Career management strategies: the role of personality

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Relatively little is known about individual differences which predispose individuals to use particular career strategies. Recently, Turban and Dougherty (1994) presented intriguing evidence suggesting that personality is related to proactivity in seeking out mentoring relationships, one aspect of career management. This paper extends and expands on this exploratory work by examining whether personality, as assessed within the "Big Five" framework (Goldberg, 1993), relates to a multi-dimensional measure of career management strategy. We begin by discussing career management strategies and recent developments in personality assessment. This is followed by a discussion of the potential relationships between personality and career management strategies. Next, we describe our study, including a presentation of the method, results and discussion of same.

Career management strategies

Hall (1996) has described careers of the future as "protean", or driven by the person, not the organization, and requiring increased self-knowledge and adaptability. Authors have emphasized the need for organizations and individuals to acknowledge and act upon the increased importance for employees to self-manage their careers (Strickland, 1997). Despite the increased focus on individuals' ability to manage their careers, relatively little empirical research has investigated determinants or consequences of career management strategies or actions. One notable exception to this is Gould and Penley's (1984) exploratory study of career strategies. Gould and Penley defined "career strategies", as "behaviors which may be utilized by an individual to decrease the time required for and uncertainty surrounding the attainment of important career objectives" (p. 244). They developed a Career Strategies Inventory to

assess individuals' use of career strategies and found empirical support for a number of subscales. These scales included strategies such as seeking guidance or mentoring, networking, self-nomination or presentation, creating opportunities, extended work involvement and ingratiating behaviors (e.g. flattering the boss). Their results supported the proposition that career strategies influence salary progression (a proxy for career advancement and success). Gould and Penley also investigated factors which predict or are associated with the use of various career strategies. They found that job type (managers versus nonmanagers), career mobility (plateaued versus nonplateaued) and gender all bore relationships with the propensity to use particular career strategies. To date, there has been limited research building on these initial results. This paper begins to address this need. Stimulated by recent developments in personality assessment, we examine whether differences in personality are associated with the use of particular career strategies.

Personality: overview and recent developments
A person's personality (i.e. a set of psychological traits) is a relatively stable precursor of behavior; it underlies an enduring style of thinking, feeling and acting (Hogan, 1991; McCrae and Costa, 1997). While it seems intuitive that the personality characteristics of individuals should relate to job and career outcomes, empirically establishing these relationships has proved difficult. A flurry of research activity on industrial applications of personality assessment during the 1950s and early 1960s was followed by a period of prolonged dormancy. This period of research inactivity was primarily due to inadequate psychometric evidence on the reliability and validity of available personality instruments (Guion, 1965). A fundamental problem during this time was the absence of an accepted taxonomy for "normal" personality.

Recent years have witnessed a rebirth of interest in the utility of personality testing in work settings. This resurgence is largely due to the emergence of a consensus on a preferred taxonomy in personality classification. As discussed by Mount and Barrick (1995), "it appears that many personality psychologists have reached a consensus that five personality constructs, referred to as the Big Five, are necessary and sufficient to describe the basic dimensions of normal personality" (p. 160). Interest has also increased due to research documenting empirical linkages between the "Big Five" personality constructs and measures of individual performance and success in work organizations (Barrick and Mount, 1991; Hough *et al.,* 1990; Tett *et al.,* 1991).

The personality dimensions comprising the "Big Five" are:

(1) extroversion (e.g. being sociable, gregarious, assertive, etc.);

(2) agreeableness (e.g. being empathic, good-natured, cooperative, etc.);

(3) emotional stability (e.g. viewed from the negative pole, being anxious, depressed, emotional, nervous, etc.);

(4) conscientiousness (e.g. dependable, reliable, careful, thorough, etc.); and

(5) openness to experience (e.g. being imaginative, curious, original, broadminded, etc).

