



RSQ Development Report (for RTP Version only)

The Resilience Questionnaire

Susan Sample

3rd March 2015



introduction

"It is not how many times you fall down; it is how many times you get back up." (Anon)

We all experience pressure and stress at times in our lives. Sometimes this is due to difficult external circumstances; sometimes this is due to our internal thoughts, perceptions and beliefs. Learning to deal with pressure can have a profound impact on our personal well-being as well as on our relationships with the people around us.

The Resilience Scales are designed to help you explore key elements of how you deal with challenging and potentially stressful situations. This report describes your own coping style in terms of your attitudes, beliefs and typical behaviour within five general areas. If this helps you to gain greater awareness of how you react, this can provide a good starting point for building greater resilience. This can then lead to additional benefits such as greater well-being, better relationships and higher performance.

Remember that most value from this report will come from the thoughts that it generates rather than from the results themselves.

Remember that the areas identified in this report are based on how you answered the questions at this point in your life. The results are not fixed and greater insight provides the opportunity to build greater resilience over time.

When reading this report, bear in mind the following points.

The results are based on how you answered the questions in the questionnaire

The results will probably reflect how you feel now but may to some extent also reflect how you have felt in the past

Whatever the results, it is for you to consider how true they are and whether there might be things about yourself that you would like to change

a summary of your results



Resilience is about how well you respond to pressure and stress and how easy you find it to recover from set-backs. The diagram below shows how you respond to pressure in terms of five different areas of functioning: Self-belief, Optimism, Purposefulness, Managing Situations and Emotional Tolerance. For each of these attributes:

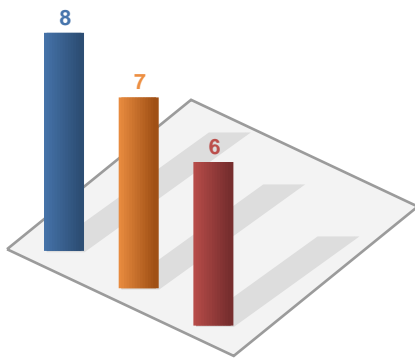
- the blue column shows how much of that attribute you display under **normal** circumstances (the scores are on a scale from 1 to 10).
- the orange column shows how much of that attribute you display when pressure is increasing (i.e. when you feel '**stretched**')
- the red column shows how much of that attribute you display when the pressure begins to become really significant (i.e. when you are '**stressed**')



For each of the five areas of functioning, if your blue column is high (7 or above) and the orange and red columns do not show much decrease in comparison with the blue column, then it appears that you have a lot of resilience in that area. In other words, you seem well able to withstand the effects of pressure, even when that pressure becomes highly stressful. On the other hand, if your blue column is low (3 or below), then this is an area that may deserve some attention if you want to become more resilient.

It is also important to consider how you change when under pressure. A large decrease from your 'typical' (blue) to your 'stressed' (red) score in any of the five areas of functioning would suggest that this is an area in which you are particularly susceptible to the effects of pressure.

Your results are explored in more detail in the following pages together with ideas and suggestions for managing pressure and developing your resilience. At the end of the report you are encouraged to summarise what you have learnt and to list some actions that you may find useful.



This area describes a person's attitudes to and perception of themselves. It relates to the concepts of self-esteem, personal confidence and competence (especially when dealing with adversity).

Typically, you have a very positive view of your value and a high level of personal confidence. You see yourself as being very capable and competent – at least in the spheres that matter to you. This means that you are likely to take on and accomplish what you need to without feeling driven to prove yourself outside your areas of competence.

Your response to increasing pressure remains reasonably positive. It is likely that you enjoy being stretched although this can introduce elements of self-doubt which could affect your willingness to take on new challenges.

Nevertheless, there appears to be little impact even when the pressure increases to the point of being stressful. You appear to maintain a moderate level of self-belief which suggests that challenging circumstances will introduce elements of self-doubt, but no more than would be reasonably expected.



