



# Role of CEO personality in strategic leadership

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## **Abstract**

Although the formulation of organisation strategies is reportedly easier, many organisations struggle when it comes to implementation of their strategies. Given that such strategies are in most cases informed by well researched market data and information, the strategy implementation challenges could then be linked to the role characteristics of strategic leaders, such as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The purpose of this research was to investigate the role of a CEO personality in strategic leadership in order to contribute to addressing the challenges of strategy implementation. The main methodology used was qualitative through unstructured interviews with 13 incumbent CEOs. A quantitative methodology was also employed to assess the personalities of the CEOs using standard personality test.

The research found that strategic leadership practices are biased towards strategy implementation than the envisioning which typically supports the building of more resilient strategies. The research found that CEO Personality has a role in strategic leadership and this was suggested by the integrated analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data. Interviewed CEOs also provided lived experiences that support this suggestion.

Organisations need to invest in envisioning and understanding the personalities in work places to build more resilient strategies. Further research is proposed to look at personality roles in different industries.

## Keywords

Personality

Strategic Leadership

Strategy Formulation

Strategy Implementation

Envisioning

## Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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**Godfrey Mwiinga**

**Date**

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## **Dedication**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH PROBLEM

## 1.1 Background

A high failure rate of strategy implementation efforts in business organisations is well documented. One of the major barriers of effective strategy implementation is the lack of leadership, especially strategic leadership at the top of the organisation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). With increasingly intense competition, shrinking product cycles, accelerated technological breakthroughs, and progressively greater globalisation, the business arena may best be described as being in a chronic state of flux, with continual variation in its Strategy Formulation (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010). Given such ever-changing environmental conditions, a firm's ability to change direction quickly and to reconfigure strategically is crucial to its success in achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Hitt, Keats, & DeMarie, 1998).

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and/or Managing Director (MD) has been characterized as a firm's chief cognitive integrator and decision maker (Calori, Johnson, & Sarnin, 1994). The firm strategies reflect the characteristics of its powerful actors, among whom the CEO is prominent (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Moreover, empirical evidence has suggested that characteristics of CEOs affect strategic decision processes (Peterson, Smith, Martorana, & Owens, 2003) and strategic actions (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001; Miller & Toulouse, 1986; Nadkarni & Narayanan, 2007) that have implications for firm performance.

These studies have examined the influence of CEO personality on firm performance without paying adequate attention to the role of CEO personality on strategic leadership processes in which it would have greater impact. The mechanisms that underlie the CEO personality and firm performance relationship require closer attention.

## 1.2 Rationale and importance of research

The rationale behind this research lies in the need to contribute to the appreciation of the role of personality in leaders that direct organisations. Many failures of organisations are largely attributed to poor strategy implementation due to the lack of strategic leadership, despite the formulation of strategies not being an issue (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). Jooste & Fourie (2009) found that *“A poor understanding of the strategy among workforce and ineffective communication of the strategy to the workforce are the most important barriers to effective strategy implementation”* (p. 80), a situation that should not be happening in an era where there is abundant relevant knowledge.

Since the above reported challenge of strategy implementation is happening in times graced with abundant knowledge of strategy formulation and implementation, and even the subsequent strategic leadership practices, it can be construed that role of a personality in the strategic leadership could be standing in the way. Examples of studies that have looked at the relevance of personality attributes of top managers in business include such as Nadkarni & Hermann

(2010), Chatterjee & Hambrick (2007), Ehigie & Akpan (2006), Peterson, Smith, & Martorana (2003), and Farkas & Wetlaufer (1996).

This research will therefore find its importance in the South Africa business environment where many business organisations are struggling to sustainable despite the lack of knowledge not being the challenge. The understanding and appreciation of the role personality of top leaders would thus be very useful in this environment. Recent South Africa studies literatures that have looked at strategic leadership ( (Jooste & Fourie, 2009), (Serfontein, 2010)) have not considered the role of personality.

### **1.3 Statement of the research problem**

South Africa has an abnormally high level of business failure as evident in the disparity between the number of start-up firms (in existence for up to three months) and the number of established firms (firms that have paid wages for more than three and a half years) (Herrington, M; Kew, J; Kew, P, 2010). As stated in the preceding section, in many organisations the formulation of the business strategies is a not an issue, but the strategy implementation thereof. One of the major barriers of effective strategy implementation is the lack of leadership, especially strategic leadership at the top of the organisation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009).

Although, the CEO personality is documented to have an influence on organisation strategy and performance (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010; Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007), the subject is not addressed in the recent South African studies done by Jooste & Fourie (2009) and Serfontein (2010) on the issues strategy implementation. Hence, the specific role of personality in the problem of 'lack of strategic leadership' remains to be investigated. Serfontein (2010) recommended the need to research on the extent of culture and diversity on strategic leadership in South Africa. Culture and diversity has a huge role in determining personality profiles (McCrae & Costa, 1997). What is evident is that this research need can be extended to include the role of CEO personality in strategic leadership because it influences the way CEOs and/or MDs lead and shape organisation cultures (Farkas & Wetlaufer, 1996).

#### **1.4 Research purpose and objectives**

The purpose of this research is therefore to investigate the role of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) personality in strategic leadership of selected organisations. Therefore, the specific objectives are as follows:

**Research Objective One:** To examine the strategic leadership practices of the selected organisations from the perspectives of the incumbent Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and/or Managing Director (led by the CEOs;

**Research Objective Two:** To investigate personalities of the CEOs and/or MDs of organisations examined in Research Objective One; and

**Research Objective Three:** To examine the role of a CEO and/ or MD personality in strategic leadership of the organisations examined in Research Question One.

### 1.5 Research scope definition

The scope of the research is defined by the following statements:

- The research focussed on examining the strategic leadership practices from the interviews with the CEOs and/or MDs of selected organisations
- The research will be limited to examining the role of a personality of the incumbent strategic leader, who is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and/or Managing Director (MD), in strategic leadership of selected organisations, without looking at organisation performance.
- The research further assessed personalities of these CEOs and/or MDs from the interviews and only one personality assessment instrument based on the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality.
- This part of the research was used to investigate the role that the CEO personality plays in strategic leadership.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of the literature review is to shed light on the research topic and its relevance. This is achieved by; not only making reference to relevant literature and/or presenting extracts from relevant literature, but also offering the researcher's own arguments as they emerged from the different literature that was reviewed.

The Chapter begins by presenting examinations of pieces of academic writings on the main research subjects, which are 'Strategic Leadership' and 'Personality', in separate sections. This is then followed by a literature review on the 'Role of the Personality of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in strategic leadership'. The literature review on 'Personality' mainly focuses on the five major personality traits upon which the Five Factor Model (FFM) of Personality is based.

### **2.2 Strategic Leadership**

#### **2.2.1 Definition of Strategic Leadership**

Strategic leadership theory has evolved from the original upper echelons theory developed by Hambrick & Mason (1984) to a study of not only the instrumental ways in which the dominant coalition impacts organizational outcomes but also the

symbolism and social construction of top executives (Hambrick, Cannella, & Pettigrew, Upper Echelons: Donald Hambrick on Executives and Strategy [and Commentary], 2001). Rowe (2001) defined strategic leadership as: “The **ability to influence others** to voluntarily make day-to-day decisions that enhance the long term viability of the organisation, while at the same time maintaining its short-term financial stability” and concluded that “Individuals and teams enact strategic leadership when they, act and influence in ways that promote the sustainable competitive advantage of the organisations” Rowe (2001:85).

This evolution of the strategic leadership theory has resulted in distinctions being made between ‘leadership’ and ‘strategic leadership’ itself. In this regard, Hambrick *et al.* (2001) note the following two distinctions between the terms leadership and strategic leadership:

- Firstly, leadership theory refers to leaders at any level in the organization, whereas strategic leadership theory refers to the study of people at the top of the organization.
- Secondly, leadership research focuses particularly on the relationship between leaders and their followers. According to (House & Aditya, 1997), this relationship has been examined from many perspectives. However, in contrast to this micro internal focus of leadership, strategic leadership research focuses on executive work, not only as a relational activity but also as a strategic activity and a symbolic activity.

The above distinctions between leadership and strategic leadership indicate that strategic leaders largely carry the responsibility of dealing with the entire business of an organisation as a whole. This entails dealing with the relationship with the Strategy Formulation and ensuring that the internal organisation environment is designed to be in alignment for effective organisation performance. This deduction is confirmed by the assertion that “leadership is about leadership ‘in’ an organisation and that of strategic leadership is leadership ‘of’ the organisation (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). Such leadership ‘of’ the organisation is achievable through the ability of an experienced, senior leader who has wisdom and vision to create and execute plans and make consequential decisions in the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous strategic environment (Guillot, 2003).

Therefore, strategic leadership largely relate to “the leader’s ability to anticipate, envision and maintain flexibility and to empower others to create strategic change as necessary” (Ireland, Hoskisson, & Hitt, 2011). As such, strategic leadership is about leader’s ability to pull the strings that differently link the various aspects of the organisation in a synchronised manner that results in the effective delivering of the products or services that align with the positioning of the organisation in the market. This deduction is synonymous to the production of the classical music sounds, which requires an understanding of the entire production process. The definition provided by Amos (2007:3) agrees with deduction: Strategic leadership is “The ability to understand the entire organisation and the environments within which they operate and using this understanding to create strategic change

through other people so as to position the organisation in the environment for both short-term stability and long-term viability” (Amos, 2007).

It has been observed that few leaders allow themselves to think about strategy and the future of their organisation. And yet leaders are required to give direction to every part of the organisation; from the corporate office to the loading dock (Montgomery, 2008). Montgomery (2008) goes on to define strategic leadership as “the ability of the leaders to create and re-create reasons for the organisation’s continued existence. The leader must have the ability to keep one eye on how the organisation is currently adding value and the other eye on changes, both inside and outside the organisation, that either threaten its position or present some new opportunity for adding value”.

In summary, the definitions of strategic leadership presented in the preceding paragraphs indicate that it requires the ability to accommodate and integrate both the internal and external business environment of the organisation, and to manage and engage in a complex information processing (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). In this process of accommodation and integration, the strategic leadership would have to ensure that a future perspective is maintained by understanding the trends in the Strategy Formulation. In this regard, Serfontein (2010) presents that strategic leadership in the organisation should focus on the future, to create excitement for the future, as well as what is happening today.

## 2.2.2 Strategic leadership in practice

Strategically oriented leaders form a game plan that everybody can understand and participate in so that eventually the plan leads to the actualisation of the vision (Hybels, 2002). When the time comes to implement such a strategy (game plan), many companies find themselves stymied at the point of execution, and having identified the opportunities within their reach, they watch as the results fall short of their aspirations (Hsieh & Yik, 2005).

Being strategic evokes peering far into the future, making strong choices and holding firm commitments, unwaveringly deploying resources to implement them, and having every senior executive single-mindedly and individually dedicated to achieving them (Doz & Kosonen, 2008). However, modern implementation of strategies requires flexibility and agility due to the ever-changing environments.

Agility evokes staying nimble and flexible, open to new evidence, always ready to reassess past choices and change direction in light of new developments, and willing and able to turn on a dime (Doz & Kosonen, 2008). Thus modern strategy implementation demands top management to constantly adjust courses of action in order to develop relevant trajectories without being satisfied with periodic strategy reviews. The following extract gives the essence of flexibility in strategic leadership by Henry E. Singleton, founder of Teledyne Corporation:

*“Singleton executed strategy very flexibly; for example, he did not manage to a business plan. Once criticized for not having a business plan, Henry replied that he knew that a lot of people running companies had very definite plans they followed assiduously. ‘But we’re subject to a great number of outside influences on our businesses, and most of them can’t be predicted. So my plan is to stay flexible.’” (Calandro, 2010, p. 30)*

Although too few companies recognize the reason of poor strategy implementation (Hsieh & Yik, 2005), the lack of strategic leadership was found to be a major barrier to effective strategy implementation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). In this fast-changing world, the question for many senior managers is: “What leadership strategy is needed in my organisation to stay competitive and to thrive?” (Kantabutra & Avery, 2010). Kantabutra & Every (2010) goes on to say that “to many academics and consultants, visionary leadership, or leadership with a vision as a core component, is the answer”.

The long term sustainability of any business in the dynamic business environment requires clear understanding of long-term perspective and application of measures that minimise business failures. Could the lack of such strategic leadership, be a reason for the high failure rate of many business start-ups in South Africa? (Herrington, M; Kew, J; Kew, P, 2010). Modern business and organisational leaders are pressurised to deliver within short-terms and it seems modern strategic leaders have little opportunity to practise strategic leadership skills, which are essential for implementation of organisation strategy. This observation could be linked to the assertion that in the short term, companies that undertake new

strategies without the right leaders in place are forced to burden their existing ones with additional responsibilities leaving little time to take strategic roles (Hsieh & Yik, 2005). Firms that stretch its existing strategic leaders too far would likely result in overall effectiveness to nosedive and this trade-off would compromise the achievement of strategic objectives.

Strategic management (leadership) involves both analytical decision-making and sound professional judgement (Calandro, 2010). Analytical decision making is informed by the core competency of the organisation, which is determined by the main business of an organisation. On the other hand, sound professional judgment has to be informed by experience and historical study of the industry. Although, strategic leadership seems to be largely focussed on the future, the understanding of the past helps to shade more light on the future.

### **2.2.3 Summary of Strategic leadership themes**

From the theory and practice of strategic leadership presented in the preceding sections, of strategy In summary, the practice of strategic leadership is connected with managing a business or an organisation as a whole and entails the following aspects:

**Table 2-1: Strategic leadership themes and descriptive indicators**

Theme	Descriptive indicators
1. Vision (Envisioning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future focus, perspective, and anticipation ( (Serfontein, 2010), (Ireland, Hoskisson, &amp; Hitt, 2011)).</li> <li>• Understanding the bigger picture (trends, issues and opportunities in the Strategy Formulation) (Amos, 2007).</li> <li>• Ensuring strategic direction (strategic choices) (Montgomery, 2008).</li> <li>• Critical reflection and dialogue (coming from an indication of exchange of ideas, discussion).</li> </ul>
2. Strategy formulation / positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic choices of products and/or services (Doz &amp; Kosonen, 2008).</li> <li>• Alignment with trends in Strategy Formulation, i.e. Products and/or services link with demands, needs or trends in the market or Strategy Formulation.</li> <li>• Addresses issue of rivalry and competition (Hambrick, Cannella, &amp; Pettigrew, 2001).</li> <li>• Developing or creating the implementation planning and mobilisation of the resources that are needed.</li> </ul>
3. Strategy execution or implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actual strategic activities done to deliver on products and services; e.g. restructuring, establishment of partnership</li> <li>• Deployment of the allocation of resources (Doz &amp; Kosonen, 2008).</li> <li>• Consequential decision making in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous strategic environments (Guillot, 2003), that can either be based on analytical information and/or sound professional judgements based on experience (Calandro, 2010).</li> <li>• Communicating and sharing of strategy and managing implications of strategic intents</li> </ul>
4. Empowering (internal environment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing through others ( (Ireland, Hoskisson, &amp; Hitt, 2011), (2011), (Rowe, 2001)).</li> <li>• Developing internal competencies, training new leaders</li> <li>• Transparency/relationships.</li> <li>• Providing oversight, monitoring &amp; constant questioning (Montgomery, 2008).</li> <li>• Maintaining flexibility-able to change ( (Ireland, Hoskisson, &amp; Hitt, 2011), (Calandro, 2010)).</li> <li>• Integration and engaging (Jooste &amp; Fourie, 2009).</li> </ul>

The above aspects are presented in some order of practice. Vision underpins business strategy formulation and is the starting point of any organisation transformation process, and must therefore be informed by empirical evidence of developing an effective vision (Kantabutra & Avery, 2010). Strategy implementation or execution follows strategy formulation, whilst empowering would have to take place in the process of strategy implementation.

## 2.3 Personality in strategic leadership

### 2.3.1 Definition of Personality

The definition of personality largely depends on the personality theories, one is using (see Table 2-1 for a summary of major personality theories examples in).

