

## Fuelled by personality capital in finding the right career

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<b>Fuelled by personality capital in finding the right career</b>	<b>Number of pages and appendix pages</b> <b>39+1</b>
<p>This thesis focuses on raising understanding of flight attendant's personality awareness and its fit for flying duty. What are the characteristics of a flight attendant to help succeed at work? How to further advance competencies for future goals?</p> <p>The theory part of this study looks mainly into personality psychology and to positive psychology in search of scope illustration. Theorists seek to answer the question of the fundamental nature of man. Are people aggressive, and even self-destructive, or are they striving toward personal growth and self-acceptance? The theoretical part highlights the problems and challenges of personality testing. The research follows the semi-structured method by interviewing four flight attendants, who are pleased with their career choice, working for large multicultural airlines.</p> <p>The findings provide a multitude of characteristics to identify the ideal candidate for a flight attendant role but also give in-depth insights into self-growth and how to find meaning through a career. Based on the results of the interviews and following the theory, a Career Roadmap recommendation has been created.</p> <p>The thesis has been completed in May 2020; the total duration of the project was four months.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Personality, career, flight-attendant, character, traits	

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# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to raise understanding of the flight attendant's awareness of their personality and its fit for flying duty. What are the characteristics of flight attendants? How do these features help to succeed at work, and how to further advance competencies for future goals?

This thesis is driven by the by curiosity of the human mind. The interest of who we are, and whom we can become, and the resources we all have at our fingertips to help us find the answers. Psychology enriches us by understanding and making sense of human behaviour.

Human personality is a subject, which has been under constant research for over two thousand years and way longer for philosophers to debate. This subject is of ongoing interest to researchers from several different scientific disciplines, and there are many hypotheses available on the subject. It offers much to speculate with a variety of perspectives involved in the topic, beginning in ancient times. This subject is for everyone since self-awareness will profoundly improve the well-being of the individual. However, it also dramatically improves the intellectual resources of every enterprise if it only succeeds in recruiting individuals that have identified themselves and their potentials.

Theorists seek to answer the question of the fundamental nature of man. Are people aggressive, and even self-destructive, or are they striving toward personal growth and self-acceptance? Theoretical studies of the goodness and evil of human nature are in process for several hundred years, but full scientific confirmation of the intriguing question of personality does not exist. There are differences of opinion among theorists on quite essential questions, such as whether a person remains unchanged after childhood development, or whether it is possible for a person, despite its challenge, to develop as a person throughout life.

The theoretical part begins with an introduction of how to become a flight attendant. It raises what qualities flight attendants require and what the work itself is like in the sky. The thesis continues with the presentation of human capital, where a significant category is the personality and characteristics of a person. In the psychology section, this thesis focuses on personality psychology and its different schools of thought. How it has evolved and how many different theories it holds. Inside the theory, different forms of personality testing are introduced. The theoretical part highlights the problems and challenges of personality testing.

In addition to the central theme of personality, the theory includes positive psychology. In that, the focus is on human potential and its development. Concepts go through optimism, emotional intelligence, strengths and psychological capital. The fact emerges that all the mentioned concepts above are also testable.

Research on the topic has been conducted using semi-structured interviews. The target group is flight attendants who are satisfied with their work, have more than five years of experience in the field and work for large international companies. Through the questions, the interviews are divided into four different categories, which delve into personality, a person's innate strengths, personal growth, the meaningfulness of work, and the achievement of goals. The research results are surprising to the researcher, especially in terms of the interviewees' personality awareness. At the end of the work, the focus is on reflection produced by the results, which continues to the reliability and validity of the research and considers exciting topics for further research. The thesis ends with an analysis of self-learning and the challenges encountered along the way.

## **2 How to Become a Flight Attendant?**

The flight attendant interview is often a busy day. As in most work interviews, it is expected to be professionally dressed, optimistic and personable during the interview. However, there are many more applicants aspiring for each flight attendant job, and airlines can be incredibly selective with so many

applicants. What sets an airline interview apart from other job interviews is that a candidate will be tested in the areas of personal appearance, customer service work experience, their ability to communicate with others, their knowledge of customer service and overall personality. Usually, there is a group exercise to let the airline see how an individual operates on a task with others. There are often question asked to introduce oneself to a crowd, perhaps reading of an in-flight announcement or a test of comprehension skills. The interview lasts typically for at least a few hours. The length of time is again part of the process to see how the applicant hang on to a long day, both in terms of professionalism and personality, just as they need to be as working in the sky as flight attendants. (Flight Attendant Career 2020)

All airlines have different hiring criteria, the age requirement is a minimum of 18, but usually older. When a person is recruited to work on international flights, he needs to be fluent in a foreign language. In addition to educational criteria, job experience with a background in a service field is generally required to be hired as a flight attendant. After a flight attendant is hired, airlines place personnel in their initial training program, which lasts 6-8 weeks, in their flight training centre, that is mandatory for certification. Candidates complete training by performing familiarisation flights and are then granted proficiency. In addition, they must pass the height and weight standards and pass the medical and drug screening. The list broadens considerably with specific requirements depending on which airline applied to, since their strategies differ. (CareerTest 2016)

Largest airline of Finland, the flag carrier, Finnair, describes cabin crew candidate like this:

“Working as cabin crew requires a strong customer-service spirit, situational intelligence, good social interaction skills, adaptability, team spirit, flexibility, and the ability to take the initiative. If you also have a twinkle in your eye and a genuinely positive attitude to life, you may very well be just the kind of person to suit the job.” (FINNAIR 2020)

This is how Emirates, an international airline based in Dubai, United Arab of Emirates, describes their candidate’s characteristics:

“There are a few qualities which will make you stand out. Namely, you’ll be positive, confident, flexible, friendly and very keen to help others. You should be determined to always perform well. And no doubt you’ll be able to manage a pretty demanding work schedule. Also, you’ll be culturally aware and reflect who we are – professional, empathetic, progressive, visionary and cosmopolitan.” (Emirates 2020)

At work, flight attendants help ensure the safety and comfort of passengers on airline flights. The job goes beyond serving food and drinks, and much of the responsibilities are mandated by law. Flight

attendants advise passengers on safety protocols, such as how and when to use aircraft seat belts, demonstrate the use of oxygen masks and explain how to exit the aircraft in an emergency. Before each flight, attendants gather for a briefing to go through the flight, and to confirm their safety and first aid knowledge is up to date for safe operations. Onboard, flight attendants make sure all necessary equipment and supplies are available for the flights to be operated under legal requirements. They may also perform first aid, handle security issues, and deal with any other problem that occurs during a flight. (HowToBecome 2020)

Being a flight attendant requires a high level of decision making and problem-solving skills to ensure the safety of passengers and excellent interpersonal skill for excellent customer service experience. Different tests are often used by the airline's human resource teams to measure competencies necessary for the role of a flight attendant. Personality assessments assess interpersonal qualities such as preparation and organisational skills, job process, meeting customer requirements applicability, proactivity, conflict reduction, transparency, and problem-solving capabilities. Communication skills measure the listening skills of a candidate and his proficiency in the usage of required languages to communicate effectively with customers. Decision-making skills measure the ability to analyse the given situation and evaluate different alternatives to reach the best possible solutions. (TARGETjobs 2012)

One research group from Taiwan looked at the satisfaction of flight attendants in their careers and looked at how career stress affects the relationship between personality and career satisfaction. The results showed that extraversion had a major and positive effect on career satisfaction and highlighted that career stress played a moderating role in connecting neuroticism and career satisfaction. Research has confirmed that considerable emphasis must continue to be placed on the recruitment process and the selection of suitable candidates whose extraversion has reached a high level. (Yang, Yang 2018)

