Transcript - Lucie Ilbury - How not to get derailed by your own personality

🕐 Tue, 04/23 18:21PM · 41mins

Transcript

Nathalie 00:07
Hello, you're listening to the Future Talent Learning podcast developed to help you build your leadership and management skills. I'm Nathalie Nahai.

Ross G 00:16
I'm Ross Garner.

Nathalie 00:17
And this week, we are asking how do we avoid getting derailed by our own personalities? We'll be comparing the difference between type and trait-based psychometric assessments and exploring the impact that the H factor of personality can have on you and your career.

Nathalie 00:34
To help us discuss these questions, we are joined by Lucie Ilbury, a chartered occupational psychologist and Head of Client Enablement at SOVA Assessment. Lucie specialises in the psychology of leadership, assessment and learning and development, while SOVA provides a fully customisable assessment platform which delivers evidence-based assessment by cutting-edge digital technology.

Nathalie 00:58
How are you doing, Lucie?

Lucie 01:00
I'm very well thank you Nat, it'd be great to be speaking with you Ross today.

Nathalie 01:05
Likewise so let's dive straight in what do we mean by a psychometric or personality test and we use that language what are we actually describing?

Lucie 01:15
So I think just to break those two apart a little bit, when we talk about psychometrics, it sort of broadly translates to a measure of the mind. So usually these surveys or questionnaires or sometimes tests that are tapping into psychological qualities that we all possess that are really hard to measure by other methods.

Lucie 01:35
So it's usually things we can't directly observe. When we look at personality, personality is one of the areas that we can measure using psychometrics. But in a real world context, while we might use personality tests in a sort of academic context, we tend to try and avoid the word test when we're looking at applying it to the real world.

Lucie 01:56
And that's because the great news is you can't fail a personality test. There's no right or wrong or good or bad personality. And maybe just to explain a little bit more about what personality is, which will bring this to life a bit more, I think.

Lucie 02:09
So personality is our behavioural tendencies or preferences that influence how we tend to behave day to day, particularly when we let our guard down or when we're feeling especially relaxed. And the preferences that are most helpful for us will be determined very much by the situation that we're in, the people that we're interacting with, the nature of the context.

Lucie 02:33
So it would be a mistake to think that you can ever fail a personality test for those reasons. It's more nuanced than that. I always find that personally reassuring at least. Our personality is also influenced by both our genetics or our nature, as we

sometimes call it, and our learning and experience throughout the course of our life.

Lucie 02:55
So we tend to refer to it as being relatively stable, but it can be influenced by what we learn, we experience, as well as all of the other qualities that make us who we are. So what motivates us are intelligence and our knowledge and skills.

Nathalie 03:10
It's interesting talking about the language of test because I think it's true, we kind of, for many of us, that sort of slightly prickly, panicky feeling that arises on the back of the neck or elsewhere when you think, oh God, what am I going to do if I discover something unexpected about myself?

Nathalie 03:25
But are there situations in which we might discover things that we'd rather not be aware of through these psychometric measures? And what do we do when that happens?

Lucie 03:37
A great question. I think actually that's where their value really comes in, because particularly if we think about something like leadership development, actually the value is quite often we can reveal things to ourselves about ourselves that we perhaps weren't fully aware of.

Lucie 03:53
And actually the crux of getting the most out of understanding personalities, if we know what our preferences and tendencies are, we can learn to manage those preferences and tendencies more effectively.

Lucie 04:07
And in an ideal world we want to actually have as wide a behavioural repertoire as possible to help us to deal with the range of situations and different people that we may need to interact with. And that requires us to have some self-insight and to then know what to do with that self-insight in a particular situation.

Nathalie 04:26
I love that idea of repertoire. Ross, how's your repertoire?

Ross G 04:31
I don't know, I would need to take a test to find out or an assessment of some kind. Part of me was thinking, what would be the point of taking such an assessment if not to find out something about yourself?

Ross G 04:43
But of course we do use it as tests, we use it in recruitment and say it's not possible to fail, but in recruitment context it actually can be possible to fail if you don't tick the right boxes. So there is a bit of attention there and kind of who is taking the test and who is administering it as well.