**Table 2-2: Major Theories of Personality (Boeree, 2006)**

Theories	Theorist/Theory	Basic Idea
Psychoanalytic theories – Freud and Beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sigmund Freud/Psychoanalytic Theory of Psychosexual Development</li> <li>• Alfred Adler /Individual Psychology</li> <li>• Erik Erikson/Psychosocial Theory of Adjustment</li> <li>• Carl G. Jung /Analytical psychology</li> </ul>	Human behaviour is determined by a person's past (childhood) experiences, which colour his/her perceptions of current events
Humanistic Theories - individuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carl R. Rogers Person-centred Theory</li> <li>• Abraham Maslow /Holistic Theory</li> </ul>	Human behaviour can be understood only in terms of the person's internal perceptions of self and others leading toward personal fulfilment
Trait Theories – aspects of personality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cattell's 16 trait dimension</li> <li>• Eysenck's Supertraits</li> <li>• Five factors of personality</li> </ul>	Describing human behaviour in the way we describe personality in everyday language and trait labels are given to consistent and enduring aspects of personality.
Biological and genetic theories – the way we are made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• William Sheldon/Constitutional Psychology</li> <li>• Gordon Allport/ Psychology of the Individual</li> <li>• Raymond B. Cattell /Factor Theory</li> </ul>	Human behaviour is traced to the joint effects of the organism's inherited Capabilities and past experience
Social – Cognitive theories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Dollard &amp; Neal E. Miller / Reinforcement Theory</li> <li>• Albert Bandura / Social Learning Theory</li> </ul>	Human behaviour results from an organism's past learning, current perceptions, and higher- level processes of thinking

The basic description of personality is best expressed in the following statement given by Boeree (2006):

*“Usually when we talk about someone's personality, we are talking about what makes that person different from other people, perhaps even unique”* (Boeree, 2006, p. 6).

What is evident from the description of personality in the above statement is that there could be several traits that constitute personality. Nevertheless, the fact that these characteristics make someone different or unique from other people means that they should be enduring characteristics. This deduction agrees with the definition provided by Ehigie & Akpan (2006) when they stated that *“Personality is a relatively enduring characteristic that makes an individual unique and different from other individuals”* (p. 80), indicating that personality entails impressions that can be made on others and is relatively stable over time and does not change from day to day.

The use of the word ‘relatively’ in the personality definition provided by Ehigie & Akpan (2006) implies that there factors that can influence personality and that, though enduring, it is subject to change over longer periods of time. This could be expected considering earlier assertions that personality traits are arbitrarily shaped by culture (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

## 2.3.2 Assessment of personality

### 2.3.2.1 Overview of assessment instruments

Although graphic models, with symbolic illustrations, or mathematical models, or even computer models, have been used to present models of personality theories, words or verbal models are the basic forms used in the study of personality (Boeree, 2006). There are various standard assessments available to measure personality and some examples include the following:

- (1) The Thematic Apperception Test, a projective test that offers more validity and consists of drawings or photographs of real-life situations.
- (2) The Myers-Briggs Types Indicator (MBTI), originally developed by a mother and daughter team.
- (3) 16 PF Instrument, which has been widely used for a variety of applications, including treatment planning and couples' counselling and to provide support for vocational guidance, hiring and promotion recommendations.
- (4) The Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality typically called the Big Five, is based on five basic dimensions or personality traits.

The descriptions the above assessments can be very comprehensive and is beyond the scope of this research. However, a brief description of the FFM of

personality is presented because it is the method used in this research. the rationale for its choice is provided in the methodology chapter.

### ***2.3.2.2 Five Factor Model of personality and implications on leadership***

Although each person has hundreds, if not thousands, of different quirks and traits that make up their personality, psychologists and/or personality test instrument developers have tried to provide guidance for people to define personality traits and to determine the most important traits.

In contemporary, an impressive body of research supports those five basic dimensions, motivate all others and encompass most of the significant variation in human personality. These five traits make up the essence of a person's personality and have been developed into what is now called the 'Five Factor Model (McCrae & Costa, 1987), more typically called the Big Five.

The MBTI may be deficient in valid supporting evidence, but that cannot be said for the Five-Factor Model (FFM). The FFM major personality traits are described in Table 2-3 and it is not in any specific order (Howard & Howard, 2001).

**Table 2-3: The Five Major Personality traits and their characteristics**

Trait	Characteristics
<b>Conscientiousness</b>	Conscientiousness refers to how dedicated you are and indicates achievement and dependability. It reflects the degree to which someone shows dependability and an achievement orientation personality ((Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gehardt, 2002), (McCrae & Costa, 1997)). When you say you are going to do something do you follow through? Do you have a strong work ethic?
<b>Neuroticism (emotional stability)</b>	Emotional Stability relates to the ability to adapt to diverse situations and to cope with stress. Emotional stability reflects a capacity for <i>emotional adjustment</i> and <i>self-confidence</i> . Emotional adjustment is the ability of individuals to adjust their emotional states to varied situational demands and to remain calm and balanced in stressful situations (McCrae & Costa, 1997). How emotionally stable are you? Do you get upset over the little things, or do they roll off your back?
<b>Extraversion:</b>	Extraversion is associated with sociability and expressiveness (Judge et al., 2002). Extraversion asks how comfortable you are in the company of others and represents sociability and expressiveness? Do you prefer to be by yourself or in a crowd? Do you like to be the life of the party?
<b>Openness to experience</b>	Openness refers to how open you are to experiencing new things. People who are open to new experiences are intellectually curious, open to a wide range of stimuli, value unusual thought processes, and often seen as thoughtful and creative (McCrae & Costa, 1987). It represents the tendency to be creative, imaginative, perceptive and thoughtful Do you enjoy learning new ideas and concepts or are you frightened of change?
<b>Agreeableness</b>	Agreeableness represents the tendency to be <i>altruistic</i> (empathetic, kind, cooperative, trusting, and gentle) and <i>compliant</i> (modest, having a values affiliation, and conflict avoiding) ( Bono & Judge, 2004)). Do you try to get along with people or do you go out of your way to be contentious and start a fight?

In order to determine one's personality, using these five major personality traits, personality assessment instrument developers give you a test that asks a series of questions (Howard & Howard, 2009). The questions may inquire about how you would react in a certain situation, or your comfort level in a given setting. The combination of scores can give a good idea of the personality of the person who took the test.

The following literature briefly states the implications of the five personality traits:

- (a). **Conscientiousness (Consolidation):** Dependability is a concern for legalism or commitment to established rules (Peterson *et al.*, 2003). “High achievers” feel a strong need to take responsibility for doing things immediately (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010).
  
- (b). **Neuroticism (Emotional stability or Need for Stability):** Emotional stability is considered a strong predictor of a person’s adaptability to unpredictable and changing situations (Peterson *et al.*, 1993). Research suggests that the emotional stability of a leader is more relevant to decision making in changing and unpredictable situations than in stable ones (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010).
  
- (c). **Agreeableness (Accommodation):** The relationship between leader agreeableness and the ability to bring about change is ambiguous because of two underlying, opposing mechanisms (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010).
  
- (d). **Extraversion:** Extraversion is associated with sociability and expressiveness (Judge *et al.*, 2002).
  
- (e). **Openness to experience (or Originality):** Open individuals have a strong need for change and are highly capable of understanding and adapting to others’ perspectives (McCrae & Costa, 1987).

### 2.3.2.3 The WorkPlace Big Five Profile (WBFP) Personality Test

The WBFP Profile personality assessment instrument was developed by Howard & Howard (2001) based on the Five Factor Model of personality. The assessment is based on the Big Five personality dimensions (Howard & Howard, 2009), referred to as the ‘Supertraits’ and 23 subSupertraits, as shown in Table 2-4.

**Table 2-4: Descriptions of Big Five Personality Supertraits**

Super-trait	Sub-super trait	Interpretation
<b>Accommodation (A)</b>	Humility	likes some acknowledgement
	Reserve	expresses opinions somehow
	Others needs	Interested needs of others and of self
	Agreement	Seeks resolution
<b>Consolidation (C)</b>	Perfectionism	Occasional need to refine or polish
	Drive	Needs some additional achievement
	Concentration	Can shift between tasks
	Methodicalness	Does some planning
	Organisation	Comfortable with little formal organisation
<b>Extraversion (E)</b>	Tact	Exerts moderate care in selecting words
	Taking charge	Accepts some responsibilities for others
	Sociability	Occasionally seeks out others
	Trust of others	Is somewhat trusting of others
	Warmth	Demonstrates some positive feelings
	Activity mode	Prefers being still or in one place
<b>Need for Stability(N)</b>	Rebound time	Moderate rebound time
	Worry	Some concern from time to time
	Intensity	Occasionally heated
	Interpretation	Realistic explanations
<b>Originality (O)</b>	Imagination	Creates new plans and ideas
	Scope	Prefers a broad view and resists details
	Complexity	Seeks complexity/balance of simplicity and complexity
	Change	Is somewhat accepting of changes

The scale used in the WorkPlace Big Five Profile personality assessment is dichotomous as shown in Table 2-6 (Howard & Howard, 2009).

**Table 2-5: Dichotomous scale of Big Five Personality Supertraits**

Supertrait	Description	Dichotomous Scale
Need For Stability (N)	The degree to which we respond to stress	- Resilient; + Reactive
Extraversion (E)	The degree to which we tolerate sensory stimulation from people/situations	- Introvert; + Extravert
Originality (O)	The degree to which we are open to new experiences / new ways of doing things	- Preserver; + Explorer
Accommodation (A)	The degree to which we defer to others	- Challenger; + Adapter
Consolidation (C)	The degree to which we push towards goals	- Flexible; + Focussed

The WorkPlace Big Five Profile personality assessment several questions and produces two customised reports results (Howard & Howard, 2009):

- A Trait Report which shows scores and respective descriptions in terms of the where is falls on scale; and
- A Narrator Report which gives narratives per super and sub-super traits in Part 1. Part 2 of the Narrator Report presents the analysis of the results respondent in comparison with available results that align with those of the respondent in order to provide interpretive comments.

In personality trait results on dichotomous scales, higher scores suggest dominance of a given set, and lower scores a dominance of its opposite set, and mid-range scores a balance of the two (Howard & Howard, 2009).

## **2.4 Role of a CEO Big Five personality in strategic leadership**

### **2.4.1 General**

All strategic leadership starts with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and in order to succeed, he or she must understand the playing field. The roles and behaviours of effective top managers (CEOs) differ considerably from those of middle management (Norburn, 1989). Not only does the CEO have the overall responsibility for the firm's management but also that the CEO's characteristics are of serious consequence to the firm (Hambrick & Hambrick, 1996). Hambrick and Mason (1984) argued that firm strategies reflect the characteristics of its powerful actors, among whom the CEO is prominent. Research suggests that some very good leaders repress certain personality traits, or develop ones they were not born with, in order to run their organisation effectively (Farkas & Wetlaufer, 1996).

Leaders in any environment are expected to lead the way; therefore they must know the way and anticipate what lies ahead to ensure that the team keeps moving ahead. The CEO has been characterized as a firm's chief cognizer and decision maker (Calori, *et al.*, 1994). Moreover, empirical evidence has suggested

that characteristics of CEOs affect strategic decision processes (Peterson, Smith, Martorana, & Owens, 2003) and strategic actions (Carpenter, *et al.*, 2001; Miller & Toulouse, 1986; Nadkarni & Narayanan, 2007) that have implications for firm performance. These studies have examined the influence of CEO personality on firm performance without paying adequate attention to the mechanisms that underlie this relationship. Psychological attributes of CEOs, by filtering how CEOs construe the reality of strategic situations and evaluate strategic response options, dispose the CEOs toward certain choices (Hambrick & Hambrick, 1996). There is empirical support for the contention that CEO personality attributes influence their strategic choices, which in turn influence firm performance as found by the following researchers:

- Miller and Toulouse (1986) found that CEOs with internal “loci of control” deployed product innovation strategies, whereas CEOs with high needs for achievement chose broad market strategies.
- Hambrick & Hayward (1997) found that CEO hubris, manifested as exaggerated pride or self-confidence was positively related to paying acquisition premiums and negatively related to firm performance.
- Chatterjee and Hambrick (2007) suggested that narcissistic CEOs chose bold strategies (for instance, large acquisitions) that attract attention, resulting in big wins or big losses.

The failures of organisations with respect to strategy implementation in South Africa have largely been attributed to the lack of strategic leadership (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). However, the role of the CEO personality in South African

organisation, evidently essential in strategic leadership given international research findings, requires closer investigation. Findings from such a research could contribute to how strategic leadership in South Africa can be enhanced by knowing the CEOs personality for the sake of ensuring sustainability of organisations.

The following sections present the review of international literature with respect to the specific implications of the Big Five Personality traits in leadership.

#### **2.4.2 Conscientiousness (Consolidation)**

Conscientious CEOs are likely to rely strongly on dependable, tried-and-true strategies Because of their concern for legalism (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010). Over time, as CEOs rely almost exclusively on known strategies and selectively ignore new and unique strategies that challenge their existing assumptions, they are likely to develop narrow fields of vision and a selective perception bias that predisposes them to ignore environmental stimuli that do not match existing assumptions (Bogner & Barr, 2000). Such a narrowed field of vision and strong selective perception bias create strong barriers to strategic flexibility by inhibiting the market-sensing capability (Johnson *et al.*, 2003). When CEOs fail to see important environmental stimuli that do not fit their narrow visions, they will be unable to respond to critical environmental changes (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010). This will inhibit their ability to quickly initiate strategic responses (Nadkarni & Narayanan, 2007).

Conscientious individuals have a strong need to reduce uncertainty and to receive specific feedback on their performance (Judge *et al.*, 2002). For conscientious CEOs, performance feedback and long range planning are central to making strategic choices (Miller & Toulouse, 1986).

### **2.4.3 Neuroticism (Emotional stability)**

Emotionally stable managers remain calm and provide focus in dynamic situations, shift focus to initiate appropriate actions to deal with unpredictable situations, and act decisively in crises (Peterson *et al.*, 2003). This observation suggests that emotionally stable CEOs feel less threatened by new and unpredictable stimuli and encourage employees to experiment with new interpretations of these stimuli (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010). Nadkarni & Hermann (2010) went on to report that the adaptability of emotionally stable CEOs reduces their hesitance to change strategies and enables them to quickly generate appropriate responses to these changes.

Studies have shown that because emotionally stable leaders have high self-confidence, they are not afraid to challenge the status quo (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010). Overcoming organizational inertia, an important barrier to strategy implementation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009), requires challenging the status quo and taking risks, both of which require the high degree of self-confidence. Thus, the confidence and decisiveness of an emotionally stable CEO may promote strategic leadership by removing barriers of organizational inertia.

#### **2.4.4 Agreeableness (Accommodation)**

Disagreeable CEOs promote a climate of competition and fear (Peterson *et al.*, 2003) that is likely to promote compliance rather than independent thinking. Intimidated by disagreeable CEOs, employees are hesitant to bring to their attention information that may challenge the CEOs' personal beliefs (Peterson *et al.*, 2003), and this hesitancy narrows the CEOs' fields of vision. Moreover, disagreeable CEOs may be sceptical of and ignore the strategic alternatives suggested by other managers and employees (Nadkarni & Narayanan, 2007).

Highly agreeable leaders pay special attention to neglected groups in their firms, treat each employee as an individual, and focus on employee empowerment, which fosters free and comprehensive exchange of information between diverse employees (Bono & Judge, 2004).

#### **2.4.5 Extraversion**

Extraverted leaders tend to take the initiative in social settings, to introduce people to each other and to be socially engaging by being humorous, introducing topics of discussion, and stimulating social interactions (Howard & Howard, 2001)). Therefore, extraverted leaders build broad and diverse networks of social relationships. Extraverted leaders are expressive and articulate individuals who persuade, influence, and organize others (Bono & Judge, 2004).

What is evident is that the sociability of extraverted CEOs usually allows them to mobilize resources internally (within their firms) and externally (outside the firms) (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010). Such CEOs are characterised by reduced cognitive biases and such reduction in these biases reduces barriers and promotes strategic flexibility (Nadkarni & Narayanan, 2007). Furthermore, Extravert CEOs can effectively remove employee resistance and promote rapid implementation of new strategies through their exceptional expressive skills and their ability to take the initiative and persuade and influence people so as to promote strategic flexibility (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010).

#### **2.4.6 Openness to experience (Originality)**

Judge *et al.*, 2002 reported that leaders who are open to new experiences actively seek excitement and risks. This need for change and risk taking can promote behaviours that may disrupt the existing product and resource advantages of stable firms (Nadkarni & Narayanan, 2007). However, CEOs' openness to new experiences is central to promoting strategic leadership these dynamic environments.

