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Updated November 5, 2024 The SHL Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ) is a highly renowned psychometric test that assesses workplace behavioral traits. It was created in 1984 and is used worldwide to provide employers with insight into how potential employees might behave in their roles. It is used for: Recruitment – Helps identify the most suitable candidates and increases interview success rates Team building and organizational change – Identifies unique skills and leadership qualities There are three different working versions of the SHL OPQ test. OPQ32n (normative) The normative version asks the participant to respond to statements using a scale of 1 to 5. Participants need to assess how much they agree or disagree with each statement. There are 416 questions and a time limit of 45–60 minutes. The answers are compared with the relevant peer group, such as a professional and managerial group, or graduate comparison group. OPQ32i (ipsative) This version also has 416 questions, but it is formatted differently. The questions are divided into 104 quads consisting of four statements. Participants need to pick two statements from each quad and decide which statement is most like them and which one is not. The ipsative element is the forced-choice aspect which makes it harder for the participant to bias the questionnaire. It is for that reason that employers prefer this version of the test. There is no set time limit for this version, but it does take longer to complete. OPQ32r (shorter ipsative) The shorter ipsative format is more widely used than the other two OPQ tests. It uses three statements as opposed to four, and there are only 312 questions, making it quicker to complete.Practice SHL OPQ Test with JobTestPrep As the SHL OPQ test measures your style and personality in relation to a job role, there are no restrictions on who uses this questionnaire. All industries are welcome to administer the test for any job role they are recruiting for. Some notable companies that use the SHL OPQ test are: Air France – Aviation LVMH – Luxury brands Costa Coffee – Food and beverages Emaar Properties – Luxury private and commercial properties IQVIA – Biopharmaceutical Gannet Company – Holding company and publisher Calor Gas – Oil and gas What Does the SHL OPQ Test Assess? The SHL OPQ test measures: Three domains Eight dimensions 32 characteristics This test is not an assessment of your knowledge or ability. It is a personality test that identifies your behavioral traits and how they can be best utilized. The three domains are: Relationships with people Thinking style Feelings and emotions Practice SHL OPQ Test with JobTestPrep Dimensions – Empathy, influence and sociability Characteristics – Modest, democratic, caring, persuasive, controlling, outspoken, independent, outgoing, affiliative and socially confident Dimensions – Creativity and change, analysis, and structure Characteristics – Conceptional, conventional, variety seeking, innovative, adaptable, behavioral, data rational, evaluative, attention to detail, forward-thinking, rule-following and conscientious Dimensions – Dynamism and emotions Characteristics – Competitive, achieving, decisive, vigorous, relaxed, worrying, tough-minded, optimistic, emotionally controlled and trusting The test is fully computer-based and can be completed on any device connected to the internet. It does not have to be completed at an assessment center. Your employer may send you a link or direct you to a website to complete your questionnaire. There is no set time limit, but the test can take anything from 45 to 90 minutes to complete, depending on your self-awareness. Depending on the version you take – OPQ32n, OPQ32i or OPQ32r – the questions will have one of two formats. OPQ32n Question Example For the following statements, decide how much you agree or disagree with them. Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree or disagree Agree Strongly agree I enjoy fixing things I rarely make mistakes I love meeting new people I often feel disappointed I feel joy when I help people For the following group of statements, pick one that you mostly agree with and one that you least agree with. Mostly agree Least agree Question 1 A – I have innovative ideas B – I am humble about my success C – I am always willing to tell people when they have made mistakes Question 2 A – I seek opportunities to meet new people B – I love setting long-term goals C – I'm mostly relaxed Question 3 A – I get anxious before events B – I am highly critical of myself C – I always hide my feelings OPQ32i features four statements as opposed to three. How Is the SHL OPQ Test Assessed and Reported? This is not a test that you pass or fail. The answers you give will be compared to others in a related peer group. This allows potential employers to see how you will fit into their company and your potential for growth. As such, the results are generated as reports that highlight your strengths and weaknesses compared to the employer's needs. The types of reports an employer may request include: Premium plus Standard manager Candidate Leadership Universal competency Emotional intelligence Team impact selection Sales If you need to prepare for a number of different employment tests and want to outsmart the competition, choose a Premium Membership from JobTestPrep. You will get access to three PrepPacks of your choice, from a database that covers all the major test providers and employers and tailored profession packs.Get a Premium Package NowHow to Prepare for the SHL OPQ TestPrepare for the SHL OPQ TestPersonality tests are not something you can revise for, and study guides are not readily available. However, there are steps you can take to make yourself more comfortable with these types of tests.Step 1. Practice Any and All Personality TestsThe internet is not short on free personality tests. The more you practice, the more self-aware you become, and the comfier you are sitting these tests in a formal environment. From a personal-development perspective, sitting personality tests and evaluating your answers allows you to see what your strengths and weaknesses are. You then know what skills you need to develop and what areas you should highlight to potential employers.Step 2. Research the Company and the RoleKnowing the values of the company and what your job role entails allows you to understand what direction the company is heading in. If the job description says you will be responsible for decision-making, you'll need to demonstrate that in your test. However, be mindful not to target your answers too much. For example, if you lie about an important skill, your employer will not respond well when they discover you cannot do it.Step 3. Think About Yourself in Terms of the Three DomainsAs there is no official preparation material, thinking about yourself in terms of the test parameters will help you answer consistently and honestly. 