Questions for probing and exploring your results

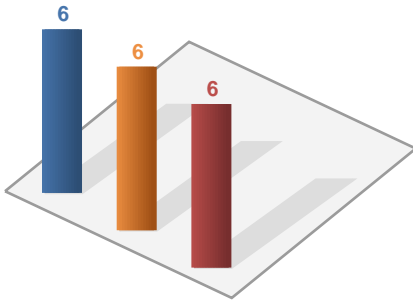
Firstly spend some time thinking about the two questions below and then go on to take a look at the tips for self-development which follow.

- In what particular situations do you think your high level of confidence helps you to be particularly effective?
- Think of a time when you were a little too confident and perhaps over-estimated your abilities. What did you do? How might you have managed the situation more effectively?

Tips for self-development

- **LEARN FROM WHEN THINGS GO WELL:** Remember a time when you had negative thoughts about yourself and what you imagined could happen to you – but which turned out to be unfounded. Try to identify what helped your initial negativity to change – perhaps someone who supported you or something you did and achieved. Write down what can you learn from that experience and what you could try in a similar situation.
- **FIGHT NEGATIVITY:** Consider those times when you put yourself down. Write down any negative thoughts you may have about yourself and consider what they involve? Do you exaggerate negative consequences, do you see things just in black and white, do you over-personalise or take too much personal responsibility, do you believe you can mind-read what people are really thinking, do you see only the negative and ignore the positive? Now question and challenge any unhelpful thoughts which you think you may sometimes have and try to replace them with more helpful or more realistic thoughts.
- **BE KIND TO YOURSELF:** Write down 3 good things about yourself. Play the role of a nurturing parent and imagine this parent talking to you about these things.

optimism



This area describes a person's attitudes to and perception of the world around them. It relates to a belief that life treats them relatively fairly and that things will turn out well in the future.

Typically, your view of life is as positive and optimistic as most people's. You are no more or less likely to believe that things will turn out for the worst. You also have a level of confidence in your ability to influence events and to approach them with as positive a mind-set as most people. This means that you are no more or less likely to avoid difficult situations than most people or to approach such events with an overly negative mind-set.

When you are stretched, you maintain this level of optimism. It seems that you take moderate pressure in your stride and remain reasonably positive about what will happen. This suggests that you do not let disappointments affect you excessively.

Even when the stress level increases you seem to maintain the same level of optimism. It seems that you do not let pressure alter your view of the world which may make you come across as emotionally very steady.



optimism

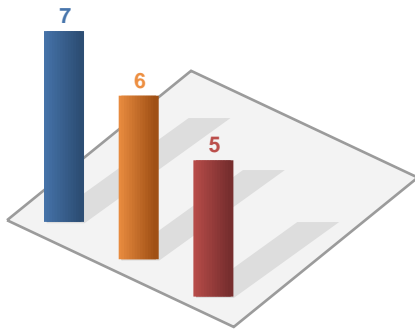
Questions for probing and exploring your results

Firstly spend some time thinking about the two questions below and then go on to take a look at the tips for self-development which follow.

- Think of any situations in the past where you might have taken a rather too pessimistic view of things? What were the consequences?
- Were there ever times when you were too optimistic about things?

Tips for self-development

- **FOCUS ON THE PRESENT:** Try and be mindful of the moment and bring your complete attention to the present. Don't judge your thoughts or think about the past or the future, just concentrate on the here and now - in short, stop imagining what could go wrong.
- **TRY TO LOOK ON THE SUNNY SIDE:** Research shows that people who laugh, smile and see humour in even the most difficult situations are better able to cope and healthier. Since people often have a good laugh at their 'disasters' (i.e. minor disasters) after the event then it is worth practising a change of perspective. Take any of your 'big disasters' of the moment, go forward in time and look back and hence try to bring that laughter forward in time.
- **CHECK YOUR WELL BEING:** It is hard to feel optimistic when you are lacking energy. Analyse your diet (eating the right foods is like keeping the petrol tank on your car topped up), consider whether you do enough physical exercise (this can have an anti-depressant effect), examine your sleep (do you sleep at the right times; would 30 minutes of relaxation/meditation during the day help?).



This area describes how people manage their own behaviour. It focuses on their determination, perseverance, reliability and the ability to make steady progress towards desired goals.