### **3 Human Capital & Psychology**

Human capital is an intangible asset not found nor marked on the company's balance sheet. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), human capital describes it as the knowledge, competencies skills and other attributes embodied in individuals or groups of individuals acquired during their life and used to produce goods, services or ideas in market circumstances. Human capital is a term developed in the early 1960s by two economists, Gary Becker Jacob Mincer, but the terms ideology goes as far back as Adam Smith (1723 – 1790). Smith, the father of modern economics, argued that capital does not just consist of machines and real estate, but also of the acquired and useful abilities of all the members of the inhabitants of the society. This idea of human capacity and education as a store of capital invested in value production was initially

applied to the analysis of nations as a whole. However, it gradually became a vital part of the understanding of how the business succeeds in an age when intellectual property and innovation are as valuable as land and factories for the creation of value in the industry. (Pettinger 2019) (Manuti, Manuti et al. 2014)

Table 1. Components of Human Capital. (Pettinger 2019)

<b>Five of the major components of human capital are:</b>
Skills, Education & Qualifications
Work Experience
Social and Communication Skills
<b>Habits and Personality Traits</b>
Brand Image and Individual fame

An organisation is often said to be only as good as its people. Human capital is substantial because it is proven to have a relationship with economic growth, productivity, and profitability. Habits and personality traits are among the five major components of human capital. In psychology, trait theory is an approach to the study of human personality. These researchers are interested in the measurement of traits, which can be defined as habitual patterns of behaviour, emotion, and thought. (Arnold, Randall 2010)

Psychology is a science that bridge between philosophy and physiology. Where physiology describes and explains the physical side of the brain and the nervous system, psychology explores the mental processes that take place within them and how these are manifesting in our thoughts, behaviour, and speech. Where philosophy is focusing on the course of ideas and thoughts, psychology examines how we come to have them and what they tell us about the working of our minds. A large part of psychology is devoted to the diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues, but that is just one side when it comes to applications for psychology. In addition to mental health practices, psychology applies to a multiple of issues that impact health and daily life, including well-being, motivation, productivity and many more. (Collin 2015)

Early psychology evolved out of both philosophy and biology. Discussions on these two topics date back to early Greek thinkers such as Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato. Modern personality psychology is highly influenced by and seeks to address, philosophical questions about what defines personality. How much, if any, of the individual's personality is under their conscious control? Are individuals generally more alike or different? Are people integral in the changing of their personalities? Do environ-

mental factors passively shape human behaviour, or are humans more active in this role? Do biological or environmental influences play a more significant role in determining personality? (Chamorro-Premuzic 2015) (Collin 2015)

Psychology is a relatively young science that has a tremendous amount of both depth and breadth and is mysterious to the general public. It is not until the late 19th century that psychology became established as a scientific discipline on its right. In 1897 Wilhelm Wundt established the first experimental psychology laboratory in Leipzig, Germany. Wundt was among the first people to claim that consciousness could be explored by experiments and that consciousness and other mental processes should be the focus of psychological research. Wundt is seen as the father of experimental psychology, and he was the one to separate psychology from philosophy and biology. With his achievements, he became the first person to be called a psychologist. Throughout history, various schools of thought have formed to explain the human mind and behaviour. In some cases, individual schools of thought rose to dominate the field of psychology for an era. (Collin 2015)

Psychology is a multi-faceted discipline which covers a variety of sub-fields of research. The significant branches of psychology are behavioural, cognitive, developmental, social, biological, psychosocial, and personality psychology. These different schools of thought in psychology have strengthened the variety of perspectives and approaches there exists for understanding the forever fascinating human psyche. While the different schools of thought in psychology are sometimes perceived as highly competing forces, each perspective has contributed to people's understanding of psychology. (Chamorro-Premuzic 2015)

### **3.1 Personality Psychology**

The American Psychological Association describes personality as individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Personality drives individuals to think, feel, and behave in specific ways consistently; in essence, it is what makes each unique. Over time, these patterns strongly influence personal perceptions, expectations, values, and attitudes. The study of personality focuses on two specific areas. One is recognising individual variations in personality traits, and the other is recognising how the different parts of a person unify. Everyone has a characteristic pattern of constant, long-term behaviours and the way he communicates with other individuals and the world around them. Personality is the driving force behind actions, and it is known that a personality type may have a multitude of expressions. Personalities are assumed to be stable, long-term, and not easily modified. (APA 2020)

Multiple attempts, by different theorists with different personalities, have been made to identify which components are most influential in shaping human personality. The idiographic research perspective

emphasises the uniqueness of each person, and research always focuses on the individual who describes the changing factors of personality in that personality. These researchers believe that the differences in personality between people are endless, and the goal of the study is to gain a deep understanding of the individual. Researchers collect information qualitatively, either through interview methods, reports, diaries, or by compiling and evaluating the information on patient relationships. A weakness of the method is the comparability of the difficulty of individual information to other more massive sets. Only a fraction of idiographic personality researchers make generalisations about human behaviour based on their numerous case studies. (Maltby, Day, Macaskill 2013)

The nomothetic model focuses research on differences between either individuals or groups. Individuals are unique; in the way, their traits are composed. The aim is to find out the basic structure of the personality and the minimum number of traits in order to be able to describe the person in general. Quantitative methods are to study the structure of personality, to produce indicators of personality, and to study the relationships between personal variables between different groups. (Maltby, Day, Macaskill 2013)

Personality theory should highlight the complexity of observed or measured behaviours and simplify, identify, and clarify the issues under investigation. The theory should help identify the cause of the behaviour and be able to predict future events or behaviour. It is essential whether the researched concept can be functionalised, as the concept must be described in enough detail to be measurable. Reliable personality theories cover and explain a variety of standard and abnormal behaviours. The theory offers new approaches to problem-solving. (Chamorro-Premuzic 2015)

It is crucial to comprehend that the culture in which people live is one of the most critical environmental factors that shape personalities. Western definitions of personality are not inherently common to other cultures, and there is evidence that the strength of personality characteristics differs across cultures. The theories of personalities can be divided into four main categories: psychodynamic, humanistic, trait theory and social cognitive perspective. (Cherry 2020)

### **3.1.1 Psychodynamic Approach**

The psychodynamic approach emphasises the systematic analysis of the unconscious psychological forces that underlie human actions, thoughts, and emotions, and how these can contribute to early experience. This methodology originates with Sigmund Freud, who was a medical doctor and not a psychologist. At the time he was educated, there was no degree in psychology that could justify any of the claims regarding his ideas today. In spite of his title, Freud was the first to systematically research and theorise the workings of the unconscious mind in a way that we associate with modern

psychology. Freud found out that a significant part of our mental life is affected by early childhood experiences and takes place beyond our conscious consciousness. Freud believes that human behaviour is the product of an interaction between various components of the mind, and that personality evolves in a sequence of psychosexual stages of development. Freud included the Id, ego, and super-ego as the critical determinants of human personality variations. All these innovations at various points of people's lives. According to Freud, the Id is the primal and instinctual part of the mind that includes sexual and violent impulses and suppressed memories, the super-ego serves as a moral conscience, and the ego is the rational component that mediates between the desires of the id and the super-ego. (Chamorro-Premuzic 2015)

The Neo-Freudian psychologists were American theorists of the mid-twentieth century, who were all influenced by Freud. They generally agreed with him that childhood experiences have an impact. However, they decreased the emphasis on sex and focused more on the social environment and the effects of culture on personality. The best-known of these dissenters are Alfred Adler and Carl Jung. (Chamorro-Premuzic 2015)

Alfred Adler (1870-1937) was an Austrian physician and psychotherapist. He developed a school of individual psychology that focuses on our drive to compensate for feelings of inferiority. Adler suggested the idea of the inferiority complex, which refers to the feelings of an individual who lacks respect and does not measure up to the expectations of others or society. Adler's ideas of inferiority represent a significant difference between his thinking and Freud's. Freud believed that people were driven by sexual and violent impulses. However, Adler claimed that childhood feelings of inferiority are what pushes people to seek to achieve dominance and that this striving is the force behind all people's ideas, emotions, and actions. (Collin 2015)

Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung (1875-1961) was another pupil of Freud, who developed his theory of analytical psychology. The emphasis of analytical psychology is on working to balance opposing forces of conscious and unconscious thought and experience within one's personality. From Jung's perspective, this work is a continuous learning process, mainly occurring in the second half of life, of becoming aware of unconscious elements and integrating them into consciousness. Jung claimed that the human psyche had three parts: the ego, personal unconscious, and collective unconscious. Although Jung agreed with Freud's concept of a personal unconscious, he thought it to be incomplete. Besides the personal unconscious, Jung concentrated on the collective unconscious, also called the analytical psyche. It refers to the notion that a part of the most profound unconscious mind is genetically inherited and is not influenced by personal experience. (Fritscher 2019)

In the early 1920s, Jung popularised the concepts of extroverted and introverted types, although understanding and psychological usage differ from his original intent. These are considered a central dimension in many human personality theories. The Jung personality test from 1921, measures preferences for dealing with and relating to people, processing information, making decisions, and organising life. Results of his test give an overview of personality and behaviour. Introversion and extroversion are often viewed as a single continuum, that a person is either one or the other. However, Jung provided a different perspective and suggested that everyone has both an extraverted side and an introverted side, one being more dominant than the other. Jung also identified a third group, which had both, the extroversion-introversion tendencies, but at that time did not give it a name. Psychologists did not begin to use the word “ambivert” until the 1940s. (Chamorro-Premuzic 2015)

### **3.1.2 Humanistic Approach**

The humanistic approach is a psychological perspective that emerged in the mid-20th century, drawing on the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology. In humanism, conscious experiences are more critical than the unconscious. It is a psychological perspective that attributes human characteristics and actions to free will and an innate drive for self-actualisation. This perspective focuses on how healthy people develop, and its approach focuses on maximum human potential and achievement, rather than symptoms of the disorder. It emphasises that people are intrinsically good and pays special attention to personal experience and creativity. This outlook has contributed to developments in constructive, educational and organisational psychology. Despite its significant influence, humanistic psychology has also been criticised for its subjectivity. (Chamorro-Premuzic 2015)

Humanism’s most known theorists were Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers both contending that the optimal psychological state for all humankind is self-actualisation, an individual’s potential within a collegial society. Both Rogers and Maslow regarded personal growth and fulfilment in life as a primary human motive. It means that each person, in different ways, seeks to grow psychologically and to enhance themselves continuously. Rogers believed that people were naturally good and imaginative. They become destructive only when weak self-concept or external constraints overpower the valuation process. Carl Rogers claimed that in order to achieve self-actualisation, a person must be in a state of congruence, an instance of correspondence between the ideal self and the real self. (Collin 2015)

Abraham Maslow (1908–1970) was an American psychologist famous for developing Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow, people have five categories of needs: physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualisation. In his theory, higher needs in the hierarchy begin to emerge when people feel they have sufficiently satisfied the previous need. The highest need refers to feeling that

people are living up to their potential, so self-actualisation looks different for everyone. Essentially, self-actualisation means feeling that people are doing what they believe they are meant to do. According to Maslow, achievers of self-actualisation are relatively rare in numbers, and his examples of famous self-actualised individuals include icons like Albert Einstein and Mother Teresa. He believed self-actualising indicates a coherent personality syndrome and represent optimal psychological health and functioning. (Collin 2015)

Abraham Maslow expanded the field of humanistic psychology to provide an understanding of how human needs evolve over the lifetime of an individual and how these needs affect the development of personality. Maslow also believed that people had an inherent desire to learn new things and better understand the world around them. While later work does not completely support all of Maslow's findings and points out its Western cultural influence, his study has had an impact on other psychologists and has contributed to the field of positive psychology. (Hopper 2020)

### **3.1.3 The Trait Approach**

The trait approach explains personality in terms of internal characteristics that are believed to determine behaviour. In psychology, the traits refer to the ways in which we usually characterise an individual. Passive or aggressive? Optimistic or pessimistic? The descriptive terms, such as compassionate, curious, creative, are all traits. Trait approach is one of the most important fields of psychological research that helps to define a person's personality. Traits can be described as a stable trait that causes an individual to react to several circumstances in a specific way. The trait viewpoint placed little focus on the conscious or unconscious, on the upbringing of the individual, or on any of the other things that the theories of the previous personality placed a strong emphasis on. Instead, the trait viewpoint of personality theory focused on individual characteristics and then used them to obtain a deeper understanding of what personality is. Theory of traits suggests that traits are still constant, regardless of circumstances and temperament. Generally, people are made up of several traits. Some known examples are Allport's personality trait theory, Cattell's personality trait theory, Eysenck's personality theory and the five-factor personality model. (Gaines 2020)

Early trait theorists tried to describe all human personality traits. For example, Gordon Allport found 4,500 words in the English language that could describe people. He organised these personality traits into three categories: cardinal traits, central traits, and secondary traits. Cardinal traits being dominating, central traits making people who they are, and secondary traits being less evident in behaviour. Raymond Cattell (1946, 1957) continued Allport's work and narrowed down the list to 171 traits. Cattell (1957) identified 16 factors or dimensions of personality: rule-consciousness, social boldness, sensitivity, warmth, reasoning, emotional stability, dominance, privateness, apprehension, openness

to change, self-reliance, perfectionism, tension, vigilance, and abstractedness. This work created the personality assessment based on these 16 factors, called the 16PF, where each dimension scores over a continuum, from high to low and the test result reveals which personality traits dominate the personality. (Gaines 2020)

Psychologist Hans Eysenck (1916-1997) was a German-born British personality scientist who focused on temperament, inherent, hereditary variations in personality. He claimed that personality was primarily influenced by biology. The Eysenck looked at individuals with different personality attributes, such as extroversion, introversion, stability, neuroticism and only later introduced the third dimension of psychoticism. His assessment is solely based on self-reporting and is affected by the mood of the respondent at the time of testing. Unlike Eysenck, Cattell based his hypothesis on several sources rather than on self-reporting. Cattell's theory of traits has been built on the use of factor analysis. (Shrestha 2017)

#### **3.1.4 The Social Cognitive Approach**

The social-cognitive approach on personality is a theory that looks cognitive processes, such as thinking and judging, in the development of personality. These cognitive processes contribute to learned behaviours that are central to one's personality. Social cognition is social thought, or how the mind processes social information. It explains how individuals think and respond to social situations, how the mind functions in a social environment are incredibly complex. Combinations of emotions, social desirability factors, and unconscious thoughts can all interact and affect social cognition in many ways. Where behaviourists define personality as a set of learned responses or habits, the social cognitive view consists the concept of reciprocal determinism, in which the environment, characteristics of the person, and the behaviour itself all interact. Significant figures in social cognitive theory are Albert Ellis, Albert Bandura and Julian Rotter. (Collin 2015)

Albert Ellis (1913-2007) was an American psychologist who played a vital role in the emotional movement that happened in the field of psychotherapy and helped to drive the emergence of cognitive behavioural methods. Albert Ellis has established that it is not the event, circumstance, or person that makes us feel a certain way. However, it is, in fact, our interpretation of the event, situation, or the person. He created the "ABC model" to explain why we think the things we think, why we feel the way we do, and why we do the things we do. The purpose of the model is to show how to intervene and take control of our thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. (Collin 2015)

Julian B. Rotter (1916-2014) was an American psychologist known to develop popular ideas; the Locus of Control was developed as a theory by Rotter in 1954. It calls the propensity of people to assume that power exists internally, or externally, with others or the situation. People who base their success on their work and feel that they control their lives have an internal control locus. People who attribute their performance or failure to outside forces, on the other hand, have an external locus of control. Although control is a personality trait, it can also reflect the degree to which individuals manage the environment. Evidence has emerged that different personality traits, such as the locus of influence and optimism, contribute to how people deal with stress. (Collin 2015)