1. Relationships With People Ask yourself how you interact with others by considering these questions: Do you like to take charge or are you more comfortable following? Do you enjoy meeting new people in formal situations or do you prefer to avoid networking altogether? Are you confident with your decisions or do you constantly seek others' approval or feedback? 2. Thinking Style This domain concerns how you read and interpret information. Consider the following: Do you prefer working with numbers and statistics or people and emotions? Do you prefer conventional, structured working environments or more casual work cultures? Do you like to understand motives and behaviors or analyze the reasons behind those actions? 3. Feelings and Emotions This domain is more concerned with how you feel internally. Think about the following: Do you get anxious before events or presentations, or relish the new experience? Do you constantly worry something will go wrong or always think of a positive outcome? Do you trust easily and find the best in a person or assume they have bad intentions? Do you enjoy competing and winning or believe the taking part is what matters? Step 4. Ask Others How They See YouIf you struggle with self-awareness and low self-esteem, ask friends, family and trusted colleagues how they view you. You might think you are a terrible decision-maker, but your colleagues may see that as one of your strengths. Ask them for examples so you can start to build your belief system. The questionnaire has over 400 statements that are very similar. The computer will pick up on any inconsistencies which may disqualify you from the recruitment process. The majority of personality tests can detect whether you have cheated or distorted the assessment. For the SHL OPQ test, this is done through either the social desirability scale or the consistency scale, depending on the test format. Both of these allow the assessor to know whether your answers are genuine and can be reliably used. The social desirability scale is for the OPQ32n version and determines whether someone has answered in a socially desirable way. A high result indicates the participant has purposefully tried to portray themselves as desirable. However, this is not always a reliable result because some people: Have naturally high self-esteem Are eager to please others Are not self-aware The consistency scale is used to measure the OPQ32i and OPQ32r formats. As the name suggests, it assesses how consistently you have responded. A low result indicates that you have not answered consistently, and your answers cannot be used to produce a reliable report. The assumption is that the low result is caused by your attempts to give the answers you think your potential employer wants. Again, there are flaws with this system. Your answers may be inconsistent because you: Did not understand the statements Are indecisive Lack self-awareness To avoid any uncertain marks, answer honestly and consistently. Take Your Time There are no official time limits, just guidelines from past candidates. If you struggle with this type of testing, take your time and read each question carefully. It will not time out or cut you off. Get Comfortable Find a comfortable, quiet place to take the test. You don't want to be disturbed or distracted and make a mistake. Answer the Questions in the Order They Are Presented If you skip any questions or decide you want to answer a question later, the computer will register that as an attempt to distort the test. This will lead to a negative outcome and possible disqualification. Don't Overthink The more you think about a statement, the more you may try to answer it how you think you should. If a statement resonates with you, pick it. Don't think about how your potential employer may want you to answer. Be Yourself Remember, these personality tests are to see if you and the company are a good fit. If your answers deem you not suitable for a role, then the chances are that the company is also not suited to you and your values.Practice SHL OPQ TestFrequently Asked QuestionsThe SHL OPQ test is a highly popular psychometric test that is part of the SHL test group. The test examines an individual's behavioural traits and how they will impact the workplace. It is a tool used in recruitment practices and for teambuilding exercises. Your personality will determine what type of roles are suitable for you. The SHL OPQ test helps companies understand where your personality will be best placed.Although there are no right or wrong answers on the SHL OPQ test, you may find it difficult to navigate if you have not sat an examination like this before. The questions examine an individual's relationships with other people, their thinking style, and their feelings and emotions. The best approach to these questions is to be honest about your response to the workplace scenarios.The number of questions depends on the type of SHL OPQ test you take. The OPQ32n, or the normative OPQ test, consists of 416 questions that are to be answered in 60 minutes. The OPQ32i, or the ipsative OPQ test, consists of 416 questions and there is no time limit. The OPQ32r, or the shorter ipsative OPQ test, consists of 312 questions and is widely used because it is quicker to complete. There is no time limit on the OPQ32r test either.The best way to prepare for the SHL OPQ test is to take practice examinations or other personality tests that closely mirror the SHL OPQ format. You can take SHL OPQ practice tests via Psychometric Success and JobTestPrep.Because it is a personality test administered online, anyone who wishes to take the SHL OPQ test can. You will most likely be presented with the SHL OPQ test if you are going through a job application for a corporate company. It is also likely that you will face the SHL OPQ test during a team exercise that attempts