

*Harnessing the Value of*

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# **PERSONALITY DATA**

**traitify**<sup>tm</sup>

*Life, with personality*

# *Introduction*

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At Traitify, personality is part of everything we do, beginning with our visual personality assessments to our delivery method through an API. With each of our offerings, our aim is to amplify the users' experiences by easily allowing for the capture of real personality data for a higher degree of match, engagement and even recommendation than ever before. During the course of this white paper, you'll not only learn about our methodology, but you'll also discover what makes us and our visual personality assessment so unique.

# About the Authors



## *Dr. Noreen Honeycutt*

is the Executive Director of Psychology at Traitify. As a founding member of the team, Dr. Honeycutt pioneered Traitify's system of embedding psychodynamic theory and using images as the central theme of an assessment, along with a clear binary decision to determine personality. Beyond her work at Traitify, Dr. Honeycutt is also a Training, Supervising, and Teaching Analyst with the Baltimore Washington Center for Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis. Dr. Honeycutt is a Clinical Professor at the University of Maryland, Department of Psychiatry.



## *Lauren Scott Janssen, MSW*

is the Psychology Director at Traitify. Ms. Janssen was the first person Dr. Honeycutt called upon to help her think through and design this new way of assessing personality. As Director, she helps to create new products, collaborates with designers and developers and works with outside partners. Ms. Janssen comes to Traitify with extensive clinical therapeutic experience. She has served as the Assistant Outpatient Program Director at the Harford-Belair Community Mental Health Center, where she practiced as a psychotherapist and clinical supervisor.



## *Beverly Betz, MSW, BCD-P*

is the Vice President of Psychology at Traitify. Ms. Betz is the newest member and brings years of clinical, supervisory and teaching experience to the team. Ms. Betz works with Dr. Honeycutt on creating and refining Traitify Assessments using cutting edge psychological science. In addition to her work at Traitify, Ms. Betz maintains a private practice of psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, and supervision in Baltimore. She is a Teaching Analyst at the Baltimore Washington Center for Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, where she serves as President.

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# What is Personality?

At Traitify, we describe personality as the unique and complex combination of characteristics, temperaments and traits that form an individual's enduring character. This individual constellation informs patterns of behavior, preferences, and choices. Personality reflects an individual's consistent patterns of viewing him/her self, and relating to other people and the world. Understanding personality can illuminate how one copes with emotions, engages in problem-solving, makes decisions, how one is drawn to certain types of people, and the experience of oneself as an individual.

Additionally, when looking at the assessment results of a group of people, understanding different personalities and how they work together provides important insights for team building, matchmaking, and interpersonal dynamics.

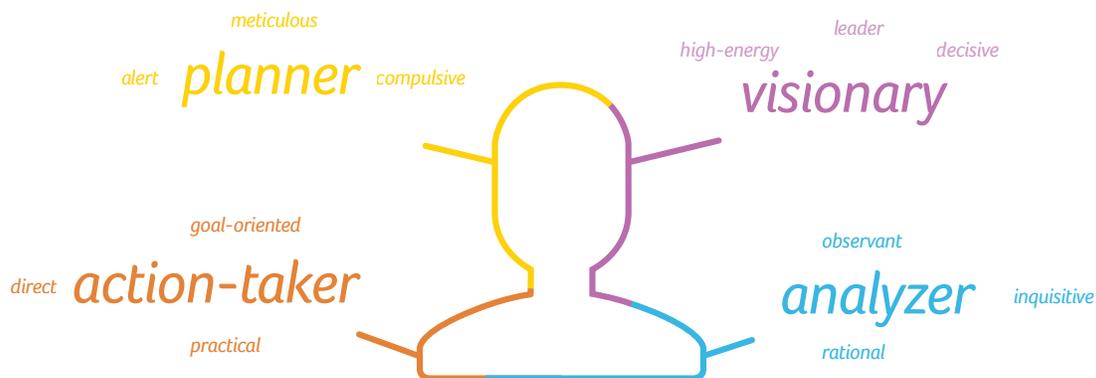
For example, here are a few words that would describe a person's personality at work: Action-Taker, Analyzer, Inventor, Mentor, Naturalist, Planner, and Visionary.



