

TALL TREES PROFILES (SINCE 2010)



# TALL TREES TEST DEVELOPMENT

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# HOW THE TALL TREES PROFILE TEST WAS DEVELOPED:

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Test design is a core part of intellectual property for any unique test or assessment, and while we wish we could keep our entire process a secret, we also understand that we owe users of our test a bit more background information, without letting the entire cat out of the bag. Our test is deceptively simple at first glance, and therefore difficult to distinguish from free and unscientific tools in the public sphere.

When we contemplated developing a test to address gaps in the market, we asked ourselves: How does one do scientific research into an essentially immeasurable quality, namely human personality?

A mixed methodology was used in the development of Tall Trees Profiles. We incorporated literature studies, observations, questionnaires, correlation studies, and qualitative methods more commonly used in social studies than in laboratory science. Tall Trees used a core method recommended to us by a university professor with a Ph.D. in Social Work and a long list of academic research publications to her name. We also consulted with a psychometric test developer at the HSRC (Human Sciences Research Council) of South Africa to gain answers to the following questions:

1. How does one avoid cultural bias in a test?
2. Which mistakes are commonly made in personality or temperament testing?



**"TEMPERAMENT TRAITS, WHETHER CONTROLLED OR UNCONTROLLED, LAST THROUGHOUT LIFE." — TIM LAHAYE**

The answers to these questions guided our process to develop a test that would be short enough to avoid test fatigue and where only one cognitive process is used per test item. These are two factors that hugely impact test validity in a negative way in commonly used personality profiles today. Several of the most popular tests of our day are too long due to excessive control items and require cognitive processes such as scale rating and simultaneously selecting the least and most popular response.

It has been found that test fatigue sets in earlier than previously believed and as soon as 5 minutes into a test of an individual with medium to low literacy. Highly educated test users, on the other hand, are able to recognize and therefore manipulate duplicate or control items, negatively affecting the validity of their results.



Apollo temple in Ortigia – Syracuse, Italy

Due to the predictive nature of a temperament or personality style report (when you have these characteristics, you will respond like that; this is how you're likely to communicate; this is what you should be good at, etc.) a predictive research method was chosen, called the Delphi method.

***The Delphi technique is a forecasting methodology for generating expert opinions on any given subject.***

It was named for the Greek oracle at Apollo's shrine at Delphi (1 and 2). The Delphi design falls under the general category of "consensus development techniques," which in turn are under the general grouping of action research approaches. Consensus techniques are typically applied when there is limited evidence or when the existing evidence is contradictory in the field of study. This is true in personality research: Evidence is subjective and literature is often contradictory.

Delphi itself is uniquely applicable in areas where advantage could be realized in the collective subjective judgment of experts (3).

We believed that more could be gained by tapping into the collective expertise of experienced users of personality and temperament tools – all of whom had either studied or worked in the field of personality, relationships, and counseling – instead of relying on the subjective impressions of individuals with no background in temperament typing. Temperament, being invisible and hard to measure does cause behavior patterns, but the behavior is also influenced by a myriad of other variables. We believed that consensus among experts regarding the predictability of personality traits expressed by various temperament types can circumvent this challenge.

In our application of the Delphi method **five main steps** were used, with one central question to the participants:

*Which descriptors of human behavior would be the best discriminants and therefore the best predictors of temperament type to include in a personality profile test?*



# 5 MAIN STEPS

## Step 1:

**Condensing 600 descriptors of temperament and personality from literature and personality tests** down to 191 (Part 1 of the question: Which descriptors would you include in a temperament test as a word or phrase a respondent would identify with as a personality trait?)

This step incorporated three of Allen's five Delphi requirements, namely:

- Importance, Priority, or Relevance
- Probability
- Desirability (1)

(Allen 1978: 117)

## Step 2:

**Peeling off the "cultural overlay" off commonly used personality indicators**, to predict which descriptors respondents would mark about themselves vs. those that may be in their blind spot/culturally unacceptable to admit.

We achieved this by using the test data of more than 900 respondents and correlating their known personality type from standardized test and informal temperament sorters with 112 traits from literature and sorting out the items respondents did not choose even though these typically would predict their temperament type, thus ending up with descriptors that were strong predictors and popularly chosen descriptions of both negative and positive traits.