You see yourself as showing a high level of focus and determination in working towards your goals. It is likely that you will persevere and see things through even when they do not go as planned. This means that, when you are committed, others can depend on you to progress towards your goals with application and determination.

When you are stretched, you lose some of your focus and determination. It seems that, whilst you typically approach things with a great deal of self-discipline, moderate pressure reduces your focus and sense of purpose to some degree.

It seems that, even when pressure increases to the point where you begin to feel stressed, you manage to maintain this level of focus and purpose. This suggests that you handle pressure as well as most people – at least in terms of maintaining your determination to see things through.



Questions for probing and exploring your results

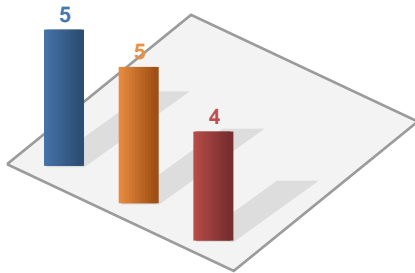
Firstly spend some time thinking about the two questions below and then go on to take a look at the tips for self-development which follow.

- Think of a situation in the past where your self-discipline and determination has helped either you or others to achieve what they set out to achieve?
- What sorts of situations do you feel most stimulate your enthusiasm and determination?

Tips for self-development

- **IDENTIFY A PASSION:** Getting things done is a mixture of being persistent and consistent. Persistence is maintained by being passionate about a long term goal. Think about projects you have done in the past, and the things that drove you forward, even when the going was tough. In short, what specifically gave you the grit to continue? Take a current situation and evaluate what would work now – what will be the best thing to keep you going?
- **DEVELOP MORE FOCUS:** To have the space to focus, you need to understand how you allocate your time, and to what; and to start to tackle your 'uncontrolled' time. Keep a diary of how you spend your time (for 1 week) and then analyse your best use and worst use of time. Now consider how to apply what you have learnt.
- **DO SOMETHING FOR OTHERS:** People who find meaning and purpose are more likely to become self-disciplined and to help them manage themselves and their anxieties. One way to develop purpose and meaning is in helping other people – based on the tenet that giving is often more rewarding than receiving (see 'The Power of Receiving' by Amanda Owen). Try writing down the names of people who are particularly important to you. Write down what you imagine would make them happy, pleased or proud (e.g. going to a football match, watching the sun rise, receiving a valentine card). Consider what you might do to help them feel positive. See if this gives you pleasure and helps you to focus and do things that you feel are positive and worthwhile.

managing situations



This area describes how people manage the environment. It focuses on their approach to tasks and projects and whether they create systems and structure or whether they respond and adapt.

Typically, you are fairly motivated to keep on top of situations. Like most people you like to know what is happening and to feel that you can control things if and when necessary. This means that you usually manage situations by balancing the need for structure with the ability to be more 'laissez-faire'.

Increasing pressure to the point where you begin to feel stretched appears to have no effect on your moderate desire to keep on top of things. This means that you continue your involvement by balancing the need for structure and organisation with the willingness to let things go – even if this means that things can become a little disorganised

However, when the pressure increases to the extent that it can be described as stress, you lose this relatively moderate desire to manage and control events. It seems that moderate pressure has little effect on your desire to manage things but that there is a point at which pressure becomes stressful and you react by pulling back quite significantly.



managing situations

Questions for probing and exploring your results

Firstly spend some time thinking about the two questions below and then go on to take a look at the tips for self-development which follow.

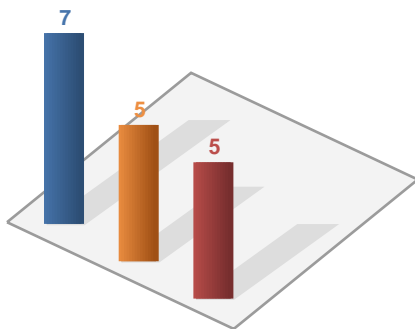
- What do you see as the particular advantages of your blend of organisation on the one hand and your flexibility and adaptability on the other?
- Are there times when you need to be more organised? And are there times when you need to be more flexible? Think of particular times when one or other of these were the case and consider how you might have handled things more effectively.

