

Paradox Theory

Both Jung and Freud recognized that the human mind is based upon opposite forces. Paradox Theory extends that principle to include complementary and paradoxical forces and applies it to specific traits. Paradox Theory includes a series of principles that can be applied to the individual psyche as well as to organizational dynamics.

According to Paradox Theory, our lives involve dealing with a series of paradoxes. Each paradox is a relationship between two categories of traits. One trait is the 'gentle' trait, while the other is the 'dynamic' trait. Each of the 12 pairs of paradoxical traits is portrayed on an XY graph in order to depict the relationship between the paradoxical traits (see profile examples) . The area within the XY graph is divided into four quadrants. Each relationship is represented by a quadrant that identifies the trait associated with that relationship. The person's score is represented by a red dot. The surrounding shaded area represents his/her typical range of behavior.

If our range of behavior is able to extend to both the Gentle and Dynamic aspects of the paradox, we will have an exceptional capability and means of fulfillment related to that aspect of our lives. This is called Balanced Versatility. It is represented by the upper-right quadrant of the graph.

However, when our range of behavior extends only to the Dynamic aspect of a paradox, it is called Aggressive Imbalance. This relationship is represented by the upper-left quadrant.

Where our range of behavior extends only to the Gentle aspect of a paradox, it is called Passive Imbalance. In either case, our behavior will have some counter-productive tendencies and we will experience lesser fulfillment. This is represented by the lower-right quadrant.

Finally, if our range of behavior extends to neither aspect of a paradox, it is called Balanced Deficiency. In that case, we will also have some counter-productive tendencies and/or lack of fulfillment. This is represented by the lower-left quadrant.

By measuring traits and organizing them according to the paradoxical model, we gain insight into the manner in which each person manages each paradox. Thus we gain a wealth of understanding about an individual's behavior patterns that is well beyond the traditional bipolar system of measurement.

For example, Diplomatic and Frank is a paradoxical pair of traits included in the HA system. Frank is the Dynamic aspect and Diplomatic is the Gentle aspect of communication.

A person who is able to be both frank and diplomatic at the same time will manifest the FORTHRIGHT DIPLOMACY trait and be an effective communicator in resolving everyday work relationship issues. On the other hand, a person who tends to be very frank but lacking in diplomacy will be quite BLUNT. A person who tends to be very diplomatic and at the same time is extremely lacking in frankness will tend to be EVASIVE. The former pattern is an example of an "aggressive imbalance" and the latter an example of a "passive imbalance". Either imbalance can lead to miscommunications and misunderstanding with others as well as create a greater distance between oneself and others. Then, there is a fourth possible pattern in which a person is lacking in both frankness and diplomacy. This is called a "balanced deficiency". This pattern also results in difficulties in communicating with people as shown by the AVOIDS COMMUNICATION trait.

If these above-mentioned traits were used in a traditional bipolar method or measurement, it would erroneously assume an "either-or" relationship between frankness and diplomacy. This approach fails to consider the option that the person could be neither, both, or have

independently varying degrees of each. A score toward the middle of the bipolar scale would not distinguish between a good communicator (balanced versatility) and a poor communicator (balanced deficiency). In the HA system, it is precisely this relationship between independently varying complementary traits that illuminates new dimensions of understanding of an individual's behavioral patterns.

The term Paradox theory is used because complementary traits appear to be contradictory. But, in fact, they are not. A person who embraces only one side of the paradox will consider the traits to be contradictory or opposite. However, a person who has psychologically resolved a paradox will consider the pair of traits to be mutually compatible. In addition, such a person will exhibit a greater range of behavior, resulting in a greater effectiveness and a greater sense of personal fulfillment.

Paradox Theory - Balanced Versatility

Each of the Gentle traits has a synergistic effect when combined a complementary Dynamic trait. The two together create something more than just the sum of two unconnected qualities. Where behavior extends to both the complementary traits, the individual can be said to have an exceptional capability in that area. For example, an individual who has strong traits in being both Frank and Diplomatic has an exceptional ability to communicate in the sense of working through difficult issues in relationships. This person will tend to be frank when it is appropriate but will also be able to be diplomatic at the same time. Such an individual will work effectively with others and will be able to work out problems when they arise. Additional examples of balanced versatility would be:

1. Self-Motivated combined with Stress Management: In this case, the person will tend to be very productive and relaxed at the same time. This tends to make the person's actions more effective.
2. Self-Acceptance combined with Self-Improvement: In this case, the person has a healthy ego structure. That is, he/she accepts Him/herself while at the same time appreciates the need for continual improvement and self-development.