Lucie 05:00
Absolutely. And I think just to build on that and add some caveats to it. So generally this sort of, again, applied best practice approach to using questionnaires like this in a recruitment context is that we combine insight into somebody's preferences and tendencies with other information about that person.

Lucie 05:18
So we might use a personality questionnaire to help inform an interview, or we might combine it with what we understand about what motivates that person or their cognitive ability. And in approaching it in that way, we're getting a far more rounded picture of the individual and their likely strengths and development areas when it comes to the role.

Lucie 05:37
So I think the way that these questionnaires are applied, as well as interpreted, and that needs to be by somebody that's appropriately trained in using the tools, is really fundamental to actually not misapplying them and not actually making inaccurate conclusions about somebody which the science just doesn't support.

Ross G 05:55
I just think it's worth drawing a distinction story between what we're talking about, which is reliable and valid tests that are

measuring what you claim to measure, and if you were to take them again, you'd expect a very similar result in future.

Ross G 06:08
So what we're not talking about is Cosmo quizzes, or which Disney princess are you on Facebook, or these sorts of things.

Lucie 06:14
Absolutely. So they need to be underpinned by science, they need to be, they need to have demonstrated that because we know personality is relatively stable that if you take a questionnaire today you're not going to get a wildly different set of results tomorrow because we have a huge amount of questions about how robust that questionnaire actually is.

Nathalie 06:33
So, let's talk about what actually makes a psychometric assessment valid and helpful, because there are lots of models, not naming any specifically, that are very popular in especially the business management world, which I personally have railed against for a long, long time and I get sort of raised eyebrows when I sort of, you know, get on my soapbox about it. But what is it that makes-

Ross G 06:52
It rhymes with Schmeyers-Briggs.

Nathalie 06:57
Well, I think it's good as a discussion point, but the problem is that, again, this comes back to type and trait and validity and reliability and robustness. Can you tell us a little bit about what makes a psychometric assessment useful and helpful?

Lucie 07:10
Sure. So when it comes to validity, maybe just to sort of unpack that a little bit more, we're generally talking about whether the questionnaire is actually measuring what it claims to measure. So in this context, is it actually measuring what we understand scientifically about this construct of personality?

Lucie 07:28
And is it helping us to actually predict something meaningful and useful in the real world? So for example, your strengths and development areas in a leadership development context, or as Ross said, perhaps somebody's alignment with a particular role if we're losing it in recruitment settings.

Lucie 07:44
We also want to be confident that it is relatively consistent over time, although we know personality preferences do evolve over the course of your lifespan. We wouldn't, as I say, expect it to wildly change day in, day out.

Lucie 07:58
We also particularly through using personality questionnaires in the workplace want to be confident that they're fair and they're not indirectly discriminating against any particular group in the way that we're applying them.

Lucie 08:10
There's a broad distinction in the literature, but two different approaches that can be taken to understanding personality. One is the type-based approach, which you've obviously referenced there, which takes a bit more of a binary view on tendencies and preferences.

Lucie 08:26
So it would tend to categorise you as one particular personality type or another. So you're either an introvert or you're an extrovert. There are contexts where, because it's quite easy to understand, it's quite accessible, it can be a nice introduction to this idea of personality.

Lucie 08:43
So in team building or team development contexts, for example, it can help to just socialise the idea. But actually it doesn't really tell us very much about how people differ in terms of their personality preferences.

Lucie 08:56
And this is where the trait-based approach comes in. So most of the scientific research suggests that actually this trait-based approach whereby people differ on a scale between two polar opposites, so rather than just being introvert or just

being extrovert, actually the vast majority of people will have a preference somewhere between the two.

Lucie 09:16
So they'll like interacting with others, they'll like socialising, but they might need a bit of time on their own and they might like to work independently from from time to time. So the trait-based approach helps to quantify a bit more precisely your strength of preference for a particular behavioural pattern.

Lucie 09:34
And most of the contemporary trait-based models are underpinned by the five-factor model of personality, sometimes called the big five, and represented by the acronym OCEAN. So OCEAN, just in a nutshell, represents openness to experience, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and eroticism.