## PER·SON·AL·I·TY

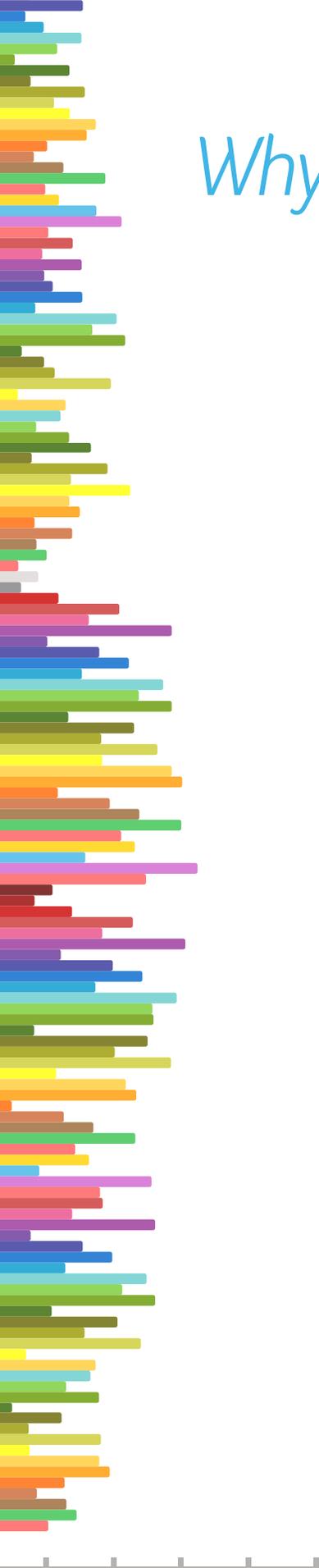
refers to individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving. The study of personality focuses on two broad areas: One is understanding individual differences in particular personality characteristics, such as sociability or irritability. The other is understanding how the various parts of a person come together as a whole.

*Encyclopedia of Psychology*



Every person is measured to a degree on every one of these personality types. Also, as you will see as you read on, each combination (and even the underlying traits) reveals more and more about the individual.

The goal of each of these models is to identify the measurable tendencies and patterns that are strongly correlated with one another. While an individual personality always has its distinct fingerprint, there are observable patterns and styles that cluster and allow for prediction in terms of behavior, preferences, and tendencies.



# Why Measure Personality?

## Understanding Personality Can Shed Light On:

- *thinking through challenges in order to make decisions*
- *choosing types of people for relationships*
- *preferences for leisure time*
- *coping with emotions*
- *consumer decisions*
- *knowing oneself*

To use personality information, you need to look deeper, within a person's overall character, to the trait level. It is in personality traits that the unique nuances and particular aspects of personality are revealed.

Significantly, personality traits exist in varying intensities and they are context specific. For example, an individual would fall somewhere on a spectrum when measuring the traits of daring and cautious, or between the poles of passivity and aggression. Similarly, it is not uncommon for an individual to be daring in one context, like business, but cautious in another, such as romantic relationships.

Therefore, it is important to measure personality from many different angles and to recognize the vast combination of traits that comprise a total personality. It is in the identification of the many co-existing facets of personality that the individual's profile can be most valuable.

We live in an ever-more personalized society, and it is becoming increasingly more important to know our strengths when making important life choices. Traitify offers this with statistically reliable personality assessments.

Self-awareness leads to a sense of empowerment. By offering this type of personality information in a simple, smart and fun image-based assessment, individuals are just minutes away from leading more personalized, and thus more meaningful, lives. That is what we aim to do at Traitify.

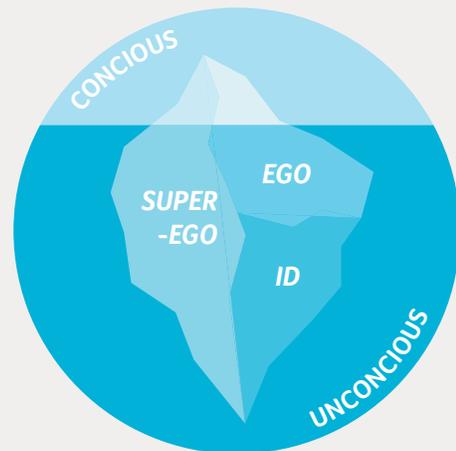
# Traitify's Psychology

The psychology of the Traitify system measures personality traits and preferences using several psychological theories as its foundation. While the field of personality psychology is vast, we've relied on several theories, outlined below.

It is from the framework of this history that Traitify's Assessments are born. Using the below building blocks, the Traitify team has modernized and revolutionized their accessibility, allowing for precise measurement of the characterological depth and nuances of an individual.

