



Birkman Mindset

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INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE



Awareness gives you power, and power gives you the ability to make choices. Having the ability to manage your assumptions, interpretations, and reactions related to different situations will help you take the next step in your career and life.

Why do you make the decisions you make? Why do you behave the way you do?

Through awareness of your behaviors, you can understand **how** you approach tasks and manage relationships. It's only when you uncover your mindset that you find out **why**. Your Birkman Mindset report reveals the Birkman Perspectives that drive the "why" of your life.

In every moment of every day, the Birkman Perspectives are constantly working together to either magnify or mitigate each other, thus impacting your overall mindset. As you work through this report, identify the various aspects that reinforce each other. These areas reveal the fundamental, complementary perspectives of your mindset. It's equally important to be aware of contrasting relationships, as these areas may take more time and effort for you and others to understand. Keep in mind that the human being is a walking set of dichotomies—there is a push-pull in all of us, and it is the sum of these characteristics that collectively make up your mindset.

As you begin this journey, know that working through your mindset requires hard work—it takes dedicated focus and mental energy to identify the cognitive biases and short-cuts you subconsciously use every day. One of the goals of this report is to help you fully understand your mindset, and to help you take control of the actions, assumptions, and decisions you make as a result. Being empowered with this information can help you be more aware of how you interpret certain situations, to anticipate the reactions of those who may see the world differently than you do, and ultimately, to help you be most effective in your career and life.



PERSPECTIVES DASHBOARD



Distinctiveness

18



Alignment

91



Image Management

29



Social Acuity

39



Distinctiveness

18

Distinctiveness reveals the extent to which you are naturally aware of variations in behaviors, attitudes, and mindsets. The higher your score, the more you have indicated a belief that you are different from others.



Low Distinctiveness (Critical) characteristics:

"Everyone is unique"

- Believe society is made up of individuals living by their own rules
- Often express their uniqueness
- Frequently challenge the status quo
- Seek new or unfamiliar circumstances and settings
- Others may not always know what to expect from them

Low Distinctiveness (Affirming) characteristics:

"We are all the same"

- Believe everyone should fit into the collective society
- Rarely appear out of character
- More comfortable with the familiar
- Strong-willed on issues they consider important
- Often surprised by people who are not like them

High Distinctiveness characteristics:

"I am different"

- Believe they are different from others
- Have a highly individualistic orientation
- Attuned to a wide range of attitudes and behaviors
- Naturally open or fluid in most situations



Distinctiveness

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Understanding Your Perspective:

Your answers to the Birkman questionnaire reveal a tendency toward restraint and predictability. This stems from your belief that you and other people are quite similar in terms of behavior and that this behavior is within the bounds of what is appropriate and acceptable. In other words, your view of yourself (as compared to others) is one of social conservatism and dependability. Let's explore some of the implications of this perspective.

Strengths of Your Perspective:

At your core, you are much of a conformist and prefer to fit in rather than stand out. You find it easier than most people to adapt to situations which others find confining or controlling. At the same time, you can rely on previous experiences to see you through new or unusual circumstances.

Not many people benefit as much as you do from your natural quest for knowledge and the information that you bring to the table. This is largely associated with your strong drive to be in-the-know and not be blind-sided out of ignorance. You prepare for the future and avoid surprises by carefully considering all of the data available.

Challenges of Your Perspective:

Your tendency to rely on past experiences can become a barrier when it comes to gaining new insights and enjoying new experiences. Balancing the appeal of new and exciting against fear of the unknown can be difficult. For you, ultimately it comes down to the information you hold. Be mindful of your need for sufficient information, so that you don't miss out on opportunities when you may not feel sufficiently informed.

How Others May Perceive this Perspective:

It is likely that others see you as inhibited in some situations, given your thorough and cautious nature. It can be frustrating for you when others appear to have too little regard for potential pitfalls; opening up in these cases can be liberating and helpful to you and others. Help others understand that your orientation toward security helps prevent undesirable outcomes, and remember that their comfort with the unknown helps avoid missed opportunities.