A number of standardized instruments measuring these constructs have been developed and have proved to have acceptable psychometric properties. In this study, we use one of these instruments, the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI), to assess personalities. While based on the five factor model, the HPI measures these five constructs in terms of seven scales or dimensions [1]. The dimensions in the HPI are labeled;

(1) sociability (i.e. extroversion, assertiveness);

(2) ambition (i.e. achievement-oriented);

(3) prudence (i.e. dependable, reliable, conscientious);

(4) likeability (i.e. agreeable, pleasant);

(5) adjustment (i.e. emotional stability);

(6) intellectance (i.e. imaginative, creative); and

(7) school success (i.e. values learning for its own sake).

Sociability and ambition relate to the "Big Five" factor of extroversion while intellectance and school success relate to openness to experience. Likeability, prudence and adjustment are the HPI equivalents of agreeableness, conscientiousness and emotional stability, respectively.

Personality and careers
As discussed by Osipow and Fitzgerald (1996), the interaction of personality and careers is a subject which has appealed to researchers for many years. Holland, for example, has focussed on measuring one's interests, an important aspect of personality (Anastasi and Urbina, 1997). According to Holland (1997), people gravitate toward occupations and work environments congruent with their personal orientations. The choice of an occupation is construed as an attempt to fulfill a desired way of life through one's work. Career choices reflect a person's self-perception regarding his or her abilities, values and personality along with assessments of how these individual aspects fit with particular occupations.

More directly relevant to the current project, Turban and Dougherty (1994) examined the relationship between a particular set of personality constructs (locus of control, self-esteem, negative affectivity, self-monitoring) and the propensity to initiate mentoring relationships. Their results strongly supported their view that employees should be viewed as proactive agents who attempt to influence their environments. Their study results also underscored their belief that personality plays a major role in determining who will be more or less proactive in attempts to influence their social work environment for the purpose of career enhancement. This makes sense given that personality can be defined

as a predisposition to act or behave in a characteristic fashion in response to one's environment.

Moving beyond a focus on mentoring, we expect individual variance in the "Big Five" to partially explain the propensity to utilize a variety of career management strategies. The implementation of some career strategies clearly involve working through or with other people; we refer to these types of strategies as "relationship-oriented" strategies. Examples would include activities such as building a network of contacts and relationships, using self-nomination or presentation (e.g. making supervisors aware of accomplishments, communicating a desire for increased responsibility) and/or developing more intimate mentoring types of relationships. Other career enhancing strategies are relatively more self or work-directed. Rather than involving relationships with others, these strategies involve career enhancing activities focusing either on job tasks or the development of career related skills. Included here would be what Gould and Penley (1984) referred to as "extended work involvement" (spending "non-work" hours thinking about or engaging in work activities), and "creating opportunities", which involves developing a broad base of skills and expertise. Relationship-oriented strategies contain a strong social element – a person has to be both willing and able to communicate and interact with others in order to execute these strategies. This clearly suggests greater use by relatively outgoing, gregarious, extroverted individuals. In the language of the Hogan Personality Inventory, more sociable persons tend to exhibit these characteristics, whereas persons who score low on this dimension seem reserved, quiet and shy. Thus, we expect sociability to be associated with greater use of relationship-oriented career strategies.

Similarly, more likeable individuals are expected to utilize these strategies more frequently as well. Relying largely on traditional gender stereotypes, Gould and Penley (1984) argued that females, having greater interpersonal skills and a greater need for emotional support, would tend to utilize some career management strategies more than males. Specifically, they believed that females would more often seek guidance and mentoring and would be more inclined to develop an extended network of relationships. Their argument was only partially supported; relative to males, the females in their sample reported seeking guidance more often. The gender-stereotypic characteristics upon which Gould and Penley based their arguments (interpersonal skills, relationship orientation) are a major part of the likeability personality dimension of the HPI. People characterized by this dimension are often described as pleasant, affable and relationship-oriented. Further, they tend to arouse liking and trust in others and get along with most people (Hogan and Hogan, 1995). People who are low on this dimension are more task oriented and are perceived as critical, cold or even hostile.

