

## **Birkman Behavioral Components**

### **Esteem**

A sensitivity-based construct that includes shyness, sensitivity about correcting others or being corrected by others, and concerns about embarrassing or being embarrassed, and their bipolar opposites. This self-consciousness related construct addresses how a person may deal with (or prefers others to deal with) approval related topics and how they relate to individuals.

High scores reflect diplomatic, sensitive behavior; a preference for personal, supportive relationships; and, a tendency to appear sensitive when others are perceived as being too direct.

Low scores reflect candid, matter-of-fact, direct behavior; a preference for candid and direct relationships; and, blunt behavior when under stress of indirectness or perceived overly sensitive behavior by others.

### **Acceptance**

A sociability-based construct that includes talkativeness, enjoyment of people in groups, enjoyment of social laughter (even at one's own expense), approachability, and their bipolar opposites. Similar to the concept of Extraversion this construct addresses the manner of relating to people in groups.

High scores reflect outgoing, gregarious behavior; a preference for group activities; and, a tendency to be too easily swayed by groups when under stress of loneliness or feeling left out.

Low scores reflect quiet, independent, and one-on-one behavior; a preference for individual assignments as well as freedom from social demands; and, a tendency to withdraw when stressed by perceived demand for sociability.

### **Structure**

An orderliness-based construct that includes following plans, finishing tasks, dealing with detailed tasks, using a systematic approach and their bipolar opposites. Related to conscientiousness this construct addresses the manner of dealing with systems and procedures.

High scores reflect orderly, systematic and detail oriented behavior; a preference for planned and controlled tasks; and a tendency to become overly constrained by existing plans, procedures, or ways of doing things when stressed by rapid change of approach, lack of predictability, or feelings that tasks are out of control.

Low scores reflect flexible, adaptable, "start-up" behavior; a preference for new, less planned and open tasks; and, a tendency to become disorganized, disjointed in giving instructions, and product "last minute" behavior when stressed by perceptions of too much control by others or overly detailed and controlling procedures.

## **Authority**

This construct addresses the approach to directing and controlling or persuading others in verbal exchanges.

High scores reflect persuasive, competitive, forceful behavior; a preference for strong give and take about issues; and, a tendency to become argumentative and domineering when stressed by perceived lack of engagement (or listening) from others or a feeling that others are trying to “win the argument.”

Low scores reflect agreeable, easy going, low key behavior; a preference for low key and non-aggressive interactions about ideas; and, a tendency to appear to give in or disengage when stressed by perceived aggression or argumentativeness from others.

## **Advantage**

This construct includes strong drive for personal advancement (over advancement of the group or team), cautiousness about giving trust, involvement with money (as incentive), and their bipolar opposites. This construct addresses the approach to idealism and team versus individual approaches to winning competitions and incentives.

High scores reflect competitive, opportunity minded and money conscious behavior; a preference for careful establishment of trust in relationships with personalized incentive; and, a tendency to become overly pessimistic, distrusting, and “win-at-all-costs” oriented when stressed by perceptions that others may take advantage or win rewards coveted by the individual.

Low scores reflect team minded, idealistic behavior; a preference for relationships where trust is high; and, a tendency to appear naïve and excessively self-sacrificing under stress of perceiving that others are not being trustworthy, or perceptions that self-interest (especially monetary self-interest) will control a relationship or interaction.

## **Activity**

This construct includes action orientation, quick thinking, physical expression of energy, and their bipolar opposites. This construct addresses preferred pace of action and aspects of style of planning and decision-making.

High scores reflect energetic, decisive, and results oriented behavior; a preference for activities requiring quick action and practical results; and, a tendency to be impulsive and impatient when stressed by perceived need to wait or indecisiveness.

Low scores reflect thoughtful, paced approaches to tasks; a preference for intellectual or emotional involvement instead of action; and, a tendency to become indecisive, lose energy, and have trouble moving forward when stressed by tasks or relationships that aren’t perceived to allow time for through or emotional involvement.

## **Challenge**

This construct involves the way in which a person approaches and understands the issues of socially correct behavior and social image. The scale addresses issues of managing social image and social expectation and impacts how one goes about imposing demands on self (and others).

High scores reflect public risk taking, setting high demands on self (and others); a preference for believable approval balanced with evenhanded critique; and, a tendency to over commit, self-blame, and over demand when stressed particularly on commitment or obligation issues.

Low scores reflect public charm, setting achievable demands on self (and others); a preference for public approval with socially supportive critique; and, a tendency to appear risk averse and other-blaming when stressed particularly on public image issues.

## **Empathy**

This construct involves emotional expressiveness. Empathy addresses comfort with emotional expression and involvement of feelings in thinking and attitude.

High scores reflect emotionally expressive, emotionally creative behaviors; a preference for open expression of emotions and open involvement with emotional issues; and, a tendency to appear overly emotional when stressed by perceived lack of attention to emotions or excessive demands for pragmatism and urgency of action.

Low scores reflect unemotional, optimistic behavior; a preference for practical tasks and unemotional relationships; and, a tendency to be unfeeling or to avoid emotional issues when stressed by encounters with emotional behavior or issues.

## **Change**

A construct based on restlessness and excitability. It involves restlessness, changeable interests, quickly changing focus, working fast, and their bipolar opposites. Change addresses dealing with change of current focus or change of attention but not resistance to or comfort with structural or organizational change.

High scores reflect quickly shifting attention, attending to intrusions easily; a preference for many quick, attention shifting tasks; and, a tendency to appear to be excessively restless and unfocused when stressed by tasks perceived to be boring or that demand focus on one goal for long periods of time.

Low scores reflect patient attention to the task at hand, resistance to distraction; a preference for tasks that allow protection from interruption; and, a tendency to appear to be resistant to demands for shifts of attention or demands for quick shifts of goals.

## **Freedom**

A construct based on conventional or unconventional answering patterns across The Birkman Method<sup>®</sup> instrument. The scale involves content from several of the other constructs with emphasis on agreeing or disagreeing with conventional responses to the content of these constructs. The construct addresses independence of thought and personal independence and also shares meaning with the Advantage construct.

High scores reflect independence of thought and action, taking initiative; a preference for tasks that allow freedom from control; and, a tendency to appear rebellious and self protective when stressed by perceived control by others or restrictive policy and procedure.

Low scores reflect group oriented or conventional thought and action; a preference for tasks and involvement based on precedence and agreement; and, a tendency to appear overly constrained by precedent or group pressure when stressed by perceived lack of control or idiosyncratic approaches by others.

## **Thought**

A construct involving cautiousness to decision making, concern for making the right decision the first time, and worry over consequences, and their bipolar opposites. The Thought construct addresses approach to deciding and action versus thought orientation.

High scores reflect cautious decision-making, consideration of many options; a preference for time to think, need for an abundance of information to evaluate options; and, a tendency to appear indecisive and anxious when stressed by perceived pressure to decide (or act) or inadequate information.

Low scores reflect quick decision making, ease of changing decisions; a preference for action over cautious consideration of many options; and, a tendency to appear rash or impulsive when stressed by perceived lack of action by others or complicated risk factors and options.