Alignment

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Alignment reveals the extent to which you approach tasks and relationships with conventional thinking. The higher your score, the more likely you embrace the behavioral norms of society.



Low Alignment characteristics:

"I am unconventional"

- Genuinely non-conformist in thinking
- Willing to display non-traditional behavioral patterns around others
- May undervalue precedent and social norms
- Can appear too concerned with being individualistic at the expense of what is acceptable

High Alignment characteristics:

"I am conventional"

- Think and reason conventionally
- Generally, follow, or conform to, social norms
- Frequently perceived as cautious or risk-averse in terms of societal expectations
- Can appear too concerned with doing what is acceptable at the expense of their individuality



Alignment

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Understanding Your Perspective:

Your answers to the Birkman questionnaire indicate you are a conventional person living in a conventional world. The advantages of such a perspective are significant. However, it can also present some challenges to you and others, since how others perceive you is considerably influenced by the view you have of yourself and your view of the world.

Strengths of Your Perspective:

It is safe to say that very few people are as traditional as you are, and other people will notice this about you, as it is an admirable characteristic. Your natural inclination to understand and demonstrate socially acceptable behavior enables other people to calibrate their own behaviors. You are able to quickly and easily see the risks in a plan or idea that is not thought through. Others can count on you for your conventional wisdom and your ability to discern the most appropriate path or approach.

Challenges of Your Perspective:

Valuing convention also implies a certain tenacity that can sometimes become an obstacle to exploration and improvement. You have a definite tendency to hold on to proven methods and approaches. You are not inclined to abandon your values in favor of something that may or may not represent a step forward. You prefer to deal with the known problem rather than risk wrestling with an unknown one. Therefore, breaking into unknown territory can be challenging for you, especially in times when you feel you don't have sufficient information about the new and unknown.

You may find yourself frustrated when others don't conform to your standards of conventional behavior. The reality is that not everyone understands and appreciates the traditional approach. Try to be open and accepting of those who think less conventionally. You may find that this less conforming style is the perfect complement to your approach.

How Others May Perceive this Perspective:

The tenacity that you bring to the table, which serves you so well in so many situations, can at times lead others to believe that you are closed to input or are stubborn in your thinking. In these moments, it can make a positive difference to listen more attentively to others' opinions and not appear to dismiss them merely because they seem unconventional. An open mind will allow you to engage in more effective dialogue with others.

Yet for you, it can be just as frustrating when others seem to have little or no regard for potential negative consequences—something that rarely escapes your attention. Learning to balance the risk/reward equation—without yielding your valuable focus—can help you and your team move forward during challenging situations.



Image Management

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Image Management reveals the extent to which you devote energy to managing and maintaining a favorable public image. The higher your score, the more you work toward ensuring other people see you in a positive way. The relationship between Self-Affirming and Others-Affirming is the engine that drives how you manage your image.

Self-Affirming reveals the extent to which you attribute socially desirable and favorable characteristics to yourself.

Others-Affirming reveals the extent to which you expect other people to show up with a socially desirable and appropriate demeanor.



Low Image Management (Critical) characteristics:

"I am focused on how my results make me feel"

- Not concerned about public image
- Strive to define and validate self-worth
- Emphasize their inventive and creative approach

Low Image Management (Affirming) characteristics:

"I am focused on results over impressions"

- Less concerned about public image
- Affirm worth through accomplishments
- Have high, sometimes unrealistic, expectations of both self and others

High Image Management characteristics:

"I am concerned with making a positive impression through my results"

- Affirm worth through validation from others
- Present themselves with an air of confidence and charm
- Subconsciously hide self-doubt with outer confidence



Image Management

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Understanding Your Perspective:

Your answers to the Birkman questionnaire have resulted in a pattern that suggests you are not very critical of yourself or most people. In other words, you generally see the world as a positive place, and you have also indicated that you do not see huge differences between yourself and others. Such a perspective is typically associated with the following characteristics.