CEOs jobs are generally seen as infinite in terms of what they can do. Hence their broad interests, divergent thinking, and receptiveness to a wide range of stimuli, CEOs with high openness to experience are likely to develop broad fields of vision by considering multiple strategic perspectives (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010). Thus, open CEOs are likely to minimize selective perception and interpretation biases,

which inhibit strategic leadership (Nadkarni & Narayanan, 2007). In contrast, executives who are averse to new experiences are likely to possess relatively restricted fields of vision within which to seek and evaluate strategic alternatives (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996).

## **2.5 Conclusion**

The rationale behind this research lies in the need to contribute to the understanding of strategic leadership and appreciation of the role of personality in strategic leaders, in order to enhance strategic management of businesses. Many failures of organisations are largely attributed to poor strategy implementation due to the lack of strategic leadership, despite the formulation of strategies not being an issue (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). Such organisation failures should not be happening in an era where there is abundant relevant knowledge. Given the fact that the theories of strategic leadership are well documented, it is most probable that the role of personalities of strategic leaders, as far as communicating and implementing organisation strategic intent is concerned, is important. Poor understanding of the strategy among workforce and ineffective communication of the strategy to the workforce are the most important barriers to effective strategy implementation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). If strategy formulation is not a barrier to strategy implementation, then the role of the CEO personality in the strategic leadership of an organisation thus becomes critical and must be understood and appreciated.

### 3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the research questions that were used to address the research problem and objectives stated in Chapter One:

**Research Question One:** What are the practices of Strategic Leadership (SL) of selected organisations as informed by the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and/or Managing Directors (MDs) of selected organisations?

**Research Question Two:** What are the Personality Characteristics of the CEOs and/or MDs of the organisations selected in Research Question One?

**Research Question Three:** What is the role of a CEO's Personality in Strategic Leadership practices of the organisations in Research Question One?

The answers to **Research Question Three** were dependent on the findings of **Research Question One** and **Research Question Two**.

## 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Methodologies and rationale

The main research methodology employed was qualitative through exploratory investigations. However, was also necessary to employ a quantitative research methodology on some aspect of the research. The following paragraphs present the rationale for the use of the qualitative research methodology as the main research methodology and also the need for the use of quantitative methodology as well.

Qualitative studies base their accounts on qualitative information presented as words, sentences and/or narratives (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008). The main research entailed engaging few respondents to obtain a wealth of data whose analysis sought to gain insights about the role of personality on strategic leadership practices in organisations. Furthermore, the role of CEO personality on strategic leadership was a subject that is not known in general and insights for such a problem can best be obtained through qualitative studies involving few respondents who possess the knowledge being sought. Such insights can have a wide application in enhancing strategic leadership in the management of businesses.

The quantitative methodology was employed for the aspect of the research that assessed the personality characteristics of the respondents. These assessments entailed reporting on quantitative information such as numbers and figures, thus fitting the quantitative approach (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008).

## 4.2 Research design and data collection

The research was executed as a two phase study as follows:

- Phase 1:

This phase constituted conducting semi-structured interviews with selected (13 No.) current Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) as strategic leaders in their respective organisations. The purpose of this phase was to collect qualitative information about strategic leadership practices from the perspectives of the CEOs. This phase also attempted to get overall impressions on the CEOs personality characteristics as informed by the analysis of their responses during interviews.

- Phase 2:

This phase sought to obtain information on personality profiles using personality assessment tests for selected current CEOs of organisations. Quantitative analysis to determine personality constructs using the five major personality traits (see Tables 2.3 and 2.4) was employed.

The Consistency Matrix and the interview guide used are presented in Appendices A and B, respectively.

### **4.3 Population, sampling and unit of analysis**

The population or universe of the study was all leaders who are in positions of strategic leadership in their organisations. These were typically CEOs and/or Managing Directors (MDs), who are the unit of analysis, as they usually are expected to provide strategic leadership. Hence, the sampling frame was the list of CEOs or MDs as strategic leaders of any private sector organisations and/or independent government agencies.

### **4.4 Size and nature of sample**

The sample consisted of 13 CEOs/MDs, whose composition in terms of size and type of organisation, gender and race, were not prescriptive. All respondents were required to be currently holding the strategic leadership positions as CEOs and/or MDs. The tenure or demography of the respondents was not prescriptive either.

### **4.5 Data analysis**

The analysis of data from the interviews was qualitative and the analysis of the results of personality assessment tests was quantitative. The data analysis was conducted concurrently with the data collection in order to have ensured that deeper levels of understanding were obtained as the research process progressed. The qualitative data analysis methods for this research included the narrative enquiry, constant comparative and content analysis. The following provides the specific data analysis entailed in the two phases:

## **Phase 1:**

- Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide for qualitative methods and data was transcribed and some notes were made during the interviews as well.
- From the transcription and cross-referencing respondents' pseudonym, themes were developed using literature and statements and key words from respondents.
- An overall sense of the data was obtained to which some meanings to the data were found by synthesis into tables.

## **Phase 2:**

The data that was analysed in this phase was numeral results of personality assessment tests which were obtained from respondents completed personality assessment tests. The purpose was to characterise the personality of the respondents in accordance to the Five Factor Personality Model.

### **4.6 Rationale: Choice of Five Factor Model of Personality**

The choice of this model was based on recent calls to use comprehensive and valid psychological frameworks to investigate the relationships between the personality attributes of the CEO and firm performance (Hiller & Hambrick, 2005). The five-factor model, which represents current orthodoxy in personality assessment, provides a robust, comprehensive way of understanding fundamental personality differences

(Peterson, *et al.*, 2003). Although opinion is not yet unanimous, there is increasing consensus among researchers that the traits identified in the five factor model encapsulate many important aspects of personality (Judge, *et al.*, 2002). Strategy researchers have also underscored the importance of this model in explaining behaviours of top managers such as CEOs (Cannella & Monroe, 1997), and recent empirical evidence has underscored its relevance to strategic decision making as well (Peterson *et al.*, 2003).

#### **4.7 Data validity and variability**

In order to enhance data validity and address data variability issues, experts were engaged and consulted in the analysis of the results of both the interviews and the personality assessment tests. Furthermore, the personality test instrument that was chosen is widely acceptable in academic research and is also well tested globally.

The design of the interview guide was also such as to minimise researcher and respondent biasness. Hence, the interview guide (Appendix B) ensured that the interview was largely semi-structured with minimal leading questions.

In order to mitigate the risk of bias analysis of the relationship between strategic leadership and personality, the personality test results were not availed to respondents and interviewer before the interviews.

## 4.8 Research limitations

Due to the research methodology being dominantly qualitative, thus requiring conducting face-to-face interviews, there were time constraints which presented the following limitations of the research:

- (1) The assessment tests of the personality of the respondents relied on a test instrument (questionnaire) that was self-administered; hence it was ascertained how well the respondents read the instructions.
- (2) Only CEOs, as strategic leaders, of selected organisations mainly located in Gauteng were targeted. Only two organisations outside South Africa were included in the study because it was easy to organise their participation.
- (3) Only a limited number of CEO and/MDs (13) as strategic leaders who can be reached for interviews made up the sample.
- (4) The study did not interview the subordinates of the strategic leaders although usually most subordinates have a firsthand experience of the personality of the strategic leader
- (5) The study was limited to leaders who are currently in leadership regardless of the time they have been in their positions. This means that the study will not take into account the influence of the experience of the strategic leaders on their personalities. Furthermore, targeting current leaders provided insights that are relevant to the current environment which have a direct impact on the strategic issues faced by organisations.

## **5 RESULTS**

### **5.1 General**

This Chapter presents a description of the sample and the results of the research with only sparse commentaries. The presentation of the results is clustered around the research questions, which focussed the following parts:

- Part 1: The Practices of Strategic Leadership (SL);
- Part 2: The Personality Characteristics of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) or Managing Directors (MDs); and
- Part 3: The Role of a CEO (or MD) Personality in Strategic Leadership.

Therefore, the results are presented in the above order as well, after starting with the description of the sample. The results for Part 3 are an integration of results from Parts 1 & 2.

### **5.2 Description of the Sample**

The Sample consisted of 12 CEOs and one MD. The 12 CEOs also play the role of MD. The single MD in the sample was managing a subsidiary of a main organisation and hence reports to the CEO of this main organisation.

The biographical data of the entire sample, as informed by the Interviews and Curriculum Vitae of each of the respondents, are presented in Table 5-1.

**Table 5-1: Biographical data of the CEOs of the research sample**

Parameter	Respondent No.												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Age (years)	58	50	53	53	30	35	66	47	60	60	51	45	47
Gender	M	M	F	M	M	F	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Position	CEO	MD	CEO	CEO	CEO	CEO	CEO	CEO	CEO	CEO	CEO	CEO	CEO
Total Working Experience (years)	33	20	25	25	10	12	43	20	33	35	25	18	19
Tenure in current organisation (years)	2	2.5	1	14	10	6	6	5	8	1	13	1.8	1.5
Staff Compliment in Current Organisation	16+	150+	450+	40+	15+	2+	3+	3+	2+	2+	15+	16+	230+
Sector	Pu	Pu	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pr	Pu	Pu
<b>Note:</b> F- Female; M – Male; Pr-Private; Pu-Public; MD- Managing Director; CEO - Chief Executive Officer													

From Table 5.1, the size of the current staff compliment was used as an indication of the extent and depth of the practices of Strategic Leadership in the organisation.

Hence, it was necessary to split the sample as follows:

- Sample of 8 (S8) larger organisations (Respondents 1,2,3,4,5,11,12 & 13);
- Sample of 5 (S5) smaller organisations (Respondents 6,7,8,9 and 10).

Despite the split of the sample, the reporting of the results also include that for entire sample, referred to as the Sample of 13 (S13) CEOs.

### **5.3 The practices of Strategic Leadership (SL)**

#### **5.3.1 General**

The results of the examination of the practices of Strategic Leadership (SL) are based on the qualitative analysis of the verbatim quotations from interview transcripts. The descriptive indicators for each of the identified SL Themes (see Table 2.1. in Section 2.2.3) were used to analyse each verbatim quotation in order to determine which SL Theme it belonged to. A sample list of verbatim quotations from the interview with Respondent No. 4 is presented in Appendix C.

The presentation of the results begins with the consolidated results for the Sample of 13(S13), Sample of 8(S) and Sample of 5(S5), after which the results per SL Theme are presented. In all the presentations of the results, sparse commentaries were made to raise points for the Discussion Chapter where necessary.

#### **5.3.2 Consolidated results**

##### **5.3.2.1 Sample of 13 (S13)**

The following Table 5-2, Table 5-3 and Table 5-4 present the summary of the S13 SL Theme frequency analysis results.

**Table 5-2: S13-SL Theme frequency per respondent and sample**

SL Theme	Respondent No.													S13
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1. Envisioning	20	6	19	12	8	5	4	8	3	3	6	6	6	106
2. Strategy Formulation	17	13	8	6	5	5	8	9	5	13	8	3	8	108
3. Strategy Implementation	17	11	6	16	12	7	10	10	4	16	9	22	14	154
4. Empowering	12	19	27	9	22	11	9	8	4	4	10	6	3	144
<b>Totals</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>512</b>

**Table 5-3: S13 - Theme contribution (%) per respondent**

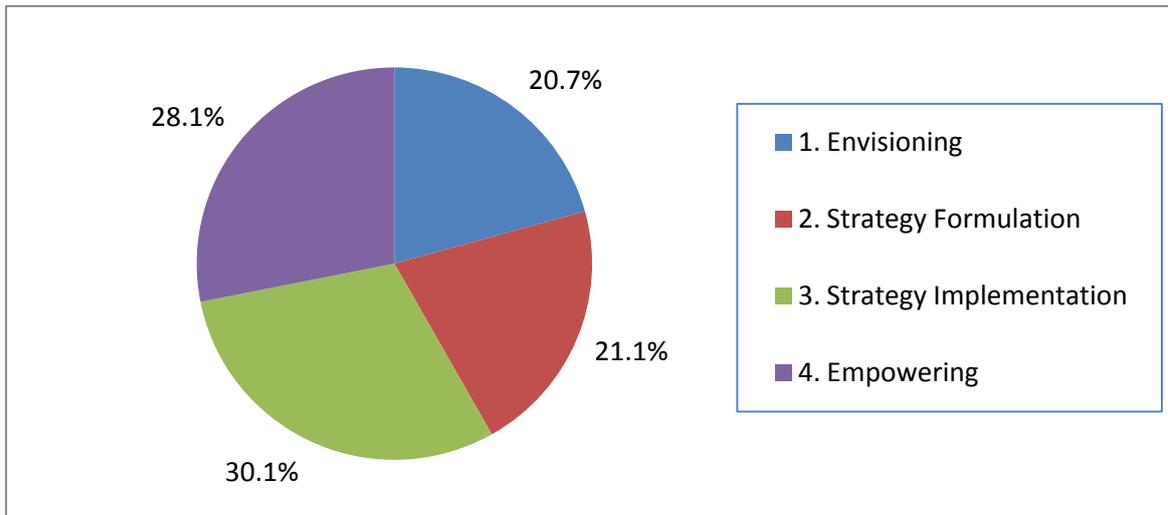
SL Theme	Respondent No.													S13
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1. Envisioning	30.3%	12.2%	31.7%	27.9%	17.0%	17.9%	12.9%	22.9%	18.8%	8.3%	18.2%	16.2%	19.4%	20.7%
2. Strategy Formulation	25.8%	26.5%	13.3%	14.0%	10.6%	17.9%	25.8%	25.7%	31.3%	36.1%	24.2%	8.1%	25.8%	21.1%
3. Strategy Implementation	25.8%	22.4%	10.0%	37.2%	25.5%	25.0%	32.3%	28.6%	25.0%	44.4%	27.3%	59.5%	45.2%	30.1%
4. Empowering	18.2%	38.8%	45.0%	20.9%	46.8%	39.3%	29.0%	22.9%	25.0%	11.1%	30.3%	16.2%	9.7%	28.1%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 5-4: S13 - Respondent (%) contribution per theme**

SL Theme	Respondent Number													S13
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1. Envisioning	18.9%	5.7%	17.9%	11.3%	7.5%	4.7%	3.8%	7.5%	2.8%	2.8%	5.7%	5.7%	5.7%	100%
2. Strategy Formulation	15.7%	12.0%	7.4%	5.6%	4.6%	4.6%	7.4%	8.3%	4.6%	12.0%	7.4%	2.8%	7.4%	100%
3. Strategy Implementation	11.0%	7.1%	3.9%	10.4%	7.8%	4.5%	6.5%	6.5%	2.6%	10.4%	5.8%	14.3%	9.1%	100%
4. Empowering	8.3%	13.2%	18.8%	6.3%	15.3%	7.6%	6.3%	5.6%	2.8%	2.8%	6.9%	4.2%	2.1%	100%

The pie-chart in Figure 5-1 presents the frequency contributions (%) of each of the SL Themes to the entire S13 Sample.

**Figure 5-1: S13 –SL theme frequency contribution(%) in pie chart**



The results in Figure 5.1 indicate that most CEOs spend more time on Strategy Implementation, followed by Empowering. In order to have a closer look at the overall weighting of each of the SL Themes, the results in Table 5-2 were ranked on scale of 1 (Highest frequency) to 4(Lowest frequency), per respondent. These results are presented in Figure 5-5.

**Table 5-5: S13- Number of respondents ranking each SL theme as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> in descending order of frequency**

Theme	Number of respondents ranking SL Theme as:			
	1 <sup>st</sup> (highest)	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> (lowest)
1. Envisioning	1	2	3	7
2. Strategy Formulation	1	4	5	3
3. Strategy Implementation	6	5	1	1
4. Empowering	5	2	4	2

### 5.3.2.2 Sample of 8 (S8)

The following Table 5-6, Table 5-7 and table 5-8 present the summary of the S8 SL Theme frequency analysis results.