Albert Bandura is a Canadian-American behavioural psychologist born in 1925. The theory of self-efficacy grew out of the research of Bandura. He stated that self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to influence events that affect one's life and control the way these events are experienced. There are four ways to build self-efficacy; mastery of experiences, social modelling, social persuasion, and states of physiology. Sense of self-efficacy can play a significant role in how a person approaches a goal. Bandura also came up with the concept of reciprocal determinism, in which cognitive processes, behaviour, and context all collaborate with and influence each other. Bandura built his social cognitive theory from a holistic view of human cognition concerning social perception and control. He stressed that behaviour is driven by a combination of forces, cues, responses and rewards. (GoodTherapy 2015) (Tugsbaatar 2019)

### **3.1.5 Personality Testing**

Job applicants and employers have distinct personalities, qualities and behaviours. Much of these characteristics help decide if these individuals fit well with the company culture and if they will be effective within the organisation. Job interviews can only tell so much about a person, and personality tests are sometimes seen as an important piece of the puzzle. But are personality assessments a good way to assess career applicants and employees? There seems to be no strong consensus even among experts, hiring the perfect candidate for any role is challenging. Organisations must evaluate the type of personality that is suitable for a company so that a personality test will help guide hiring decisions. However, if the organisation has not identified the types of personality it needs, it makes no sense to classify someone on the premise of their personality without having criteria as to how they fit into the company. (Williams 2019)

More than two thousand years ago, Greek physician Hippocrates was the first trying to categorise humans into types. Hippocrates' theory of humorism, argued that personality traits are based on four separate temperaments associated with four fluids of the body. One of these four fluids were believed

to control the health and mood of the human body. Much progress has been made since the four humors, and while Hippocrates's theory is no longer held to be valid; it paved the way for further discoveries and insights into human personality. (Collin 2015)

Objective personality evaluation began with Woodworth's Personal Data Sheet back in 1917. Woodworth's test was developed to identify soldiers prone to nervous breakdowns during attacks in World War One. Jung's theory of psychological types in 1921, explained how people could be characterised by their preference of general attitude: Extraverted (E) vs Introverted (I), their preference of one of the two functions of perception: Sensing (S) vs Intuition (N), and their preference of one of the two functions of judging: Thinking (T) vs Feeling (F). (Collin 2015)

Nowadays, personality tests are techniques designed to measure one's personality to understand human behaviour. There are two types of personality tests, the classic psychometric test, and a projective test. The standard test coming from a cognitive-behavioural perspective and assumes that people are honest when answering test questions. The projective is a test in which an object reflects things from its subconscious that go unnoticed through creative or self-perceiving exercises.

Personality tests are among the least successful in predicting work performance relative to other recruiting methods, according to studies by Frank L. Schmidt. He found that they work best when used with other measures, such as cognitive ability or integrity tests, that have higher predictive validity. However, professor of industrial psychology, Deniz S. Ones, claims that a well-designed evaluation of the personality, if used correctly, can be a useful and reliable way of assessing whether someone is fit for a career. The issue is that not all tests are equal. Most tests are based on the Five-Factor Model, which consists of openness to experience, conscientiousness, extroversion, complacency and neuroticism. Such tests have been the subject of the most research evaluations. But there are several common and inexpensive personality tests that are less accurate for use in recruiting. Professionals are advised to avoid using tests that put people in one of a handful of categories or personality styles because these types of tests are too simple. According to the publisher of the questionnaire, one of the best-known personality tests, the Myers-Briggs Style Indicator, is not meant to be included in the recruiting process at all. People of several different styles succeed at the same job for different reasons, says the publisher's website. Individuals should not be stereotyped since their personal preferences. (Meinert 2015)

### **3.1.6 The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator**

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is probably the most common but not generally the most reliable personality method. In comparison, 89 of the top Fortune 100 companies use MBTI when making

recruiting and teaming decisions. The MBTI is so commonly used that 24 different languages provide this assessment. A range of political and military organisations also make use of this. During World War II, the MBTI was founded with the goal of helping women move into the workforce. Two housewives called Isabel Briggs Myers and Katharine Cook Briggs, influenced by Carl Jung's work, felt that if women had improved understanding of themselves, they could enter a work environment that suits their personalities best. The questionnaire they developed tests people based on four pairs of psychological preferences. (Collin 2015) (Karimova 2020)

Extroversion and introversion; this model looks at people's attitudes. It's believed that those defined as extroverts draw energy from interactions with others. Their energy will start to subside without external stimulation. On the other hand, introverts are assumed to be expending energy by interactions with others. Therefore, to recharge their batteries and restore centeredness, they seek quiet time alone to reflect on their experiences and to understand them. They proceed after acquiring a new understanding of the situations. (Karimova 2020)

Sensing and intuition dimension focus on how people obtain knowledge from their surroundings. Many who prefer the sensing approach are said to rely more on information that the five senses can collect, meaning their stimuli need to be real and transparent in order to make sense. If anyone depends on guidance from their intuition for decision formation, they tend to predict results by recognising general trends and linking different information with the use of hypotheses and other information available. (Karimova 2020)

Thinking and feeling; when it comes to decision-making, those who classify as thinkers prefer to draw conclusions based on logical and disconnected points of view. This means that they prefer a rationale that is persistent and can be applied to a specific set of guidelines. Feelers prefer to make decisions, mostly based on situational factors. Feelers weigh each situation against another, with the aim of creating a sense of harmony and consent. This is different in comparison to thinkers who are more concerned about the truth, give more direct feedback, and avoid inconsistencies. (Karimova 2020)

Judging and perceiving; this is a characteristic not included in Carl Jung's original theory, and it describes how a person communicates with the outside world. According to the MBTI, a person may be classified either as a judge, someone who prefers to think or feel, or as a perceiver, someone who prefers to use his intuition or senses. (Karimova 2020)

One of the arising questions people ask after solving their type is: how regular is my type? Figure 1. shows how the personality type divides in the general population. (CareerPlanner 2020)

## Personality type distribution

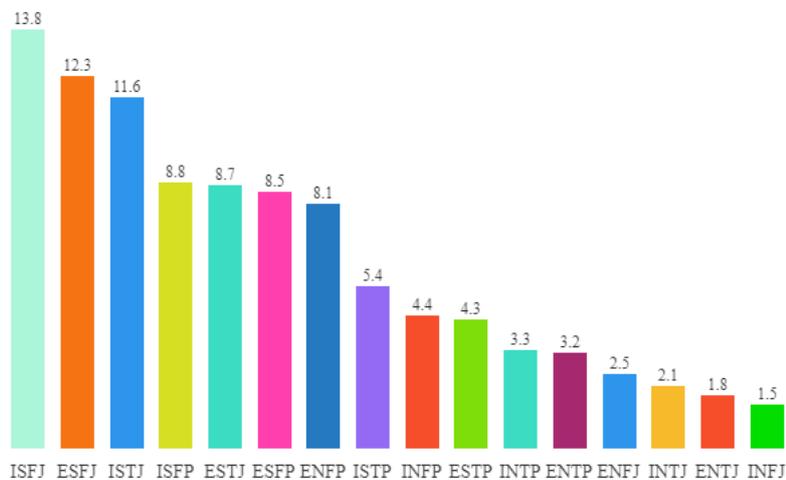


Figure 1. General personality type distribution. (CareerPlanner)

### 3.1.7 Five-Factor-Model

The big five personality traits are the most used and best-accepted model of personality in academic psychology, meaning that it is the most scientifically validated and reliable psychological model to test personality. Five-factor-model attempts to identify the five fundamental aspects that make up human personality. Big Five test gives insight into how people react in different situations, which can help a person choose an occupation. Psychologists, career counsellors and recruiters use this information in a personality career test for recruitment and candidate assessment. Unlike the MBTI, which aims to categorise types of personality, the Big Five recognises that people exhibit specific characteristics that need to be evaluated on a scale. It is unusual to be on one side or the other of the continuum. (Widiger 2017)

