to control, contain or modify a misfit or incompetent trend or response. This is reached through the honest supervision of one's own behaviours and responses in order to modify them and thus obtain better results. It is somewhat a self-development process that causes what some people call "conscious competence." With practice (reinforced trials), the new behavioural style becomes more usual. Change is apparently achieved when strength in habit reaches a high level and self-concept is unconsciously altered.

To help us predict the impact of High Self-control in High or intense primary Axes, we have designed a set of rules that we continue to test and improve. It is important to remember that the introspection and discipline produced by High Self-control only alters exterior expressions, whereas the trends of the primary axes remain more or less intact.

Rule #1:

Individuals with a High Self-control Axis will tend to contain or "soften" the effect of their High proactive Axes (Risk and Extroversion), whereas they'll strengthen the expression of their Low receptive Axes (Patience and Conformity to Norms) with objectivity and determination. We believe that through learning and conscious effort, a High Self-control Axis will tend to modify the tendency expression of High and Low Axes as follows:

- High Risk Axis: adds technique, subtlety, reduces and moderates the tendency to dominate.
- High Extroversion Axis: adds purpose, consistency, balance, reduces shallowness.
- High Patience Axis: adds objectivity, sensitivity, reduces excessive detail orientation and status quo.
- High Norms Axis: adds self-confidence, determination, reduces shyness and the defensive attitude.
- Low Risk Axis: adds optimism, confidence to achieve goals, reduces passive acceptance to norms.

- Low Extroversion Axis: adds social vision and reduces the tendency to isolate.
- Low Patience Axis: moderates impatience, adds balance and reduces impulsiveness.
- Low Norms Axis: adds flexibility, manageability, reduces opposing tendencies.

Rule #2:

Individuals with a High Self-control Axis will tend to moderate behaviours and use their behavioural style in a more mature, intellectual, controlled and analytical way, as described by the four primary Axes. This implies that the force of the High Self-control apparently doesn't affect all the Axes equally. The restrictive, moderating and containing effect produced by the High Self-control could be too strong for a person with a Low Patience Axis, whereas change or impact on the behavioural style of a High Patience Axis can be extremely subtle. For example, High Self-control can have little effect on 100, 00, 100, 00 profiles, but a noticeably strong effect on 00, 100, 00, 100 profiles. This rule doesn't apply when Self-control is extremely high.

Rule #3:

Individuals with a Low Self-control Axis won't control their extreme responses very well and will show less emotional control, objectivity, maturity and self-confidence, as indicated in the scale definitions and descriptions in the PDA Manual, according to the pattern profile relative to their four primary Axes (...that assume a mid self-control). The impact of a Low or intensely Low Self-control, is obviously less consistent and less predictable. It is usually present in individuals who have not developed their self-concept very much, they haven't committed strongly to their behavioural style as those with a High Self-control Axis. It can be assumed that individuals with a Low Self-control Axis don't have the internal perception or discipline required for moderating and making their strong response tendencies more consistent. The impact of Low Self-control is probably not systematically equal in all individuals. However, despite these Rules, Analysts should understand that a High or Low Self-control has different and even opposing effects according to the behavioural style described or determined by the four primary Axes. It must be noticed that we cannot define that "all individuals who have an intensely Low Self-control Axis, whatever age, will be absolutely rebel or inconsistent," because, for example, we know there are very successful individuals who have an excellent orientation toward achievement who also have a Low Self-control. We consider that these individuals can tolerate the uncertainty caused by their Low Self-control better than most people.

Due to the close connection between Self-control and social responsibility, consistency and selfdiscipline, we see that the force of the High Self-control (within a moderate range), is a valuable resource for most, if not all, situations. It is not so essential for low level or less complex jobs, but it is very valuable for managerial positions or jobs that require

accountability for others, mature judgement and/or objective ability to solve complex and strategic problems. When reviewing behavioural Profiles, we concentrate in the interpretation of some ethical aspects that relate to Self-control. We lay emphasis in verifying the experience, work habits and consistency of those with a Low Self-control Axis. We also tend to label individuals with a High Self-control by referring to the pride they express through their own ethical rules and sense of responsibility. However, in both cases we are far from predicting their honesty or level of adhesion to the accepted codes of behaviour.