## Psychodynamic Theory

Created in 1923 by Dr. Sigmund Freud, psychodynamic theory describes the dynamics or workings of the mind. The mind is composed of three structures: ego, id and super ego. The id, which contains instincts and drives, is often in conflict with the super ego, which is the conscience. The ego (thoughts, some coping mechanisms) mediates between the two. While some of our mental functioning is conscious, much remains unconscious, or out of our awareness (and gets expressed in dreams, or slips of the tongue).



### Psychodynamic Principles:

- **Attachment Style** - the style of attachment to others
- **Free Association** - a way to access the unconscious part of an individual's mind
- **Unconscious Motivation** - what drives an individual at the deepest level
- **Ego Strengths** - core psychological strengths of an individual
- **Defenses** - the ways in which individuals protect themselves psychologically and cope in the world

### Vocational Psychology

which measures variables integral to career orientation, such as the Strong Inventory, Holland Themes, and the US Department of Labor's O\*Net.

### Personality Theory

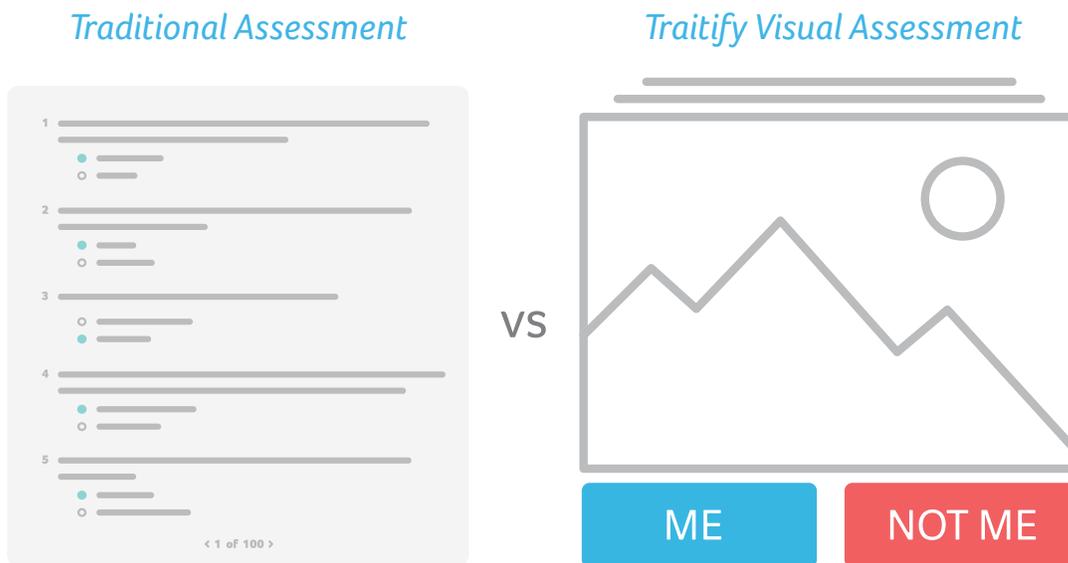
which identifies archetypes and collective patterns, or the overall ways that certain traits tend to cluster, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

### Behavioral Theory

which identifies patterns of behavior that are reinforced and predictable in individuals and groups, based experimental psychology.