**Table 5-6: S8 - SL Theme frequency per respondent and sample**

SL Theme	Respondent No.								S8
	1	2	3	4	5	11	12	13	
1. Envisioning	20	6	19	12	8	6	6	6	83
2. Strategy Formulation	17	13	8	6	5	8	3	8	68
3. Strategy Implementation	17	11	6	16	12	9	22	14	107
4. Empowering	12	19	27	9	22	10	6	3	108
<b>Totals</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>366</b>

**Table 5-7: S8 - Theme contribution (%) per respondent**

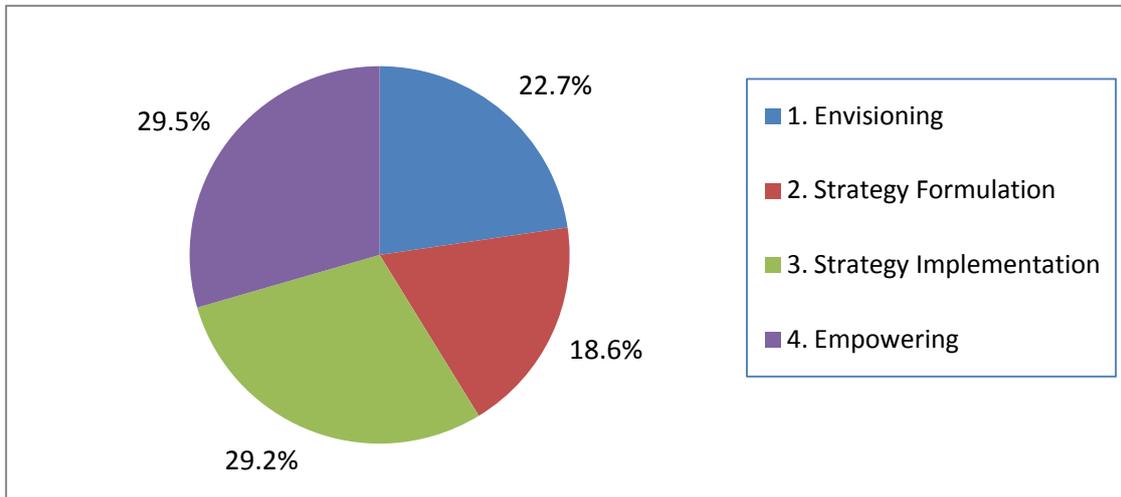
SL Theme	Respondent No.								S8
	1	2	3	4	5	11	12	13	
1. Envisioning	30.3%	12.2%	31.7%	27.9%	17.0%	18.2%	16.2%	19.4%	22.7%
2. Strategy Formulation	25.8%	26.5%	13.3%	14.0%	10.6%	24.2%	8.1%	25.8%	18.6%
3. Strategy Implementation	25.8%	22.4%	10.0%	37.2%	25.5%	27.3%	59.5%	45.2%	29.2%
4. Empowering	18.2%	38.8%	45.0%	20.9%	46.8%	30.3%	16.2%	9.7%	29.5%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 5-8: S8 - Respondent (%) contribution per SL Theme**

SL Theme	Respondent No.								S8
	1	2	3	4	5	11	12	13	
1. Envisioning	24.1%	7.2%	22.9%	14.5%	9.6%	7.2%	7.2%	7.2%	100.0%
2. Strategy Formulation	25.0%	19.1%	11.8%	8.8%	7.4%	11.8%	4.4%	11.8%	100.0%
3. Strategy Implementation	15.9%	10.3%	5.6%	15.0%	11.2%	8.4%	20.6%	13.1%	100.0%
4. Empowering	11.1%	17.6%	25.0%	8.3%	20.4%	9.3%	5.6%	2.8%	100.0%

The pie-chart in Figure 5-2 presents the SL Theme frequency contributions as percentages.

**Figure 5-2: S8 - Frequency contribution of each theme**



The number of respondents ranking each SL theme for S8 is shown in Table 5-9.

**Table 5-9: S8 - Ranking SL Themes by Respondents**

SL Theme	Number of respondents ranking SL Theme as			
	1 <sup>st</sup> (highest)	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> (lowest)
1. Envisioning	1	2	3	8
2. Strategy Formulation	0	2	3	3
3. Strategy Implementation	3	3	1	1
4. Empowering	4	2	0	2

### 5.3.2.3 Sample of 5 (S5)

The following **Table 5-10**, **Table 5-11** and **Table 5-12** present the summary of the S5 SL theme frequency analysis results.

**Table 5-10: S5 - SL Theme Frequency per respondent and sample**

SL Theme	Respondent No.					S5
	6	7	8	9	10	
1. Envisioning	5	4	8	3	3	23
2. Strategy Formulation	5	8	9	5	13	40
3. Strategy Implementation	7	10	10	4	16	47
4. Empowering	11	9	8	4	4	36
<b>Totals</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>146</b>

**Table 5-11: S5 – SL Theme contribution(%) per respondent**

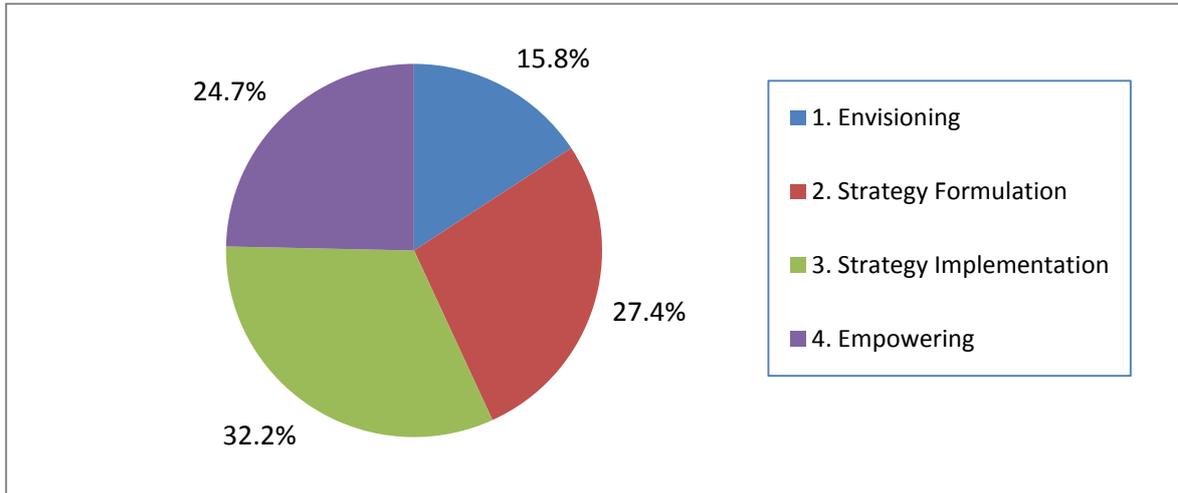
SL Theme	Respondent No.					S5
	6	7	8	9	10	
1. Envisioning	17.9%	12.9%	22.9%	18.8%	8.3%	15.8%
2. Strategy Formulation	17.9%	25.8%	25.7%	31.3%	36.1%	27.4%
3. Strategy Implementation	25.0%	32.3%	28.6%	25.0%	44.4%	32.2%
4. Empowering	39.3%	29.0%	22.9%	25.0%	11.1%	24.7%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 5-12: S5 - Respondent contribution (%) per SL Theme**

SL Theme	Respondent No.					S5
	6	7	8	9	10	
1. Envisioning	21.7%	17.4%	34.8%	13.0%	13.0%	100.0%
2. Strategy Formulation	12.5%	20.0%	22.5%	12.5%	32.5%	100.0%
3. Strategy Implementation	14.9%	21.3%	21.3%	8.5%	34.0%	100.0%
4. Empowering	30.6%	25.0%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	100.0%

The pie-chart in Figure 5-3 presents the SL theme frequency contributions as percentages.

**Figure 5-3: S8 - Frequency contribution of each SL Theme**



The number of respondents ranking each SL theme for S5 is shown in Table 5-13.

**Table 5-13: S5- Ranking SL Themes by Respondents**

Theme	Number of respondents ranking SL Theme as			
	1 <sup>st</sup> (highest)	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> (lowest)
1. Envisioning	0	0	0	5
2. Strategy Formulation	1	3	1	0
3. Strategy Implementation	3	2	0	0
4. Empowering	1	1	3	0

### 5.3.3 Results per Strategic Leadership (SL) Theme

#### 5.3.3.1 *Envisioning*

The contributions of the SL theme on Envisioning in the three samples were as follows:

- In S13: made the lowest contribution (20.7%), though marginally compared to Strategy Formulation theme (21.1%);
- In S8: made second lowest contribution (22.7%) though the contribution increased when compared to contribution in S13;
- In S5: made the lowest contribution (15.8%) which was a large reduction when compared to contributions made in S13 (20.7%) and S8 (22.7%).

An indication from the above results is that smaller organisations are less focussed on Envisioning and would rather spend their resources on immediate needs for their survival due given their generally lower economies of scale. Looking at the number of respondents that ranked Envisioning from Tables 5-5, 5-9 and 5-13, the following are the results:

- In S13: Seven out of 13 Respondents ranked Envisioning lowest;
- In S8: there was more less an even number of respondents ranking Envisioning, although overall it was ranked lower ( Five out of the Eight respondents ranked Envisioning 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>;

- In S5: all the Five respondents ranked Envisioning the lowest.

The following are examples of verbatim quotations from the two Respondents (1 & 3) that made the largest contributions to Envisioning:

*“This new council set a new vision and a mission for ECSA, and I can share that with you, Godfrey, and it is really ‘the vision is to ensure that ECSA provides the necessary skills, and to ensure that it contributes to the development of the South Africa society and economy, in essence’”. (Respondent No. 1)*

*“ ..., in the South African context, a profession council has to be relevant to the needs of society because to operate legally, you can do that very well, but your relevance to society, needs to be elevated and that is what we are doing with our mission and vision, we developed a new strategic plan, I can give you all these documents, in fact they are available on the website” (Respondent No. 1).*

*“You must remember coming in as a new CEO I also had my own vision, I told them that this where we are going. So I developed what I called the S Curve, the 2014 Vision, which says that NNN has operated as a very good company through the normal distribution curve and we got up that curve; but everything that goes up must come down. So NNN is at the tip of that normal distribution curve and it will go down. Now we need to create another curve to pull it up” (Respondent No. 3).*

*“To make sure that whatever developments that are being proposed will contribute to social economical developments in the future” (Respondent No. 3)*

### **5.3.3.2 Strategy Formulation**

The contributions of the SL theme on Envisioning in the three samples were as follows:

- In S13: made the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest contribution (21.1%), though marginally compared to Envisioning (20.7%);
- In S8: made lowest contribution (18.6%), which was a reduction compared to the contribution made in S13 (21.1%);
- In S5: made the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest contribution of 27.4%, which was an increased when compared to both contributions made in S13 (21.1%) and S8 (18.6%).

The above results indicate that larger organisation have long years of having built up solid strategies and are more established, hence spend less time on strategy formulation compared to smaller organisation. Looking at the number of respondents that ranked Strategy Formulation from Tables 5-5, 5-9 and 5-13, the following are the results:

- In S13: Nine out of 13 Respondents ranked Strategic Envisioning 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>; split between 4 and 5 respondents, respectively;
- In S8: no respondent ranked Strategy Formulation 1st;

- In S5: Three out of the Five Responded ranked Strategic Formulation 1<sup>st</sup>.

Smaller organisation seems to spend more time on strategy work in order to survive. However, the lowest contribution (2.8%) was made by Respondent No. 12 and the selected verbatim quotation included the following:

*“By the time we had taken it to the board we had shared it with the stakeholders, especially the regulator and the ministry” (Respondent No. 12)*

An interesting observation that ties in well with Respondent No. 12 making the lowest contribution towards the Strategy Formulation theme is that the CEO was relatively new in his job and had indicated that he had been spending more time in building the internal foundation of the organisation. Hence, he reported the highest contribution towards the Strategy Implementation theme (see sub-section 5.3.3.3):

*“When we started thinking strategically, we started internally” (Respondent No. 12)*

The high contribution made by Respondent No. 10 (12.0%), which could largely be attributed to the type of organisation he leads. His organisation depends on strategic partnerships to deliver turn-key projects.

*“I made a lot of meetings where we had to meet 60 companies in all regions. We had regional meetings almost every 2<sup>nd</sup> month where all key people and partners met” (Respondent No. 10)*

### **5.3.3.3 Strategy Implementation**

The contributions of the SL theme on Strategic Implementation in the three samples were as follows:

- In S13: made the highest contribution (30.1%), though only 2% higher than Empowering (28.1%);
- In S8: slightly lower contribution than in S13, but almost same contribution (29.2%) with Empowering (29.5%) in S8;
- In S5: Contribution increased to 32.2%, compared S8, together with an increase of Strategy Implementation and reduced Empowering, an indication of Chief Executive Officer Involvement being higher in smaller organisations.

The high focus of smaller organisations on strategy implementation is confirmed by the looking at the number of respondents that ranked Strategy Implementation from Tables 5-5, 5-9 and 5-13, the following are the results:

- In S13: strategy implementation was ranked very high with 11 out of the 13 Respondents ranked it 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>;
- In S8: high ranking of strategy implementation seen here as well with six out of the eight respondents equally making up the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> ranks; and
- In S5: high ranking of strategy implementation continued with all Five Respondents making up the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> ranks.

*“I have worked with the council in setting the vision and mission and the strategic plan which becomes the document that informs the business plan which includes projects and strategies that we employ in order to achieve set goals.”*

Reflecting on the interview of the Respondent No. 12 that made the highest contribution (14.7% compared to S13 average of 7.7%), there was a strong indication that the CEO of the organisation spent more time with addressing Strategy Implementation and empowering given that he is relatively new in this job and came to address a organisation that had experienced historical operational challenges as illustrated by the following verbatim quotation:

*“You cannot hold some accountable if they do not understand what is expected of what they are supposed to do; what I call empowering with respect to information of the company and move on to the details of the actual job” (respondent No. 12)*

*“When we got to know what the company was, and as employees were empowered with business information, now we had to get to the customers; we launched a programme called know your customer (KYC), which was implemented as a successor programme as they were other programmes that had to continue being implemented such as debt collections, promotions such as Bill Washer where customer were offered to pay at least 50% and have the rest written off”*

*(Respondent No. 12)*

Respondent No. 4 also made a relatively high contribution (10.4%) and had shown during the interviews that he is very hands-on as illustrated by the following verbatim quotations

*“We initiated that field, we introduced this technique in South Africa, and we have done over 200 installations all over the world. We do not go for areas where we are not good at, we keep to what we are good at” (Respondent No. 4).*

*“We have been caught in some cross-fire and the saving grace was that everything was documented and we were totally vindicated. I call things in the way I see them and if I believe someone has a hidden agenda, I will say it”  
(Respondent No. 4)*

#### **5.3.3.4 Empowering**

The contributions of the SL theme on Envisioning in the three samples were as follows:

- In S13: made the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest contribution (28.1%) to Strategy Implementation (30.1%);
- In S8: slightly increased decreased contribution (29.5%), but now marginally highest compared to Strategy Implementation (29.2%);
- In S5: decreased contribution (24.7%) compared to Strategy Implementation, which increased to 32.2%.

The decreased contribution of the empowering in small organisation could be indicating that CEOs themselves are more hands-on given the size of the organisation. Strangely enough, none of the five respondents ranked it lowest, although three out of the five respondents ranked it 3<sup>rd</sup>, which is closer to the 4<sup>th</sup> and lowest rank.

The fact Strategy Implementation made the highest contribution, this would follow that companies then go ahead and spend more time aligning the internal resources to deliver on the strategy.

It is interesting to deduct that Empowering is highly ranked here. However, from Table 5.4, the highest contributing Respondent No. 3 (18.8% against average of 7.7%) actually scored high on Envisioning as well (17.9% against average of 7.7%). This could imply that Envisioning does translate into empowering the internal environment. Selected verbatim from this respondent are as follows:

*"You said partnership strategies, here are the partners and this is how we are going to do it" (Respondent No. 3).*

*"The Implementation happens below me, and it is those Group Executives that must start implementing those strategies"(Respondent No. 3).*

## 5.4 CEO Personality Test Results

Extracts of results for Respondent No. 1 as produced by the WorkPlace Big Five Profile (WBFP) Personality Tests (Howard & Howard, 2009) are presented as sample results in Appendix D, in which the interpretations for each of the sub-Supertraits are also given. Table 5-14 presents the scores per respondent and **Table 5-16** average scores per sample.