Lucie 09:54
And within each of these factors, again, we have two polar opposites, so you can be high on extroversion or introverted on the other end of the scale, but we're not categorising you as one or another, we're looking very much at your strength of preference between the two.

Lucie 10:10
Probably also worth noting that when we look at actually measuring OCEAN or the big five, most questionnaires will break those down into a bit more detail. So something like openness to experience, for example, which is the creativity factor in a nutshell, would break that down into your appreciation of aesthetics and art and music, as well as your orientation towards problem solving and finding solutions, and your openness to going new places and meeting new people.

Lucie 10:39
So there's another level of granularity. So we start to build up this really comprehensive picture of how individuals differ, and some of the nuances within the factors themselves as well.

Nathalie 10:51
It's such a fascinating area, oh my goodness! So why has this ocean model, the big five as many of us know of it, moved to a more elaborated hexico six-factor model? Can you unpack what that is, what shift happened there?

Lucie 11:05
Of course. So although generally accepted within the literature, and although the research has told us time and time again, these five factors appear as common themes in terms of the differences when it comes to measuring personality.

Lucie 11:18
Actually, it's been acknowledged for a while that something perhaps was missing, in that it doesn't really account for the fact that, unfortunately, particularly in the workplace, personality can sometimes have a bit of a darker side.

Lucie 11:32
It also misses some of the nuance when we look at it from a cross-cultural perspective, particularly in more collectivist societies, where actually traits like how humble you are, and your focus on the needs of the group over the needs of the individual, become really fundamental to performance, particularly in a leadership context, actually.

Lucie 11:54
So hexico represents the five factors within the big five, but includes the addition of the sixth H factor, which relates to honesty and humility. Probably worth mentioning for anyone that's got the question back of mind, why the letters have changed.

Lucie 12:12
So neuroticism in the ocean model has actually been swapped out for emotionality. It's a slightly less sensitive way of getting at the same underlying construct, and extraversion has changed from E to X.

Lucie 12:26
So we're just highlighting the X in extraversion, really, when it comes to hexico.

Ross G 12:33
I find this super difficult to follow when it's not written down. So I think in the show notes, what we might do is we'll put both

acronyms and then we can sort of flag up the ones that have changed.

Ross G 12:43
I do like that honesty, humility, from that age sounds like a super positive thing, obviously, if you want to be high in that. But the background reading for this podcast was the book by, I'm going to try and mangle the same, Kibbeum Lee and Michael Ashton, who are the researchers that came up with the Hexico model.

Ross G 13:03
The book is titled The H Factor of Personality, and the subtitle is, why some people are manipulative, self-entitled, materialistic, and exploitative, which makes H sound like a terrible addition to the model.

Ross G 13:16
How do you feel about the branding of H?

Lucie 13:20
I think probably something that is really important to emphasise with age, and it applies to every other letter in both the Big Five and the more recent evolution of Hexico, is that there are pros and cons, there are strengths and risks associated with a strong preference or behavioural tendency for any of the areas.

Lucie 13:42
So just to bring this to life again, if we take openness to experience, it's associated with being highly creative and really innovative in your thinking, probably looking for new solutions and new approaches.

Lucie 13:55
That all sounds really great. And if you're working in a highly creative environment where you're driving forward change, it will be a huge asset. But actually there are other contexts where if you're constantly looking for new ways of doing things, or you're really radical in your thinking, it will actually work to your detriment.

Lucie 14:15
So there are pros and cons with any strong preference to any end of the scale across the model. Absolutely, I think, as you'd mentioned there, with high age, there are some real risks. And some of those, oh sorry, low age, there are some real risks.

Lucie 14:31
So being perhaps more comfortable with bending the truth may be comfortable with some degree of working loosely around ethics to progress what you need. But actually there could be some real advantages.

Lucie 14:50
So if you're working in a highly political context, you may need to be more guarded with the truth. You may need to perhaps be a bit more attuned to some of the less positive or prosocial behaviours that can sometimes be apparent.