Big Five model, initially developed in the 1970s, it has since been repeated several times over the years through independent research. Paul Costa has collaborated with Robert McCrae and Warren Norman, who have taken slightly different directions to obtain the same results: most human personality characteristics are now grouped into five fundamental dimensions of personality, independent of culture and language. Such five dimensions were developed by asking hundreds of questions to thousands of respondents and then analysing the data using a statistical method known as factor analysis. It is a method used to reduce the number of variables to fewer factors. This technique removes the full, common variance from all variables and places them in a common ranking. It is critical to realise

that the researchers did not set out to find five dimensions, but that five dimensions emerged from their analysis of the data. The five specific personality traits defined in theory are called (Figure 2) extraversion, empathy, openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism. (Widiger 2017)

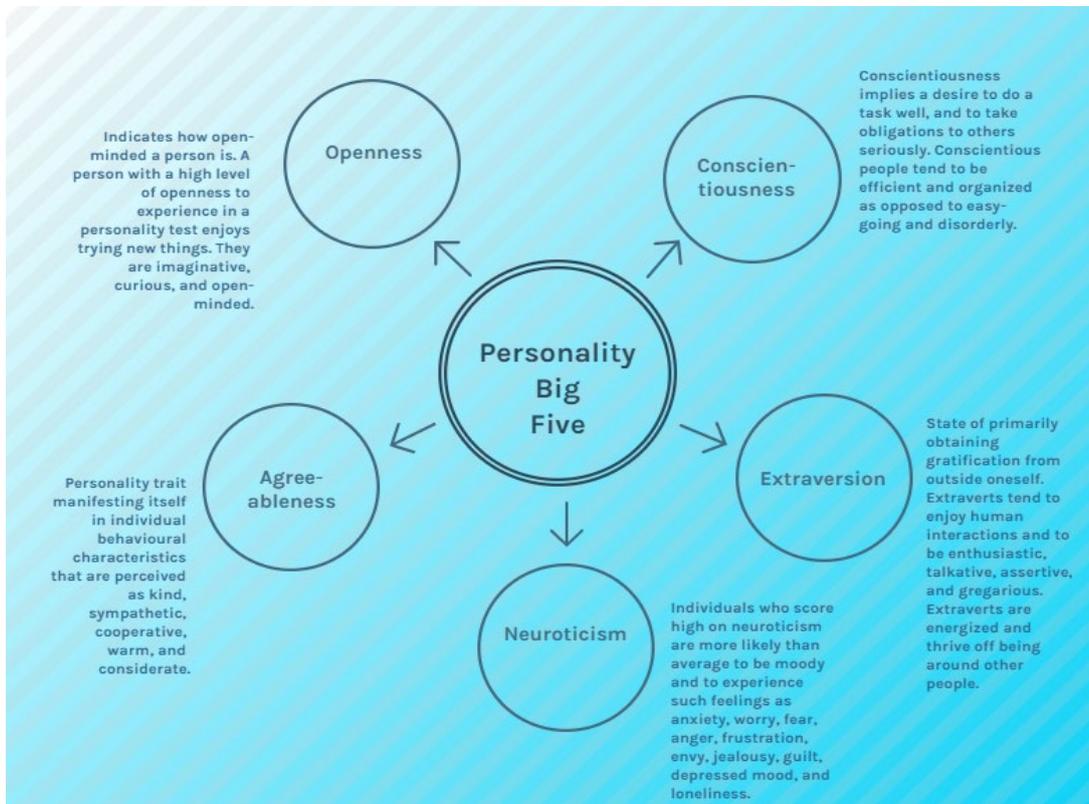


Figure 2. Big Five Model of personality. (Widiger)

### 3.1.8 Aptitude Testing

An aptitude test is a tool used to assess the individual's propensity to excel in a specific task. Individuals also take an aptitude test to assess the types of occupations that are a good fit for their skills and interests. Aptitude tests presume that people have intrinsic strengths and weaknesses and have a reasonable ability to excel or fail in particular areas on the basis of their innate characteristics. An aptitude test does not measure expertise, nor is it a measure for which a person can prepare in advance. (Lore 2011)

Several companies use aptitude tests to help them make hiring decisions. Such assessments, called career assessments, allow human resources staff to learn more about the strengths and limitations of prospective employees. Situational judgment assessments are a form of job aptitude test that can help determine how workers will react to different circumstances in the workplace. They are often used to determine the employee's communication style and willingness to function within a team. Any of the situational assessment assessments concentrate primarily on the occupations of the customer

service provider. These assessments examine personality characteristics that predict positive interactions with the public, such as empathy, diplomacy, and flexibility. (Inkson 2007)

### **3.2 Positive Psychology**

Positive Psychology is a scientific study of optimal human functioning, aimed at discovering and promoting factors that allow individuals and communities to thrive. Psychology has often emphasised and focused on the weaknesses of individuals in relation to their potential. Positive psychology is a collection of a variety of techniques that encourage people to identify and further develop their own positive experiences, emotions and characteristics. Positive psychology has three central concerns: positive individual characteristics, positive experiences, and positive institutions. Understanding positive emotions involve studying contentment with the past, happiness in the present, and hope for the future. (Mukund, Singh 2015)

Marcus Seligman is generally agreed to be the father of modern positive psychology, influenced by earlier humanist thinkers such as Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. Seligman was born in New York in 1942. In 1967, he received a PhD in Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. He has become a well-known researcher and author of several popular books that have made positive psychology accessible and well-known to many followers. His specialities revolve around learned helplessness, pessimism, depression, resilience, and optimism. (Seligman 2012)

Seligman's research into learned pessimistic attitudes in time led him to develop an interest in optimism, an enthusiasm that would eventually lead to the emergence of a new branch of psychology. Instead of focusing on what is wrong with people, he wanted mental health to be more than just the absence of illness. Alternatively, Seligman brought in a new era of psychology that also focuses on what makes people feel happy and fulfilled. Seligman offers research into three forms of a happy life that all human beings can achieve: a life of pleasure, a life of engagement, or a life of meaning. (Seligman 2018)

### **3.3**

#### **3.4 Learned Optimism**

Martin Seligman has come to the theory of learned optimism through a scientific study of learned helplessness. Seligman discovered that when people feel that they have no control over their situation, they tend to give up instead than fight for control. By shifting his focus to attempting to discover what it is that keeps some people from becoming helpless. The response was optimism. Using his

knowledge of conditioning people to be helpless, he shifted his focus to conditioning people to be optimists. The results of these investigations have led to the definition of learned optimism. (Seligman 2018)

Optimists see problems as temporary, as specific to a situation and as externally caused. Whereas pessimists, facing the same misfortunes, see problems as permanent, they generalise a situation and take personal blame for the failures. Researchers suggest that optimism levels are influenced by childhood experiences, in addition to being partially hereditary. Seligman suggests that it is possible to learn the skills that can help anyone become a more optimistic person. (Seligman 2018)

The approach to learning optimism is based upon the rational emotive behavioural therapy (REBT) created by Albert Ellis and the cognitive-behavioural techniques developed by Aaron Beck. Both methods focused on identifying the underlying thoughts that influence behaviours and then actively challenging such beliefs. Seligman's model of learned optimism (Figure 3) is known with the acronym "ABCDE". (Seligman 2018)

# ABCDE

## Optimism - Martin Seligman



1

### Adversity

Identify the situation or event that triggers pessimism



2

### Belief

Record how you interpret the adversity, making sure to separate out thoughts from feelings



3

### Consequences

Record what you did, how you acted, and how you felt about the adversity



4

### Disputation

Make an effort to argue against your beliefs and interrupt the pattern of emotions around the adversity