**Table 5-14: S13 – CEO's WBFP Personality Supertraits scores**

Respondent No	N	E	O	A	C
Respondent 1	57+	50=	59+	52=	42-
Respondent 2	53=	42=	45=	55+	52=
Respondent 3	42-	50=	58+	54=	53=
Respondent 4	54+	40=	45=	56+	44-
Respondent 5	68+	49=	57+	35-	54=
Respondent 6	42=	57+	54=	50=	39-
Respondent 7	51=	50=	63+	46=	45=
Respondent 8	57+	40=	65+	53=	48=
Respondent 9	41=	37-	58+	39-	47=
Respondent 10	51=	56+	60+	49=	51=
Respondent 11	55+	47=	56+	48=	45=
Respondent 12	52+	55+	56+	58+	58+
Respondent 13	37-	54=	59+	54=	52+

**Note that for scores with '+', '=' and '-' signs mean the following:**

- **N: Need for Stability:** '+' → Reactive (N+); '=' → Responsive(N=); '-' → Resilient (N-)
- **E: Extraversion:** '+' → Extravert (E+); '=' → Ambivert (E=); '-' → Introvert (E-)
- **O: Originality:** '+' → Explorer (O+); '=' → Moderate (O=); '-' → Preserver (O-)
- **A: Accommodation:** '+' → Adapter (A+); '=' → Negotiator (A=); '-' → Challenger(A-)
- **C: Consolidation:** '+' → Focused (C+); '=' → Balanced(C=); '-' → Flexible (C-)

**Table 5-15: Average CEO's WBFP Personality Supertraits scores**

Sample/Supertrait	N	E	O	A	C
Sample of 13	50=	48=	57+	50=	48=
Sample of 8	51=	48=	54=	52=	50=
Sample of 5	48=	48=	60+	47=	46=

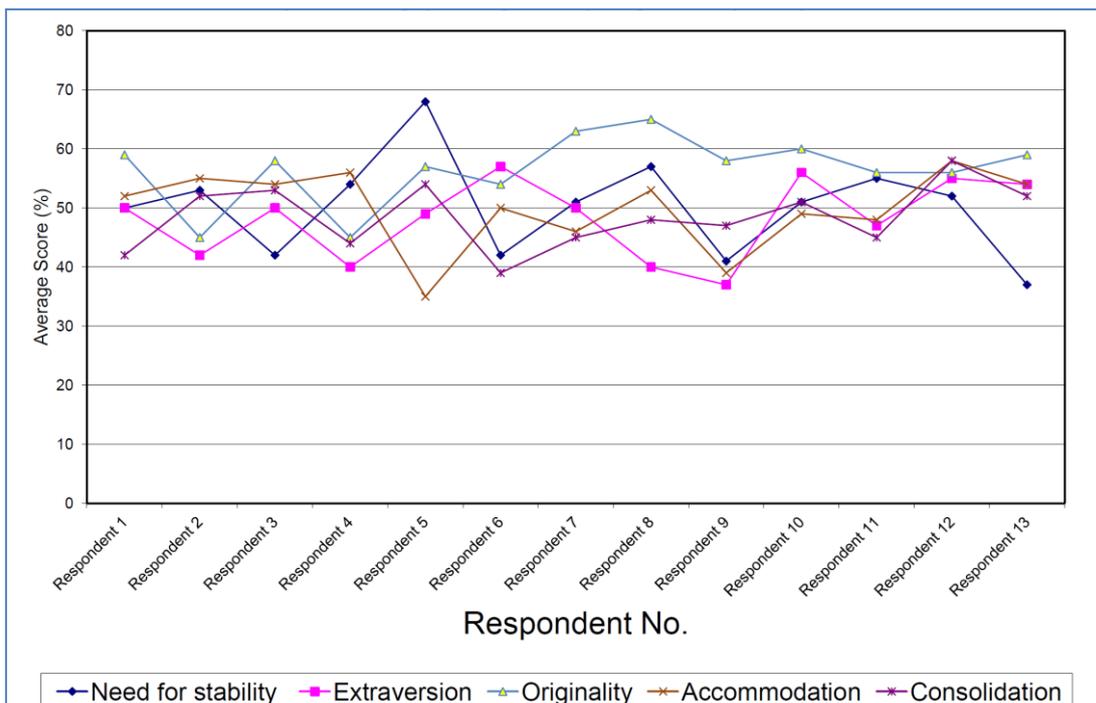
The interpretations of the average scores for Sample of 13 CEOs as shown in Table 5-15 above are presented in Table 5-16 below

**Table 5-16: S13 – Interpretations of the average WBFP scores**

score	Interpretation (Howard & Howard, 2009)
N = 50% <b>Responsive (N=)</b>	Normally tends to be calm, secure, and steady. Some surprises, pressures, difficult situations, and stressful circumstances can lead to some worry, anger, discouragement, or other stressful responses. Has a moderate threshold for handling workplace stress. May need a moment to get over a crisis before resuming regular activities or moving into a problem-solving mode.
E = 48% <b>Ambivert (E=)</b>	Tends to shift easily from working with other people to working alone. Finds too much of either kind of work dissatisfying. Has a moderate threshold for sensory stimulation from the work environment. To extraverts, may come across as an introvert or may appear as an extravert to introverted co-workers because of operating from the mid-range.
O+57% <b>Explorer (O+)</b>	Tends to have a variety of interests. Likes cutting edge technology and strategic ideas. Seeks new experiences, and thinks about the future. May describe self as a strategic thinker, creative, imaginative, or artistic. Is probably more liberal than most and enjoys theory and concepts. May be perceived as impractical and easily bored
A=50% <b>Negotiator (A=)</b>	Tends to shift between competitive and cooperative situations fairly easily, usually pushing for a “win-win” strategy. Has a clear sense of personal identity, neither dependent nor independent. Works well either as a team member or as an independent. At worst, might be regarded as “sitting on the fence” between opposite views while trying to help both sides compromise.
C=48 <b>Balanced (C=)</b>	Tends to keep both work demands and personal needs in good balance. Mind typically operates like both a parallel processor and like a serial processor, both switching tracks and proceeding linearly. Probably more ambitious than a Flexible, yet probably more prone to enjoy leisure than a Focused. Occasionally, able to interrupt focus on goals with some spontaneous diversions.

The interpretations for the average scores when the Sample of 13 is split into 8 and 5 are the same save for the O in Sample of 8 whose position changes from ‘+’ to ‘=’ as a results of the score dropping from 57% to 54%. This change implies that CEOs in smaller organisations dominated the Explorer (O+) sub-Supertrait of the Supertrait Originality (O). The graphical presentation of the results of **Table 5-14** in the Figure 5-4 below reveals this observation lie plot of the Originality is clearly above the other traits from Respondent 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, which make up the Sample of 5 respondents/ organisations.

**Figure 5-4: S13 – Average WBFP trait scores per respondent**



## **5.5 Role of a CEO Personality in strategic leadership**

### **5.5.1 General**

The results of the role of a CEO Personality in Strategic Leadership (SL) are presented from two angles:

- Firstly, from the responses given by respondents during the interviews; and
- Secondly, by comparing the personality trait results from the WorkPlace Big Five Profile Tests with the SL Theme frequency analysis results of the Practices of Strategic Leadership obtained from the interviews. The comparison of the results was limited to only the extreme values (Highest and Lowest) since these are the ones that typically indicate dominance (Howard & Howard, 2009).

### **5.5.2 CEO Perspectives on role of personality**

Each interview, though unstructured, was broadly in two parts: the first focussed on Strategic Leadership practices and second part dealt with the personality aspects. The second part of the interview started by asking each respondent to discuss what they thought was the role personality, with emphasis on theirs, in the strategic leadership practices in their organisation as discussed in the first part of the interview. The following Table 5-17 and Table 5-18 show the number of verbatim quotations that were linked to the subject of personality.

**Table 5-17: S8 - Verbatim quotations relating to personality**

<i>Respondent Number</i>	<i>Total number of statements</i>	<i>Number of statements linked to personality</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
1	84	19	22.6
2	75	14	18.7
3	70	13	18.6
4	52	9	17.3
5	48	7	14.6
11	33	10	30.3
12	31	11	35.5
13	31	7	22.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>21.2</b>

**Table 5-18: S5 - Verbatim quotations relating to personality**

<i>Respondent Number</i>	<i>Total number of statements</i>	<i>Number of statements linked to personality</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
6	28	10	35.7
7	31	6	19.4
8	35	14	40.0
9	31	8	25.8
10	20	11	55.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>33.8</b>

All the respondents acknowledged that personality has a role in the way they lead, however, Respondent No 9 was uncomfortable about judging himself but was able to broadly speak to personality aspects in strategic leadership. In addition, the personality characteristics were not limited to the natural ones, there was an overall indication that there are some personality characteristics that have to be acquired through experience and learning. Verbatim quotations from each

respondent indicating acknowledgement of the importance and/or role of personality in leadership are given in Table 5-19 and Table 5-20.

**Table 5-19: S8 - Verbatim quotations relating to personality**

<i>Verbatim quotation (Respondent No.)</i>
<i>"I think in many of the success in the strategic leadership will be ascribed to the personality as well" (Respondent No. 1)</i>
<i>"I first of all learn what type of personality they are, so I manage that type of relationship" (Respondent No. 2)</i>
<i>"That personality match is quiet amazing and it is a struggle, I am trying to slow down. While I am trusting people to do well, at the same time it's the pace of doing it. And I think its part of my personality that I am rushed, I am quick, you know." (Respondent No. 3)</i>
<i>"My view is that a lot of our success is partly due to the way I operate". " It counts against me as well, I basically call things the way I see them and if I believe someone has a hidden agenda, I will say so" (Respondent No. 4) (see Appendix C, Statements 41 &amp; 44)</i>
<i>"It has got everything to do with who I am as an individual; I have massive, massive Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)" (Respondent No. 5)</i>
<i>"There are certain attributes you develop with time to make sure that the business of sustainability. Quite a resilient personality and being able to deal with anything. Resilient, entrepreneurship spirit, keeping abreast with your professional; our profession has changed a lot with a lot of acts being passed lately; you need to be in touch and be on top of your game and also incorporated business skills as you are no longer an engineer" (Respondent No. 11)</i>
<i>"There is some level of eccentricity in myself because I tend to question traditionally known things and the status quo; I have no problem professionally telling someone that they are struggling delivering and I try and tell them in way that they see it as me helping them" (Respondent No. 12)</i>
<i>"I think that I have roots in where I am coming from in terms of the family background although I have been able to acquire some skills from education. I am basically a person that listens and try to tolerate some people to a certain level" "I am a person who is soft and I do not have to scream, but I would want people to work" (Respondent No. 13)</i>

**Table 5-20: S5 - Verbatim quotations relating to personality**

Verbatim quotation (Respondent No.)
<i>“I have learnt to be compassionate, to be tolerant because people are not objects; you want people to have personal lives; I do not believe in this thing that you should leave personality at home, put on your professional life” (Respondent No.6)</i>
<i>“I am always a team person, but I am not scared to take decisions although I will always consult before” (Respondent No.7)</i>
<i>“I can be a bit impatient with people who do not deliver; if someone does do what is supposed to be done, I take it over and do it myself. I did a research on what impact (my impatience) had on my staff, I actually discovered that it made them very defensive and limited their innovation and creativity. I had to understand the issue of my behaviour and how it impacted on performance of my staff member” (Respondent No. 7)</i> <i>“I have had to learn it along the way, I grew up a very shy person, not a risk taker and as I grew up I was encouraged by poor performance (which he saw in others)” (Respondent No. 7)</i>
<i>“I have built up the reputation of delivering excellent work and people knowing me on what I can deliver” (Respondent No. 7)</i>
<i>“So You have to be positive, you have to be open; you have to really have the view that the glass is half full and not half empty” (Respondent No. 7)</i>

### 5.5.3 Extreme Personality scores and SL Themes frequency scores

The scores used in this section are obtained from Section 5.3 for Strategic Leadership (SL) Theme frequencies (Table 5-2, Table 5-6 and Table 5-10) and from Section 5.4 for Personality Trait scores (Table 5-14). The comparisons are presented separately in sections that follow for the total Sample of 13 CEOs, and the two split Samples of 8 CEOs and 5 CEOs. The following is a sample illustration of the derivation of Respondent No 1 information Table 5-21:

From Table 5-2: SL Theme Frequency scores are:

- Envisioning = 20 (Highest Score) ; Strategy Formulation = 17; Strategically Implementation = 17; and Empowering = 12 (Lowest Score); and

From Table 5-14: Personality Scores are:

- ‘N+’ = 57%, ‘E=’ =50%; ‘O+’ = 59%; ‘A=’ = 52% and ‘C-’ = 42%: hence Highest Score is ‘O+’ (Explorer) and Lowest Score is ‘C-’ (Flexible).

### 5.5.3.1 Sample of 13(S13)

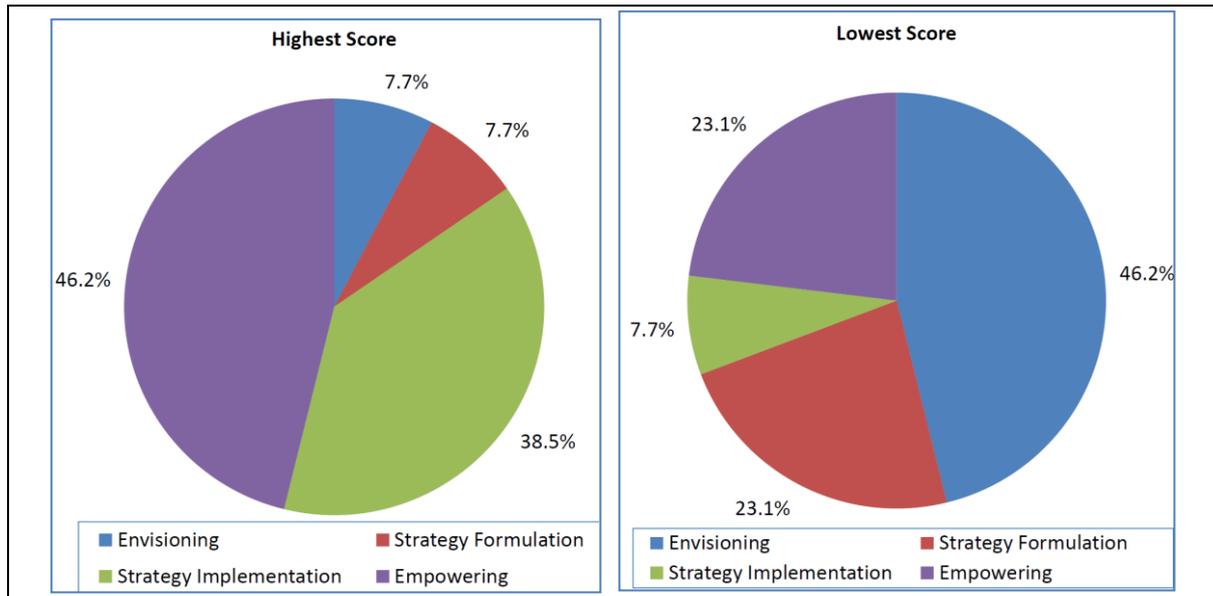
**Table 5-21: S13 - Extreme Personality scores and SL Themes per Respondent**

Respondent No	Strategic Leadership Themes		Personality	
	Highest score	Lowest score	Highest score	Lowest score
1	Envisioning	Empowering	Reactive(N+)	Flexible(C-)
2	Empowering	Envisioning	Adapter(A+)	Introvert(E-)
3	Empowering	Strategy Implementation	Explorer(O+)	Resilient (N-)
4	Strategy Implementation	Strategy Formulation	Adapter(A+)	Introvert(E-)
5	Empowering	Strategy Formulation	Reactive(N+)	Challenger(A-)
6	Empowering	Envisioning	Extravert(E+)	Flexible(C-)
7	Empowering	Envisioning	Explorer(O+)	Flexible(C-)
8	Strategy Implementation	Empowering	Explorer(O+)	Introvert(E-)
9	Strategy Formulation	Envisioning	Explorer(O+)	Introvert(E-)
10	Strategy Implementation	Envisioning	Explorer(O+)	Negotiator(A=)
11	Empowering	Envisioning	Explorer(O+)	Flexible(C-)
12	Strategy Implementation	Strategy Formulation	Focussed(C+)	Responsive(N=)
13	Strategy Implementation	Empowering	Explorer(O+)	Resilient (N-)

**NOTE:**  
N = Neuroticism (Emotional); C = Conscientiousness; A = Agreeableness; E= Extraversion; O = Openness to change

The following results in Figure 5-5 and Figure 5-6 are deduced from a frequency analysis (the number of respondents that made the Highest and Lowest scores) of the information Table 5-21.