Lucie 15:04
So I think viewing it as all bad is probably a bit of an error.

Ross G 15:09
Yeah, so if you're high in age, so high in honesty, people are likely to trust you and you cooperate and things, but people might walk all over you and you might struggle to get ahead. Exactly. Whereas if you're low in age, then you might be the star of the show and you're willing to take risks and people admire your enthusiasm and your willingness to do whatever, but only for a while, because that type of person can become toxic in the long run.

Ross G 15:32
And once you realise you can't trust them, they're only in it for themselves that could be problematic.

Lucie 15:37
Absolutely and I think again another thing that's really pertinent is personality is only one part of the picture when it comes to understanding the ways in which people differ and that the factors that influence our our behavior.

Lucie 15:50
So again our values, our motives, our intelligence, our skills, our knowledge will all be really key additional variables to consider as part of the mix and actually motivation is particularly relevant to this idea if you're low age but actually you're

driven to do good and help other people rather than harm them that's a very different potential outcome for an organisation or an individual compared to somebody that perhaps is a bit more motivated by their own agenda or perhaps wanting to in the most extreme case do harm to others.

Nathalie 16:28
And it's interesting you mentioned earlier about the power of context. And of course, the person that we bring to work is going to probably be a little bit different or filtered than the person that shows up when we're having a cheeky drink with our friends or playing with our kids or whatever it might be.

Nathalie 16:40
And so I wonder, when we're thinking about humility, honesty, and leadership, are there specific contexts, and I'm thinking more on a systemic level here, where high H tends to thrive and other contexts where low H tends to thrive?

Lucie 16:54
So, I think it's a great question. It's quite nuanced in terms of the environment that you had. Broadly, you would be looking at an environment that aligns with either low age or high age would probably play to that person's natural preferences and tendencies.

Lucie 17:10
So, if you're looking at a highly egalitarian, collaborative, organisational context, then somebody that's high age will probably do really well because they're candid and straightforward, and that will be supported by the environment that they're in.

Lucie 17:26
Conversely, if we look at low age, if the environment is characterised by perhaps that slightly more political landscape and perhaps somebody needing to be more guarded in their approach, then again that would probably be a better fit.

Lucie 17:40
But when we look at leadership, actually I think the trick is to understand your preferences and then find ways of pushing yourself outside your comfort zone to develop behaviours that are actually the opposite end of the scale to those that may come naturally to you.

Lucie 17:55
And again, this is helping to build that behavioural repertoire that I mentioned earlier that means you can more effectively flex your behaviour to the particular situation that you're in.

Nathalie 18:06
I am struck by the thought that so many of us claim to want honest leaders in political systems which require a lot of strategy and leaning into perhaps less savory practices and strategies. So I'm sort of thinking, oh, I wonder how effective it is in or like how possible it is to realistically expect a different form of leadership when the systems don't necessarily invite those behaviours as the ones that will be the most strategically successful.

Ross G 18:38
British politics was the example that I thought of. There's a bit of a cash 22, isn't there? Because if you have a leader who is low age and they do the personality assessment thing, oh, I'm low age, it might be advantageous for me to increase my levels of age.

Ross G 18:56
Well, they're going to be dishonest about that. Either they're going to pretend that their age is higher than it actually is. There's almost like no way out of being a low age person. Or is that too big?

Nathalie 19:07
If your values are not aligned with the greater good and benevolence and universalism and all that.

Ross G 19:11
But your values are aligned with pretending that they are. If you're going to pretend that you're a benevolent in order to get, I don't know, I'm being very cynical now.

Lucie 19:21

I think it's a really important, I think that the broader sort of question around person and environment fit is a really important one to consider in this context. I think far too frequently we focus development on the individual when actually it's the system or the organisational culture that also needs to evolve simultaneously to reinforce and support the behaviours that we're trying to encourage and the political systems may be a good example of that, where it's really tough to perhaps work outside of your comfort zone if you are low age because of the environment that you're in, it will work potentially directly against it.