to establish the personalities within the workplace.If you are entering into a workplace that has a distinct corporate culture, the SHL OPQ test helps a company understand how an individual's personality will fit within this. The SHL OPQ test examines how someone's personality measures against the job role being advertised. If the role requires an independent and motivated person, the SHL OPQ test will ask potential candidates questions that will help identify these personality traits.The OPQ32i and the OPQ32r do not have a set time for a candidate to complete the questions. Generally, the OPQ32r test can be completed quicker because there are fewer questions. The OPQ32n test has a limit of 60 minutes for individuals to complete the test.Although the questions cannot be answered incorrectly, you may provide answers that highlight to a company that you have a personality that does not fit with the job role being advertised. For example, if you answer questions that highlight you do not like working in a team environment and that you are difficult to persuade, then you may be rejected from a collaborative role.The SHL aptitude and behavioural tests are some of the most popular examinations used in employment practices. You can practice the SHL OPQ test via Psychometric Success and JobTestPrep. It is also worthwhile practicing other forms of personality tests to prepare for the style of questions.The pass mark differs from company to company. Passing the SHL OPQ test also depends upon the type of workplace culture in each company. For corporations that are using the test to simply analyse the personalities of their existing staff, there is no need to fear the idea of failing the test. In contrast, if you are applying for a specific job position then you may fail if the test answers indicate you have personality traits that do not match up with the role. Companies like Airfrance, Costa Coffee, Calor Gas all use the SHL OPQ test.Although the test was initially developed in 1984 to be completed in person, it is mostly administered online. The reason for this is because it is easier for companies to collect the results quicker and identify your personality traits.The results given from the SHL OPQ tests are representations of an individual's preferences and behaviours between 12 to 18 months. This means the test takes into consideration changes in personality traits over time. An individual may sit two tests years apart and indicate different personality traits in each of the tests. It is a good idea to take personality tests like the SHL OPQ annually to ascertain what job roles are a good fit for you. When they are included as part of the recruitment process, personality tests can be stressful. However, with practice and self-awareness, answering these types of questions will become easier. The outcome of these tests is to see if you are a good fit, but they also provide a lot of information about your strengths and areas to improve. Always remember to be yourself and answer truthfully. If you are not a match for the company, then neither are they a match for you. © Psychometric Success 2007-2025. All rights reserved. For the cycling team, see Omega Pharma–Quick-Step. For other uses, see OPQ. This article needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.Find sources: "Occupational Personality Questionnaires" – news · newspapers · books · scholar · JSTOR (July 2009) (Learn how and when to remove this message) The Occupational Personality Questionnaires, OPQ or OPQ32, are widely used occupational personality questionnaires. The authors were Saville et al., including Roger Holdsworth, Gill Nyfield, Lisa Cramp, and Bill Mabey, and they were launched by Saville and Holdsworth Ltd. in 1984.[1] The series included the first commercially available Big Five instrument. OPQ32 provides an indication of an individual's preferred behavioural style at work; to help employers gauge how a candidate will fit into certain work environments, how they will work with other people, and how they will cope with different job requirements. It is now available in more than 30 languages and uses item response theory to shorten the questionnaire to under 30 minutes. The OPQ32 is used in selection, development, team building, succession planning, and organisational change. Independent reviews are available online. Distribution is done today by SHL Group Limited. ^ BPS Review, 1994 and 2007, Occupational Personality Questionnaires, Concept Model, authors P. Saville, R. Holdsworth, G. Nyfield, L. Cramp and W. Mabey Retrieved from " The SHL Occupational Personality Questionnaire is a measure of relationship style, thinking style, and feelings and emotions. It is commonly used to screen candidates for jobs that require high interpersonal abilities and emotional intelligence. The test is administered by SHL, which is also known for its pre-employment cognitive exams. The OPQ is SHL's own personality test and is considered a reliable predictor of job performance and role fit. It is used by many big-player companies including Honeywell, Chevron, and Barclays. The OPQn (normative) and OPQr (response theory) are the two variants of OPQ in use today. The OPQr is the more common of the two, mainly because it contains fewer questions and thus provides the candidate with a friendlier experience. Aside from the number of questions, the two versions of the Occupational Personality Questionnaire also differ in the way the questions are formatted. OPQn presents candidates with a statement about themselves and asks them to rate it on a five-point scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. OPQr uses forced-choice questions, requiring the candidate to choose between two or more equally desirable (or undesirable) traits. Scroll down to see examples of this in action. In summary: Question Type Question Number Test Duration OPQn Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) 416 questions Appox. 60 minutes OPQr Forced-Choice (Which of the following statements is most like you?) 104 questions Approx. 