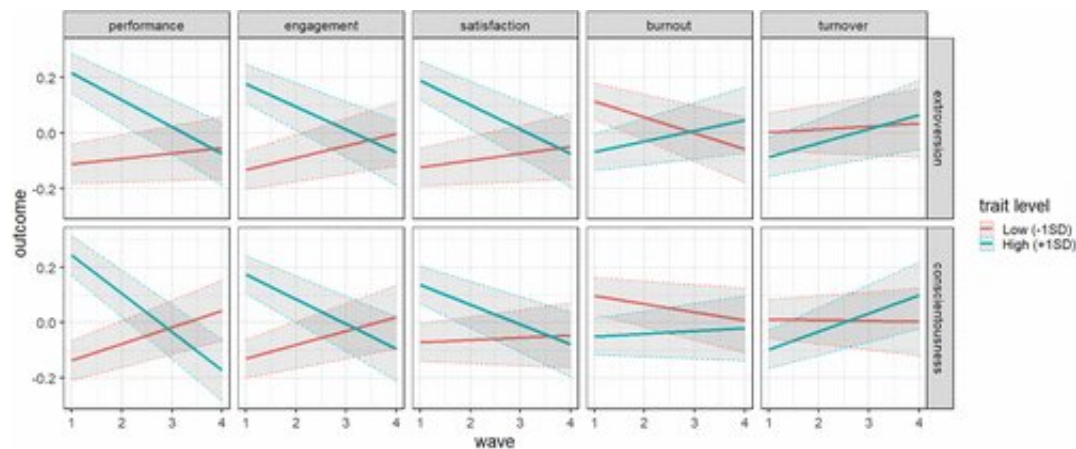


# Extroverted and conscientious employees most 'burdened' by working from home

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The estimated effects of time, extroversion, and conscientiousness on employee outcomes. Credit: DOI: 10.1177/19485506211039092

Prolonged working from home during the corona pandemic has led to less productivity and less happiness at work among employees who score high on the personality traits extroversion and conscientiousness. People who scored low on these characteristics actually improved their work performance over the same period. For the many organizations that are now thinking about the continuation of remote working, it is important to take these individual differences in personality traits into account.

This is apparent from a joint study into the relationship between personality traits and [work performance](#) while working from home, by

Tilburg researchers Anthony Evans (Social Psychology), Christina Meyers (Human Resource Studies), Olga Stavrova (Social Psychology) and Phillipe van de Calseyde (Organizational Behavior, Eindhoven University). Due to Corona, organizations worldwide were forced to quickly switch to remote working. Previous research has shown that this provided benefits and challenges for employees: more flexibility and autonomy versus loss of social contact with colleagues and difficulty in reconciling work and family. In this study, for the first time, the role of individual characteristics in the context of working from home is investigated. An important step in understanding how [individual differences](#) determine or hinder employee success while working remotely.

During the first wave of the pandemic, a four-month longitudinal survey was conducted to measure changes in [employee](#) outcomes (such as performance, engagement and job satisfaction) during the transition to remote work. In doing so, the researchers found that highly extroverted and conscientious employees became less productive and less happy over time, while employees who scored low on these traits improved over the same period. Follow-up research currently underway should reveal whether experiences during the early months of the pandemic (and memories of those experiences) can predict future attitudes toward remote versus office work.

## **About the research project**

The research lies at the intersection of [social psychology](#), [organizational behavior](#) and human resource studies and is part of the theme Adaptive Societies, Organizations and Workers, one of the three Cross Cutting Themes within the Herbert Simon Research Institute (HSRI). This research institute was established to stimulate and finance multidisciplinary collaboration within the social sciences (TSB) of Tilburg University. The research was financed from the seed funding

that the HSRI makes available annually for interdepartmental research projects within TSB.

Results of this study are published in *Social Personality and Psychological Science*.

Data and study materials are available on the [Open Science Framework](#)

**More information:** Anthony M. Evans et al, Extroversion and Conscientiousness Predict Deteriorating Job Outcomes During the COVID-19 Transition to Enforced Remote Work, *Social Psychological and Personality Science* (2021). [DOI: 10.1177/19485506211039092](https://doi.org/10.1177/19485506211039092)

Provided by Tilburg University

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