Lucie 19:56

But I think I'd again emphasise the values, motifs, all of the other attributes that make us who we are, a key to consider when it comes to actually how this plays out in a real world context.

Ross G 20:10

Outside of the world of politics, is it fair to say that low age will always derail your career?

Lucie 20:16

Um, in a nutshell, no. Um, and I think just looking at what we mean by leadership development and again, just broadening this out and a little bit more. So any strong behavioral preference has the tendency to both positively advantage us if we applied in the right way to the right extent, um, and, and take into account situational demands, but it also carries a number of risks.

Lucie 20:41

Um, so again, if we take the example of, um, high openness to experience, which is generally considered a positive quality, someone that's highly creative, but if you think about someone that's highly creative in the context of maybe, um, very highly, um, structured environment where actually need to follow set process and rules, it could really start to negatively impact them and work against them if they were to take that to the extreme.

Lucie 21:09

Likewise, if we think about a quality like great attention to detail, which probably means that somebody produces work to really high quality and probably really conscientiously follows up to, to make sure that work is free of error.

Lucie 21:23

That could work really effectively for that person, um, until potentially they get to a level in an organisation where they need to rely on others to, um, support them with that work. If we need to get to delegate and actually that focus on reducing work to the highest possible quality may mean that not only does it impact how their team feel about them, when perhaps they're at risk of getting too close to the work of other people and maybe even in the extreme case, micromanaging them.

Lucie 21:51

But actually the pressure it puts on the individual themselves, if they're getting too involved in too much, you know, potentially have a risk of burnout. So I think any strong preference, whether we're looking at eight or more broadly has the preference to negatively impact, um, your career or your performance in, in your career.

Lucie 22:11

So again, it's really learning to raise your awareness of what that preference is and to, um, work out when you want to flex around your natural tendencies, um, to, to support you to sustain performance over time and, and really to, to work effectively in the range of situations that you may face.

Nathalie 22:31

And definitely recognise the perfectionism, delegation, debate. It's a conversation me and quite a few of my creative friends have ad nauseam. We still haven't worked. Got to work around for that part from the re-skilling of letting go.

Ross G 22:42

You work for yourself, don't you?

Nathalie 22:45

Yeah, well, yeah, exactly. Yeah, no, that's quite tricky. So I also want to ask the question around lopsided leadership, which is very compelling. What do we mean by that?

Lucie 22:57

So lopsided leadership is when there's a risk of somebody taking a one-size-fits-all approach to leadership. So this is effectively not adapting to the demands of a situation, just being driven by your preferences and tendencies and what comes naturally to you, and then applying that consistently regardless of situational demands.

Lucie 23:20

And it's a particular risk as leadership derailment in leadership context because actually the range of contexts and situations that we're faced with become increasingly complex and nuanced, which means that actually that one-size-fits-all approach is really starting to work against us.

Lucie 23:38

The other thing that's probably just worth a mention is the times when we're most at risk of actually demonstrating this one-size-fits-all approach or going back to the patterns of behaviour that worked effectively for us in the past.

Lucie 23:53

And actually that tends to be when we're under stress and pressure, when we're fatigued or when we let our guard down. So again, leadership is a particular risk from that perspective because quite often it carries a degree of stress and pressure that perhaps isn't as apparent when your scope of responsibility isn't so great.

Lucie 24:11

So I think, again, just helping people to build their awareness of not only their natural preferences but the times when they may be at risk of overplaying those natural tendencies and applying them regardless of situational demands can be really, really beneficial.

Lucie 24:28

The other thing worth mentioning, I think, is the factors that actually protect us against both leadership derailment and lopsided leadership. And if we're particularly emotionally intelligent, so we're very self-aware, we're very aware of others and the social context, and we've learned effective techniques and tips to manage our own behaviour, we actually tend to be less at risk of some of these derailers than would otherwise be the case.

Lucie 24:55

So again, really important to take a slightly more nuanced view of each of these areas rather than just applying them as a blank wall of thumb.

Ross G 25:05

I think as well for managers, we're talking a lot about how you understand your own personality and you might notice certain tendencies or preferences that maybe you'd want to try and act against depending on the situation.