5

### Energisation

Redirect your thoughts and attention away from the adversity

Figure 3. Learned Optimism of ABCDE. (Seligman 2018)

Learned optimism test was designed to help people discover how optimistic they are. The questionnaire contains forty-eight questions, and the evaluation works best before reading the analysis in the Seligman's "Learned Optimism" book published first in 1991. People who start more optimistic can further improve their emotional health, while those who are more pessimistic can benefit by lowering

their chances of experiencing symptoms of depression. Optimism enhances the quality of life, and anyone can learn to practice it. A determined effort to cultivate optimism can improve the quality of life, ensure happiness and success. (Seligman 2012)

### **3.5 Emotional Intelligence**

When it comes to success and happiness in life, emotional intelligence is just as relevant as intellectual capacity. It's a hot topic not only in psychology but also in the business world. Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, to engage with others, to communicate effectively, to overcome challenges, and to ease conflict. People need to learn how to manage stress in such a way that they feel more at ease reconnecting to strong or unpleasant emotions and changing how they experience and respond to their feelings. Emotional intelligence helps people build stronger relationships, achieve academic success, and accomplish career and personal goals. It can also help to connect with feelings and turn intention into action and make informed decisions about what is most important in creating a meaningful life. (Trought 2017)

The psychologist's Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer are two of the leading experts on the subject. They describe emotional intelligence as the ability to identify and understand emotions in oneself and others. Emotional intelligence is commonly known as a valuable ability that researchers believe can be developed through preparation and practice. Emotional skills can automatically come to certain people, but there are things that anyone can do to help enhance their ability to understand and reason with emotions. Factors such as upbringing and personality play a significant role in the growth of emotional intelligence, but it is an ability that can be developed through commitment and practice. Emotional intelligence attributes include self-awareness, self-regulation, cognitive skills, compassion, and motivation. (Houston 2020)

Daniel Goleman (1946-) was the author of the globally best-selling book Emotional Intelligence, published in 1995, which he described self-knowledge as being made up of emotional understanding, objective self-assessment, and self-confidence. It's all about understanding feelings, personal strengths, and weaknesses, and having a good sense of one's own worth. Self-regulation is characterised as the process by which people incorporate their actions into their daily lives. It consists of self-monitoring, strategic thinking, decision-making, goal setting, preparation, self-assessment and emotional control as a result of behavioural change. (Houston 2020)

### 3.6 Character Strengths

Character attributes are psychological mechanisms that describe more overall values, which are core traits that have been identified and appreciated over time by moral philosophers and theological thinkers. 'Character Qualities and Virtues' is a pioneering book (2004) written by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman, collecting the work of researchers to establish a classification system for commonly regarded positive traits. They researched all significant religions and philosophic practices and found that the same six values were practised in almost all cultures over three millennia. The purpose of the classification is to present a measure of humanist principles of character in a scientific and empirical way. It aims to include a theoretical structure that will assist optimistic psychologists in the development of practical field applications. (VIA Institute 2020)

For decades, researchers have turned to cognitive skills as a measure of work perforation. Smarter people were assumed to be more likely to excel on the job, but a more exceptional assessment intellect is just part of the story. Less mentioned are the qualities of character. Skills, interests, and talents are very different from the qualities of character or the positive characteristics (Figure 4) that are central to a person's identity. These are fundamental facets of our personalities, which are respected by people of all cultures. Essential factors in job performance are, for example, leadership, imagination, competence, participation and collaboration, all of which contribute to personality, not generally called intelligence. (VIA Institute 2020) (Niemiec 2020)



Figure 4. Positive traits. (VIA Institute)

Character strengths consist of qualities that come most naturally to us. Every individual possesses all the 24 strengths in different degrees, giving each person a unique character profile. VIA is a non-profit organisation, established in 2001, set out to advance both the science and practice of character, and empower people on their strengths-building journey. The VIA-test is the only free, scientific survey of character strengths available. Anyone can take the simple character test approximately in 15 minutes and find out their strengths. It is regarded as a central tool of positive psychology, and it has been used in hundreds of research studies. Studies show that using character strengths can help strengthen the ability to overcome problems, enhance overall well-being, build resilience, and improve relationships. Already, millions of people worldwide have taken the VIA survey to discover their greatest strengths and benefit from the self-knowledge it offers. (Linley 2008) (Peterson, Seligman 2004)

Table 2. The 24-character strengths. (Seligman 2004)

<b>There are six classes of virtues that create the 24-character strengths in total:</b>
<b>Wisdom and Knowledge:</b>
creativity, curiosity, judgement, love of learning, perspective
<b>Courage:</b>
bravery, persistence, honesty, zest
<b>Humanity:</b>
love, kindness, social intelligence
<b>Justice:</b>
teamwork, fairness, leadership
<b>Temperance:</b>
forgiveness, modesty, prudence, self-control
<b>Transcendence:</b>
appreciation of beauty, gratitude, hope, humour, spirituality

### 3.7 Psychological Capital

Psychological Capital, also referred to as PsyCap, is generated from, both the positive psychology and the work on positive organisational behaviour. PsyCap was designed initially for organisations, by Fred Luthans. He suggested that growth in organisations needs to focus on psychological rather than educational development. Luthans considered that human resources could serve as a competitive advantage as they are more unique by competitors than financial, structural, and physical capitals. The latest literary developments support the notion of developing and sustaining competitive advantage, the organisation's human resource strategies should emphasise the factors that are eminently unique

and cumulative, valuable, context-specific, renewable, diffusible to replicate, and non-substitutable. (Ohlin 2017) (Luthans, Avolio 2007)

Psychological capital looks further from conventionally recognised human capital. PsyCap refers to an individual's positive psychological state of development and consists of four personal qualities: optimism, self-efficacy, resiliency, and hope (HERO). (Ohlin 2017)

Optimism and hope are both characteristics of personality that have been connected to physiological and psychological well-being. The idea of hope is firmly founded on the assumption that individuals want to achieve their goals. Generally, approach-oriented goals are emphasised over avoidance-oriented goals. Ideally, in the context of work, the goals are precise, observable, attainable, realistic and time-based, as well as clearly communicated. Leaders will assist workers by breaking down complex, challenging goals into smaller pieces. (Ohlin 2017)

The word self-efficacy refers to an individual's trust in his ability to accomplish a task or to achieve a goal. Self-efficacy defines how we think and feel about ourselves. This idea was initially created by Albert Bandura, as mentioned earlier in the social cognitive approach. Now, psychologists contend that our level of self-efficacy will affect whether we ultimately succeed in a challenge. Resilience, instead, is the capacity to rebound from setbacks and grow stronger by resolving life events. Over the years, we all experience hardship and rejection. However, what makes us successful and ambitious is not determined by how often we are rejected, but how often we bounce back and give it another go. Essentially, resilience is about learning to fall. (Luthans, Youssef et al. 2015)

The principle of psychological capital consists of these four components above, and the development of one resource tends to improve the other. Four components form the best construction that maximises its capacity when all areas are taken into account. PsyCap is closely related to increased well-being, work and life satisfaction. Many of the positive psychology methods are focused on gratitude and are closely related to this definition and thus indirectly activate HERO. (Ohlin 2017)

## **4 Methodology**

In this section of methodology, will be explained the chosen research method and the process of data collection, and who were selected to participate in this thesis.

## **4.1 Semi-structured Interviews**

The purpose of this thesis is to raise understanding of the flight attendant's awareness of their personality and its fit for flying duty. What are the characteristics of a flight attendant? How do these features help to succeed at work, and how to further advance competencies for future challenges?