At present, we still observe and continue to learn about the Self-control Axis. We have no gradual procedure to interpret the force of the Axis in each case, or to integrate the variations of the Self-control Axis with all the core, polar and sub-polar pattern profiles. Together with the observations described above, the following suggestions can be useful:

1. Always remember that Self-control is a self-report of self-concept. It doesn't measure attitudes or values directly, and it is subject to the same environmental influences as the four primary Axes.
2. Think of Self-control mainly in terms of maturity of judgement or determination of beliefs, objectivity, analytical reasoning, self-discipline and competence instead of compliance with rules or social acceptance.
3. Consider Self-control as an individual "active" Axis that plays a critical role in determining a variety of personality aspects, such as cognitional aptitudes and skills. Self-control adds new dimensions to the behavioural style determined by the four primary Axes of the pattern profile.
4. It adheres strictly to the Self-control scale of definitions since there is always the chance of error in measurement. Remember that Self-control interacts with other variables to produce different effects in individual subjects.
5. Never assume unusual aspects based only on the strength of a High Self-control, but be specially alert to the rigidity of an Axis Intensity above 90%.
6. Look for different types of rigidity, and not only those that relate to an intense Self-control. Some individuals seem to be very concerned with uprightness and consideration of humanist values to work comfortably in a competitive business environment. Others seem to lack imagination and spontaneity due to an extreme trust in the rules of logic or rational thinking. Some seem to be moral compensators and virtuous individuals who use their weighted High Norms Axis to win prestige and justify their egocentric actions. The larger group can be the one of those who have a High Risk Axis and Low Norms Axis, with High Profile Intensity; these individuals have an imperative need for control or power. These individuals are apparently strongly invested by the need of being considered "the authority." They define themselves as

very responsible individuals, but they'll have a condescending attitude and will thus rarely admit their mistakes or weaknesses.

7. Always consider age, since Self-control measures internal values and priorities of adults. An 18-year-old, with a very Low Profile Intensity can express a "High" Self-control in his/her behaviour. On the other hand, older individuals with Low Self-control have are more likely to show themselves a insecure, incoherent, non perceptive and less "clever." They can also lack clear goals and are more difficult to lead or develop.
8. Try to interpret the differences between the Self-control strength in the Natural and Role profiles, and look for other additional circumstantial influences on Self-control. Low Selfcontrol in the Role profile could indicate that the person feels limited or has low selfconfidence, or even certain sense of incompetence to satisfy the role's expectations. High Self-control in the Role profile confirms the individual's ability to resort to self-discipline reservoirs and thus satisfy the role's expectations. Extremely high levels of Self-control can reveal strong adjustment and adaptation problems. Intensely Low Self-control can be accompanied by prolonged and chronic discontent. An Intensely Low Self-control Axis can be found in very independent and creative or individualistic people who have their own unique philosophies and values.
9. Don't trust too much the pattern profile descriptions of the four primary Axes without considering the Self-control strength. Expect strong variations from these descriptions in individuals with an intensely High or Low Self-control Axis. The challenge of the PDA Analyst is to logically determine (and then verify) the way in which the Self-control Axis will reciprocally act with the influences of the four primary Axes to produce a completely integrated behavioural style.

Compatibility with the Position

In this article we will describe the concept of Compatibility, a basic aspect of the PDA Assessment. We will describe how we measure and understand the coincidence, correlation or compatibility between the behavioural style of a person and the behavioural demands of a position.

Compatibility is an estimate of the degree of coincidence between the behavioural trends of a person and the behaviour required for a successful performance at work. The reader must observe that a high compatibility value does not guarantee a successful performance at work; it only suggests that the behaviours required by the position are compatible with the individual's behavioural predisposition, and therefore a good performance can be expected. We must remember that successful performance in a job position is not only due to the behavioural profile compatibility, but also to several additional factors, such as education, knowledge, experience, desire to succeed, and many others.