The degree to which our personality is versatile corresponds to the degree to which we are capable of responding appropriately to a variety of situations. We may have traits that enable us to respond effectively to some situations. However, when the situation changes and complementary traits are needed, we may or may not be able to respond effectively.

For example, in a day-to-day situation, we may be required to respond to situations decisively, and make quick decisions with confidence. However, we may occasionally be required to make an extremely important decision that will require careful analysis, a much slower tempo and a careful attitude. If we apply our quick and decisive approach to such important decisions, disaster is often the result. Conversely, if we apply our careful and analytical mode to each of our everyday decisions, our overall productivity would be greatly reduced. Someone who has achieved balanced versatility is able to identify the requirement for the situation and change behavior accordingly. He/she probably does this instinctively without even thinking about it. It is precisely this balanced versatility that is the key to creative human potential. By examining the particular areas of balanced versatility, we are able to determine the individual's greatest capability and appropriate organizational role.

This mechanism operates in much the same manner as a balance scale. In Figure 2 : **Balanced Versatility**, the qualities are balanced. Therefore the entire scale remains above the dotted line, which delineates productive traits from counter-productive traits.

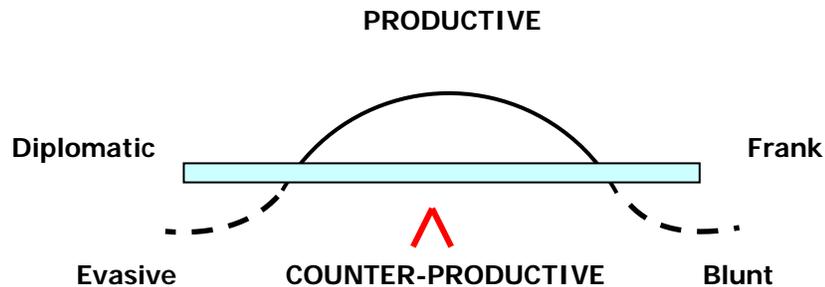


Figure 2 : Balanced Versatility

Paradox Theory - Imbalance

Where behavior extends only to one trait of a complementary pair, it is called an “imbalance”. This imbalance will often manifest in counter-productive behaviors. The degree of the counter-productivity depends on the extent of the imbalance. If a person, for example, is very Frank and is very weak in Diplomatic, he/she will tend to be very blunt. That is, this person will tend to focus on the value of being Frank and fail to consider the value of being Diplomatic in many situations. In a sense, this person is like a broken record and will act in the same way in all situations, failing to appropriately adapt his/her behavior to different situations.

Thus, the elements of personal discrimination and choice are limited by a rigid psychological pattern. This limitation forms an imbalance in the individual’s life that can disrupt his/her happiness and career success. Imbalance can also be observed by comparing the strengths of all the Dynamic traits to the strengths of all the Gentle traits. An Aggressive Imbalance would indicate that the Dynamic traits are stronger overall than the Gentle traits. A Passive Imbalance would indicate that the Gentle traits are much stronger overall than the Dynamic traits. Aggressive Imbalances in the interpersonal areas indicate a “roughness” to the personality. Strong Passive Imbalances in the interpersonal areas indicate a degree of suppression or lack of personal power. If extreme, this can indicate a tendency toward passive-aggression.

When either a Gentle or Dynamic quality is much greater than its complementary partner, the strength of that positive quality ceases to be an asset and becomes counter-productive. For example, a person who scores high on Frank and low on Diplomatic will be blunt (Aggressive Imbalance). Having diplomacy without frankness (Passive Imbalance) is called evasive. Hence, what was potentially a useful attribute, such as being very straightforward or forthright, becomes a destructive attribute that interferes with productivity and harmonious co-existence. By analyzing complementary traits in this manner, we are able to determine the degree of a negative quality by measuring the degree of difference between the two potentially positive traits.