While females tend to score higher on likeability than do males (Hogan and Hogan, 1995), it is a characteristic which is normally distributed within both genders. As noted above, many of the career advancing strategies involve developing relations with others. Regardless of gender, someone who is low on

the personality dimension of likeability would be less likely and able to develop and maintain relationships with others. On the other hand, highly likeable individuals would be better able to enact career enhancing strategies that require relationship building. Relatedly, Turban and Dougherty (1994) found that high "self-monitors" are more likely to initiate mentoring activities. We expect that being likeable should also lead to greater use of all career enhancing strategies which involve relationship-building.

We expect a different set of personality characteristics to relate to career management strategies oriented more towards themselves or their work. Prudence is the HPI measure most directly equivalent to the "Big Five" marker of conscientiousness. Descriptors include reliable, planful, responsible, thorough, detail-oriented and hard-working. Conscientiousness has proved to have a robust relationship with measures of work success; individuals who are assessed as relatively high on this dimension tend to perform better at their jobs (Barrick and Mount, 1991). In our study, we expect that prudence will relate to a propensity to involve oneself in one's work (i.e. "extended involvement in work"). This expectation is based upon the description of prudent individuals as very thorough and hard-working – traits which may predispose persons to use career enhancing strategies emphasizing increased work effort (more hours per week, working at home, etc.).

We also expect that personality will relate to the propensity to engage in self-development. Specifically, the "Big Five" marker of "openness to experience" (degree to which a person enjoys intellectual stimulation, change and variety) appears to be a compelling candidate to relate to this approach. Two meta-analyses, Barrick and Mount (1991) and Hough *et al.* (1990), both reported relationships between openness to experience and success in training. As discussed by Mount and Barrick (1995, p. 168), this finding reflects the fact that this personality characteristic tends to "lead individuals to be active rather than passive in training, and willing to engage in learning experiences." As noted, the HPI scales of intellectance and school success relate to the openness to experience construct. Intellectance, which is akin to intellectual curiosity, seems particularly likely to relate to a propensity to engage in career enhancing behaviors involving self-development.

Unlike other personality characteristics, the HPI dimension of ambition should prove to relate to both general categories of career management strategies (i.e. relationship-oriented and self/work-oriented strategies). This is because this dimension includes "will to achieve" or "achievement orientation" characteristics; highly ambitious individuals are interested in "getting ahead" and thus seem likely to make greater use of a host of career management activities or strategies to facilitate this goal. Recall the definition of career strategies: behaviors utilized to decrease the time required for attainment of important career objectives. If a person is assessed as being ambitious, competitive and goal-oriented, it seems quite likely that they will utilize actions which promote their careers. Ambitious people often engage in social interaction not because they are outgoing (i.e. sociable) or relationship-oriented

(i.e. likeable) but rather, because they have an agenda for their interaction (Hogan and Hogan, 1995).

Because we lack compelling arguments linking adjustment, the HPI equivalent of emotional stability, with a predisposition to utilize career management strategies, we do not have a priori expectations. Given the exploratory nature of this project, however, we will examine the data for existing relationships.

Method
Sample and procedure
The sample for this study consisted of professional accountants (auditors, tax specialists and consultants), drawn from five firms, including both public ("Big Six") and industrial firms. Participating firms distributed packets containing instructions and the instruments to their professional accountants, who participated on a voluntary basis. Answer sheets were returned directly to the researchers in pre-addressed envelopes. A total of 220 questionnaires were sent to participating firms. Of those 220 questionnaires 135, or 61 per cent, were returned. Because of missing data, the final sample was reduced to 128 (58 per cent of the original 220). Of these 128 individuals, 45 per cent were female and 55 per cent were male. Ages ranged from 22 to 58 years with the mean being 29.5 years.