20 minutes The SHL OPQ Test contains questions in the forced choice format. This means that rather than ranking yourself on one trait at a time, you have to choose which personality trait is more like you out of two or more behavioral statements that all seem like good choices. These questions force you to make a trade-off, hence their name. For example, the SHL OPQ may ask you which of these statements describe you most: I usually give myself deadlines for important tasks and I am receptive to other people's input in my work. Both of these represent desirable personality traits, but you must choose only one statement. Personality assessments may use a forced choice questionnaire to make it harder for the candidates to choose answers they think their recruiters want to see. This allows your responses to be a more truthful representation of your personal behavioral preferences. The OPQn, which doesn't have forced-choice questions, instead uses a social desirability scale, which ranks each candidate by the degree to which their responses appear to be socially desirable rather than honest. Learn more on our SHL OPQ Course >> The SHL OPQ is considered challenging among other personality tests. Since both SHL OPQ tests contain no right or wrong answers, it can be a difficult and anxiety-inducing experience for candidates to tailor responses and highlight their positive personality traits. The OPQ test's length and sheer number of questions do not help candidates remain calm throughout the exam. Practice tests can help mitigate this issue on the actual test. Practice for the SHL OPQ Personality Test >> Let's look at an example that could appear on the SHL OPQ: Each OPQ32 Personality Test question begins with three behavioral statements that reflect your interpersonal skills, workplace behavior, and problem-solving skills. For example: Which statement describes you the MOST? I usually resolve conflicts by listening to all sides, then making a decision. I believe having a positive outlook can influence work performance. If I hear about new technologies that can streamline my work, I usually check them out. All three statements represent positive personality traits. Choosing the first might indicate you have a good analytical thinking style. The second might reflect optimism and the third represents adaptability. On the SHL OPQ tests, after selecting your first choice, you are presented with the two remaining statements and asked to indicate your second choice. For example, if your first choice was "I believe having a positive outlook can influence work performance", your next choice will be: Which statement describes you the MOST? I usually resolve conflicts by listening to all sides, then making a decision. If I hear about new technologies that can streamline my work, I usually check them out. One of the challenging aspects of the OPQ Personality tests is the need to balance between honest answers on the one hand, and maintaining an image of professionalism and emotional stability on the other. This can be achieved by separating your Work Self from your Home Self. You may feel that it is honest to have your responses reflect your tendency to procrastinate tasks on the weekends or your hobby of pranking your friends, as these are real personality traits you have. However, this information is outside the scope of what the SHL Personality Test aims to measure and is therefore irrelevant. Instead, focus on your workplace behavior and behavioral tendencies during work hours. How are your team dynamics? Do your personality traits align with the organizational culture? Do you like using your analytical skills to tackle problems? Focusing on your work personality will help you be honest and ace your OPQ Personality Tests. Learn more on our SHL OPQ Course >> Here are a few tips that can help you optimize your performance on the SHL OPQ assessments: Many test takers assume ranking the highest on as many traits as possible would yield the ideal test result. This is a mistaken approach, as some of the traits measured on the OPQ can be negative or destructive. For example, one of the traits measured by the questionnaire is tough-mindedness, which is desirable in moderation but can lead to aggression in excess. Aside from the OPQ dimensions and traits measured by the exam, the SHL personality test also has a hidden consistency scale, which measures whether your responses are aligned with each other. Being inconsistent can affect your hiring process! There is no single way to take the SHL OPQ. Different traits can be desirable for different job roles. Ask yourself whether your desired role requires you to be a team player or a lone wolf, a decision maker or a rule-follower? Let these factors inform your choices. If you are about to take an SHL OPQ assessment, practice can help you turn an average report into a glowing report! Gain insightful tips and answer SHL OPQ practice tests. I Want to Learn More About the SHL OPQ Test Practice >> Are you taking other SHL Tests along with the SHL OPQ? Learn about our all-inclusive SHL Preparation Course, which contains 1000+ sample questions covering the numerical, inductive, deductive, and other SHL tests. JobTestPrep is a leading provider of preparation for pre-employment psychometric tests: both aptitude tests and personality tests. The SHL Personality Questionnaire ranks candidates on a total of 32 qualities, giving the test its name: OPQ32. The traits are divided into three dimensions, which are further divided into sub-dimensions. Here are all 32 traits divided into their groups: Relationships with People Influence Sociability Empathy Persuasive, controlling, outspoken, independent-minded. Outgoing, affiliative, socially confident. Modest, democratic, caring. Thinking Styles Analysis Creativity & Change Structure Data-rational, evaluative, behavioral. Conventional, conceptual, innovative, variety-seeking, adaptable. Forward-thinking, detail-conscious, conscientious, rule-following. Feelings and Emotions Emotion Dynamism Relaxed, worrying, tough-minded, optimistic, trusting, emotionally-controlled. Vigorous, competitive, achieving, decisive. Master the SHL OPQ32: Comprehensive Preparation Guide Prepare effectively for the SHL OPQ32 with our in-depth tutorial. This video provides a detailed overview of the questionnaire's structure, the 32 personality traits assessed, and expert strategies to help you present your best self. The following are answers to questions many test takers have about the SHL OPQ assessment. Though there are pen-and-paper versions of the OPQ test, it is most commonly taken online. Your hiring company will send you an email invitation with a link to the assessment and inform you when you have to complete it by. The deadline is usually a few days to a