Ross G 25:20

But also the people that report to you are also going to have certain tendencies and preferences. So you're probably going to want to have some sort of role in coaching them or helping them to reflect on why they're making certain decisions or why they're behaving a certain way and then I guess helping them navigate that complexity.

Ross G 25:40

That's an important role of a manager.

Lucie 25:42

Absolutely. I think there's huge opportunity as a manager to understand the preferences and tendencies of your team and find a way of working with individuals that means that understanding is playing out in the way that you're coaching them, the way that you're communicating with them.

Lucie 26:00

And actually understanding your own preferences and tendencies as a leader as well is a key part of that picture because it can be very easy to lead somebody that's very similar to ourselves, depending maybe on your self-esteem and your self-confidence.

Lucie 26:15

Sometimes it can be harder. But actually if we're working with someone that's very, very different to we are, sometimes you

can find there's a bit of a communication breakdown or there's some issues that arise in your ability to empathise with that person's perspective, which just a bit more of understanding around frameworks like Hexaco and the Big Five, I think can really support and huge value I think in working with the wider team with an appropriately trained user of questionnaires, like personality questionnaires, to really raise broader awareness of strengths and development areas and opportunities to flex behavioural style more effectively.

Ross G 26:55
Could I ask one last question? I'd like to go back to the manipulative, self-entitled, materialistic and exploitative point from earlier on. Now this is no reflection on my own context, but what if you work for such a person?

Ross G 27:10
Do you have any thoughts on how you might navigate that situation?

Lucie 27:14
A great question. So I think, again, understanding your own preferences and tendencies and perhaps we're assuming that you are actually high age and that you're particularly struggling with the fact that the opposite end of the continuum.

Lucie 27:29
I think increasing your awareness of what that means in terms of their behaviours, maybe understanding a bit more about where that's coming from. So as I say, there is a distinction between personality and motivation and actually somebody that maybe behaves in that way a bit more superficially but is motivated by ultimately the greater good and trying to do the right thing for the team.

Lucie 27:50
It may mean that actually if you're working for someone like that, you find a way of focusing on actually why they're doing what they're doing and how it's supporting you and others in the business to flourish.

Lucie 28:04
I'm not saying for a moment there won't be cases where actually that person isn't motivated by such high ethical standards and morality. And I think in those cases, it's probably just treading a little bit more carefully in terms of what you share with that person and the way that you choose to communicate with them.

Ross G 28:23
I mean, in the notes for this show, we've got the line, good psychopaths written down, if you want to explain. Is that what you're talking about?

Lucie 28:32
Absolutely. So there's a book that I think we've included in the references on this topic called The Good Psychopath, which is basically highlighting that certain traits that are sometimes associated with what we would consider a psychopath, so things like remaining incredibly calm under pressure, perhaps being able to be really tenacious and almost ruthless in your pursuit of goals or what it is that you're looking to achieve, and being able to really dial back your empathy for other people can actually be very helpful qualities in certain contexts.

Lucie 29:15
So for example, if we think about a surgeon or we think about a pilot or even a CEO that is faced with huge amounts of pressure and stress, and actually those traits can help them to do the right thing in those contexts and can help them to perform effectively.

Lucie 29:32
But actually, if those traits are accompanied by a desire to perhaps do harm to others, which is the more stereotypical view of a psychopath, then we have a problem. So again, it's this distinction between motivation and personality, which will really determine whether these are an asset or perhaps a risk.

Nathalie 29:54
All right, so let's wrap up. Ross, what will you be taking away from this conversation and applying in your life this week?

Ross G 30:00
Yeah, so I feel like I have, throughout this podcast, tended towards discussing low age as a type, and I think that's a mistake,

as actually the way that you described it earlier on as trait-based assessments.

Ross G 30:13
So you tend towards a certain way, but that doesn't necessarily define you as actually really reassuring. And so, forgive me if I've made the low age seem like a type just for caricature purposes, but I'll be reflecting on the extent to which we can act against our traits if we choose to do so.