In Figure 3 : **Imbalance**, Frank significantly outweighs Diplomatic. Consequently the scale dips into the counter-productive region on the blunt side. Frank is the Dynamic aspect.

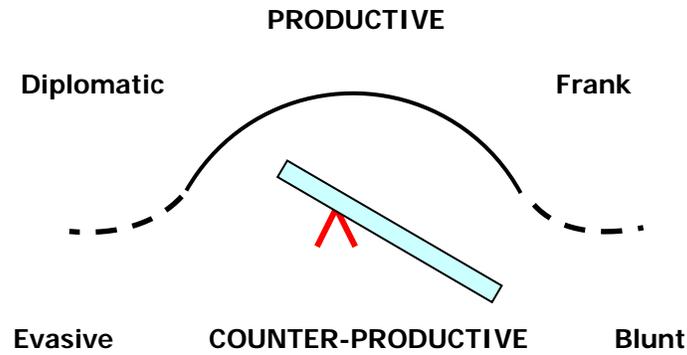


Figure 3 : Imbalance

Paradox Theory - Balanced Deficiency

Where both complementary items are weak, it is called "Balanced Deficiency". As shown in Figure 4 : Balanced Deficiency A person who lacks self-acceptance and also lacks self-improvement will not only be self critical, but will be defensive and afraid to deal with real issues that may need improvement.

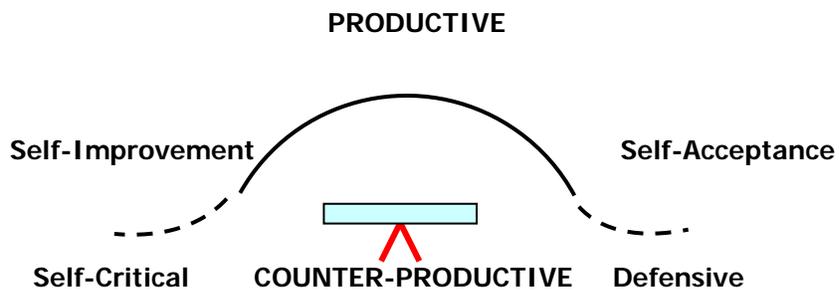


Figure 4 : Balanced Deficiency

Paradox Theory - Balancing Factors & Aggravating Factors

It is important to look at a whole series of traits to fully understand an individual. If an individual is blunt, we must look for other traits (especially Gentle traits) that may moderate that tendency, as well as for other aggressive imbalances that may exacerbate that tendency. For example, if an individual is warm and empathetic, he/she will maintain a greater affinity with others, even if he/she is blunt. That is, others will tend to be offended by his/her bluntness less frequently. In this case, Warmth/Empathy serves to moderate bluntness. Conversely, if an individual is dogmatic, over-dominating, defensive, harsh, or authoritarian, difficulties experienced in relationships with others will increase. In such cases, these other traits serve to exacerbate bluntness, making it more counter-productive.

Paradox Theory - Philosophical Background and Bibliography

Paradox Theory is actually an application to psychology of Yin-Yang Theory, which Carl Jung extensively studied when developing his own theories. This section related to Yin-Yang theory is included as a point of interest and further explores the philosophical assumptions behind Paradox Theory.

In the Western way of thinking, Yin-Yang Theory would appear to be a combination of theoretical physics, philosophy, and psychology. The primary source of Yin-Yang Theory comes from the I-Ching.

Western science is based on observing specific aspects of life and attempting to isolate factors relative to a specific phenomenon. Yin-Yang Theory is also based on principles of observation. However, instead of attempting to isolate factors, it attempts to identify universal factors. Yin-Yang Theory identifies universal, observable principles of nature that apply equally to diverse fields including physics, medicine, and psychology.

Yin / Yang in General

The following are some general examples of Yin and Yang.

