

Trego Takeaways

Can Personality Change?

Question: "I took the Trego Personnel Survey approximately 10 years ago. If I took it again today, would my personality profile be similar to my first profile or would it show significant changes"?

For more than 25 years, I have been accumulating test/retest data for the purpose of answering this question. I now have test/retest data for 129 individuals. The time between test and retest ranges from one to 188 months (15.7 years) with an average test/ retest interval of 48 months. The results of this analysis are summarized in the following Test/Retest Table.

TPS Personality Scales	Percent Test/Retest Similarity
Energy level	91 %
People Contact	88%
Attitude	88%
Average	89%
Assertiveness	90%
Friendliness	89%
Emotional toughness	90%

Additional results

- a) The percent test/retest similarity for the Learning/Reasoning Ability scale is 92%
- b) The Endorsement scores changed for four individuals. Two individuals changed from average to below average and two individuals changed from below average to average.
- c) Energy level had the largest test/retest decrease (less active). Attitude had the largest test/retest increase (more positive).

Conclusion

According to William James (1890-1981), regarded by many as the father of psychology, "In most of us, by the age 30, the character has been set like plaster and will never soften again". The result of this project clearly support William James. For most of us, our personality is remarkably stable overtime. In the final analysis, although people do grow and change, the results of this project clearly show that they do so on a foundation of enduring basic personality tendencies. In the final analysis, you're personality - you're stuck with it.

Key Takeaway

For most of us, our personality is remarkably stable over time.