Tips for self-development

- **THE DISAPPEARING PROBLEM TRICK:** Think of a current concern. Now try parachuting yourself forward to a time when the 'problem' has gone. What do you notice is different? What do you do differently? What does it feel like? Now try to practise those behaviours and practise feeling those feelings. See if you can gain strength from them. You are taking the first steps towards resolving the problem.
- **PREPARE TO TACKLE AN ISSUE:** Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced. Whether we like it or not we need to grapple with problems, otherwise they become baggage that is harder and harder to move. Take a current problem and write down what the issues are and then identify those that you find hardest to face. Consider what you need to help you face them and then seek out those resources.
- **CLARIFY YOUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE:** There are things you may worry about but cannot influence. Write down a list of all the things/events/circumstances that you find negative – it can help to treat this as a 'blame game' and not to worry about whether it is sensible or not. Then divide the list into those over which you have no control (perhaps things like the character of your boss, constant change, other people's support) and those where there is something that you could do (perhaps discussing with a friend, enlisting support, approaching the right person, changing your behaviour or attitude). Then decide on one small change that you intend to make – and write down the first step but make sure you also write down when you will take it.



emotional tolerance



This area describes a person's subjective emotional experience and whether they feel open, tolerant and relaxed or somewhat tense, suspicious and defensive.

Typically you appear relaxed with a very generous attitude towards others. This means that you see yourself as open, welcoming and non-defensive with a tolerant approach towards people's mistakes. This makes it much easier for you to forgive and forget and, when faced with challenging or difficult situations, you are fairly unlikely to show frustration or to blame others.

Even when you are stretched, your level of emotional tolerance drops only slightly which means that you are likely to remain as calm and positive towards others as most people. It seems that, even under moderate pressure, you are as likely as most to try to understand people's motives rather than to seek a scapegoat

Even when you begin to feel stressed, you do not let this affect your attitude towards others any further. In other words your attitude and generosity towards others remains as positive as most people's even when you feel that you are under quite extreme pressure.



emotional tolerance

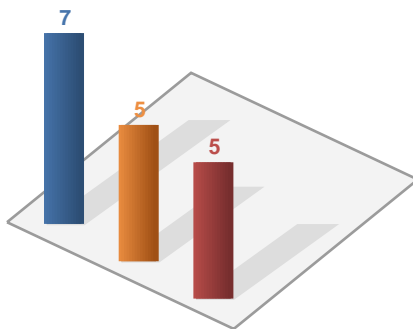
Questions for probing and exploring your results

Firstly spend some time thinking about the two questions below and then go on to take a look at the tips for self-development which follow.

- Can you think of a situation in which remaining calm and composed has helped you or others to achieve their goals?
- Do you ever find that remaining too calm in a situation can have an adverse effect? Has this ever happened to you?

Tips for self-development

- **LEARN FROM THOSE WHO UPSET YOU:** Reflect on the idea that we learn most from those who annoy or upset us the most. Why? It's because there are perfectly good ways of seeing the world that are different to our own. Identify one person who annoys you and try to imagine walking in their shoes (this may require some help from them directly or from someone who may understand them better than you do). Write down as much as you can about what it is like to be them – their attitudes, beliefs, emotions, assumptions etc. Try to see a positive interpretation of how and why they do things. Consider whether this has helped you to understand and accept some of your differences and whether this could help you to flex your world view?
- **LEARN BY ANALYSING YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE:** Consider your basic reaction to unpleasant or terrible events – is it fight or flight (i.e. do you tend to become anxious, fearful and avoidant or anxious, aroused and critical) and break this down into the various ways you might behave when you get defensive (such as losing your temper, becoming deadly silent, talking behind their back, discounting the person or feeling superior, using humour, teaching or preaching etc.). Think of situations where this has happened and consider how, with hindsight and maturity, you might have behaved differently. Consider how this might help you to have an 'early warning system' for your defensive behaviours and what you might do instead.
- **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY:** Think of someone with whom you feel (or have felt) angry or disappointed or hurt. Imagine blaming them completely for the situation(s) – and write down all the reasons you may have, no matter how unreasonable. Now look at each of these reasons and tell yourself that you are partly to blame – and try to work out your part in creating the situation



This area deals with the way in which you completed the questionnaire itself and whether you may exaggerate your positive characteristics.