**Figure 5-5: S13 - SL Themes Frequency of Highest and Lowest scores**



**Figure 5-6: S13 - Personality Traits Frequency of Highest and Lowest scores**

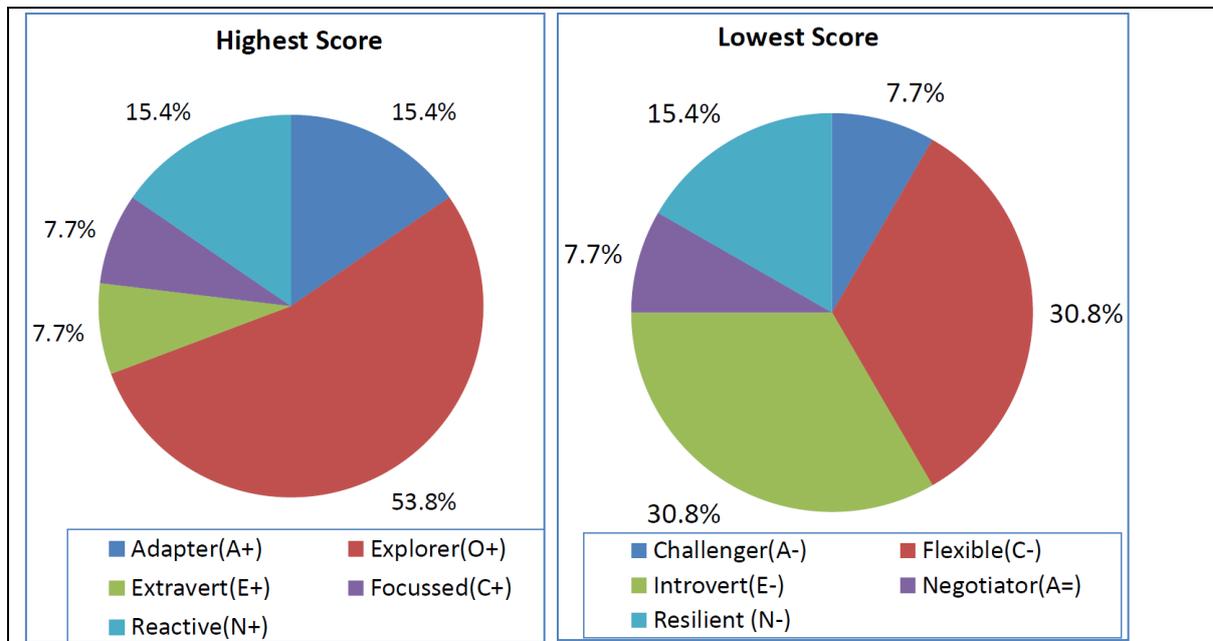


Table 5-22 and Table 5-23 present the comparisons of scores for entire sample.

**Table 5-22: S13 –Comparing Highest Score Personality Trait against of SL Themes**

Highest Score Personality Trait		Number of SL Themes related to Personally	
Name of Trait	Frequency Score / 13 respondents	Highest Scores / 13 respondents	Lowest Scores/ 13 respondents
Explorer (O+)	7	Strategy Implementation = 3	Envisioning = 4
		Empowering = 3	Empowering = 2
		Strategy Formulation = 1	Strategy Formulation = 1
Adapter (A+)	2	Envisioning = 1	Envisioning = 1
		Strategy Formulation = 1	Strategy Formulation = 1
Reactive(N-)	2	Envisioning = 1	Empowering = 1
		Empowering = 1	Strategy Formulation = 1
Focussed(C+)	1	Strategy Implementation = 1	Strategy Formulation = 1
Extravert (E+)	1	Empowering = 1	Envisioning = 1

**Table 5-23: S13 – Comparing Lowest Score Personality Trait against SL Themes**

Lowest Score Personality Trait		Number of SL Themes related to Personally	
Name of Trait	Frequency Score / 13 respondents	Highest Scores / 13 respondents	Lowest Scores/ 13 respondents
Flexible(C-)	4	Empowering = 3	Envisioning = 3
		Envisioning = 1	Empowering = 1
Introvert (E-)	4	Empowering = 1	Envisioning = 2
		Strategy Formulation = 2	Strategy Formulation = 1
		Strategy Formulation = 1	Empowering = 1
Resilient (N-)	2	Strategy Implementation = 1	Empowering = 1
		Empowering = 1	Strategy Implementation = 1
Challenger (A-)	1	Strategy Formulation = 1	Empowering = 1
Negotiator(A-)	1	Strategy Implementation = 1	Envisioning = 1
Responsive	1	Strategy Implementation = 1	Strategy Formulation = 1

### 5.5.3.2 Sample of 8(S8)

The results in Table 5-24 presents the results per respondent for the Sample of 8 in terms of the ‘Highest and lowest frequency per strategic leadership theme’ and ‘Highest and lowest scores of personality traits.

**Table 5-24: S8 - Extreme Personality scores and SL Themes per Respondent**

Respondent No	Strategic Leadership		Personality	
	Highest score	Lowest score	Highest score	Lowest score
1	Envisioning	Empowering	Reactive(N+)	Flexible(C-)
2	Empowering	Envisioning	Adapter(A+)	Introvert(E-)
3	Empowering	Strategy Implementation	Explorer(O+)	Resilient (N-)
4	Strategy Implementation	Strategy Formulation	Adapter(A+)	Introvert(E-)
5	Empowering	Strategy Formulation	Reactive(N+)	Challenger(A-)
11	Empowering	Envisioning	Explorer(O+)	Flexible(C-)
12	Strategy Implementation	Strategy Formulation	Focussed(C+)	Responsive(N=)
13	Strategy Implementation	Empowering	Explorer(O+)	Resilient (N-)

**NOTE:**  
N = Neuroticism (Emotional); C = Conscientiousness; A = Agreeableness; E= Extraversion; O = Openness to change

The following results in Table 5-25 and Table 5-26 are deducted from Table 5-24. A tabular presentation is used instead of a graphical used in Sample of 13, presentation because of this sample is smaller and trends can easily be seen in

tabular format. In Table 5-26 Personality Traits that did not receive scores on both Highest and Lowest Score were omitted.

**Table 5-25: S8 - Frequency of highest and lowest scored SL Themes**

SL Theme	Highest Score	Lowest Score
Envisioning	1	2
Strategy Formulation	0	3
Strategy Implementation	3	1
Empowering	4	2
<b>Total Counts (Check=8)</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>

**Table 5-26: S8 - Frequency of highest and lowest scored Personality Traits**

Personality trait	Highest Score	Lowest Score
Adapter(A+)	2	0
Challenger(A-)	0	1
Explorer(O+)	3	0
Flexible(C-)	0	2
Focussed(C+)	1	0
Introvert(E-)	0	2
Reactive(N+)	2	0
Resilient (N-)	0	2
Responsive(N=)	0	1
<b>Total Counts (Check=8)</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>

The following are the observations from the above results that present some points for discussion:

- The SL Themes of Strategy Implementation and Empowering show the highest contribution to strategic leadership practices.
- There is no evidently dominant personality trait, although the personality trait of Explorer had a marginally higher frequency score of 3
- The only high score for Envisioning belongs to a larger organisation.

### 5.5.3.3 Sample of 5(S5)

The information in Table 5-27 shows the results per respondent for S8 in terms of Highest and Lowest frequency per SL Theme and Highest and Lowest scores of personality traits as per the WorkPlace Big Five Profile Trait Reports.

**Table 5-27: S5 - Extreme Personality scores and SL Themes per Respondent**

Respondent No (Company Type??)	Strategic Leadership		Personality	
	Highest score	Lowest score	Highest score	Lowest score
6	Empowering	Envisioning	Extravert(E+)	Flexible(C-)
7	Empowering	Envisioning	Explorer(O+)	Flexible(C-)
8	Strategy Implementation	Empowering	Explorer(O+)	Introvert(E-)
9	Strategy Formulation	Envisioning	Explorer(O+)	Introvert(E-)
10	Strategy Implementation	Envisioning	Explorer(O+)	Negotiator(A=)

**NOTE:**  
N = Neuroticism (Emotional); C = Conscientiousness; A = Agreeableness; E= Extraversion; O = Openness to change

The following results in Table 5-28 and Table 5-29 are deducted from Table 5-20.

**Table 5-28: S 5 - Frequency of highest and lowest scored SL Themes**

Theme	Highest Score	Lowest Score
Envisioning	0	4
Strategy Formulation	1	0
Strategy Implementation	2	0
Empowering	2	1
<b>Total Counts (Check=5)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

**Table 5-29: S5 - Frequency of Highest and Lowest scored Personality Traits**

Personality trait	Highest score	Lowest score
Explorer(O+)	4	0
Extravert(E+)	1	0
Flexible(C-)	0	2
Introvert(E-)	0	2
Negotiator(A=)	0	1
<b>Total Counts (Check=5)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

An examination of the above data and information revealed the following points for discussion:

- The above results (Table 5-28) indicate that Envisioning has less contribution to Strategic Leadership in smaller organisations.
- The high frequency given to the Personality trait ‘Explorer’ in the High Score category (Table 5-29) indicate that CEOs in smaller organisations have a variety of interests in terms of the degree with which they are open to new experiences.

## 6 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 6.1 Examining the practices of Strategic Leadership (SL)

The frequency contribution of each of the SL Themes in Figure 5-1 for the entire Sample of 13 (S13) indicate that the investigated CEOs overall spend more time on Strategy Implementation(30.1%), though marginally compared to the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest contribution made by Empowering (28.1%).

The low contribution made Envisioning (20.7%) is confirmed by the highest number of respondents that ranked SL Theme of Envisioning the lowest (see Table 5-5). This implies that in modern times organisations are more focussed on short-term targets thus losing the bigger picture. Although the results indicate that organisations spend more on time on strategy implementation, the reported failures of strategy implementation (Jooste & Fourie, 2009) could then imply that organisations could be busy implementing strategies that are not well informed by a strong vision, a starting point of business strategy (Kantabutra & Avery, 2010).

The split samples reveal actually smaller organisations pay less attention to Envisioning (15.8%) and seemingly give more attention Strategy Implementation (32.2%); while the bigger organisations scored Strategy Formulation (18.6%) the lowest, but still spending time on Strategy Implementation (29.2% and Empowering (29.5%). The little attention given by smaller organisations to Envisioning could be attributed to the high failure rates of small businesses

reported by Herrington, *et al.*(2010). Respondents acknowledged the importance of an organisation having a vision as a core element of leadership, an observation that aligns with similar assertions made by Kantabutra & Avery (2010) that vision is a starting point of a business. Nevertheless, vision alone is not enough as some Respondents were quick to indicate that vision must be lived and it is not about statements.

*“You can have the best vision, mission and strategic plan, but if you are unable to work with your people, it means nothing; ultimately you get things done through people” (Respondent No. 1)*

*“The vision is not what is written down, you yourself, you are the embodiment of that vision”. (Respondent No. 8)*

On the indication that CEOs spend more time on Strategy Implementation, there were similar findings in previous research findings that reported that strategic leadership focuses on Strategy Implementation (Hambrick, *at el.*, 2001). This could be because of the fact that most CEOs are not given permanent jobs but are contracted to serve over specific performance terms.

## 6.2 Personalities of CEOs

### 6.2.1 General

The consolidated (averaged) results of the Workplace Big Five Profile (WBFP) Personality tests for all respondents represent the Composite CEO, herein referred to as the Leader. The interpretation are based on the Five Factor (Big Five) Model of personality and the review of the standard reports (Trait and Narrator) provided by the WorkPlace Big Five Profile Manual (Howard & Howard, 2009).

### 6.2.2 WorkPlace Big Five Profile personality test results

#### (a).Need for Stability (N)

This measures the degree to which Leader responds to stress and to the extent that she interprets events in her environment as stressful. Overall, the N score for the Leader is moderate and all the trait scores on this dimension are similar, all falling within two scaled points of each other. This suggests that this Leader is responsive, tending to be calm, secure and steady under normal circumstances; a characteristic that is able to give this Leader high confidence and not afraid to challenge the status quo (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010). However, such a Leader can be provoked to worry and become anxious in stressful situations and may take a short while to recover and move into problem solving mode (Howard & Howard, 2009).

#### (b).Extraversion

This measures the degree to which Leader tolerates sensory stimulation from people or situations.

Respondent No. 2 scores moderate overall on extraversion. Apart from a low score on activity mode, all other scores fall within the moderate range. The composite Leader achieves a score in the range of what is referred to as an Ambivert personality. This suggests that the leader is neither strongly extravert nor introvert. This personality characteristic not ideal for this composite CEO because being extravert entails sociability. Sociable CEOs can have a better ability to mobilize others and when developing extensive social interactions both internally and externally (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010). This leader's low Ambivert characteristic means he or she can probably long hours at her desk working quietly. Nevertheless, the interpretation given by Howard & Howard (2009) for such a person adds that he or she can probably get on well with co-workers and may have well developed interpersonal and communication skills.

#### (c).Originality

This measures the degree to which the Leader may be open to new experiences or new ways of doing things. Leader's overall score for this behavioural/response dimension falls in the high range.

For the Sample of 13 CEOs, the Composite Leader for the Sample of 13 CEOs has a strong imagination (high range) which suggests he or she is probably creative and enjoys new ideas and, theories and concepts. The score for complexity falls on the border of moderate-high and this suggests that's she may enjoy the challenge of complexity to straightforward simple solutions. He or She takes an interest in a wide range of subjects. The leader is not averse to change (score is moderate) but would probably want some good motivation for introducing it. Leader takes a high level approach to problems and may avoid getting locked into details which would bore and frustrate the leader. The score on scope is high and the Leader is likely to be a strategic thinker with liberal views and tendency to think about the future (Howard & Howard, 2009). She may be seen by others as impractical at times.

When the Sample of 13 CEOs was split into Samples of 8 and 5 CEOs, the Originality score for larger firms changed from Explorer (O+) to Moderate (O=), a trend that revealed that smaller firms tend to have a variety of interests and thus exhibiting the stronger need for change and capability to understand and adapt to others (McCrae & Costa, 1987).

(d).Accommodation (agreeableness)

This measures the degree to which Leader may defer things to others or to what extent she displays dominance as a behaviour or response. Leader achieves an

overall moderate score on this trait with all scores falling within 4 scaled points of each other.

The Leader's profile on this trait suggests sensitivity to others' needs, avoiding does not push her own agenda or opinions. She values harmony and agreement in the workplace. Leader does not have a high need for acknowledgement or recognition.

Leader probably can negotiate well in times of conflict. She may be able to facilitate the development and achievement of others.

#### **(e).Consolidation**

This measures the degree to which the Leader may push towards goals. Leader falls in the overall moderate range on this dimension of behaviour and responses.

The Leader's score for perfectionism falls on the border of moderate-high. This suggests that he or she has some need to achieve perfection with a moderate drive to achieve. Her drive is also towards the high end of the moderate range although it is still within the moderate range. She may be comfortable shifting between tasks to some extent but also at times prefers to be focussed.

The Leader does not need a high level of organisation or a high degree of structure in order to do her work. Her score on organisation is low. She does not need to over plan her work processes but keeps some planning in her projects.

### 6.2.3 From the interviews

The interviews with the CEOs revealed that personality characteristics are very critical in leadership practices. Though personality traits are generally viewed as natural, some CEOs reported that they have had to learn new ways of doing things that shifted from their natural behaviours. Overall, it seemed evident that in many instances there is a link between personality and the way CEOs lead, an observation that was reported by Farkas & Wetlaufer (1996). Respondent No. 3 put it very clearly, when she was asked about the role of personality in her strategic leadership practices, as follows:

“That personality match is quiet amazing and it is a struggle, I am trying to slow down. While I am trusting people to do well, at the same time it’s the pace of doing it. And I think it is part of my personality that I am rushed, I am quick, you know.”  
(Respondent No. 3)

The importance of personality can be emphasised by referring to the number of statements that linked to personality as reported in Section 5.5.2: in Sample of 13 CEOs, overall about 20% of statements was related to some personality elements, while this proportion increased to about 34% for the Sample of 5. This could imply that smaller organisations are more personal in the way business is conducted.