Strengths of Your Perspective:

Your perception reveals an outlook that is optimistic but not naïve. You behave in a way that is appropriate, and you believe others should show up in a similar way. You have a fundamental belief in the goodness of people and an overall expectation that people generally do the right thing, just because it is the right thing to do. Your upbeat demeanor is contagious, and your charm is endearing. You are quite effective in capitalizing on these traits to establish solid relationships with others.

Challenges of Your Perspective:

There are times when others go beyond the limits of what you deem appropriate, and these moments can catch you off guard and make you feel more critical than you typically are. Your high standards are not always realistic, and you can become uncharacteristically judgmental when people fall short. It is likely that others sense your disapproval through your words as well as through your body language.

How Others May Perceive this Perspective:

Even though you have high standards, you don't seek out opportunities to find fault in others—conversations that involve blame or direct criticism are not something you enjoy. However, there are times when your judgmental tone slips out, and others may interpret your comments as criticism. This may be perceived by some as a double standard. While you are well aware of your own imperfections, you prefer others not to point them out to you, especially in public. This may send the message that you are comfortable pointing out others' flaws but are less likely to address your own.



Social Acuity

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Social Acuity reveals the extent to which you have reasonable expectations of other peoples' behaviors and attitudes. The higher your score, the more realistic your expectations of others are likely to be.



Low Social Acuity (Critical) characteristics:

"I see through a critical lens"

- Expect freedom from control (real or perceived)
- Prefer environments that allow for expression of individual differences
- Believe people should act as they choose and let others do the same
- Others may often sense a skeptical tone from them

Low Social Acuity (Affirming) characteristics:

"I see through an optimistic lens"

- Often have idealistic or naïve expectations
- Find it difficult to make exceptions
- Others may often sense a judgmental, corrective tone from them

High Social Acuity characteristics:

"I see through a realistic lens"

- Tend to set reasonable expectations
- Are willing to examine both the good and bad
- Tend to use a constructive tone with others



Social Acuity

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Understanding Your Perspective:

Your answers to the Birkman questionnaire reveal that you have a uniquely optimistic outlook of the world. You generally see a lot of good around you, which provides you with some significant advantages. Of course, that same perspective can sometimes be a source of frustration, especially when others don't meet your expectations.

Strengths of Your Perspective:

Your optimistic orientation does not go unnoticed by others, since you regularly offer a positive outlook that can be contagious. Bringing out the best in others is one of your natural strengths, and you have an easier time finding the good in most situations than most people. You have a resilience that keeps you from getting dragged down, even in life's most upsetting moments. You avoid unpleasant surprises by keeping yourself fully informed and having all your bases covered.

Challenges of Your Perspective:

Your belief that people will always do the right thing can lead to disappointment. Logically, you understand that people will not always behave appropriately, but you may still feel disillusioned in these times. It can be difficult for you to refrain from negatively evaluating others' behaviors when they fall short of your optimistic expectations.

You are cautious and careful by nature, and when situations arise that threaten your security (in almost any sense), you will feel stressed and perhaps a little fearful. You tend to believe that more information will lead you out of the stress—which is often true. However, you also run the risk of overcompensating and getting involved in issues and problems that aren't relevant to you. Others may not appreciate what they perceive as you crossing too many boundaries.

How Others May Perceive this Perspective:

Your cautious nature will be noticed by most people and may be misinterpreted as fear and apprehension. Your natural reluctance to jump at any opportunity can lead others to believe that you have trouble experimenting with new or different approaches or even considering others' ideas. In these moments, communicate to them that your goal not to resist their ideas, but to avoid unintended consequences that come along with significant change.

BIRKMAN MINDSET SUMMARY



Distinctiveness

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Alignment

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Image Management

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Social Acuity

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Self-Affirming

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Others-Affirming

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