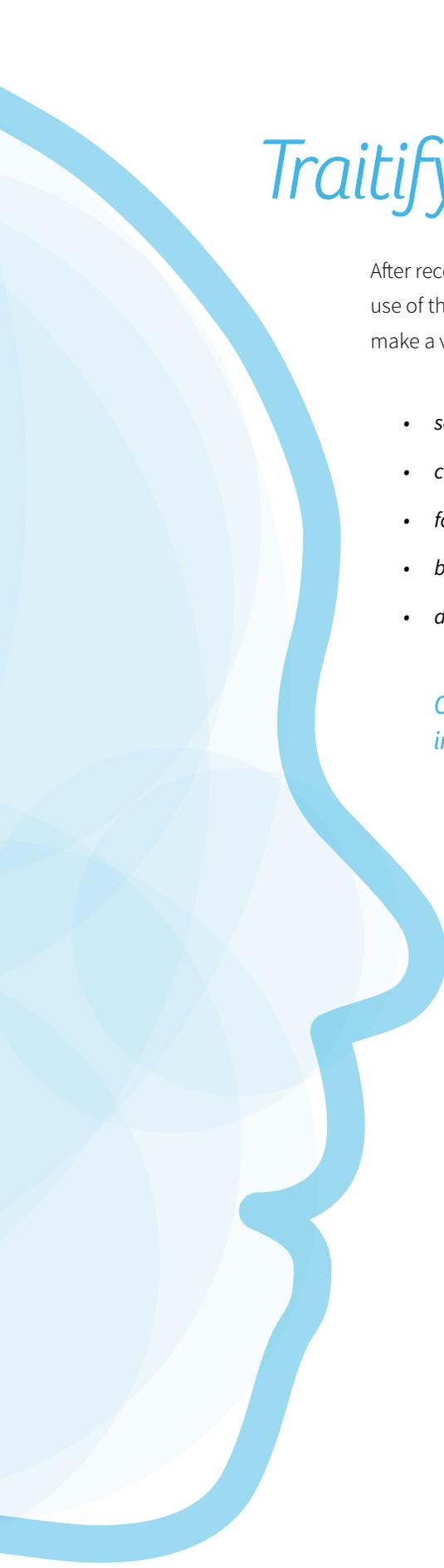
# Traitify's Methodology

Our primary method of personality measurement is presenting images based on a particular concept. The image as the medium for measurement is linked to the concept of free association in that it elicits internal personality preference and responses on many levels of consciousness. Thoughts, emotions, and memories are stimulated in the process of associating visually. Traitify's assessment elicits an automatic response based on personality factors that are more authentic than the traditional questionnaire format, which is often susceptible to a testing effect.



The "Me/Not Me" option allows for the highest level of personalization in that it invites an individual to move toward or away - identify with or not identify with - a particular image. Thus, in the aggregate of all images, unique personality components are identified. By forcing a binary decision, the results are decisive. Multiple images allow for similar personality concepts to be measured in a variety of different ways. While the "Me/Not Me" selection is binary, the multiplicity of images allows for a full spectrum of results, similar to a Likert scale.

By using an assessment that is visual in nature, we are able to access core elements of personality by measuring the individual's response to the imagery chosen in the Assessment. These images resonate uniquely with people taking the assessment, capturing a level of nuance that isn't available with standard pencil and paper tests. In other words, in a simple, fast, game-like experience, Traitify measures a depth of personality in a way that is fun and nonthreatening.



# Traitify's Actionability

After receiving the results from a Traitify assessment, it is important to know how to make use of this personality data. Information about an individual's personality can help them make a variety of life decisions, such as:

- *selecting a college major*
- *choosing a career or vocation*
- *forming friendships*
- *building peer groups*
- *determining how to best spend free time*
- *environments in which to thrive*
- *making consumer choices*
- *choosing romantic partners*
- *conflicting personalities*
- *complementing personalities*

*On the other side, websites, applications, employers, can use this information in ways such as:*

- *recruiting and hiring*
- *making credit decisions*
- *matching people to people for:*
  - *team understanding/dynamic*
  - *profile identify (more than a name)*

Clearly, personality data have a myriad of applications, not only for the individual, but also for those seeking to form a relationship with that individual, including educational institutions and employers, commercial vendors, service providers, friends and romantic partners.

# Personality Is Predictive

By revealing individual personality traits and types, Traitify can make predictions about:

 <p><b>BEHAVIORAL</b> <i>like buying behaviors or exercise patterns</i></p>	 <p><b>PREFERENCES</b> <i>such as movies, travel, field of study, jobs and work environments</i></p>
 <p><b>STYLES</b> <i>approaches such as social, leadership, perseverance, learning, teaching</i></p>	 <p><b>RELATIONSHIPS</b> <i>with people, products and services</i></p>

Everyone has had the experience of easily relating to someone new, cliquing with a stranger who is easy to talk to. The basis of that “goodness of fit” with another person is connected to compatibility of personality traits and types. In this way, Traitify can use personality data to predict likely matches between people in any of the above preferences, styles, and so on.

## An Array of Personalized And Contextual Assessments

While personality is enduring and stable, an individual’s psychology differs in terms of strengths and conflicts in the different areas of life. For example, one may be exceedingly successful in work, yet challenged in sustaining an interpersonal relationship. For this reason, we have customized decks in order to measure personality for very specific purposes.