## **6.3 Role of a CEO personality in Strategic Leadership**

### **6.3.1 General**

The discussions for the role of a CEO in Strategic Leadership begin by presenting separate discussions for the Sample of 13, 8 and 5, after which a concluding discussion is presented. Reference was made to the results in Section 5.5.3.

To examination of the role of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) personality in Strategic Leadership was achieved by analysing the comparisons of the extreme scores ( Highest and Lowest) of personality trait and frequencies of the SL Theme by each respondent. The results in Tables 5-21, 5-24 and 5-27 show what came out of this exercise of extreme score comparison per respondent for the three sample types S13, S8 and S5, respectively

### **6.3.2 Sample of 13 (S13)**

The contributions made by the SL Themes of Strategy Implementation (38.5%) and Empowering (46.2%) were the largest on the Highest Score analysis, whilst the SL Theme of 'Envisioning' dominated the Lowest Score analysis ( see Figure 5-5). The former implies that more attention is given strategy and internal environment related aspects of the businesses, whilst the latter is an indicator of the low attention given to Vision related thinking and activities.

For the Personality (Figure 5-6), the large contribution by Personality Trait Explorer (53.8%) towards the Highest Score analysis indicate that this personality trait could have a dominant role in Strategic Leadership. One of the interpretations for this personality trait (Explorer) relate to thinking about the future (Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010; Howard & Howard, 2009; Peterson *et al.*, 2003; McCrae & Costa, 1987).

For the Lowest Score analysis, the personality traits of 'Introvert' and 'Flexible' got the same contribution of 30.8%, which was the highest. Both of these traits align with the Explorers should not be: not open to new experiences and without much thinking about the future.

From the interview results, the Strategic Leadership Theme of Envisioning made the lowest contribution in Sample of 13 (S13), although during the interviews, all respondents acknowledged the importance of an organisation having a vision as a core element of leadership, which was found to agree with similar assertions by Kantabutra & Avery (2010). However, some respondents were quick to indicate that a Vision must be lived and it is not about statements. The following statements illustrate this observation:

*“You can have the best vision, mission and strategic plan, but if you are unable to work with your people, it means nothing; ultimately you get things done through people” (Respondent No. 1)*

*“The vision is not what is written down, you yourself, you are the embodiment of that vision”. (Respondent No. 8)*

From Tables 5-22:

The dominant personality trait of Explorer seem to be more linked to the highest scores of SL Themes that relate to elements of Strategic Leadership (strategy implementation and Empowering) that closer to the internal environment, a further illustration of organisations being more internally focussed without keeping an eye an eye on the bigger. This observation could be agreeing with what Nadkarni & Narayanan (2007) reported concerning that Open CEOs are likely to maximise selective perceptions and interpretations biases which inhibit strategic flexibility. Maintaining strategic flexibility is critical in strategic leadership (Ireland, *et al.*, 2011).

### **6.3.3 Sample of 8 and 5**

Splitting the Sample of 13 into larger organisations and smaller organisations led to interesting revelations. The dominant Personality Trait of Explorer was all due to contributions from the smaller organisation scores and it became apparent that CEOs in smaller firms are more agile and open to new experiences. One respondent put it as follows:

*“And we stay small enough to be able to move quickly into an opening; once you are a big company it gets much harder to change direction; If we see an opening, we will go for it if it is in an area of our expertise” (Respondent No. 3)*

The absence of a dominating personality trait in larger organisation of the S8 sample could be attributed to the lack of flexibility that larger organisations exhibit when it comes to venturing in new opportunities. As such the results in Table 5-24 did not show any personality trait dominating a particular strategic leadership theme.

For the smaller organisations, the dominance of the High Score Personality Trait Explorer (4 out of 5 Respondents scored it Highest ) (see Table 5-27) was evidently more linked to Lowest Score of the SL Theme of Envisioning (3 out of 5 respondents) and Highest Score SL Themes linked to organisation strategy (Strategy Formulation and Strategy Implementation). What this implies is that the CEOs are not managing the organisations in their natural way and this would be attributed to the influence of external factors.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

### **7.1 Highlights of the main findings**

#### **7.1.1 Strategic leadership**

From the various definitions of strategic leadership presented in literature, the outstanding dimension is that of looking ahead in the future, Envisioning. Literature also strongly suggests that a Vision should be the starting point of any organisational change and must underpin any business strategy. However, the main finding regarding the practices of strategic leadership are that organisations give less attention envision but rather spend more time implementing strategies. It can then be questioned whether these strategies being implemented are well informed with the market trends in respect of their future dynamics.

#### **7.1.2 CEO personality**

The CEOs that were interviewed all acknowledged the importance of personality characteristics in strategic leadership, and leadership in general. Explicit personal experiences were shared, especially with reference to inherent personality traits, which were also traced to their family backgrounds. However, it was found that certain behaviours are largely dictated by the nature of the CEO position and as such CEOs have to learn to accommodate new behaviours.

The main findings from the personality tests results is that the composite CEO was characterised mainly as an Explorer, a personality trait whose interpretation also includes thinking about the future, Envisioning. This finding aligns with the function of mainly steering the organisation into the future, characteristic of the CEO responsibilities. However, another highlight was that score on organisation was very low suggesting that for this study being organised is not a priority.

### **7.1.3 Role of a CEO personality in strategic leadership**

Although the dominant personality trait (Originality (O+ → Explorer)) of the composite CEO entailed to a large extent being visionary, the Strategic Leadership Theme of Envisioning made the lowest contribution during the interviews. The strategic leadership that made the largest contribution was that of 'Strategy Implementation', closely followed 'Empowering', both of which are more internally focussed.

## **7.2 Recommendations**

### **7.2.1 Stakeholders**

The following are the suggested recommendations for stakeholders:

- (1) There needs to be more investments put in addressing personality issues in organisation because they have some effect in the organisations operate.

- (2) More attention must be given to envisioning, which entails understanding the bigger picture, in order to build more sustainable organisation. CEO must be given the latitude to venture into the horizons. How else can one withstand storm tomorrow if there are no efforts to predict it?
  
- (3) Chief Executive Officers of organisations must spend more time getting more organised, an attribute they did not score well in this study. It is important to note that Strategic leadership largely entails building invisible strings between the leader and what is being led, both within the internal and external environments. Pulling such strings should be able move the organisation in sync with the dynamic business environment s.

### **7.2.2 Future research**

The following three areas are proposed for future research:

- (1) Investigating how the strategic leadership themes identified this study influence organisation performance.
  
- (2) Investigating the role of personality on firm performance in specific types of industries.
  
- (3) Investigating how Gender influences personality and subsequent strategic leadership practices.

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## 9 APPENDICES

## 9.1 Appendix A Consistency Matrix

Research questions	Literature review	Data collection tool	Analysis
(1) What are the CEOs' perspectives on strategic leadership practices in the organisations that they currently lead?	(Serfontein, 2010)  (Jooste & Fourie, 2009)  (Doz & Kosonen, 2008)  (Hamel & Prahalad, 2005)	Interview guide aspects (2), (3), (4) and (5)	Narrative enquiry to listen to respondent role in strategic leadership of organisation  Content analysis and constant comparative analysis of all interviews
(2) What are the personality characteristics of the CEOs of selected organisations in objective (1)?; and	(Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007)  (Hambrick & Hambrick, Strategic Leadership: Top Executives and Their Effects on Organisations, 1996)  (Ehigie & Akpan, 2006)	Psychometric (personality) assessment tests (secondary sources) Interview guide aspect (5) a)	Content analysis (quantitative) to determine dominant personality factors using the Five Factor Model of personality  Narrative enquiry to listen to respondent awareness and understanding of personality
(3) What is the role of CEOs' personality characteristics in strategic leadership practices in the organisation in the organisation they currently lead? ,	(Nadkarni & Hermann, 2010)  (Peterson, Smith, & Martorana, 2003)  (Ehigie & Akpan, 2006)  (Hambrick & Pettigrew, 2001)	Interviews guide aspects (2), (3), (4) and (5)	Narrative enquiry to listen to respondent's articulation of role of personality in strategic leadership of organisation.  Content analysis and constant comparative analysis of all interviews

## 9.2 Appendix B: The Interview Guide

ASPECT	PARAMETERS
(1) Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Personal introduction – interviewer and respondents (collect demographic information –subject to respect consent)</li> <li>b) <u>Purpose of interview</u>: to gain an understanding of the organisation’s strategic leadership practices and context; to provide an open-ended exploration of personality; to focus attention on a particular experience of role of personality in strategic leadership; to gain a specific CEO’s perspectives and insights about such an experience; elicit subjective world views of the experience</li> <li>c) <u>Explain anonymity</u> if required and agree on terms of data management.</li> <li>d) <u>Explain processes</u> of data collection and analysis: transcripts of interviews; audio-recorded conversations; and notated observations.</li> </ul>
(2) Mode of data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) An open-ended, directed conversation that explores a participant’s deep, firsthand knowledge.</li> <li>b) Focuses on “lived experience” and emphasizes “sense -making”.</li> <li>c) An in-depth and intimate discussion beyond what ordinary conversational conventions and etiquette permit.</li> </ul>
(3) General guiding questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <u>Types and meanings</u>: what is this? What does this mean?</li> <li>b) <u>Structures</u>: what are the contexts that give this meaning?</li> <li>c) <u>Processes</u>: how does this come to have meaning?</li> </ul>
(4) Data collection strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <u>Asking questions</u>: phrasing questions; open-ended questions; ask respondents to think back; avoid asking “why”; keep questions simple; and be cautious about giving examples.</li> <li>b) <u>Interactional style</u>: be conversational; be clear; allow sufficient time for responses; use what works; and recognize the limits.</li> <li>c) <u>Observing behaviour</u>: take notes on the group or setting dynamic; and note limitations of recording device.</li> </ul>
(5) Types of interview questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <u>Opening &amp; introductory questions</u>: tell me about your personality....; tell me about your strategic leadership style ..... and when you hear strategic leadership, what does it mean for your organisation....</li> <li>b) <u>Transition questions</u>: what do you do to ensure strategic leadership is in place..; and how did you communicate your strategy ....</li> <li>c) <u>Key questions</u>: what are the most important aspects of strategic leadership in your organisation ... .</li> <li>d) <u>Ending questions</u>: of all of the things that you described.....</li> </ul>
(6) Closing remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Thank respondent verbally</li> <li>b) Recap on anonymity and any possible follow-up communications</li> </ul>
(7) Barriers to respondent participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Travel to the research site;</li> <li>b) Timing of interview or observations;</li> <li>c) Setting related constraints (gatekeepers); and</li> <li>d) Researcher knowledge and status.</li> </ul>
(8) Post Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <u>Thank respondent via email and telephone</u></li> </ul>

### 9.3 Appendix C: Sample of Interview transcript - Respondent No 4

**Note:**

- Themes were Numbered and Colour Coded as follow:

1-Envisioning Strategy 2- Strategy Formulation 3- Strategy Implementation 4-Empowering

- Statements that related to personality were letter and Colour coded as P-Personality
- Where there is 'NNN' it represents the anonymous name of the organisation.

No.	Respondent No 4 verbatim quotations	Theme
Responses after Introduction:		
1	Well I think basically, I rely on having in my view the best people in this field working for me I believe that we have probably one of the best teams in the world, I have had various people around the world telling me they rate NNN in the field that we specialise as leaders in the world.	2
2	I have a number of engineers, and Zama as you know is a sociologist, and we tend to try to pick, who I consider to be the best people in the world. One of the the key things we rely on is getting repeat work from happy clients	4
3	We always rate our existing clients as worth 10 times as out potential clients; our policy is always to try and keep the existing clients and keep them happy	2
4	It's becoming harder and harder in South Africa due to the procurement processes that are in place now: Just to give you an example a proposal we put yesterday for pipe replacement project, there were 70 companies putting proposals (explained cost implications to the industry and drew on international practices)	1
5	And that relies on the personal integrity between the manager within the utility and the company concerned; and that that is where there is a breakdown in South Africa that is where we have the biggest problems.	1
6	We are finding that in South Africa, its becoming very very difficult to get repeat work from clients that you do a good for, because that client cannot push the work because their job will be at risk, they cannot show favouritism, if they do show favouritism, there putting their career on the line.	1
7	So what is happening is that they putting up tenders and making it wide open for everybody, invariably you get some companies that does not have the skills, especially on pricing low	1
8	I do believe in South Africa the tender process is flawed and the way it's being its detrimental to industry; we have taken a conscious decisions that we are going to find work in Australia; we have worked in many countries in the world	1
9	We like working in South Africa, it's an interesting market, we are experiencing flawed in tender process; we have never taken a client on, never before. We have 1 in 3 success rate, except this year when we contested	1
10	I think the most successful part of our business are the people we employ, in my view they are 100% honest; I know in many companies, people lose sleep because they do not know what is going on.	4
11	We have been in middle of a battle where the client was accused by someone else about corruption; we were caught in cross-fire and the saving grace was that my colleagues had every single thing written, was documented and we were, absolutely, totally vindicated. We actually got apology letters and actually had further knock-on work from that	3

No.	Respondent No 4 verbatim quotations	Theme
12	But in my view there is a process in place where people are using accusations means of getting rid of colleagues, every effect until I actually seen it (explained example)	1
13	I reckon we have the best team in the country, We do not conform to what the Government requires in terms of BEE because most of our staff members are African people; we create employment and train our people, we give them a career – we see that as most important than giving 50% shares to a BEE partner who actually does not need our money”	4
14	We take on a lot of technicians, young engineers, of mixed demography	3
15	Strategically, we have taken a decision that we are going to diversify our markets, we are not going to put our work in one basket	1
<b>Response after Interview remarks regarding situation when company was vindicated and whether it is because NNN makes sure that it understand the business environment well:</b>		
16	Absolutely, the procurement processes actually has laws in place that allows you to contest the results (gave an example they are contesting then said they the company initiated that field and introduced this technique in South Africa, have done over 200 installations all over the world and is sure of its tender)	1
17	We are rated as the experts in the world and even the World Bank has given recommendations of what we do and yet this particular municipality gives us 9/50 in order to make sure that we cannot get through to the price stage which we could have won. We could take them to court and we would win.	4
18	Response on the question of importance of understanding of client background:	
19	I mean getting work from clients is very delicate position, you want to be friendly, and a lot of our clients I treat them as friends, but you also have to keep an arm's length from your clients - do you go fishing with them? do you watch Rugby with them? do you Go on holiday with them?" where is the line not allowed to cross? ( gave example of practice of entertaining clients)	3
20	At the end of the day, getting work in South Africa is now relying on personal relationships ( gave examples); in my view its important to know before job is coming out (explained this proactive approach)	3
	All we ask for is a level playing field; we want to know we put in the best proposal against the best companies; we have opposite number who is not qualified and does not have experience but still gets jobs from use; There is no consistence; out market is not fair	1
<b>Response to remark regarding survival of NNN despite the procurement issues:</b>		
21	At the end of the day it still comes down to relationships, a lot of the projects are manipulated even with this process (gave an example)	3
22	This thing of giving work to your friends in this country is a very very big issue; I know, there are a number of organisations set up to do that (gave examples of such organisations) but we are not a member of out in the Cold as we are not members of anything.	1
23	We are fighting to leverage off on what what we have, and we are still successful, and the key to our success is the fact that we focus on what we are good at, which is a fairly a narrow market;	2
24	And we stay small enough to be able to move quickly into an opening; once you are a big company its get much harder to change direction; If we see an opening, we will go for it if it is in an area of our expertise;	2
25	the other thing that we are very careful about we do not go for work that is outside our expertise; a number of companies come to you and say, 'oh can you help us, w e would like you to do our sewerage works up in in Limpopo, I have contacts with so and so, we can get you in there, we can get you the job',	2