Nathalie 30:33
I think for me, building on that one, it's also this sense of expanding our repertoire. So when there's someone that we find maybe difficult to understand or to cope with being like, okay, what can I learn here?

Nathalie 30:45
What are the things that they're able to do or their preferences or tendencies that are perhaps unfamiliar or jarring to me that I could actually learn from to see where the kind of the blind sides are maybe.

Nathalie 30:57
Lucie, what one idea would you like listeners to perhaps remember or take with them from this conversation?

Lucie 31:04
So I think, if I may, probably two key areas to sort of leave the podcast with. I think one is to try and sort of challenge your thinking around what we mean by strengths in particular. And actually, it's almost a construction, this idea of a strength, the universal strength that will apply across every situation that we're in, every single person we're interacting with.

Lucie 31:28
Actually, any strength has the potential to derail us if we don't manage it effectively, we don't keep it in check. And we potentially overplay it or misapply it to the demands of the situation. So I think that's one thing is just to challenge this idea of universal strengths.

Lucie 31:44
The second is very much related to the focus of understanding personality in a personal development context. And the fact we're not trying to change somebody's personality. Development is very much about behavior.

Lucie 31:58
And it's about raising our awareness of the factors that influence our behavior of which personality is one that can then help us to develop skills and knowledge that enable us to be more effective and to have a wider range of behaviors that we can draw on.

Lucie 32:13
So I think, again, just emphasising the fact that you can't fail a personality questionnaire is not a test. And we're not trying to change you when it's being applied to a personal development context is very much just about raising self-awareness.

Ross G 32:28
Did you see Encanto at all? Do you happen to watch that film? It's on the Disney Plus. It's a Disney animated feature, but it's about a family who all have gifts. Now each family member has a different sort of magical gift, but it's about how those gifts are perceived as a strength, then also tend to be a weakness, and then towards the end they sort of rediscover what it means to what those gifts mean for them.

Ross G 32:58
It was kind of really similar to what you were talking about. I think you might enjoy it.

Lucie 33:02
Sounds like the perfect analogy.

Nathalie 33:16
So then let's go to our regular feature which is one thing I've learned this week. I've learned quite a bit just in this one conversation but Ross do you want to go first? What have you learned this week?

Ross G 33:25
Sure, so I was reading about the Web 3 revolution, so this is one for the sort of tech geeks. So Web 1 .0 was the initial

infrastructure of the internet, so you had publishers producing content and then people would consume it.

Ross G 33:39
It's mostly by sharing information. The power was decentralised, so you could remove any element of the system and it would still work. What we have now is Web 2 .0, so we're all creators, but we tend not to benefit that much from the stuff that we're creating.

Ross G 33:52
The benefits of those creations tend to go to the tech giants, which are difficult to unplug. You can't just remove Apple or Facebook, because we use them for things like paying for stuff, keeping in touch with relatives, logging into other sites, all these kind of things.

Ross G 34:05
So you have this sort of centralised network, which is problematic in different ways. Web 3, not Web 3 .0, because apparently the decimal is no longer cool, is potentially a fairy tale land for idealistic nerds or it's a return to the beautiful decentralised version of the original internet.

Ross G 34:26
There's an article in Word about it. It's all about blockchain, NFTs, and this weird landscape of in-jokes and self-references that I don't totally understand, but if you're interested in the future of the internet, I think it's worth the read, because it asks, does the notion of a decentralised internet, is that actually a good thing?

Ross G 34:47
Because one of the problems with it is, if there's no standards, it's super difficult to use anything. And are we really that centralised just now? Because, for example, we don't really have centralised banks.

Ross G 34:59
There are hundreds of different banks you could shop with. So it kind of challenges some of the sort of, I guess, some of the parameters of that conversations happening inside. I made that sound super dull.

Ross G 35:09
It's really interesting. It's in Word. I'm going to put a link in the show notes.

Nathalie 35:13
Actually sounds very, very interesting. On a totally different note, I have been reading Bessel van der Kolk's book, The Body Keeps a Score, which is about trauma and recovery from trauma or adverse experiences.

