

Study shows higher job performance linked to people who are more honest and humble

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The more honesty and humility an employee may have, the higher their job performance, as rated by the employees' supervisor. That's the new finding from a Baylor University study that found the honesty-humility personality trait was a unique predictor of job performance.

"Researchers already know that integrity can predict job performance and what we are saying here is that humility and honesty are also major components in that," said Dr. Wade Rowatt, associate professor of psychology and neuroscience at Baylor, who helped lead the study. "This study shows that those who possess the combination of honesty and humility have better job performance. In fact, we found that humility and honesty not only correspond with job performance, but it predicted job performance above and beyond any of the other five [personality traits](#) like [agreeableness](#) and conscientiousness."

The Baylor researchers along with a business consultant surveyed 269 [employees](#) in 25 different companies across 20 different states who work in positions that provide health care for challenging clients. Supervisors of the employees in the study then rated the job performance of each employee on 35 different job skills and described the kind of customer with whom the employee worked. The ratings were included in order to inform higher management how employees were performing and for the Baylor researchers to examine which personality variables were associated with job performance ratings.

The Baylor researchers found that those who self-reported more honesty

and humility were scored significantly higher by their supervisors for their job performance. The researchers defined honesty and humility as those who exhibit high levels of [fairness](#), greed-avoidance, sincerity and modesty.

"This study has implications for hiring personnel in that we suggest more attention should be paid to honesty and humility in applicants and employees, particularly those in care-giving roles," said Megan Johnson, a Baylor doctoral candidate who conducted the study. "Honest and humble people could be a good fit for occupations and organizations that require special attention and care for products or clients. Narcissists, on the other hand, who generally lack humility and are exploitative and selfish, would probably be better at jobs that require self-promotion."

The study currently appears online in the journal *Personality and Individual Differences*, and is the first to link [honesty](#) and humility to better [job performance](#).

Provided by Baylor University

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