Measures
Personality – as stated previously, the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) was used to assess personalities. The HPI is a paper and pencil self-assessment instrument consisting of 206 statements requiring a dichotomous yes/no answer. In addition to its basis in the "Big Five" personality taxonomy, the HPI was chosen for a number of other reasons, including its psychometric properties (Lifton and Nannis, 1990), its widening use within the academic community (e.g. Johnson, 1994; Muchinsky, 1993; Trapnell and Wiggins, 1990; Widiger and Trull, 1997), and because it was developed specifically to apply the five factor model "to concerns within business, personnel, and organizational settings" (Widiger and Trull, 1997, p. 244).

Career management strategies – in assessing career management strategies, we used a 25 item questionnaire. This instrument was a modified version of Gould and Penley's (1984) Career Strategies Inventory. It provides self-reports of general strategies used to manage a career. It includes scales designed to tap five broad categories of career management strategies: creating opportunities, self-presentation, extended work involvement, seeking career guidance/ mentoring and networking. In our "Career Management Survey", we asked respondents to rate each of the 25 items on a scale ranging from a score of 1 ("Not at all relied upon/used") to 7 ("Used/relied upon to a great extent"). The set of items contained in the survey appears in the Appendix.

Demographics – because career stage may influence the extent to which individuals will use career strategies, participant age (as a proxy for career

stage) was included as a control. Also, as Gould and Penley (1984) found some gender differences, we include participant gender as an additional control. Both age and gender data were provided by respondents.

Results

After first performing a check for common method bias[2], we next ran a factor analysis on the "Career Management Survey" items as a step towards developing career strategy scales. We then used correlation and regression analyses to examine the relationship between personality and career management strategies.

Career management strategies scale analysis – using a rotated (varimax), maximum likelihood factor matrix solution, five interpretable factors with eigenvalues greater than the unity cutoff criterion were extracted. Table I

Item	Factor loading
Factor 1: *seek mentoring*	
Get career guidance from supervisors	0.85
Get career guidance from experienced people in the organization	0.77
Seek feedback about performance and implications for your progress	0.64
Seek mentoring relationships	0.59
Make your supervisors aware of your career objectives	0.38
Factor 2: *maintain career flexibility*	
Look for opportunities to learn new skills	0.68
Adapt to changes in my work	0.65
Adapt to changes in who I work with	0.58
Develop skills which may be needed in future career positions	0.52
Attend organization development opportunities	0.39
Keep career options open	0.36
Obtain broadly based work experiences in the organization	0.30
Factor 3: *build networks*	
Get career guidance from people outside the organization	0.54
Seek development opportunities outside the organization	0.50
Make your boss aware of assignments you want	0.46
Build a network of contacts in the organization to get information	0.42
Factor 4: *extended work involvement*	
Take your work home with you	0.77
Work at your job beyond normal work hours	0.67
Spend considerable non-work hours thinking about your job	0.62
Factor 5: *self-presentation*	
Work hard when you know superiors will see results	0.84
Make sure superiors are aware of your accomplishments	0.53
Present yourself as a person who "gets things done"	0.39

Notes: Maximum likelihood with varimax rotation.
The five factors accounted for 56.2 per cent of the variance in responses
Items loading on a factor at 0.30 or greater are presented

Table I.
Factor analysis
loadings

presents the factor loadings for those items loading at 0.30 or greater on each of the five factors (three items from the 25 item survey failed to load on any of the factors at 0.30 or greater). Loadings and interpretation were fairly consistent with the five scales pre-supposed to exist. The factors were labeled as follows:

(1) *seek mentoring or guidance* (e.g. get career guidance from supervisors; get career guidance from experienced people in the organization);

(2) *maintain career flexibility* (e.g. look for opportunities to learn new skills; adapt to changes in my work);

(3) *build a broad network of contacts* (e.g. get career guidance from people outside of the organization; seek development opportunities outside the organization);

(4) *extended involvement in work* (e.g. take your work home with you; work at your job beyond normal hours;); and

(5) *self-presentation* (e.g. work hard when you know supervisors will see results; make superiors aware of accomplishments).