week, giving you time to prepare by taking SHL OPQ practice tests. Your email may also contain invitations to take other SHL assessments. The best way to take the SHL OPQ test is by desktop computer. If you are unable to find a quiet place with a PC, the test is also compatible with mobile devices. Yes. The SHL OPQ assessment is available in 37 different languages. If you would like to take the OPQ test in a different language than the one offered to you, you can ask your recruiters for a new invitation, this time with correct questionnaire. If you've been asked to take the SHL OPQ test, the human resources team at your hiring company probably uses Talent Central, SHL's online software used for all SHL assessments. The Talent Central program allows your recruiters to view your report. This report assigns a personality profile to each candidate, detailing valuable insights like what their future performance is likely to be like, their suitability for leadership positions, and their likely relationship with their co-workers. It is generally up to the recruiting company to decide whether or not to share SHL OPQ test results with candidates. More often than not, they choose not to. However, in some countries or organizations, you may file a Freedom of Information request, especially for public bodies. On the SHL OPQ Test, you can go back to the previous question to adjust your answer, but no further. This is to allow candidates to fix any errors they may have made by moving forward too quickly. All trademarks are the property of their respective trademark holders. None of the trademark holders are affiliated with JobTestPrep or this website. Home » OPQ Personality Test | SHL Occupational Personality QuestionnaireOPQ Personality Test – Strictly speaking, it is called the OPQ – the Occupational Personality Questionnaire – but most refer to it as the OPQ Test or OPQ Personality Test.The OPQ (otherwise called the OPQ32) is a well-researched personality tool used all around the world by many organisations. The first Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ) was launched in 1984 by Saville and Holdsworth Ltd – now SHL – as the OPQ Concept Model. This was a model of occupational personality with questions and descriptors relevant to the workplace. It was updated in 1999 to measure a total of 32 personality characteristics and renamed as the OPQ32. Quest Partnership's MD, Max Choi is a British Chartered Occupational Psychologist specialising in psychometrics, personality and talent management. Max was part of the team involved in this update.OPQ has a quality pedigree and Professor Peter Saville is the key person behind it. He is a British Chartered Occupational Psychologist specialising in psychometrics. The test was authored by Peter Saville, Roger Holdsworth, and company in 1984. The OPQ32 was published in 2 versions: – The OPQ32n is a normative questionnaire asking candidates to rate the accuracy of a statement on a scale of 1 to 5. It also has a measure of 'Social Desirability'. For example; an indication of whether the individual has tried to give a good impression of themselves.The OPQ32i is an ipsative questionnaire forcing candidates to choose from a series of statements. They have to select both the one that 'best described' them, and the statement that 'least described' them. This is called a 'forced choice' approach. It included a measure of consistency i.e. whether the candidate had selected similar descriptors throughout the questionnaire. The forced choice approach was an attempt to reduce faking. However, critics would argue that ipsative profiles are internalised profiles. That is to say, we do not know how they compare to others. Initially launched in English with just 2 comparison groups (UK General Population and UK Managers & Professionals), the OPQ Personality test is now available in over 30 languages and with a wide range of comparison groups.The original versions were developed for supervised administration. However, research following the rapid development of internet applications indicated that unsupervised testing had no adverse effects. It also showed online technology increased the accuracy of scoring. The latest version of the OPQ is the OPQ32r which was published in 2012. Available online, it is essentially a slightly shorter version of OPQ32i, using a forced choice approach. It takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. Using a forced choice approach and it is normed, so you can now compare the individual against available comparison groups.For more information on the range of reports provided by the OPQ Personality Test and to see samples of the reports, visit our Online Shop, or contact us on 01285 861734. All products and services featured are independently selected by WikiJob. When you register or purchase through links on this page, we may earn a commission.With the number of college graduates rising every year, nearly half of the employers in the US now use occupational personality tests to single out the very best candidates. One of the most common tests is the SHL Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ). Developed by Saville and Holdsworth Ltd (SHL), the OPQ is also referred to as the SHL personality test or OPQ32. Recruitment is an expensive and time-consuming process. Employers are constantly searching for more efficient ways to identify competent candidates – those who are a good fit for the company's culture and sympathetic to their commercial goals. SHL's aim is to provide employers with scientifically verifiable insights into candidates' personalities. The SHL tests identify whether candidates possess the characteristics required for the job role. They can also predict future performance at work, and identify any leadership potential. SHL provides two types of personality test – the OPQ and the SHL Motivation Questionnaire (which predicts future performance at work). At their core, the SHL personality tests are based on the Big Five Personality Traits: Openness Conscientiousness Extraversion Agreeableness Neuroticism The Big Five taxonomy is based on decades of empirical research into personality, and is generally considered to be robust. Furthermore, the SHL tests have been translated into over 30 languages and SHL has the largest database of records in the world, from over 86 million candidates. What Is the OPQ? For those curious about OPQ meaning, it stands