- ***For human resources, we have assessments to analyze Careers, Perseverance, Integrity and Leadership styles.***
- ***For those seeking romance, we have assessments to analyze Relationship Styles, CORE personality types and compatible matches.***
- ***For entertainment, we have assessments to playfully analyze Superhero personality and Movie preferences.***
- ***For social purposes, we have an assessment to analyze Introversion/Extroversion.***
- ***For marketers, we have an assessment to analyze Buying Behaviors.***
- ***And, if you have a specific need, we can build a custom assessment, even if it’s just to reflect your own brand.***

# Measurements

Traitify delivers scoring at both the Personality Type and Trait level. These scores represent the individual results compared to the maximum results. To break it down even further, each personality type score is a composite of the scores for all of the traits that make up that personality type. The weighted trait scores, in turn, are created from the binary responses to the images in each assessment with short textual descriptions.



## Personality Traits

Beyond the overarching personality types, Traitify drills deeper, using our unique image based assessment technology to precisely measure trait-based aspects of personality.

Constellated uniquely in every individual, traits are the underlying ingredients or building blocks of every personality. All individuals have dominant personality traits that are observed in a specific context. Thus, the context of the assessment is very important. For example, an individual may be very driven and aggressiveness in his or her professional life, but feel very inhibited and shy in romantic pursuits.

## Personality Types

Traitify has delineated major personality types as they relate to various areas of life, including work, play, and love. These personality types are grounded in psychodynamic principles, and behavioral psychological theories.

When a group of traits form a cluster, a type results. Personality types are the broad, differentiated category results being measured by a particular assessment. Types are reflected in an individual's preferences, coping style, patterns of behavior and relationship style. For example, the "Visionary" personality type in our Careers assessment tends to be thrill-seeking in his or her choice of work activities, and will likely show higher levels on traits such as high-energy, daring, enthusiastic, and aggressive.

# Career Personality Assessment

The Traitify Career Personality Assessments is similar to established measures such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®), the Holland Occupational Themes, and the Strong Interest Inventory in that they seek to learn about the individual by measuring specific preferences in order to form a composite picture of the whole.

Traitify's Career assessment is a measurement created by Dr. Noreen Honeycutt and the Psychology Team to measure personality in the context of career selection. The assessment results for a participant are categorized as a blend of two of seven identified personality categories or types: Action-Taker, Analyzer, Inventor, Mentor, Naturalist, Planner, and Visionary. Each of these personality types is made up of eight traits.

The **Action-Taker** traits are concrete, direct, goal-oriented, physically-driven, practical, prefers working alone, realistic, and stable. The **Analyzer** traits are analytical, deep, deliberate, inquisitive, intellectually-driven, observant, rational, and serious. The **Inventor** traits are creative, flexible, intuitive, likes novelty, passionate, spontaneous, unconventional, and whimsical. The **Mentor** traits are altruistic, empathic, loyal, open-minded, patient, prefers working with others, process-oriented, and sensitive. The **Naturalist** traits are, earthy, future-focused, independent, optimistic, organic, protective, relaxed, and steady. The **Planner** traits are alert, compulsive, conventional, decisive, detail-oriented, likes familiarity, meticulous, and particular. The **Visionary** traits are aggressive, competitive, confident, daring, high-energy, leader, outgoing, and visionary.



## Action-Taker

Hands-on doers. They use manual and physical skills, working with technology or machinery to complete tasks.



## Analyzer

Inquisitive. They study and look deeply for information with a keen eye and an experimental nature.



## Inventor

Highly creative. They take a contemporary, “out of the box” approach to work and life.



## Mentor

People-oriented. They have great communication skills and fulfilled when working directly with others to improve a personal or societal situation.



## Naturalist

Attached to the natural world, frequently working with plants and animals in their environment.



## Planner

Detailed people. They are methodical, precise and detail-oriented.



## Visionary

Pioneers. They are great conviners and like to work with others in a “take charge” capacity.

# Reliability And Validity

## Method

After an initial pilot study completed at the University of Southern California, Traitify conducted a more comprehensive study with 482 participants. The participants were requested, though not required, to provide basic demographic information. The data from this study was then downloaded from the server and processed for a Principal Component Analysis and reliability (internal consistency) analyses.