The strategies of seeking mentoring, building networks and self-presentation contain strong social elements and are thus categorized here as "relationship-oriented" strategies. "Self/work-oriented" strategies include maintain career flexibility and extended involvement in work. For each respondent, the factor solution was used to compute factor scores representing their relative use of these five approaches. Using factor scores maximizes the independence of the computed career strategy variables.

Correlation and regression results – means, standard deviations and intercorrelations of all study variables appear in Table II. The relationships observed between the demographic variables (age, gender) and the personality variables is consistent with differences found in the general population (Hogan and Hogan, 1995). In addition, the pattern of intercorrelations among the personality variables in our sample are generally similar to those reported in Hogan and Hogan (1995). The results indicate that age displays fairly strong relationships with career strategies, some of which are intuitive (e.g. older employees are less likely to seek mentoring), while others are less obvious (e.g. older workers report greater use of the strategy of maintaining career flexibility). Relative to age, gender is only weakly associated with differences in career strategy usage – in fact, none of the point-biserial correlations achieve significance at conventional levels.

As a primary test of the relationship between personality and career strategies, we present partial correlations between the personality scales and career strategies (see Table III). These partial correlations reflect the association between personality and career strategies after controlling for the effects of age and gender. Consistent with expectations, sociability is strongly associated with building networks ($p < 0.01$). However, it is only modestly correlated ($p < 0.10$) with seeking mentoring and does not manifest a relationship with self-presentation. We also expected more likeable individuals to make greater use of

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	M	SD
1. AGE	–														29.43	6.29
2. SEX	−0.20*	–													1.45	0.50
3. AMB	0.10	−0.16	–												24.04	4.74
4. ADJ	0.20*	−0.19*	0.45***	–											24.45	6.63
5. INTEL	−0.04	−0.18*	0.12	0.01	–										12.26	4.78
6. LIKE	−0.02	0.27**	0.26**	0.29**	0.07	–									18.40	2.87
7. PRUD	0.17	0.16	0.09	0.25**	−0.49	0.18*	–								20.00	4.14
8. SCHL	0.10	0.13	0.19*	−0.04	0.10	0.15	0.08	_							9.53	2.38
9. SOC	−0.07	−0.09	0.36***	0.05	0.50***	0.27***	−0.43***	0.07	–						12.88	5.45
10. Seek monitoring	−0.35***	0.10	0.16	−0.01	0.11	0.21*	−0.06	0.13	0.17	–					0.02	0.89
11. Flexibility	0.21*	0.07	0.30***	0.17	0.19*	0.29*	−0.01	0.19*	0.20*	0.00	–				0.03	0.86
12. Build networks	0.11	−0.04	0.23**	−0.06	0.19*	0.06	−0.16	0.13	0.31***	0.07	0.08	–			0.01	0.84
13. Ext. work Inv.	0.20*	−0.13	0.05	−0.08	0.18*	−0.18*	0.01	0.17	0.02	−0.01	0.05	0.07	–		−0.01	0.89
14. Self-Presentation	0.01	0.08	0.20*	0.15	0.08	0.26**	0.07	0.16	0.13	−0.04	0.01	0.03	0.01	–	0.02	0.86

Notes:
Sex is coded as 1 = female. 2 = male.
$n = 128$
* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

Table II.
Descriptive statistics
and intercorrelations

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Career
management
strategies

Career management strategy	Personality variable						
	AMB	ADJ	INTEL	LIKE	PRUD	SCHL	SOC
Seek mentoring	0.22*	0.07	0.11	0.22*	–0.01	0.18*	0.16
Maintain flexibility	0.30***	0.16	0.23**	0.29***	–0.07	0.15	0.24**
Build networks	0.22*	–0.09	0.19*	0.07	–0.18*	0.12	0.32***
Extended work involvement	0.02	–0.14	0.18*	–0.16	–0.01	0.17	0.02
Self-presentation	0.22*	0.17	0.10	0.25**	0.05	0.15	0.14

n = 128
* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed tests)

relationship-oriented strategies. This proved true for seeking mentoring ($p < 0.05$) and self-presentation ($p < 0.01$), but not for building networks.

