

<https://www.catalysts.cc/the-catalysts-way/9-3-factors-of-success-at-work/>



9.3 Factors of Success At Work

🕒 Thursday, der 18. May 2017 👤 Christoph Steindl 📁 The Catalysts Way 💬 Keine Kommentare



When you visit a group of kindergarten children and ask them “who can dance?”, all children will cheer and raise their arms. If you ask them “who can sing?”, the same. Ask the same questions to a group of grown-ups, and rarely anyone will volunteer. A long time ago, we could all dance and sing, but after years of schooling we have lost our confidence, and possibly also some of our abilities.

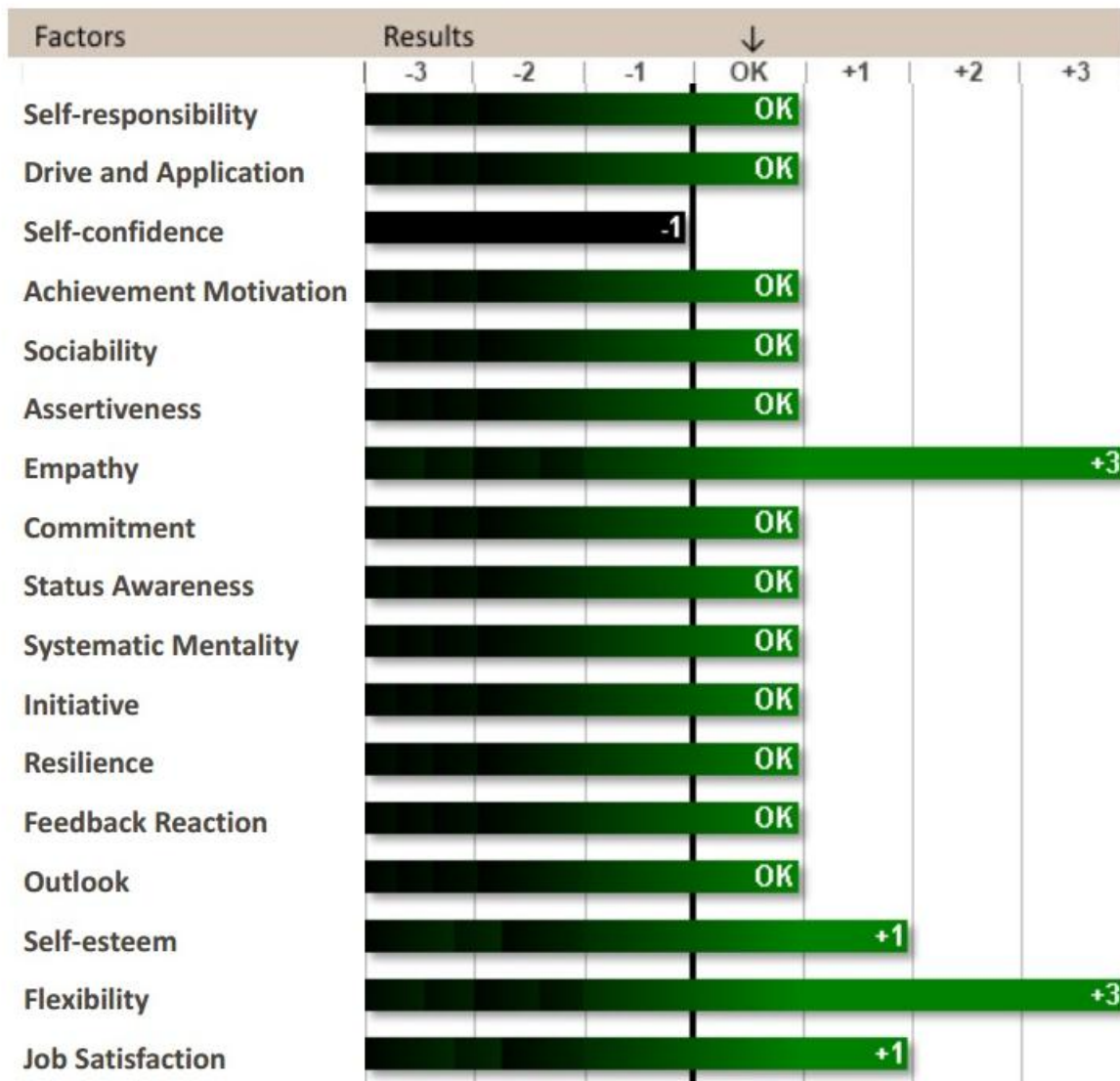
A couple of years ago, an old friend of mine pointed me to **DNLA**, a **method to discover our natural latent abilities**, the things we once were confident of but over time lost somehow. Of course, DNLA doesn't focus on dancing and singing, but on the factors that are relevant for our success at work like self-confidence, self-esteem, flexibility, etc.

