

# DASA

Decision-making and Self-regulation Assessor  
Personal Insight Report

**A Sample**

**ID 8603-231**

**Date 18/11/2015**

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# DASA PERSONAL INSIGHT REPORT

## Introduction

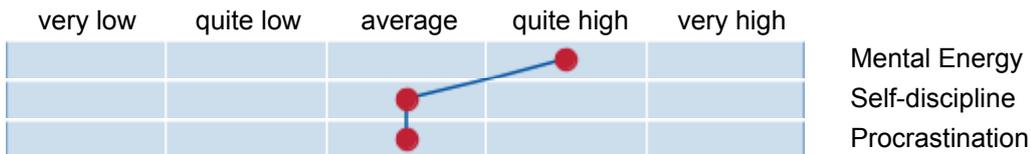
This report is based on your responses to the Decision-making and Self-regulation Assessor (DASA). Before reading the analysis, please bear in mind the following.

1. Your responses to the DASA have been compared to a representative sample of the UK working population in order to benchmark your self-regulatory and decision-making styles, and your likely competence at making decisions, against this group. If your responses were to be compared to a different group of people, this report would probably differ in various respects.
2. Most human characteristics have advantages as well as disadvantages. What you see as a weakness, others might view as a strength. In reviewing this report, consider how you might wish to capitalise on your self-perceived strengths, as well as how you might address anything you see as a weakness.
3. Everything reported in this analysis is based on the responses you have made to the DASA. If you are uncertain or disagree with some of the analysis, it may be useful for you to reflect on these aspects.

## YOUR SCORE

### Self-regulation: Energy and control

*This section considers the extent to which you perceive yourself as having mental energy, and the degree to which you are able to regulate and control yourself and your impulses in order to achieve your aims and goals.*



#### Mental Energy

*People who have more mental energy, and are resistant to the depletion of that energy, are more likely to feel lively and energised, able to take on challenging tasks and persevere until those tasks are completed. High levels of mental energy are also associated with the ability to control the impulse to engage in behaviour which is more immediately attractive but less beneficial in the long term.*

Your responses to the DASA suggest that you experience more mental energy than most people in the reference group. It is unusual for you to feel mentally tired and drained. Instead, you often feel fully alert, motivated and ready to go. This sense of energy helps you to control your impulses and to keep focused on what you need to do. It helps you to enjoy tasks that you find engaging and interesting as well as to force yourself to do the tasks you consider to be chores. To maintain or further your sense of mental energy, you may like to imagine that your mental energy is limitless, or to recall things you know you are good at. How we think about our mental energy influences the energy we actually feel.

#### Self-discipline

*This scale measures the ability to delay short-term gratification and to keep thoughts and actions under self-control. High scorers tend to be good at sticking to the task at hand and avoiding distractions. Lower scorers are likely to be more susceptible to distracting temptations which yield short-term pleasure or relief, but which are likely to interfere with the achievement of longer-term goals.*

If you are doing something dull and uninteresting, you are as likely as most people in the reference group to turn your attention to more entertaining and engaging matters. Your capacity to maintain your attention on things you don't like doing is also probably similar to that of most people. There are times when switching attention in this way can be a good thing: after doing something different for a while, you can return to the task later feeling refreshed and re-energised. However, you should try to ensure that you switch attention in a productive way, rather than as a way of simply ignoring something important that you don't want to do.

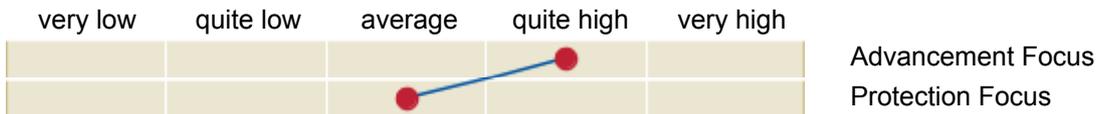
## Procrastination

*Procrastination involves 'dithering' when it would be better to act. People who procrastinate focus their attention on less urgent tasks rather than more urgent ones, and shy away from things which may be unpleasant but nevertheless need to be addressed. High scorers on this dimension tend to delay action unnecessarily, whereas low scorers are less likely to do so.*

You procrastinate and put things off to the same extent as most people in the reference group. You can take quite a long time to get around to things, and you may put off doing what you know ought to be done. However, you don't do this very regularly, or to a great extent. When you do procrastinate over something, it may be that you are expecting to find it unpleasant, and it is easier to avoid thinking about it than to get on and do it. If this is the case, focus your attention on how you will feel when the task is accomplished. The long-term satisfaction and sense of accomplishment, and the freedom you will feel from having got the job done, is likely to far outweigh any short-term discomfort.

## Self-regulation: Regulatory focus

This section examines the extent to which you focus on two important aspects of self-regulation.