We expected prudence to be associated with greater use of the extended work involvement strategy, but this did not prove to be true. However, our expectation that intellectance would relate to the strategy of maintaining career flexibility was borne out ($p < 0.01$). Also, as expected, ambition proved to have a relationship with a host of career strategies, including seeking mentoring ($p < 0.05$), maintaining career flexibility ($p < 0.001$), building networks ($p < 0.05$) and self-presentation ($p < 0.05$).

A number of other unexpected significant findings emerged as well. Specifically, in addition to relating to two of the relationship-oriented strategies, likeability also displays an association with the strategy of maintaining flexibility ($p < 0.001$). Further, prudence is negatively correlated with building networks ($p < 0.05$), while sociability relates to maintaining flexibility ($p < 0.01$), school success positively relates to seeking mentoring ($p < 0.05$) and intellectance displays positive associations with both building networks ($p < 0.05$) and extended work involvement ($p < 0.05$).

As an additional test of the personality-career strategy relationship, we next ran a series of regression analyses. The results are presented in Table IV. A separate regression analysis was performed for each of the five career strategies. Each model contained the demographic variables (age, gender) along with those personality dimensions that were found to have significant partial correlations with the particular career strategy in question[3]. This approach allows for a test of the independent effects of each personality variable found to be significant in the partials while controlling for the effects of the demographic variables and other significant personality dimensions.

First, it is worth noting that age, as a proxy for career stage, continues to show a robust relationship with career strategies, while gender does not. Consistent with expectations (and the partial correlation results), both sociability

	Seek mentoring	Career management strategy			
		Maintain flexibility	Build networks	Extended work involvement	Self-presentation
AGE	−0.368***	0.230**	0.136	0.197*	0.004
GENDER	−0.004	0.135	0.049	−0.058	0.053
SOC	––	0.004	0.213*	––	––
AMB	0.134	0.222**	0.149	––	0.156*
LIKE	0.153*	0.192*	––	––	0.204*
SCHL	0.123	––	––	––	––
INTEL	––	0.178*	0.030	0.180*	––
PRUD	––	––	−0.10	––	––
Model R^2	0.16***	0.18***	0.09**	0.06*	0.06*

Notes:
N = 128 for all models
Only those personality variables with significant partial correlations ($p < 0.05$) were entered into the models
R^2 is adjusted
Report regression coefficients (betas) are standardized
* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$ (one-tailed tests)

Table IV.
Results of regression analyses

and likeability are significantly associated with some (but not all) relationship-oriented career strategies. Sociability continues to manifest a relationship with building networks, while likeability shows relationships with the strategies of seeking mentoring and self-presentation. With respect to the "work/self-oriented" strategies, intellectance continued to display a relationship with career flexibility and extended work involvement.

With respect to the "unexpected" findings revealed in the partial correlations, most dissipated in the regression results. The remaining significant findings include positive associations between intellectance and the use of extended work involvement and likeability and maintain flexibility.

Discussion
Using a widely accepted instrument developed within the framework of the "Big Five" model for application in work settings, this exploratory study investigated whether or not personality is associated with career management activity. After controlling for gender and age, results support the proposition that an individual's personality relates to their propensity to utilize particular career strategies. Per Turban and Dougherty (1994), these results underscore the perspective that employees should be viewed as proactive agents who can be differentiated in terms of their relative use of career management strategies.

In support of expectations, sociability and likeability proved to be associated with career strategies involving relationships with others. As noted by Hogan and Hogan (1995, p. 28), "the likeability construct concerns charm, tact, and interpersonal skill". Persons who are low on this construct tend to be perceived as cold, distant or even hostile. Thus, it is perhaps unsurprising that persons with lower likeability scores report less extensive use of strategies requiring relatively intensive interpersonal relations (e.g. seeking guidance and mentoring, presenting a particular "image" to one's supervisor). Even if an individual desires to utilize these strategies, if they are not perceived as likeable, they may have difficulty enacting them. Unlike Gould and Penley (1984), we did not find that women reported more extensive use of guidance and mentor-seeking behavior. Gould and Penley's findings, however, may actually be obfuscating a more robust, underlying relationship between personality (i.e. likeability) and relationship-focused strategies[4].

