

## Stress and the McQuaig Temperament Scales (part 1)

The Canadian Mental Health Association says workplace stress costs the Canadian economy an estimated \$5 billion a year. The International Labor Organization estimates that, in the U.S., approximately 200 million days are lost each year due to stress.

While time demands and balance-of-life issues have been cited as two of the many sources of stress, our focus in this newsletter is on how a person's underlying temperament impacts their stress levels.

This is the first in a two-part series. In part one we focus on two of the four McQuaig scales, Dominant <> Accepting and Sociable <> Analytical. Below is a list of the common activities that people with different McQuaig traits will find stressful.

Dominant Scale: People high on the Dominant Scale are goal-oriented and like to win. They will find stress in activities where:

- > consensus needs to be reached before moving forward;
- > there is not a clear link between their personal goals and team goals;
- > someone else is in charge

Accepting Scale: People high on Accepting Scale are supportive team players. They will find stress in activities where:

- > they have to confront others;
- > risky decisions need to be made;
- > the team is pulling in a number of different directions and compromise will be difficult

Sociable Scale: People high on the Sociable Scale are extroverts who like to be one of the gang. They will find stress in activities where:

- > they are required to work on their own with little interaction
- > unpopular decisions need to be made
- > they need to perform detailed analysis before moving forward

Analytical Scale: People high on the Analytical scale are logical and task-oriented. They will find stress in activities where:

- > people frequently interrupt their work
- > a great deal of interaction with others is required
- > they are expected to be overly enthusiastic

While a broad range of factors may contribute to an individual's stress levels, important attention needs to be paid to the nature of the work itself. Any one of us, in a role that we are not temperamentally suited, will feel anxiety, under perform and eventually leave.

### Would you like to learn more about your own temperament and how it impacts your stress levels?

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