Compatibility is calculated by correlating the individual's pattern profile with the position's profile. This comparison results in a Compatibility value that can be generated for the Natural and Role profiles. This comparison is automatically made by the system. With the first versions of the tool, such values were obtained through Correlation Tables.

Compatibility values will go from 100% when coincidence between the pattern profile of the individual and the position's profile is exact, to 0%, indicating disparity. It is defined in percentage terms. As a rule of thumb, the higher the correlation percentage, the stronger the coincidence between the behavioural tendencies of a person and the position's behavioural requirements.

- Values below 50% indicate that the individual's behavioural trends are significantly different from the behavioural demands of the position. There are few chances that the person can respond successfully to the behavioural requirements of the position. The person will probably have to make a great effort and could be easily unmotivated.
- When the Compatibility value is between 50% and 69%, it indicates that there is a moderate coincidence.
- When the Compatibility value is between 70% and 89%, it indicates that there is good coincidence.
- When the Compatibility value is above 90%, it indicates that there is very good coincidence. Thus, there are great chances that the person will respond successfully, and without making a lot of effort, to the behavioural requirements of the position.

Validity of the Compatibility value

Since the comparison between these two profiles is determined by the compatibility value, the validity of this value and its interpretation depend on the consistency and objectivity with which the individual's profile and the position's pattern profile were obtained.

It is important that the pattern profile of the position is a true reflection of the needs of the position. If the definition of the behavioural requirements of such position was made in fifteen minutes, over lunch and in a napkin, the compatibility value will be invalid, no matter how solid it appears to be.

Of course, the information must be gathered in an appropriate way in order to ensure its validity. If the pattern profiles are questionable, then the Compatibility value will also be doubtful.

Interpretation of the Compatibility value

Interpreting the Compatibility value is not a mathematical and straightforward process, since the Compatibility value is not absolute. Due to this, we recommend, as basic interpretation rule, that it is interpreted in combination with and by observing other indicators of the behavioural profile of the person.

If the Compatibility value is low, look for reasons that explain why the person could be a better candidate than what the value describes. For example, if we observe that a candidate scores a low compatibility value but there are several indicators in the PDA Graph that describe that the individual is "very flexible" (low Profile Intensity, for instance), we can think that the person has the necessary flexibility to change and adapt to the behavioural requirements of the position. In this case, a low compatibility value can be a minor problem compared to an individual who is more rigid and less flexible.

We know that Natural Profile values represent the natural tendencies of people, they are relatively stable and resistant to change. We also know that the perceptions of the Role profile are more malleable. Therefore, a person with a high Compatibility value in the Natural profile but a low Compatibility value in the Role profile, will generally coincide better with the position than the person with a low compatibility value in the Natural and high in the Role profile. Going back to the previous example, the individual with a high flexibility level (low or moderate profile intensity) should be able to adjust quite well to the expectations of the Role profile if motivated, well advised, well led and properly trained to reach goals.

Final note

A low compatibility value doesn't mean a lost candidate. Occasionally, we'll encounter situations where a person has excellent knowledge, vast experience or certain talent. All this could make the person an ideal candidate, since it could benefit the organisation, but regarding the "behavioural profile", compatibility is low. In such cases, it could make sense to modify and adjust the behavioural expectations of the position in order to adapt them to the candidate's natural behavioural style.

For example, a candidate with vast experience and excellent knowledge, highly sought technical skills and an extraordinarily creative mind, but with a very erratic style regarding administrative aspects (Low Norms Axis) applies for a position at a high-tech organisation where norms and the organisation are extremely important. A solution could be that the organisation hires a collaborator, an administrative assistant to support and assist this individual with the normative aspects of the job.

As in other qualifications of the PDA Assessment, the Compatibility value requires interpretation, not rigid numerical rules against which a person's career can be judged. Observing the Compatibility value must be the first step of a reasoned analysis of the PDA Assessment, not the last one.