Persons assessed as relatively more ambitious also reported greater use of career enhancing strategies. These results, in tandem with the sociability results, provide evidence of the important influence of the "Big Five" dimension of extroversion on employees' approaches to career management. That is, more extroverted (i.e. sociable, ambitious) individuals appear particularly more likely than their more introverted, contented counterparts to utilize a host of career management strategies. Previous meta-analytic results (Barrick and Mount, 1991) have shown that extroversion significantly predicts job success criteria for managers and sales people. Interestingly, these prior results indicate that extroversion has its biggest impact on measures of status change (e.g. promotions), as opposed to other criterion measures (e.g. productivity, turnover/tenure). The results of the present study may help explain these meta-analytic results. That is, the strength of the relationship between extroversion and promotions may be partly mediated and explained by career management strategies. Extroverted, ambitious individuals may enjoy more successful, upwardly mobile careers in part because they are proactive in their use of career enhancing strategies.

As noted previously, the "Big Five" marker of "openness to experience" has proved to be predictive of success in training efforts. Authors (e.g. Mount and Barrick, 1995) have noted that individuals relatively high on this trait tend to be receptive towards and seek out education and self-developmental opportunities. Thus, we expected, and found, that intellectance would relate to a propensity to engage in self-development and skill expansion (i.e. maintain career flexibility). However, intellectance also displayed a relationship with extended work involvement (in both the partials and the regression) and with building networks (in the partials). Why might these relationships exist? A closer examination of the definition of the HPI intellectance scale may provide some clues. As discussed by Hogan and Hogan (1995, p. 43):

> persons with high scores on intellectance are seen as imaginative, inventive, and artistic which is consistent with the theme of creativity. But, in addition, intellectance correlates about 0.40 with the power scale of the inventory of personal motives, and 0.30 with the commercial

scale. Moreover, persons with high scores also seem witty, active, and energetic. Consequently, the scale combines elements of intellectuality with upward mobility, and these themes characterize persons with high scores. Conversely, persons with low scores on Intellectance seem narrow, conventional, lacking in curiousness or imagination, and contented with their life styles.

Thus, upon reflection, our results may reflect the fact that people who are both perceived by others as bright, witty and creative and are upwardly mobile, will be both able and interested in engaging in a variety of career management strategies. Of course, the relationship between intellectance and a propensity to involve oneself in one's job may depend on the intellectual challenge of the work. Our sample consisted of individuals holding fairly high level, challenging positions – these results may change if the nature of the work were less challenging.

Prudence, the HPI equivalent of the "Big Five" marker of conscientiousness, displayed little relationship with the use of career management strategies. This is particularly interesting given that this personality dimension appears to be a valid predictor of a range of job-related success criteria (Mount and Barrick, 1995). Given that the descriptors associated with this construct include being planful, careful, responsible and hardworking, it is perhaps unsurprising that prudence (or conscientiousness) is associated with indicators of work performance. We assumed that these traits would also indicate a predilection towards greater job involvement, as indicated by higher scores on the extended work involvement strategy. Our findings failed to support this expectation. One explanation may lie in the fact that those who score highest on prudence are very organized and planful. They may tend keep their work life relatively compartmentalized, and so do not work extended hours or take their work home with them. Thus, lower mean scores for these employees may not indicate less of a work-orientation, but rather, greater planning and organizational skill. Low scorers, on the other hand, may not engage in these behaviors because they, unlike their higher-scoring counterparts, may be less conscientious with respect to work-related activities. This would explain our (non) finding. Our discussion here is obviously speculative. Future research is clearly needed to clarify the relationship between this construct and career management strategies.

