

Questions 1 to 5

Do the following statements agree with the information in the reading passage?

In boxes 1-5 on your answer sheet write

- TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE if the statement contradicts the information
NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

1. Personality tests in the 1950s had answers which were either right or wrong.
2. Asking interviewees directly about their leadership skills should be avoided.
3. Kelly's test could easily detect lies.
4. Rosenberger has invented a new personality test.
5. The software has yet to be used outside Germany.

Reading Passage:**A new way of making personality tests useful**

Modern personality tests date from 1950s America, when George Kelly invented his "personal construct" theory. His work was designed to elicit personal information by asking people open questions about themselves that could not be interpreted as having right or wrong answers. For example, asking a person whether he considers himself to have leadership skills will generally produce the response that he possesses them in abundance. But asking him how he considers himself to be different from his boss might garner more information: he is innovative, say, whereas his boss is traditional. As none of the questions are prejudicial, the temptation to provide anything other than honest answers is removed. And the descriptive terms are introduced by the person being tested rather than the questioner, allowing new and more personal information to be introduced.

Researchers can use this information to create complex grids and webs that map an individual's personality and that can be used to compare it with others'. By asking a person's opinion of colleagues, the company he works for and where he sees himself in five year's time, a rich image of the person can be created. But the picture becomes rapidly more complicated as more questions are asked, making detailed assessment and comparison difficult.

A team at the Chemnitz University of Technology in Germany, led by Matthias Rosenberger, has transformed the usefulness of the test by feeding its results into high-capacity computers. When many so-called "personal cognitive dimensions" are entered, computer software generates three-dimensional grids that represent the answers. These can be manipulated and explored. The software allows researchers to compare grids from different people to see who has relatively similar personalities and may get on well and who may be quite different and experience constructive friction with one another.

Two German companies are already using the system. One, a tools company, is employing it to select members of its own staff and some from another company to take part in a joint project. A second firm is profiling its entire staff before restructuring, to find out who will best fit where.

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