### Advancement Focus

*People who self-regulate with an advancement focus tend to concern themselves with aspirations and accomplishments. They are particularly engaged in activities which allow them to demonstrate success and improvement. They approach such activities eagerly, and see them as a means to demonstrate to themselves and to others that they can improve things and achieve successes. People with high scores on this scale are focused on advancement, achievement and accomplishment. They tend to persist with, and do relatively well at, tasks which allow them to demonstrate such achievement.*

You are more likely than most people in the reference group to think about things you can aspire to and achieve, and also more likely to think about the things you have achieved in the past. Furthermore, compared to the reference group, you are more engaged in, and more motivated by, activities which allow you to demonstrate your talents, skills and abilities: what you are capable of, and what you can achieve. You are likely to feel demotivated and lose energy if, for an extended period of time, you find yourself in a situation in which it is difficult for you to demonstrate your potential. In situations where you can demonstrate what you are capable of, you are motivated and energised, and your chances of success are maximised.

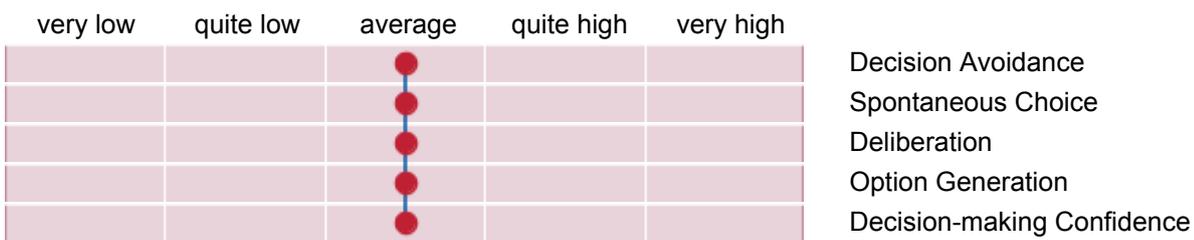
### Protection Focus

*People who self-regulate with a protection focus tend to defend the status quo. They concern themselves with safety, security and responsibility. They tend to avoid risk, taking the view that it is better to maintain present levels of happiness, wellbeing and success than to jeopardise these by taking chances. They may consider that the advantages of avoiding losses outweigh the benefits of making gains.*

Your tendency to be on the lookout for problems, difficulties and dangers is in the average range for the reference group. As a consequence, you are as likely as most to do the safe and responsible thing. You concern yourself to the same extent as most people with ensuring that the status quo, and with it current levels of safety and security, are maintained. At times you may be willing to take risks, whereas at other times you will play it safe. You probably consider that the benefits of taking a chance to improve things are generally counterbalanced by the need to maintain existing levels of happiness, wellbeing and success.

## Decision-making style

We all make many decisions every day, but people differ in how they go about making those decisions. Differences of decision-making style can have a critical impact on what we decide to do, and the extent to which we are likely to achieve our goals and aims. This section focuses on five important aspects of decision-making style.



### Decision Avoidance

This is concerned with the extent to which people put decisions off, and avoid them altogether if they can. People with high scores on this scale often feel anxious about making decisions. Before a decision, high scorers are likely to experience a sense that whatever they decide may be wrong, and afterwards, will tend to have a nagging doubt that they have made the wrong choice. They are also likely to defer to others when making choices, and will have a tendency to strive to make the best decision even when, because a choice is relatively unimportant, it would be better just to make a satisfactory decision and move on. Low scorers are less likely to delay or avoid decisions.

You are as likely as most people in the reference group to postpone decisions unnecessarily. When you have a decision to make, you quite often confront the issues and make the necessary choice without delay. However, there are also times when you put decisions off without any real need to do so. To what extent this combination (postponement of some decisions and immediate engagement in others) is effective will depend upon your ability to make quick decisions when the outcome is unimportant, and to deliberate for longer when the outcome is more critical and you cannot afford to make a mistake. Try to ensure that you only delay decisions when you really need to.

### Spontaneous Choice

When presented with one or more options, it is possible to accept or reject these with little or no thought. For example, after a long day at work, someone may be asked to go for a meal. With little or no thought they may agree to the proposal. Alternatively, they may reflect on the pros and cons of going out, perhaps considering how long they are likely to be out, how much alcohol they might end up consuming, and what the implications for this might be when they have to attend an important meeting the following morning. People with low scores on this scale are less likely than others to make spontaneous decisions. High scorers, on the other hand, are more likely to make choices immediately, spontaneously and without thinking. High scorers on spontaneity are also relatively likely to make choices using 'gut feeling' or intuition.

The extent to which you take spontaneous decisions, without thinking things through, is similar to that of most people. There may be times when you rush into things, and make decisions too hastily, but this is not typical of you. When you do take spur-of-the-moment decisions, you may experience this as exciting and providing a sense of freedom. If the issues concerned are trivial, there is no harm in this. However, you may find it helpful to try and ensure that you do think more carefully before you take important decisions that can have serious consequences for you and others.