The research method selected is a qualitative interview study with a semi-structured format. It is a combination of an unstructured interview and a structured interview and has the advantages of both two setups. This chosen method provides qualitative data, that is descriptive and regards phenomenon which can be observed but cannot be measured. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allowed the preparation of the questions ahead of time and created a structure for the interviews. Semi-structured interviews allowed informants the freedom to express their views in their terms. (King, Horrocks et al. 2019)

Semi-structured interviews can provide comparable, reliable, qualitative data when done successfully. This method was used so that the participants can express their opinions and ask questions, which encourages them to give more information rather than provide simple answers. (King, Horrocks et al. 2019)

## **4.2 Data Collection**

The research data was collected from four flight attendants working for different airlines with over five years of working experience each, all coming from multicultural and large organisations. Besides the flying experience exceeding five years, flight attendants that seemingly enjoy their careers were selected, to assess if there is a correlation between their personality and the fit for their career choice. The responders were all European and aged between 29 to 39 years. One of the interviewees had a supervisory position. The decision to collect data from flight attendants working in different companies, rather than to focus on one, was adopted to protect the participant's privacy since the thesis topic and the nature of the interviews were very personal. Research questions were all open-ended questions, allowing for a discussion with the interviewee instead of straightforward question and answer format.

The interviews consisted of a total of nine pre-planned questions (attachment 1), that raised some more questions during the interviews. Nevertheless, the information that merged on top of the planned questions was not added to existing questions, nor it is used in the analysis of the data. The research questions aimed to support one another to get more profound interviews and try to ease the flow of discussion to gain more information on the topic. However, the nine questions were divided

into four different sections, to ease the analysis of the collected data. Interview guide can be found as an attachment

The first section of the questions focused on how they describe their personality, familiarity of personal tests, and if they were able to identify and use their strengths at work. The second part was spent discussing managing work-related conflicts and what they perceive they have learned through their work about themselves. The third part focused on talking about what kind of a person would be a fit for being a flight attendant and if they considered themselves as a fit. All the interviews were finished with questions about what makes a job meant for them and what are their future goals. Interviews were recorded with a mobile app, lasted between 35 to 50 minutes each and provided a vast amount of data.

## **5 Results**

In this data analysis, the information collected is transformed into a form of explanation, understanding or interpretation of the persons and situations investigated by this thesis—a qualitative method of analysing the naturally occurring conversation from interviews held. A summary of the data is made up of four categories.

### **5.1.1 Identifying Resources of Personality**

The interviews started in recognising responders' personalities, where all the flight attendants described themselves using mostly different traits, such as flexible, outgoing, adventurous, friendly, curious, reliable, and positive. Two considered being extroverted types, while the other two said they maybe fall somewhere in the middle of extroversion/introversion scale.

Almost all flight attendants used examples of how others have told them to be like, "I am like my mother", or similar types of comments were used by almost all responders. These comments were most often rising in their family surroundings, with many comparisons, inside the family dynamics. They considered only closest colleagues would describe them as their friends outside the work environment, some bringing up they adopt a work identity and do not behave entirely typical of themselves in their jobs. Few examples raised of how they behave differently at work, that how they become very organised and systematic in their work, compared to their free time habits.

All the responders had completed multiple personality tests as well as some aptitude tests. They were able to remember 16 personalities, which is a formation of MBTI, and few had completed the Big Five test. Even though they all had filled out personality tests, they did not remember their results very well or did not think it even mattered much. The reason, majority of them were hesitant of the importance of these tests, was the variety available and much of the tests seem to be just for fun.

All responders had also, taken a test provided by the company in their application phase, which they believed to measure their personality and capabilities for the acquired role. How they described these tests showed they seemed to differ significantly from one company to another.

When asked about responders' strengths, they all justified their strengths with the positive feedback they had received, in an atmosphere of modesty—initiative, flexible, fair, reliable, and so on. Only, the flight attendant holding the supervisory position considered he was able to use his strengths at work, relating to his leading style. The supervisor was more comfortable in identifying his strengths and thought they helped him to lead and persuade others and gain control of, sometimes quickly, changing situations.

### **5.1.2 Self-growth Through Career**

The ability to understand other ways of doing things was said to become easier over the years, and the reason was thought to be the fact that there is a high number of colleagues, and that most understand the importance of fluent teamwork for smooth operations. Effective and respective communication was thought to be an essential part of any flight. It was said to become the norm in aviation to

work with different mindsets because the personnel figures are often high. The bigger the airline, the less likely the attendants know their colleagues before meeting them in the briefing. Some said that because there are strict rules to be followed in aviation, it helps disagreements from escalating since everyone has been trained with the same guidelines from the beginning.

Everyone was able to identify that their work had taught them something about themselves. With the pre-existing perceptions broadened, the learnings of oneself proved to be positive and useful. Some mentioned they are more fit with the rules and guidelines than they had thought, others were surprised how adaptable they were when some said they have learned to be excellent team players.

### **5.1.3 The Characteristics of Flight Attendants**

The discussion of the ideal candidate and its characteristics brought in a variety of attributes. The qualities insist (Figure 5) on excellent people skills and an affinity for hospitality. Confidence, responsibility, and trustworthiness were necessary qualities to take care of the safety aspects. The ideal candidate identifies with excellent communication skills. The flight attendant should be a positive team player who is not afraid of stepping up and taking responsibility, even in surprising situations. Someone who can respect, internalise, and follow instructions. A person who can adapt to quickly changing circumstances. The extroversion trait was seen useful because of customer interaction, but it was also seen as a significant benefit in large organisations where they meet new colleagues daily. None of the responders identified themselves as the perfect fit for this specific career, but everyone considered themselves suitable for their roles.



Figure 5. Characteristics of a flight attendant.

#### 5.1.4 Meaningful Future

Meaningfulness of work raised a wide-ranging discussion. It was found in the excitement that brings in motivation to get up every morning to go to work in good spirits. It was recognised valuable how the enthusiasm rising from work affected their overall positiveness and improved life-satisfaction. Also, it was considered significant to offer value for the time spent away from home. Meaningfulness was also said to be the ability to achieve, improve and learn at work to support future goals. The interviews were finished with goals discussion with everyone. All had some type of goals, but only some were able to define their goals in detail and make it believable there is an actual plan to turn their dream into reality.

### **5.1.5 Summary of Results**

All the flight attendants were able to describe their personalities to some degree and thought it to be suitable for their positions. They mostly detailed themselves using trait descriptions and some using personality type letters. Their perceptions of themselves seemed to be influenced by their peers and family environment. It was not easy to for the responders to identify, list or even to discuss their strengths openly. Only one recognised that he could use his strengths in the work environment. Understanding other perspectives and problem-solving skills were set to grow in large organisations, that are formed of different personalities. Everyone had noticed they have learned from themselves through their work. Flight attendants thought ideal candidate is constructed of a multitude of skills and abilities, but suitability was achieved even without all the idealised qualities. Meaningfulness from work was found from a factor that contributed to their lives positively and was linked to personal goals, and in achieving those.

# Research Results

Highlights from the interviews



1

## Personality Awareness

Flight attendants recognise their traits and characteristics  
Believe they have learned from themselves through work  
Are hesitant of typing / categorising themselves



2

## Airlines Test Applicants

Using different test and methods



3

## Large Organisations

Large staff numbers enable personal growth by offering multiple perspectives and different ways of working  
Extroverts benefit from large organisations because of a lot of new colleagues



4

## Strengths

A responsible role helps to identify and leverage one's strengths



5

## Meaningful Career

Work becomes meaningful if it creates something that a person has identified important to themselves  
Career affects the overall life-satisfaction

Figure 6. Results of the interviews.

### 5.1.6 Recommendations

Start with the wonder of who you are, get acquainted with a multitude of scientific tests, identify your strengths to see what kind of work corresponds to your skills. Reflect on others with the mindset that everyone is unique and has talent; going forward is not a competition. You've got your goals to discover, you've got your potential to own. (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Career Roadmap.