Table 1 : general Yin and Yang comparisons

<i>YIN</i>	<i>YANG</i>
<i>form</i>	<i>function</i>
<i>moon</i>	<i>sun</i>
<i>winter</i>	<i>summer</i>
<i>female</i>	<i>male</i>
<i>cold</i>	<i>hot</i>
<i>damp</i>	<i>dry</i>
<i>inside</i>	<i>outside</i>
<i>water</i>	<i>fire</i>
<i>quiescence</i>	<i>movement</i>
<i>night</i>	<i>Day</i>
<i>right</i>	<i>left</i>
<i>murkiness</i>	<i>clarity</i>
<i>darkness</i>	<i>light</i>
<i>contraction</i>	<i>expansion</i>

There are an infinite number of comparisons which can be classified as Yin and Yang."

Further Reading Regarding Yin-Yang Theory

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How Paradox Theory Is Applied To The Traits

Yin and Yang are not fixed categories. However some traits are generally Yang and other traits are generally Yin. These are listed in the chart below.

Table 2 : Yin and Yang Comparisons in HA

<i><u>Yin (Gentle)</u></i>	<i><u>YANG (Dynamic)</u></i>
Open/Reflective	Certain
Intuitive	Analytical
Collaborative	Authoritative
Experimenting	Persistent
Analyzing Pitfalls	Risking
Analyzing Pitfalls	Optimistic
Diplomatic	Frank
Helpful	Assertive
Wants Capable Leader	Takes Autonomy
Stress Management	Self-Motivated
Self-Improvement	Self-Acceptance
Flexible	Organized
Warmth/Empathy	Enforcing
Precise	Tempo
Tolerance of Bluntness	Influencing
Tolerance of Evasiveness	Outgoing
Wants Stable Career	Optimistic
Tolerance of Structure	Handles Conflict
Manages Stress Well	Tempo

Some traits tend to be more neutral and more easily change from Yin to Yang depending upon the context of comparison. These traits could be called "chameleon traits".

Chameleon traits include:

1. Precise is a Yin trait when compared to Tempo and a Yang trait when compared to Tolerance of Structure.
2. Wants High Pay is a Yang trait when compared to Cause-Motivated and a Yin trait when compared to Self-Motivated.
3. Systematic is a Yang trait when compared to Intuitive, and a Yin trait when compared to Wants Challenge.
4. Enlists Cooperation is a Yin trait when compared to Authoritative and a Yang trait when compared with Warmth/Empathy.
5. Warmth/Empathy is a Yang trait when compared with Relaxed and a Yin trait when compared with Wants to Lead.
6. Self-Improvement is a Yin trait in relationship to Self-Acceptance and a Yang trait in relationship to Wants Recognition.

Each personality component is measured separately (not on a bipolar scale) and is positioned and analyzed in relationship to its complementary opposite. This analysis provides detailed information related to various characteristics, which may be either productive or counter-productive based on the following principles:

If the individual has strong characteristics (high scores) on both items of a pair of compliments it will be a particularly strong ability with regard to that dimension.

If the individual has weak characteristics (low scores) on both items of a pair of compliments, it will be a significant weakness with regard to that dimension.

If one item is significantly stronger than its complementary item of a (paradox) pair, the strength of that characteristic will become a weakness. We then speak of an "aggressive imbalance" or a "passive imbalance". For example, a person who scores high on Frank and low on Diplomatic will be blunt (aggressive imbalance). Having diplomacy without frankness (passive imbalance) is called "evasive".

Paradox Theory - How the Traits Were Selected

The traits and their complements were selected on the basis of usefulness through a process of trial, error and gradual refinement.

Usefulness, as mentioned earlier, was determined in four ways:

1. Traits were selected in order to identify the requirements of a wide variety of work situations.
2. Traits were selected that would identify a wide variety of character strengths and personal needs at work.
3. Traits were selected that related to a wide variety of task requirements.
4. Traits were selected in order to identify areas for personal growth that would enhance work potential and facilitate team effectiveness.

Paradox Theory - Position Suitability

To achieve personal satisfaction with work, it is important to find a situation that provides opportunities to express oneself as well as use one's greatest capabilities. In addition, it is important to find a work situation that has a minimal need for the weaker traits or areas of imbalance. When this compatibility is accompanied with the individual having interests that relate to the job, and work environment preferences that correspond to the environment of the workplace, the individual has a high level of suitability for that position