### Deliberation

*There are two ways to make decisions. The first way is unconscious and intuitive; when people have a 'feel' for the right choice without knowing why, they are using this method. The second way is by conscious deliberation: when we use this method, we consciously weigh up the pros and cons of the various options. The choice is not made with 'gut feeling', but rather with conscious thought. Deliberation can be slower than intuition. But deliberation is very important when we are dealing with novel situations and problems, and when we wish to consider not only the immediate effect of a choice, but also the long-term impact of that choice on events as they unfold over time. High scorers on this scale tend to deliberate consciously when making choices. Low scorers are less likely to do so, and when they do deliberate, they tend to spend less time on this than others.*

When you have a decision to make, you spend about the same amount of time and energy consciously weighing up the pros and cons of different options, and actively seeking new information to aid your choice, as most people in the reference group. The extent to which this is effective will depend upon your ability to adapt your style to the situation you are in. When faced with familiar problems or issues which you have dealt with successfully in the past, deliberating on what to do often wastes time. However, when faced with important, novel and complex problems, or with planning future events associated with uncertainties, careful consideration of the issues is generally required. If you think that you are spending too much time thinking about trivial issues, or too little time considering important ones, you may find it helpful to reflect on this when you are making decisions, and pay attention to allocating your time more effectively.

### Option Generation

*When we take decisions, we often have several options before us. For example, a person doing a particular task at work may be offered an alternative task and asked to decide which of the two they would prefer to do. Often in these circumstances it is possible for the decision-maker to generate one or more additional options themselves. The person here might think of a third task which needs doing, and consider whether this is the best option. People with high scores in option generation perceive themselves as being likely to create alternative options rather than to accept the options immediately before them. Low scorers, on the other hand, see themselves as more likely to choose between readily apparent options than to generate additional ones.*

When faced with a choice or problem, you are as likely as most people to create further options. Whether this level of option creation is ideal will depend on your job role and the situations you are presented with. You may find it helpful to consider whether, in some situations, you routinely decide between options you are very familiar with, and perhaps fail to consider better options which are less readily apparent. On the other hand, you might wish to consider whether there are times when you spend a little too much time thinking of new options when making routine and unimportant decisions.

### Decision-making Confidence

*People who lack confidence when making decisions often feel anxious when deciding what to do, may let others take their decisions for them, or assume that the decisions made by others are better than their own when this is not necessarily the case. At the other end of the scale, very high levels of decision-making confidence may signify overconfidence, which can give people a sense of invulnerability, and lead them to suppose that whatever choice they make will be the right one.*

Your belief in your ability to make quality decisions is roughly the same as most people's belief in theirs. You are not overconfident in your ability to make the right choice, but at the same time you don't normally feel particularly anxious or stressed when deciding what to do. Having said that, there may be some areas and situations where making choices does make you feel anxious and tense, while in others you can feel very confident. You may find it helpful to think about what these situations are, and what it is about them that alters your confidence from its generally moderate level. There are advantages to the moderate level of decision-making confidence you generally experience. Lack of confidence can lead people to experience difficulty in making choices, whereas people who feel overconfident can seriously overestimate their chances of success. Your own level of decision-making confidence will help you to avoid the problems encountered at either end of this spectrum.

## Indirectly-measured DASA dimensions

The scales described earlier in this report are all measured directly when someone completes the DASA. Two additional scores are presented in this section which are not measured directly but which are instead computed from weighted combinations of various DASA scale scores.



### General Self-regulation

People with high scores on this scale report having more mental energy than others, a greater ability to control their impulses, relatively more self-discipline, and a lower likelihood than others to procrastinate or put decisions off unnecessarily.

Currently you can self-regulate to the same extent as most people in the reference group. For advice on how you might improve your level of self-regulation, revisit the feedback provided earlier in this report, especially the four sections on Mental Energy, Self-discipline, Procrastination and Spontaneous Choice.

### Decision-making Competence

Research has shown that high scorers on this scale are more likely than others to make timely and informed choices. The reason for this is that they have developed a decision-making style which enhances their ability to make sound decisions. They are less likely than others to put decisions off unnecessarily or to make thoughtless choices. However, it is important to note that good decision-making depends on more than decision-making style. It depends on situational factors not considered in the DASA, such as experience of similar decisions, general reasoning ability and even absence of fatigue.

In comparison to the reference group, your score for Decision-making Competence is about average. From this, it is likely that you are about as prone to making errors and misjudgements as most people. When you have time, and you are making a decision with important consequences, try to make sure that you stop and think as well as using your intuition. Check your assumptions, and consider what the consequences will be if your choice is the wrong one. Question whether you really have all the information you need to choose wisely. If you tend to put decisions off, consider the suggestions made in the section on Decision Avoidance. Finally, remember that getting enough exercise, sleeping well, getting worries off your chest, keeping hydrated, eating sensibly and avoiding the overuse of alcohol or other drugs will help to ensure that the decisions you make are good ones.