for Occupational Personality Questionnaire. The OPQ is one of the most popular assessments used by employers. It is a traits-based test that allows employers to assess candidates' styles of behavior and predict how their personality might affect their performance at work. It is a self-report test, meaning the results are based on your own self-perception. While it is not technically possible to fail an OPQ assessment, employers will be looking for certain characteristics for the role in question. You can, therefore, score highly or poorly depending on what the employer requires and whether you possess the corresponding personality traits. With the OPQ's prevalence within the market, it is crucial that you prepare yourself in case an employer asks you to take one. The more familiar you are with the shl personality test format and types of questions, the more accurately and thoughtfully you will be able to answer them. Some companies known to use the OPQ are: Goldman Sachs Coca-Cola IKEA Volvo Heineken The Adecco Group Bombardier Kimberly-Clark What Does the OPQ Measure? The Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ) is a widely used psychometric assessment tool designed to measure an individual's workplace-related personality traits and behavioral preferences. Developed by SHL (now part of CEB-SHL Talent Measurement Solutions), the OPQ is used by employers and organizations to gain insights into an individual's behavioral style and potential fit within a specific role or organizational culture. The OPQ measures a range of personality dimensions, including: Extraversion: The degree to which a person is outgoing, sociable, and assertive versus introverted and reserved. Emotional Stability: The extent to which an individual remains calm and composed under pressure or is prone to experiencing emotional ups and downs. Conscientiousness: The level of organization, reliability, and attention to detail a person displays. Openness to Experience: The inclination to be curious, creative, and open to new ideas and experiences. Agreeableness: The tendency to be cooperative, empathetic, and considerate of others' needs and feelings. Tough-mindedness: The degree to which an individual is logical, objective, and resilient in dealing with challenges and criticism. Independence: The preference for autonomy, self-reliance, and working with minimal supervision. Structure: The inclination towards orderliness, planning, and adhering to rules and procedures. The OPQ provides employers with valuable information to assess job fit, predict job performance, and identify development opportunities for individuals within their organization. The Structure of the OPQ Assessment The opq test is taken online and has three formats: OPQ32r You are most likely to take the OPQ32r, the "shorter ipsative" version of the test. It consists of 104 questions and is untimed, typically taking around 25 to 40 minutes to complete. You are presented with blocks of three statements, from which you must choose the one that sounds most like you and the one which sounds the least like you. For example: "Please choose one MOST true and one LEAST true statement:" I enjoy the companionship of others I try out new activities I look to the future (Source: SHL) OPQ32i The OPQ32i is similar to the OPQ32r, but each question consists of a block of four statements. They are both shl occupational personality questionnaires. OPQ32n OPQ32n is the 'normative version' of the shl personality test. You are presented with 416 statements, which you rank on a scale of 1 to 5 (strongly agree to strongly disagree). It is untimed and takes around 45 to 60 minutes to complete.Take a SHL OPQ32 Personality Test The OPQ measures behavioral styles, not ability. There is no "wrong" kind of personality. However, the more closely your behaviors align with the company's performance expectations, the more likely it is you will be suitable for the role concerned. The three major styles assessed are: Relationships with people Thinking style Feelings and emotions Within these categories, you are assessed across 32 dimensions of personality. The opq test is therefore sometimes referred to as OPQ32. Below are the 32 characteristics as they fall within the categories of shl personality test. 1. Relationships with People Sociability – Socially confident, affiliative, outgoing Influence – Independent, persuasive, outspoken, controlling Empathy – Democratic, caring, modest 2. Thinking Style Structure – Conscientious, rule-following, detail-conscious, forward-thinking Creating and change – Variety seeking, conventional, innovative, adaptable, conceptual Analysis – Evaluative, behavioral, data rational 3. Feelings and Emotions: Dynamism – Achieving, vigorous, decisive, competitive Emotions – Optimistic, emotionally controlled, relaxed, trusting, worrying, tough-minded (Source: Actualisecoaching.com) Together with the framework above, your test answers are compared against SHL's Universal Competency Framework (UCF). The UCF was developed through wide-ranging research into workplace behaviors. Many of SHL's individual personality tests are linked by the common foundation of the UCF. The UCF describes eight general dimensions of competency (defined by Professor Bartram in 2002 as "sets of behaviors that are instrumental in the delivery of desired results.") Within the eight dimensions are 20 key competencies that are outlined below: Leading and deciding – Taking action and offering direction; demonstrating leadership Supporting and cooperating – Supporting and working with colleagues; demonstrating an understanding of standards and values Interacting and presenting – Networking and communication; using powers of persuasion and influence; presenting information Analyzing and interpreting – Extrapolation of complex problems; applying expertise and understanding technology; analytical thinking Creating and conceptualizing – Research skills; innovation and creativity; systematically conceptualizing and strategizing Organizing and executing – Planning and organization skills; meeting customer expectations and providing quality service; adhering to procedures Adapting and coping – Successfully responding to change; coping with stressful situations Enterprising and performing – Achievement of personal work objectives; being commercially aware and forward-thinking. (Source: cebglobal.com) These two frameworks are used in conjunction