We used this data in quantitative analysis to identify culturally sensitive items that were too popular across personality types or not acknowledged by any personality type due to negative associations with the item.

This step incorporated three of Allen's five Delphi requirements, namely:

- Feasibility
- Probability
- Desirability (1)

(Allen 1978: 117)

### Step 3:

**Rating the 191 descriptors for the strength of discriminant and prediction value.** (How strongly is this item a predictor of one particular distinct personality type vs. a trait shared across personality/temperament types? Which type/s does it predict? Would people admit to having this trait? Would this trait predict social/emotional behavior, work/task behavior, or value-driven/life view behavior?)

This step incorporated four of Allen's five Delphi requirements, namely:

- Importance, Priority, or Relevance
- Feasibility
- Confidence (invalidity of argument or premise)
- Probability (1)

(Allen 1978: 117)

### Step 4:

**Correlation data was used to distill items down to the strongest discriminates.** Groups of items that were chosen as a set by more than 90% of responders to a particular personality type, were regarded as duplicates. Redundant items were eliminated as items that would prolong the test without providing statistically significant information or a different test outcome.

This step addresses three of Allen's five Delphi requirements, namely:

- Importance, Priority, or Relevance
- Confidence
- Probability

(Allen 1978: 117)



### Step 5:

**Correlated data was compiled** from all these phases to compile a test with only 56 of the strongest discriminants, grouped together based on the ranking of their prediction area and predictor strength, and fed back to the respondents to test on their subjects for qualitative feedback. Nuanced final changes were made.

This step incorporated four of Allen's five Delphi requirements, namely:

- Importance, Priority, or Relevance
- Feasibility
- Confidence
- Probability

(Allen 1978: 117)

In addition to developing the set of 72 predictors that make up the responses to 18 test questions, we developed a series of complex algorithms that lend more sophistication to the test. These algorithms ascribe more weight to items that have been found to be stronger predictors than others and to calculate the personality type of individuals with scores that lie extremely close across the four main temperament categories.

Throughout the use of the test, narrative, qualitative and quantitative research is gathered from our facilitators who implement the tests with their clients, as well as directly from clients who access tests online, without the assistance of a facilitator.

In 2017, we asked our most experienced facilitators to indicate the number of clients who agreed that their test result was accurate. The feedback was based on the completion of 3655 profiles under the supervision of 22 facilitators.

- 98.25% of Clients regarded the result as accurate upon the first reading of their result
- Another 1.01% of clients disagreed initially but agreed after a workshop or individual feedback regarding their result.



**"TEMPERAMENT IS THE THERMOMETER OF CHARACTER."  
- HONORE DE BALZAC**

- The remaining 0.74% of clients said that the test was inaccurate/ they were dishonest out of fear for the interpretation of their results/ admitted to not taking the test seriously/ were in an acute state of trauma when taking the test and tested accurately at a later date/ were under 18 and admitted to "not knowing themselves well"/ or regarded the test as inaccurate, while their close family members did agree with the test result.

# TYPE OF TEST OR PROFILE



Tall Trees Profiles is a value-neutral relationship instrument to be used to help people to live their purpose (to optimize their “sweet spots”) and to have better relationships with those around them.

We believe that we cannot change ourselves; only God can. However, by learning more about ourselves, we are growing in our understanding of the areas in which we need Him, how we can co-operate with Him as He enables us to grow beyond our inborn design.

The series of profile tests are NOT psychometric. These tests are not fit for use in measuring IQ, abilities, or psychological pathology. The profiles have, however, been developed with proper methodology commonly used in the development of human science measuring tools, and the team keeps improving the tests based on ongoing research.

Tall Trees tests or profiles are personality or style profiles, as they measure behavioral preferences across a range of contexts. They are qualitative and descriptive in nature.

The purpose of a TTLP is thus not the measurement of what people can do, but rather of who people can be. It grows intra- and interpersonal intelligence.

We are humbly aware that no model, test, or profile will address all of a person’s personal or professional development needs and therefore recommend that our TTLP be used in conjunction with other instruments and processes. Our facilitators (Imago therapists, psychologists, play therapists, psychometrists, counselors, occupational therapists, social workers, HR consultants, career guidance experts, etc.) do this daily with great success.

*Should you have any additional queries in this regard – please contact Hettie Brittz:*

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