Nathalie 35:26
And I learned today for the first time something very interesting, which made me feel less bonkers, which is called the internal family systems therapy model, which was developed by a guy called Richard Schwartz.

Nathalie 35:38
And he talks about how each person's mind, each of our minds, is a bit like a constellation of parts or family or a society whose members have different levels of maturity and excitability and wisdom and pain.

Nathalie 35:51
And so he talks about in broad terms kind of three aspects or roles that these parts can inhabit. So the first is exiles, which is about part of ourselves that we feel we need to deny or lock away or suppress at all costs in order to survive.

Nathalie 36:06
And then another part, which is the managers, which made me think of, Lucie, what you're talking about with kind of like the conscientious aspect when it gets into overdrive, at least I recognise it as that, the managers being perfectionist and often quite critical and that drive us to be relentlessly productive.

Nathalie 36:23
And finally, the firefighters, which are kind of like the emergency responders that act very impulsively whenever an experience triggers an exiled emotion. So it's just so fascinating to hear about a different approach to how we manage our lives and our internal competing desires, drives, motivations, ways to stay safe within a different lens when you're looking at

how we can flourish as people and heal from trauma.

Nathalie 36:52
So that's what I learned this week, the internal family systems approach to therapy.

Ross G 36:56
I need to get you followed on Goodreads, Nathalie, because I've never met anyone that reads as many books as you. Every week you have some fascinating new book, and they all sound great. You read a book a week?

Ross G 37:05
Is that fair?

Nathalie 37:06
No, no, no. I've been reading this one for a few weeks, but, um, some of the, some of the books I just, like I read bringing back the beaver within days. I was just so enchanted by this extraordinary book.

Nathalie 37:14
This one's a much, much thicker book. So, but I do love to read because there's just so much interesting stuff out there. Yeah. Yeah. Lucie, how about you? What have you learned this week?

Lucie 37:25
Nowhere near as fascinating as that, I have to say, but a very practical tip that I've heard this week, which I'm now putting into practice every single day, is if you raise your eyes to the sky, if you're feeling a bit low on energy or a bit less alert than you'd like to, it actually tricks your brain into feeling it's more awake than it may actually initially be feeling.

Lucie 37:49
So this is something I'm now going to try every single day in the afternoon when I get my slump, I think.

Nathalie 37:55
I wonder if that's why every time I read in the evenings, because your eyes are pointing down at why I just, you know, fall asleep within minutes.

Lucie 38:03
Absolutely if you throw in artificial lights and macbooks and mobile phones to the mix it's yeah just just a recipe so try and try to look up apparently is the answer

Nathalie 38:14
And so is there anything else Lucie that you fancy mentioning before we wrap up that you want people to know about?

Lucie 38:21
So I think we sort of talked a bit about personality being one part of the picture when it comes to the qualities that make us tick and the areas that it's helpful to gain insight into either in development or to consider in the mix when we're looking at recruitment.

Lucie 38:35
One approach which is sort of increasingly being taken to psychometrics is actually more a blended assessment approach and rather than just using a standalone assessment of personality, we actually have an assessment that includes measures of personality traits that are relevant to the particular context alongside items that are tapping into motivation and potentially judgment items as well as cognitive ability items.

Lucie 39:04
This is something that some of us really advocate so rather than just as I say getting a very narrow perspective using quite a complex tool that requires a huge amount of training and interpretation to be able to do something meaningful with, we're actually looking at all of the variables that matter in terms of performance in the workplace or better in terms of development and we can also then look at the results to a more accessible lens and the reports that are available tend to use the language of your organisation's talent frameworks and competencies.

Lucie 39:40
So I think that's probably just something to mention as a consideration for how we might evolve the way that we've used

psychometrics more historically and we've moved from the FIFAT model to Hexico.

Lucie 39:51

I think this blended assessment approach is probably the next step forward in terms of making sure we're applying assessment effectively to a real-world context.

Nathalie 40:01

Brilliant. Bring on the complexity. And that is it. You've been listening to the Future Talent Learning podcast with me, Nathalie Nahai and Ross Garner. Our guest this week was Lucie Ilbury. Until next time, bye for now.