DNLA uses a questionnaire with dozens of questions, an expert system and advanced correlation checks to measure **17 important soft skills**. It's goal is

- to make the potentials visible
- to enable someone to appreciate one's strong factors and to understand one's weaker factors
- to understand what to do in order to regain one's natural abilities
- to provide enough coaching and support to facilitate that personal growth

All questions are strictly work-related – not like “what's your favorite color / food / hobby?” which can sometimes be found in personality tests.

Two years ago we started to use DNLA at Catalysts. We grouped our knowledge workers into team members, team leaders of small teams and team leaders of large teams. For each such profile, some soft skills are more important than others, hence we defined a “target profile” for each. Here's a typical result:



The results of the survey are benchmarked with successful people with a similar target profile (not just within Catalysts but across multiple companies). A negative grade means that a specific potential is present but possibly not strong enough for the respective job position. An okay value means that only 50% of all successful employees reach that level, while “+1” is only reached by 12%, “+2” by only 8%, and “+3” only by 5%.

After the survey, a DNLA consultant walks the participant through the DNLA results, explains the various factors and helps the participant to reflect on the factors with more or less potential. At the end of such a conversation, the feedback from a participant typically is that DNLA captures his/her potentials really well.

The survey can be seen as an entry point to a **personal improvement cycle**:

1. Take the survey
2. Understand your stronger and weaker factors
3. Get feedback on which factor to focus on for improvement
4. Get coaching and support to actually improve during the next couple of months
5. Go back to step 1

In addition to those 17 factors of soft skills, the DNLA expert system also outputs three more factors: **gender, diversity, and intercultural competence**.

As of 2017, Catalysts is home to team members from 14 different countries. Everyone has to cooperate with colleagues from different countries and is part of multinational teams. We regularly communicate with international colleagues, partners, and customers through phone calls or video conferences. If our team members were lacking the required sensitivity and intercultural awareness to respect and understand other cultures this could quickly lead to discrimination, misunderstanding and even conflict.

With strong values for those three factors one is able to see a situation from somebody else's point of view and to communicate one's own point of view constructively, without offending or affronting people from other cultures.

And there are two more important result values:

- **Ability to lead:** having the ability to inspire colleagues and to set out a vision or goal in such a way that these colleagues enthusiastically adopt them as their own; *being able to motivate others to take action.*
- **Willingness to lead:** being very aware of one's surroundings; assessing one's own actions and those of others objectively and then proceeding to implement the necessary steps, for oneself and for others; *being willing to act*

We use those results as a safety net for our leadership programme:

- If someone is well able to lead others but is not willing to do so, it's a pity (from the company perspective), but we will accept it and not keep pushing someone to become a leader.
- If someone is willing but not at all able to lead, we will put on the brake and first help the would-be leader to regain his/her natural ability to lead.

All in all, the DNLA approach has been well-received by our staff and is appreciated a lot – you are not viewed as a coding machine at Catalysts, but as a full-fledged, multifaceted human being. We provide as much coaching and support as necessary to grow your natural abilities in all those areas that are important **for your successful business life.**

For more information about DNLA, check out <https://www.dnla.de/>

(and no, we don't get a referral bonus, I share it because it has proven valuable for us)

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