## **7 Discussion**

In the final chapter of this thesis, the emphasis is on the evaluation of the results. What information, thoughts and questions arise from the interviews. The reliability and validity of this research are assessed in this section. The thesis concludes with an analysis of self-learning and an appreciation of the difficulties faced along the way.

### **7.1 Conclusions**

Personality itself is not a simple tool for finding a career fit, but awareness of personality can point out the way, without it being the complete answer. One's values and motivational factors are undoubtedly among some of the features for a complete career choice. From the theoretical part, it can be concluded that airlines have defined some stereotype of what kind of applicant they are searching for and who they believe can manage the role. Whether or not the descriptions are realistic, in particular the number of positive features per person, can be disputed.

When human resource teams search for capable candidates to become flight attendants, they do not only focus on individual capabilities but how well that personality suits in their team. Not all the hired applicants share the same personalities, nor do they all have the same skills and abilities to the same extent. It is crucial that people look at their uniqueness as a source of strength, rather than compare themselves to others, and focus on the missing qualities. When other people look us from the outside, they see our accomplishments, whereas we experience a full behind-the-scenes view of our behaviour and range of emotions. It can create uncertainty in anyone but to overcome challenges positive mindset and attitude of growth can assist. It is valuable to identify personal strengths and explore where those can take us individually. Strengths can undoubtedly assist in deciding a dream career, boost self-esteem, assist in personal growth, endorse future possibilities, and turn dreams into reality.

Disagreements in the work environment hold power to inspire us to learn more about ourselves. Next time, something heats us even in a heartbeat, maybe not to react to a situation, but to question it. If we allow this moment of inquiry for contrasting views, there is a chance that this will lead to personal development, academic growth and understanding. It may be realistic to start on an individual basis and then multiply it on an organisational level, in order to achieve success.

Goals have value as they help to build and enhance the potential. When it comes to reaching goals, the type of personality can enable or get in the way of going forward, and it is vital to know where and how. Identifying one's competence is self-awareness. People's understanding of their competence

often varies from their actual level of competence, since self-assessment is an inherently difficult activity. The findings of personality tests, as well as feedback, are often biased, flawed, or difficult to understand. There is obviously a difficulty in drawing inferences, and it is not reasonable to expect people to prove their abilities to be correct in their judgments.

There are plenty of personality tests available for the public, purely for the amusement, that do not provide any scientific validity and reliability. Based on the interviews it seemed that, unless a person had personal interest toward scientific testing, it was somewhat difficult to differentiate the personality tests available and to trust that which of them were to be beneficial. Unfortunately, so much of research goes onto something, that then gets mixed with pure entertainment. It is advisable to remember no single test, not even the scientific one, is accurate in telling anyone that who they are or what they are capable of, but the ones validated, can be used as a tool for acquiring self-knowledge. Learning to understand oneself, helps to understand others and by understanding others, can we learn more from ourselves.

It is impossible to imagine a happy life if work is consuming, and it is also challenging to keep the mood positive when job causes sheer fatigue and stress. When it comes to finding a job that fits, getting to know oneself is recommendable. The time invested at work needs to create personal value. Ideally, the chosen career motivates and supports future goals, and generates more positivity and overall life satisfaction.

## **7.2 Validity of Research**

The researcher has ethical and moral responsibilities, and the thesis is analysed in terms of its validity. The purpose of this study is to produce the most accurate information possible. Qualitative interview study is a more informal method of study that offers in-depth information on the underlying reasoning and motivation of the respondents. The goal is to understand the topic, in-depth from an individual's perspective. Qualitative research is described as any kind of data collection that is intended to explain, but not to predict. In this thesis, the literature review has been used extensively; reliability is increased by the fact that the same theoretical issues emerged from several different sources.

Since the topic was chosen to be of interest to the researcher himself, it was crucial to be as neutral as possible, without confusing own beliefs and opinions on the topic. It was very critical, especially during the interview phase, so that the interviewees were not led in any direction but had the freedom to express their views and beliefs. Due to the very personal topic of the study, it was also essential to make sure that the interviewees trusted that their anonymity would be maintained. It was promised to all responders that the recordings of the interviews would be deleted after the data analysis.

The validity of an assessment is the degree to which it measures what it is supposed to measure. This work succeeded in measuring what had been sought, but the delineation of the subject would have allowed for a deeper and clearer whole.

### **7.3 Limitations and Further Research**

The delineation of the topic was very challenging, and the more research took place, the more difficult it became. It was challenging to focus on a narrow subject area and precise it down to fit. In this stage, it is much easier to identify that at which stage this project would have benefited most from the guidance. Another significant limitation of this thesis was it being so personal information and not all that got asked wanted to participate knowing that the data will be analysed and documented for public sharing. Even though the interviews had only indirect relations to airlines, the participants were also immensely concerned with the privacy of their employer. Challenge of the usefulness of this type of research, is a small group of participants and only one researcher analysing data with his perception. The self-awareness of the flight attendants' personalities was not easy to identify, based only in their abilities to describe it. This research would have benefitted from the use of some of the scientifically validated tests, mentioned in theory.

It seemed that airlines test their applicants using different test and methods, would be interesting to research the human resources side of aviation and what is the process for identifying the ideal candidates. Get to know the design of recruiting and how to match the perfect candidate with the right position. Due to the privacy of organisations and humans being part of the company's capital, I reckon it would be challenging to get to the sources of information. Another idea for future research is about people that are highly passionate about their work. Candidates that have identified their potentials and trust in themselves to take responsibility for their living. Entrepreneurs or the mindset inside of a start-up could be an attractive target group. Do they believe more in themselves or their ground-breaking innovations?

### **7.4 Personal Learning**

Even I did not manage to narrow the topic enough; I thoroughly enjoyed reading and exploring the data. I am grateful I ended up choosing a subject I had a personal interest on. I know I will still be interested in reading more relating to this matter, mainly because I believe that neuroscience will have a significant impact on the future of psychology. Advances in neuroscience help strengthen psychological theory in some cases; in others, it provides breakthroughs that challenge classical ways of thinking.

Overall, the project was an excellent introduction for myself to see what my challenges are. As expected, I met my shortcomings; I was familiar with but had the opportunity to welcome a few new joiners for myself. Perceiving the complete picture and creating the thesis from scratch was overwhelming and distressing at times. Narrowing the topic was by far the most significant dilemma I faced. Putting together the research questions to form an intact whole was another mayhem, that caused intermittent despair. The difficulty to start the actual writing process was also surprisingly defiant and became even harder when I tried to manage it along with my full-time job. I was only able to progress when I had my full focus on the project, and after I understood to make it my main task.

Time management issue was something that I created for myself. The conflict between the reality of enjoying this type of project, but at the same, it was a battle between my genuine interest versus self-doubt and uncertainty, fear of not being able to manage it against my own set of expectations. Since failures are essential for growth, taking action is far more useful than avoiding the task altogether. Something I now realise; I know much better in theory than in practice. Avoiding any task due to fear of failure is merely blocking myself discovering my potential. Through this rewarding journey of my thesis, I learned that practice makes perfect, but it is not always the final result that holds the most value.

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## Appendices

### 7.5 Appendix 1. Research Questions

<b>Category 1.</b> <b>Identifying resources of personality</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ How can you describe your personality?</li><li>✓ What personality tests have you done?</li><li>✓ Can you recognise your strengths? Can you apply them in your job?</li></ul>
<b>Category 2.</b> <b>Self-growth through career</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ How do you solve work-related conflicts / what helps you to understand other views of doing things?</li><li>✓ What have you learned about yourself in your job / how have you learned?</li></ul>
<b>Category 3.</b> <b>The characteristics of a flight attendant</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ How are you the right fit for your career?</li><li>✓ What personality traits, characteristics fit best for your job? Describe an ideal candidate?</li></ul>
<b>Category 4.</b> <b>Meaningful future</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What makes a job meaningful, relevant, valuable to you?</li><li>✓ What are your future career goals?</li></ul>