to produce your OPQ assessment results.Practice SHL OPQ32 Personality Test with JobTestPrep There is a range of reporting options for the OPQ assessment. Reports are designed to ensure your employer is given the information required to make insightful recruitment decisions. Below are some examples of opq32 test reporting styles: The Managerial and Professional Profile Chart provides an in-depth graphical representation of your results. The Manager Report provides a brief written report describing your personality. The User Report provides both a graphical and written overview of your personality. Social Desirability scale helps employers determine if your responses are genuine. As you can see, despite the complicated conceptual framework behind the OPQ, the reports are simple to analyze and provide clear, detailed insights into your personality. All SHL OPQ candidates are entitled to feedback on their results. During a feedback session, you may be given a Candidate Report, which is a brief written overview of your personality. Can I Trick the SHL OPQ32 Personality Test? When taking your OPQ assessment, remember to be honest and answer the questions as accurately as possible. Do not try and trick the test. You may be tempted to try and answer the questions in a way that presents you in the best light possible, but this will likely distort your results. Hundreds of thousands of candidates take the OPQ every year and SHL occupational personality questionnaire has compiled 24 terabytes of data to compare your results against. This makes the opq32 test one of the most accurate and reliable personality tests on the market. Within the OPQ model are two scales which analyze how you have answered the questions: The consistency scale analyzes whether your answers are reliable. The social desirability scale analyzes whether you have tried to skew your answers to present yourself in a more positive light. This will analyze your desirability from the employer's point of view. If you score poorly on the consistency scale, it indicates that you did not understand the questions, you are indecisive or that you were trying to cheat the test. Similarly, if you score poorly on the social desirability scale, it may be because you have tried to distort the test by answering the questions too positively. It may also suggest you lack self-awareness or you are driven to please the people around you. If you somehow succeed at tricking the test, you may end up in a job that you are not suitable for. It's just not worth it. SHL Personality Test Examples There are many opq assessment sample tests available where you can practice. Utilizing these practice test can help you improve your results. Here are some opq test sample question answers: Agreeableness: "I am usually considerate of others' feelings." "I often go out of my way to help others." "I find it easy to get along with people." Conscientiousness: "I am known for being organized and methodical in my work." "I always complete tasks on time." "I pay close attention to details." Extraversion: "I enjoy socializing and meeting new people." "I am the life of the party at social gatherings." "I prefer working in a team rather than alone." Openness to Experience: "I am open to trying new and unconventional things." "I enjoy exploring new ideas and concepts." "I am a creative thinker." Emotional Stability (Neuroticism): "I rarely get stressed or anxious in challenging situations." "I am generally calm and composed." "I can easily handle emotional setbacks." Motivation and Drive: "I am highly motivated to achieve my goals." "I am willing to put in extra effort to succeed." "I am driven to excel in my work." Adaptability: "I can quickly adapt to changes in my work environment." "I am comfortable with uncertainty and unexpected challenges." "I thrive in dynamic and changing situations."If you need to prepare for a number of different employment tests and want to outsmart the competition, choose a Premium Membership from JobTestPrep. You will get access to three PrepPacks of your choice, from a database that covers all the major test providers and employers and tailored profession packs.Get a Premium Package NowHow to Prepare for the OPQ Assessment: A Step by Step Guide (2025)Here are some more shl personality test tips to help you prepare to take an OPQ assessment:Step 1. Be Self-Aware So You Can Present Your Personality AccurateyTake some time before the test to think about yourself in the context of the three personality categories. For example: Relationships with people: Are you a born leader or do you prefer to follow? Thinking style: Are your strengths in organization? Do you like structure to your day or are you more laid-back? Feelings and emotions: Do you often feel anxious? Are you competitive? How do you react when someone has wronged you? Step 2. Use Your Time WiselyAs the test is untimed, take care to answer the questions thoughtfully. That said, overthinking your answers may lead you to subconsciously present an inaccurate representation of your personality. If in doubt, go with your instinct.Step 3. Research the Company and the RoleThink about which characteristics the recruiter is looking for and how you fit the criteria. If you understand how your personality corresponds with the characteristics required, this will likely come across in your test result.Step 4. Imagine Yourself in an Employment Context When Considering Your AnswersThe OPQ test questions are designed to identify behaviors at work and your results will be scrutinized by your employer.Step 5. Take Practice Personality TestsYou can find plenty of free resources online. Try searching for variations of 'OPQ32 practice questions' or 'OPQ assessment sample tests'. Be sure to take a look at the OPQ32 study guide from JobTestPrep.Step 6. Take Care of YourselfBefore taking the occupational personality questionnaire test, ensure you are well-rested. Eat healthily and drink plenty of water to keep your mind alert.Prepare for SHL OPQ32 Personality TestUltimately, if you are honest with your answers, your natural qualities will shine through. And remember, even if you score 'poorly' on an OPQ assessment, it does not mean you have a bad personality. It only means you may not be suitable for the job you are applying for. And if the job is not one which would fulfill you and make you happy, then it is probably not a job you want anyway. Frequently