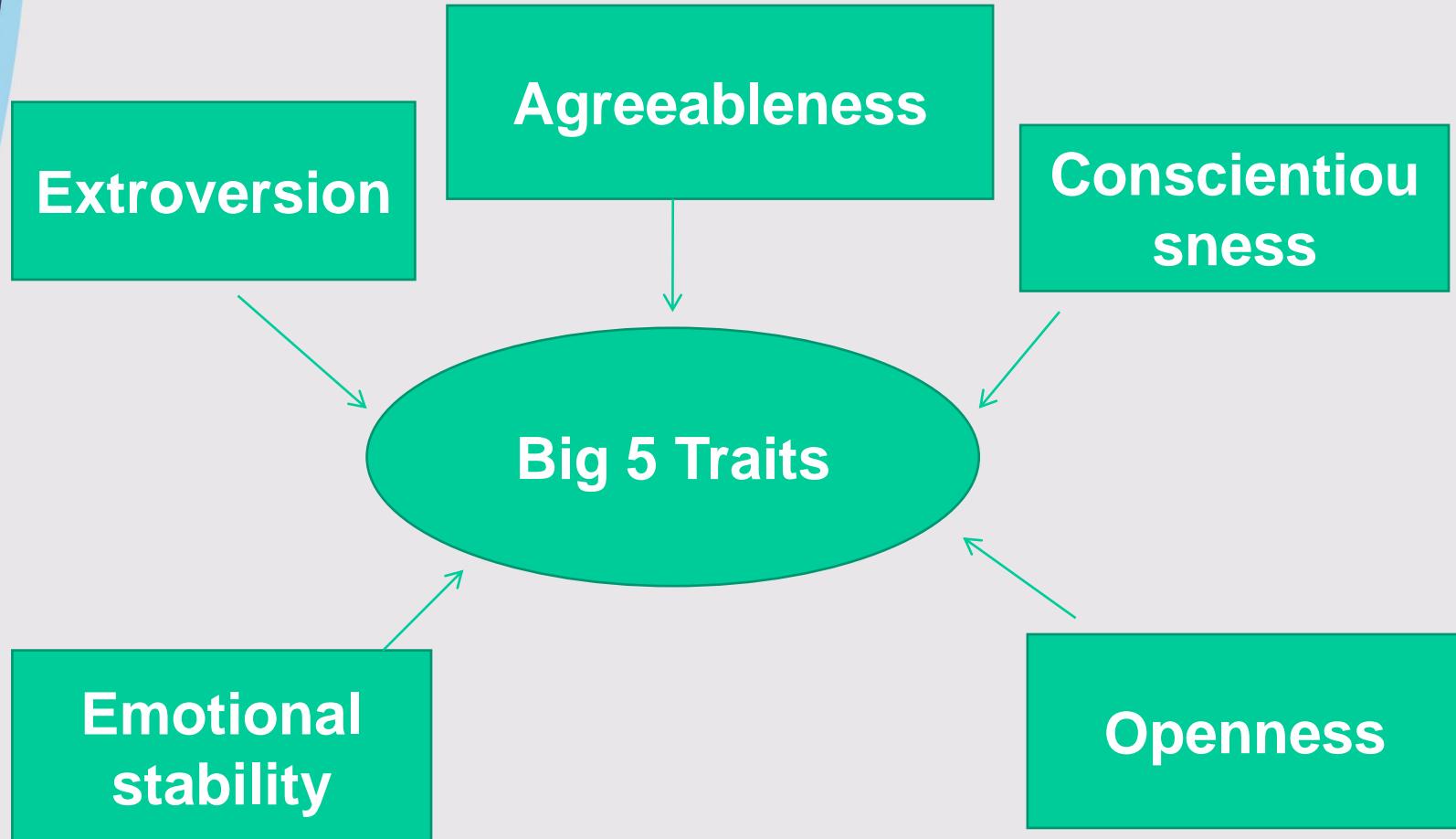




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The 'Big Five' personality traits / model





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Personality is composed of traits. About 100 years ago a few personality experts tried to catalogue the personality traits that had been described over the years. Experts found many traits, but reduced them to five abstract personality dimensions using rare sophisticated techniques. A recent investigation identified the same five dimensions, as the 'Big Five' personality dimensions.



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(a) Extroversion refers to a person's comfort level with relationships. Extroverts are sociable, talkative, assertive (self confident) and open to establishing new relationships. Introverts are less sociable, less talkative, less assertive and more reluctant to begin relationships.



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(b) Agreeableness refers to a person's ability to get along with others. Highly agreeable people value harmony (agreement, union) more than they value having their way. They are cooperative and trusting of others.

People who score low on agreeableness focus more on their own need than the needs of others.



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© **Conscientiousness (carefulness)** refers to the number of goals that a person focuses on. A highly conscientious person focuses on relatively few goals at one time. He or she is likely to be organized, systematic, careful, thorough, responsible, self-disciplined and achievement-oriented. A person with a low conscientious nature focus on a higher number of goals at one time. The individual is more disorganized, careless and irresponsible, as well as less self-disciplined.



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(d) Emotional stability focuses on an individual's ability to cope with stress. The individual with positive emotional stability tends to be calm, enthusiastic and secure. A person with low emotional stability tends to be nervous, depressed and insecure.



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(e)Openness addresses one's range of interests. Open people are willing to listen to new ideas and to change their own ideas, beliefs and attitudes in response to new information. People with low level of openness tend to be less receptive to new ideas and willing to change their minds.



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Personality and OB

- (a) Understanding personalities is important because personality affects behaviour, people with similar personality types tend to get along well at work, while opposites do not.
- (b) Personality profiles are used to categorize people as a means of predicting job performance. Some personality characteristics are more productive than others.
- © The concept of personality is not to be understood in an organizational context only. The need for understanding human characteristics is more significant.