No.	Respondent No 4 verbatim quotations	Theme
	we do not got for anything like that, that is not our area of expertise.	
26	We stick to what we think we are good at; and a lot of the times the clients come back to us because, they need the work to be done and we get a lot of repeat work from clients	2
27	One of our biggest strategy, and I think the key to our sources, is the manner we market our company, we do not put in lots of adverts in too many magazines, telling people how great we are, because I really believe if someone else says that you are good rather than what you say;	3
28	it's not what we think of ourselves that is important, it's what other people think of us	3
29	So what we give training, we have made training one of our key elements of what we do, and we market our expertise through conferences and awards; we submit our projects for awards and we present the results at conferences; and that is how we market ourselves.	3
30	Through training, effectively we have trained our own opposition; in fact everyone that is competing with use, we trained their managers.	1
<b>Response to question on partnerships:</b>		
31	Not really, some of them do, but some of them just see it as an opening to get friends in certain municipalities so that they can get more work and we can go for it.	3
32	So our strategy is to market our expertise through training, papers and conferences, and where necessary we will not stop once the budget has finished, we believe that having a happy client is the key at the end of the day, and making profit is secondary.	3
<b>Response to Question on how company manages issues of client</b>		
33	For such clients we just have to admit defeat, sometimes you have to admit that you will not make that client happy; most are reasonable, but we have one whom we have to let go (the exception)	3
34	Most of the time we try and have good relationship with our clients and our client satisfaction questions survey usually reveals about 4.5/5 for repeat work.	3
235	Our policy is not, we accept mistakes, there will always be mistakes, it's not how bad you make the mistake, it's how well clean-up afterwards; at the end of the day, we try and have a happy client	4
36	We believe in using the best equipment, all my staff have top quality laptops; if anyone came to me that they need printers or software, I will give them. We buy what we consider money can buy. We what people to have good equipment	4
37	If we know that the client needs something because the client has spoken to us about their problem, you have a slight advantage"	3
38	We do not pay the highest salaries but we have a very strong bonus system in place that as people perform, they can get a very high bonus at the end of the year (explained proportions)	4
39	We also find internal politics is important: if someone is niggling and affecting morale, then you have to get rid of them, even if they are good, its like a cancer eating you away everyone; we have had one in the past,	3
40	We try to look after our employees if they are in trouble: we have paid off legal fees of one of our employee and rescued one from debt (gave examples of staff helped)	4
<b>Response to role of personality:</b>		
41	My view is that a lot of our success is partly due to the way I operate. I do a lot of public speaking and where one of our key strengths is that we do training; one of our key strengths is that we very good at	p

No.	Respondent No 4 verbatim quotations	Theme
	training: putting together good training material; we have won a number of top papers and presentation at conferences	
42	I believe I have a bit of an outgoing personality in that regard in my work and presenting at conferences; my staff follow me and they are very good at it now; most have learned that it is the way to get the work; if you are good at what you do and explaining in public, you have the confidence to stand up before people.	p
43	And that is the thing I believe I am good at ; the quality of our presentation is always best or amongst the best	p
44	It counts against me as well, I basically call things the way I see them and if I believe someone has a hidden agenda, I will say so. And that often comes back to bite me. But at the end of the day some people acknowledge it, some people do not like me. sometimes perhaps that I should keep quiet I could probably learn from them in terms of diplomacy	P
45	The fact that they are not doing their job, I criticise them and say they are useless and must get own with the business. Positively, that is positive and an advantage for me, but most of my staff do not do that. Most of them are more diplomatic, and I could learn from them.	P
<b>Response to Q whether the his actions are derived from experience:</b>		
46	That is just the way I am, I have always been that way; if I see something that is wrong, then I would rather not get involved, or I will create an issue of it. In some regards, it actually saved us, because there was big a Water Utility that tried and they wanted us to get involved: I basically told them that what they were doing was illegal as they were always pushing work to one contractor and they stopped giving us work; eventually someone found out and the 2 guys that were in charge were dismissed and the contractor went down and if we had been part of it, we could have gone down with them.	P
47	At the time, they were our biggest client, we basically told our biggest client to go away and that we will not work with them; we called it as it was; and at the time, it was a huge decision for us, we rattled: looking back at it looks crystal clear we did the right thing, but at the time, it was not clear at all.	P
48	The reason, we have one person managing our finances, and that that is me: there is no cheque that goes out without me seeing it. We are quiet rigid in that manner; if there is anything that goes wrong, I am responsible ( we are strict in way we run our finances)	p
49	The reason, we have one person managing our finances, and that that is me: there is no cheque that goes out without me seeing it. We are quiet rigid in that manner; if there is anything that goes wrong, I am responsible ( we are strict in way we run our finances)	3
50	In that regard we try and do it the proper way	3
51	Part of it is that we are a smaller company , like the family ; we treat everyone and give them the respect they desire	4

## 9.4 Appendix D: Sample WBF Test Results: Respondent No. 1

### N: NEED FOR STABILITY

THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE RESPOND TO STRESS

57

**RESILIENT (N-):** Tends to handle stressful workplace situations in calm, steady, and secure way. Usually stress-free, managing with few difficulties even when stress occurs. Moves into problem-solving mode rapidly and proceeds in a rational, analytical way. May appear too relaxed, uncaring, insensitive, unaware. May not interpret or view critical problems or stressful situations seriously enough.

**RESPONSIVE (N=):** Normally tends to be calm, secure, and steady. Some surprises, pressures, difficult situations, and stressful circumstances can lead to some worry, anger, discouragement, or other stressful responses. Has a moderate threshold for handling workplace stress. May need a moment to get over a crisis before resuming regular activities or moving into a problem-solving mode.

**REACTIVE (N+):** Tends to respond in alert, concerned, attentive, or excitable way. May experience workplace stress more than others and often serve as group's conscience. May accept responsibility for problems caused by others. Under stress, could be perceived as anxious, tense, angry, discouraged, or worried. May need to recover before resuming work or problem solving.

### E: EXTRAVERSION

THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE TOLERATE SENSORY STIMULATION FROM PEOPLE/SITUATIONS

50

**INTROVERT (E-):** Prefers working alone. Typically, is serious, skeptical, quiet, private person who may prefer writing to talking. Enjoys handling individual assignments without interruptions. May come across to others as cool, aloof, or hard to read. May also appear to be a loner. Prefers work environment with very little sensory stimulation and away from the action.

**AMBIVERT (E=):** Tends to shift easily from working with other people to working alone. Finds too much of either kind of work dissatisfying. Has a moderate threshold for sensory stimulation from the work environment. To extraverts, may come across as an introvert or may appear as an extravert to introverted co-workers because of operating from the mid-range.

**EXTRAVERT (E+):** Prefers being around other people and in involved in activities. Naturally talkative, enthusiastic, sociable, warm, trusting, and fun-loving. May become the formal or informal leader in a work team. Usually comfortable with lots of sensory stimulation and meetings. May be perceived as talking too much. May also lack some listening skills because of tendency to dominate conversations.

### O: ORIGINALITY

THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE ARE OPEN TO NEW EXPERIENCES / NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS

59

**PRESERVER (O-):** Tends to possess expert knowledge about a job, topic, or subject. Tends to be down-to-earth with a here-and-now view of the present. Approach to work is practical, tactical, and efficient. Comfortable with repetitive kinds of activity in the job. Could be viewed as conservative, too narrow in thinking, set in ways, or rigid. Prefers tried-and-true, traditional methods.

**MODERATE (O=):** Tends to be middle of the road and somewhat down-to-earth, but will consider new ways of doing something if convincing evidence is available. Not usually known for creativity or curiosity, but they can surface. May adopt and then expand upon a good idea from someone else. Appreciates both innovation and efficiency, but neither one to the extreme.

**EXPLORER (O+):** Tends to have a variety of interests. Likes cutting edge technology and strategic ideas. Seeks new experiences, and thinks about the future. May describe self as a strategic thinker, creative, imaginative, or artistic. Is probably more liberal than most and enjoys theory and concepts. May be perceived as impractical and easily bored.

### A: ACCOMMODATION

THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE DEFER TO OTHERS

52

**CHALLENGER (A-):** Tends to relate to others by being expressive, tough, guarded, persistent, competitive, or aggressive. Often independent in thought, asking tough questions to protect self-interests and to make sure of being right or winning. May not accept information without checking. Could come across to others as hostile, rude, self-centered, hard-headed, or not a team player.

**NEGOTIATOR (A=):** Tends to shift between competitive and cooperative situations fairly easily, usually pushing for a "win-win" strategy. Has a clear sense of personal identity, neither dependent nor independent. Works well either as a team member or as an independent. At worst, might be regarded as "sitting on the fence" between opposite views while trying to help both sides compromise.

**ADAPTER (A+):** Tends to relate to others' authority by being tolerant, agreeable, and accepting. Often defers to others and is seen as helpful, easily moved, promoting harmony, and a team player. Typically, allows others to "win" or be right more than allowing self. At times, may come across to others as naïve, submissive, conflict averse, dependent, or unprincipled (because of yielding a position).

### C: CONSOLIDATION

THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE PUSH TOWARDS GOALS

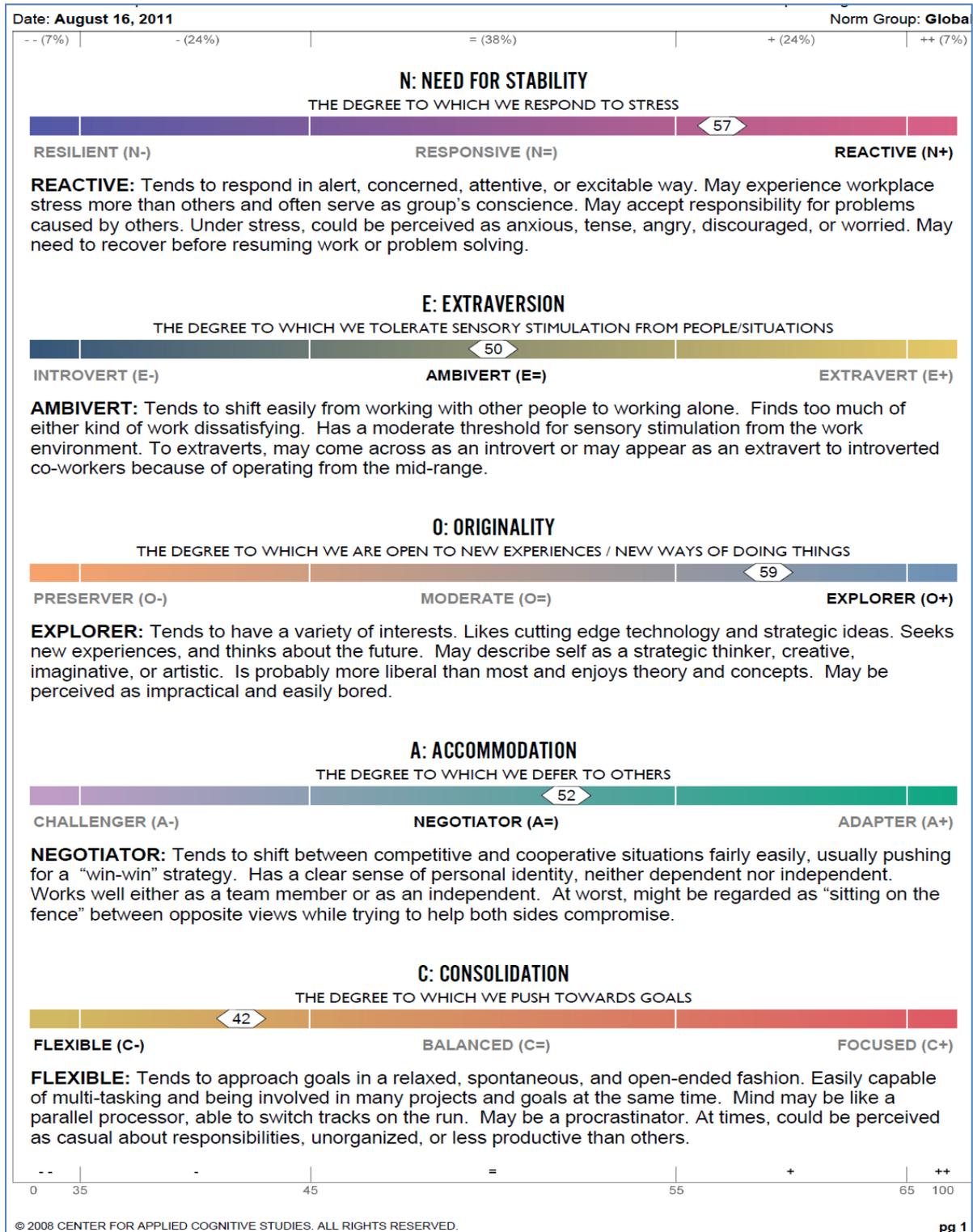
42

**FLEXIBLE (C-):** Tends to approach goals in a relaxed, spontaneous, and open-ended fashion. Easily capable of multi-tasking and being involved in many projects and goals at the same time. Mind may be like a parallel processor, able to switch tracks on the run. May be a procrastinator. At times, could be perceived as casual about responsibilities, unorganized, or less productive than others.

**BALANCED (C=):** Tends to keep both work demands and personal needs in good balance. Mind typically operates like both a parallel processor and like a serial processor, both switching tracks and proceeding linearly. Probably more ambitious than a Flexible, yet probably more prone to enjoy leisure than a Focused. Occasionally, able to interrupt focus on goals with some spontaneous diversions.

**FOCUSED (C+):** Tends to work toward goals in an industrious, disciplined, and dependable fashion. Mind may be like a serial processor, proceeding in a linear, sequential manner. Has a strong will to achieve, doing so with preparation and organization. Consolidates time in pursuit of established goals. May be perceived as a workaholic, overbearing, compulsive, meticulous, stubborn, or inflexible.

Appendix D Continued: Extract from a Trait Report:



## Appendix D Continued: Extract from a Narrator Report:

Date: August 16, 2011

Norm Group: Global

# PART ONE:

BASED ON THE 28 TRAIT SCORES

## N: NEED FOR STABILITY

When crises, emergencies, interruptions, and other potential stressors happen at work, you feel stressed--heart beats faster, stomach churns, perspiration abounds, and you experience difficulty in thinking clearly. In such situations, you need to be able to fall back on some kind of routine activity that is second-nature to you. Once the stressor has passed, you will need to take some time to calm down and restore your natural state of mental alertness. This level of reactivity results in your serving as a conscience for the organization--a barometer for improper organizational behavior.

## N1: WORRY

Your associates likely know you as someone who worries while awaiting most outcomes. Anticipating the outcome of a business proposal, for example, will typically find you less able to think clearly and behave calmly. Such worrying can play a significant role in identifying and pursuing follow-up activities that can positively affect the outcome.

## N2: INTENSITY

Under normal work circumstances, your associates rarely if ever see you give any sign of having a strong temper. But that is not to say that you do not get moderately angry or upset on occasion. You show more anger than some, and less anger than others.

## N3: INTERPRETATION

You tend to have a special sense for detecting what might go wrong, which can be an asset in situations that require caution, skepticism, and a general avoidance of overconfidence, such as tax accounting, investment banking, and mechanical engineering.

## N4: REBOUND TIME

Once a setback or crisis is over, it takes you a significant amount of time and effort to get beyond it. You will need exercise, escape, or some other activity to get your mind off of it and to settle back to normal. Such a sensitive nature makes you more vigilant in trying to eliminate sources of stress--both for yourself and for others--within the organization.

## 9.5 Appendix F: S13 - The sub-Supertraits scores and interpretation

Sub-Supertrait	Super trait	Score (%)	Interpretation
Imagination	O	60	Creates new plans and ideas
Scope	O	59	Prefers a broad view and resists details
Complexity	O	55	Seeks complexity/balance of simplicity and complexity
Perfectionism	C	54	Occasional need to refine or polish
Humility	A	53	likes some acknowledgement
Reserve	A	53	expresses opinions somehow
Drive	C	53	Needs some additional achievement
Tact	E	53	Exerts moderate care in selecting words
Rebound time	N	53	Moderate rebound time
Worry	N	52	Some concern from time to time
Intensity	N	51	Occasionally heated
Interpretation	N	51	Realistic explanations
Change	O	51	Is somewhat accepting of changes
Concentration	C	49	Can shift between tasks
Methodicalness	C	49	Does some planning
Taking charge	E	49	Accepts some responsibilities for others
Others needs	A	47	Interested needs of others and of self
Agreement	A	47	Seeks resolution
Sociability	E	47	Occasionally seeks out others
Trust of others	E	47	Is somewhat trusting of others
Warmth	E	47	Demonstrates some positive feelings
Activity mode	E	44	Prefers being still or in one place
Organisation	C	41	Comfortable with little formal organisation

END