Asked QuestionsThe SHL OPQ (Occupational Personality Questionnaire) assessment is a way for employers to assess the personality traits and work behaviors of potential employees. Based on the Big 5 personality traits, like many other personality assessments, the SHL OPQ looks at the following: Openness Conscientiousness Extraversion Agreeableness Neuroticism There are three different types of Occupational Personality Questionnaire that you might face in pre-employment screening. OPQ32r and OPQ32i are ipsative tests, presenting 104 statements in blocks. You will need to choose the statement that is most like you and least like you. The OPQ32n is the 'normative' version and presents 416 statements that you are required to rank on a five-point scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The SHL OPQ is a self-reporting test, which means that the answers you choose are based on the way you think about yourself.The SHL OPQ is used to create strong teams, identify the best candidates and find future leaders. The occupational personality testing It is not an ability test, and there are no right or wrong answers. Instead, they assess the way a candidate interacts with others, how they think and solve problems, and how they deal with feelings and emotions. These include sociability, influence, empathy, structure, creating and change, as well as analysis skills, dynamism, optimism and trusting ability. The answers that you provide on this assessment are compared against the SHL Universal Competency Framework (UCF) and the needs of the recruitment team for the role.To get the most out of the SHL OPQ test, you need to answer as honestly as possible. These questionnaires often feature statements that could all be as relevant as each other, so deciding which one describes you best can make it difficult to choose. The assessment is untimed, so you can make the most of your answers – although it always makes more sense to answer honestly rather than spending too long choosing the statement that you think matches what the recruiter is looking for. The OPQ is designed to ensure that you can't 'game' the system – inconsistencies in the way you answer come out in the way the statements are presented. There are no right or wrong answers in the assessment, so you cannot fail the SHL OPQ. However, if your answers do not show that you have the right personality traits for the role then you will not be selected.The SHL OPQ (Occupational Personality Questionnaire) is basically the same as the Kenexa Occupational Personal Inventory (OPI) and the Hogan Personality Inventory. They use the same structure of statements and rankings, are self-assessments, and are based on the same Big-Five personality traits: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. The SHL OPQ mostly has 104 statements that measure 32 personality traits. The Kenexa Occupational Personality Inventory has 250 questions based on 25 separate personality traits, to be ranked on a scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The Hogan Personality Inventory is more focused on the 'bright side' personality of the candidate, with seven personality traits and six specific work behaviors assessed through 220 statements that you need to choose whether they are true or false, or whether you agree or disagree.The SHL OPQ Assessment (Occupational Personality Questionnaire) is an untimed assessment, where you will need to assess yourself on the statements provided. Usually, the test will take about 20 minutes to complete.As with any pre-employment assessment, one of the best things you can do to ensure you are prepared for the OPQ testing is to get a good night's rest, eat a healthy meal and ensure that you are hydrated. As this is a personality test, with no right or wrong answers, practice is not about revision and learning, but more about ensuring that you know what the test will look like, how the statements are presented and how you need to answer. You will need to be prepared to dig deep in the assessment. This is a self-reporting questionnaire, and to answer honestly you will need to really think about yourself. You need to answer honestly, but make sure you bear in mind the requirements for the job for which you have applied. In most cases, go with your gut instinct when you are answering.To get familiar with the structure of the SHL OPQ assessment and the way the statements are presented, practicing tests will help. One of the best places for revision is the SHL website. The Online Personality Questionnaire is available as a practice test online, as are all the other types of SHL test. You can learn more about what the SHL test is assessing through articles like this Wikijob one, full of details that you can use to make the most of your preparation. For thorough preparation, you can get access to both free practice tests as well as paid-for prep packs that include tips and tricks as well as revision with JobTestPrep.When candidates are faced with pre-employment assessments, it can be tempting to try and 'crack' or 'game' the assessments for a better result. With a test that is based around personality traits, this is not a good idea. While it might seem to be the best idea to answer based on what you think the employer and the recruiter want to hear rather than the type of person you are. The OPQ is designed to ensure that your answers are the same throughout the assessment, and any answers that are out of the ordinary are flagged. Trying to cheat in this way not only risks you getting the job in the first place, but you might not be a good fit, either. Personality traits are as much about the way the potential employee will fit into the workplace as it is about their suitability for the role itself. What this could mean is that if you 'crack' the personality test, you could end up in a job that you aren't suitable for, or in a workplace culture that you are not comfortable in.Each role will have different requirements from a candidate in terms of scores, and this is not a 'right' or 'wrong' assessment so it isn't something that you will fail, necessarily. Instead, the answers you give are used to form a report, which is compared to an ideal candidate model for the role and the company culture. They are also compared against the SHL Universal Competency Framework (UCF) which are used to demonstrate behaviors that demonstrate a candidate can have future success: Leading and De