We acknowledge several limitations of our study. First, although our participants were drawn from a number of firms and specialization areas, they were all members of the accounting profession. The generalizability of our results to other occupations and professional groups is unknown. The types of career strategies utilized, although often consistent with a priori expectations, may be peculiar to the accounting profession. Further, it is possible that the relationships between personality dimensions and career strategies may vary across occupational groups. Future research should investigate the taxonomy of career strategies and their relationships with personality measures in other, more heterogeneous samples.

An additional limitation in our study is the threat that common method variance (i.e. data collected at a single point in time utilizing self-report questionnaires) may have inflated the observed relationships. Although the results of Harman's one-factor test suggest that common method variance is not a substantial problem, we recognize the desirability of future research using alternative approaches. Specifically, future researchers might consider collecting behavioral measures of career management activities from a source other than the participant employee. Future research should also attempt to map out the complex relationship between ability (e.g. cognitive ability), personality, career strategies and career success. Many questions need to be addressed. For example, are career strategies more important to career success and/or more highly utilized when individuals have less ability or training? Are career strategies less effective if they are used by the "wrong person"? For example, we found that less likeable individuals were less prone to seek mentoring or guidance from others. Does this mean that they are necessarily less effective at this strategy? To what extent can invividual insight into one's personality result in more conscious adoption of effective career strategies? A host of questions such as these remain unanswered.

The above limitations and unresolved questions notwithstanding, our results provide preliminary evidence that personality predisposes individuals to differentially enact career management strategies. Given evidence suggesting the efficacy of career management strategies, it is important that researchers continue to delineate the causes and consequences of these actions. We hope the results of this research project stimulate additional research in this area.

Notes

1. Although there are seven personality scales in the HPI, it is based upon the Five Factor Model (i.e., "Big Five") and can, with little difficulty, be approximated by or described in terms of five factors (Hogan and Hogan, 1995). The use of seven versus five dimensions reflects an ongoing debate amongst personality psychologists regarding the number of scales necessary to represent the underlying five constructs.

2. Harman's one-factor test (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986) was used to assess the degree to which study results might be an artifact of common method variance. In this technique, all of the variables of interest are entered into a factor analysis to examine the number of factors necessary to account for the variance in the study variables. If either (a) a single factor emerges, or (b) a "general" factor accounts for the majority of the variance, then the threat of common method bias increases. Accordingly, all study variables (i.e. career management items, personality variables, demographics) were factor analyzed, using a principal components analysis with varimax rotation. Using an eigenvalue greater than 1.0 cutoff criterion, ten factors were extracted with no apparent general factor. While this analysis does not completely rule out the possibility of common method variance, it does suggest that same-source bias is an inadequate explanation for study results.

3. This approach replicates the approach taken by Day and Silverman (1989) in their study of the relationship between personality and components of job performance.

4. As indicated earlier, as a group, males and females tend to differ on this personality measure; females are more likeable than males. This is also true in our sample ($t = 2.49$, $p < 0.01$).

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Appendix
Career management strategy items

1. Keep career options open.
2. Develop skills which may be needed in future career positions.
3. Assume leadership in work areas where there seems to be no leadership.
4. Develop expertise in areas critical to the department's operation.
5. Make your boss aware of assignments you want.
6. Obtain broadly based work experiences in the organization.
7. Work hard when you know superiors will see results.
8. Get career guidance from supervisors.
9. Make superiors aware of accomplishments.
10. Present yourself as a person who "gets things done".
11. Work at your job beyond normal work hours.
12. Make your superiors aware of your career objectives.
13. Take your work home with you.
14. Spend considerable non-work hours thinking about your job.
15. Get career guidance from experienced people in the organization.
16. Seek feedback about performance and implications for your progress.
17. Build a network of contacts in the organization to get information.
18. Get career guidance from people outside the organization.
19. Build a network of friendships in the organization to help career.
20. Seek mentoring relationships.
21. Adapt to changes in my work.
22. Look for opportunities to learn new skills.
23. Attend organization development opportunities.
24. Seek development opportunities (e.g. seminars, classes) outside the organization.
25. Adapt to changes in who I work with.