Some of the questions in the questionnaire are ones that most people would like to answer with 'strongly agree', whatever might actually be true in their own case. This is because these questions are phrased in such a way that people who would like to project a positive image of themselves would want to be seen agreeing with them.

Your answers show that you agreed with more of these questions than most people. This could be because you genuinely think and act in a socially desirable way. However, an alternative explanation could be that you have a tendency to project a socially desirable image. If this has been done consciously it suggests that you were trying to enhance your image in the eyes of the person or people who will see the results. If this has been done subconsciously it suggests that you are motivated to believe in a socially desirable view of yourself. These options should be considered when reading the rest of the report.

However, when you imagine feeling stretched you agree with fewer of the socially desirable questions. This shows that you recognise and admit that moderate pressure makes it harder to behave and act in a socially desirable way.

This pattern of answering is maintained when you imagine feeling stressed. This suggests that you imagine yourself behaving in a slightly less socially desirable way (i.e. acting in a way which most people would approve of) under any kind of pressure – or at least that is what you want others to believe. Such a pattern is not unusual and the fact that you admit to some less desirable thoughts and behaviours under pressure makes it less likely that you have consciously tried to project an unrealistically positive self-image to the outside world.



thinking more about your results

Hopefully the pages above will have given you some insight into the areas in which you are most susceptible to the effects of pressure and stress. You can use this page to note down and ideas you have had as to what you might be able to do in each area to improve your resilience to pressure.

Self-belief

Describe what you have learnt plus any thoughts and reactions

Actions you might take

Optimism

Describe what you have learnt plus any thoughts and reactions

Actions you might take

Purposefulness

Describe what you have learnt plus any thoughts and reactions

Actions you might take

Managing Situations

Describe what you have learnt plus any thoughts and reactions

Actions you might take

Emotional Tolerance

Describe what you have learnt plus any thoughts and reactions

Actions you might take



final remarks

We hope that you have found this report useful. It is intended to act as a mirror by capturing your thoughts about how you respond to pressure and stress and then describing the likely effect this has on your thoughts feelings and behaviour.

The importance of our resilience cannot be under-estimated. When people get stressed this often has a negative impact on their personal well-being as well as on the relationships with the people around them.

This questionnaire has identified five key elements that help people to respond more positively to pressure and it is possible to work on each component in order to develop greater resilience. Having seen how you scored on the five elements, this can help you identify areas where change could have the greatest impact on your own level of resilience – and a number of development suggestions have been presented to help get you started. As you move forward it is worth remembering that everyone suffers from self-doubt and set-backs and that resilience is about how you deal with them as the following quotations suggest:

I have not failed. I've just found ten thousand ways that won't work

Thomas Edison

Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail.

Confucius



The following table shows your raw scores (with average ratings in brackets) for each of the six scales in the questionnaire. The average ratings are based on a scale from 1 to 6.

Scale	Normal	Stretched	Stressed
Self-belief	79 (5.27)	72 (4.80)	71 (4.73)
Optimism	71 (4.73)	69 (4.60)	68 (4.53)
Purposefulness	73 (4.87)	67 (4.47)	64 (4.27)
Managing Situations	61 (4.07)	57 (3.80)	50 (3.33)
Emotional Tolerance	77 (5.13)	68 (4.53)	66 (4.40)
Impression Management	72 (5.14)	64 (4.57)	63 (4.50)

N.B. Although the average raw scores shown in the table at the left are on a scale from 1 to 6, the other scores shown on the previous pages of this report are on a scale from 1 to 10 and show how your responses on each scale compare to those of other people.

On the 1-10 scale, scores of 5 and 6 suggest you have a similar level to the average person. More extreme scores (towards 1 or 10) indicate decreasing or increasing levels compared to the group with which you have been compared.

Norms used: Development participants (n=345)