482 <i>Participants</i>	.938 <sub>α</sub> <i>Cronbach's alpha score</i>	90% <i>Completion Rate</i>
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## Career Results

A Principal Components Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation was performed on data from 482 participants with complete and valid responses to ensure that the trait scores form subsets that are consistent with the seven personality types. Results revealed that a seven factor solution was appropriate. All factor loadings for the traits on their type factor were at or above .45. Taken together the results of the PCA analyses support the structure of the career assessment. Next, the internal consistency of the personality types were measured using Cronbach's Alpha; a commonly used estimate of the reliability of a psychometric test. The internal consistency was very high for all personality types with the average = .938. See Table 1 for Cronbach's alpha scores for each personality type. These results show that the personality types have very good internal consistency, that is indeed comparable to the existing standards within the personality assessment marketplace.

## Conclusion

Traitify's Career assessment shows a good factor structure and exhibits excellent internal consistency. Further validation studies are underway which will further verify the strength of our assessment.

We are committed to constantly improving our underlying technology to enhance its usefulness and value.

Table 1 - Cronbach's Alpha Level By Types

Personality Type	Chronbach's
Action-Taker	.930 <sub>α</sub>
Analyzer	.940 <sub>α</sub>
Inventor	.943 <sub>α</sub>
Mentor	.926 <sub>α</sub>
Naturalist	.944 <sub>α</sub>
Planner	.950 <sub>α</sub>
Visionary	.935 <sub>α</sub>

# The Time Is Now

It has become increasingly difficult to navigate the vast amount of information available in our digital world. Web Services and Applications have attempted to circumvent this challenge by using our demographic data, our location, and monitoring our click behavior to “personalize” recommendations and improve our experience with their product or service. Still, these second degree attempts at understanding who we are and what we like are often anything but smart!

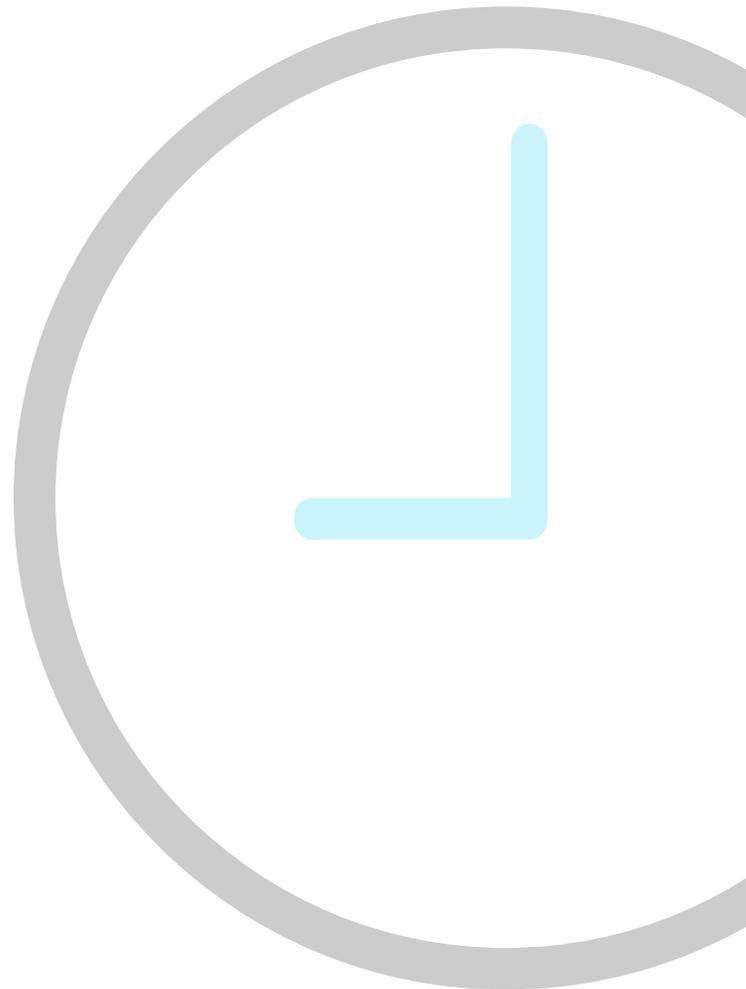
Imagine how much better the user experience would be if the web service or application knew the real you and not just the average income in your zip code, or just the cross street you’re approaching, or just which websites you recently visited. How much better could a web service or application tailor its offering to you, if it understood how adventurous or reserved you are, whether you prefer solitude to group interaction, or like to spend your free time at cultural venues rather than sporting arenas.

*These are truths about your very essence that can’t be determined from subgroup analysis or eavesdropping on your click stream.*

Traitify was founded to address this challenge. We’ve built our technology to be fast, fun, and easy to use for both the end user and the developer embedding it into their application.

Discovering an individual’s complex and unique personality, and using that understanding to enrich their experience, is Traitify’s mission.

*“In an increasingly complex digital world, we need technology that can help us discover what we need and want quickly, without wasting time hopelessly searching.”*



# About Traitify

At Traitify, we've created a Personality API that unlocks rich personality data that can be used to personalize websites, apps, services, and more.

Uncover personality blends, types, traits, scores and even matching, all of which is useful to understand users' behavior, predict engagement, and recognize patterns.

Our service is accessed using our Javascript SDK and/or our RESTful API. On the developer site, code samples are available for Javascript, Curl, Ruby, NodeJS, .NET, Java, Python, and PHP.

To learn more about how it all works, visit [traitify.com](http://traitify.com). If you're ready to start building with our API, you can go straight to [developer.traitify.com](http://developer.traitify.com).

## Get in touch

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# Psychology Advisors

**Jennifer Babcock, PhD** Dr. Jennifer Babcock is a psychologist and psychoanalyst practicing in Old Town Alexandria, VA. Dr. Babcock works with children and adults in psychotherapy, and she also provides psychological, educational, academic, and neuropsychological assessments of children and adults. Dr. Babcock is an Assistant Clinical Professor at George Washington University, teaching doctoral level students about assessment. Dr. Babcock is also on the adjunct faculty at Georgetown University Hospital, teaching psychiatrist residents about assessments. Dr. Babcock graduated from the George Washington University with her Doctoral Degree in Psychology in 2005. Dr. Babcock received her Master's of Education in Counseling Psychology and Master's of Arts in Organizational Psychology from Columbia University in 2001.

**Lynn Friedman, PhD** Dr. Lynn Friedman is a clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst, maintaining a full-time, private practice in Chevy Chase, MD. She specializes in work-life (career) and relationship concerns and teaches psychotherapy and career coaching at Johns Hopkins University. Links to her nationally-syndicated, Washington Business Journal Column, "Corporations on the Couch", and to her Washington Post articles can be found at [www.washington-dc-psychologist.com](http://www.washington-dc-psychologist.com)

**Teresa Tawes, MS, MBA** Teresa Tawes is the Outpatient Director of Harford-Belair Community Mental Health Center, Inc. She is responsible for both operational and clinical management for the Adult, Child and Adolescent, and Geriatric Services. Additionally, Ms. Tawes participates in advocacy and public policy issues for persistently mentally ill consumers in the Maryland Public Mental Health System. She is a graduate of Loyola University Maryland with a Master of Science Degree in Clinical Psychology and a Master of Business Administration.

# Studies And Reports

**Fisher, N. (2011). *Nine Lives: Nine Case Histories Reflecting the Human Condition*. NY: Vantage Press.**

This book contains descriptions of the emotional lives, internal struggles, conflicts, and anguish of nine people in psycho-dynamic psychotherapy. It highlights how personality traits emerge, in the context of both innate constitution and the environment (nature/nurture), and how they develop and reveal themselves over time.

**Grosz, S. (2013). *The Examined Life: How We Lose and Find Ourselves*. NY: Norton and Co.**

This book contains vivid descriptions of several individuals and their experience of psycho-dynamic psychotherapy. It displays the multiple forces which guide our personalities and choices.

**Holland, J.L. (1966). *The Psychology of Vocational Choice*. Waltham, MA: Blaisdell.**

Using vocation research, Holland describes six categories of vocational inclination.

**Malawista, K., Adelman, A., Anderson, C. (2011). *Wearing My Tutu to Analysis and Other Stories: Learning Psycho-dynamic Concepts from Life*. NY: Columbia University Press.**

Three psychoanalysts explain the complexity of personality, through the use of case examples. Concepts such as attachment (relationship styles) and mentalization (the ability to empathize), and the inherent interplay of personality traits are illustrated through lively anecdotes.

**Nordvik, H. (1996). "Relationships between Holland's vocational typology, Schein's career anchors and Myers-Briggs' types." *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 69: 263-275.**

This article details research done with Holland's vocational typology. It compares predictions resulting from the MBTI and the Holland.

**Shedler, J. (2006). "That was then and this is now: An introduction to contemporary psycho-dynamic therapy." Available online at <http://jonathanshedler.com/writings/>**

A psychoanalyst describes fundamental psycho-dynamic principles used to identify and understand personality structure and traits.