Impression Management

We often receive questions concerning the three “Impression Management” HICs on the HPI: Mastery, Moralistic, and Virtuous. Although these HICs predict intended behaviors such as adhering to personal values, working hard, and striving for perfection, we also stress that high scores on all three might reflect impression management. In other words, while it is certainly possible for someone to be high on all three of these HICs, they also represent areas where individuals are likely to focus when purposefully trying to present themselves in the very best light possible. Below are questions we often receive about the HPI’s “Impression Management” HICs.

1. How do we identify impression management?

Hogan identifies potential impression management using three HICs on our Prudence scale: Moralistic, Mastery, and Virtuous. The total possible raw score on these three HICs is 14. Individuals who score a 12 and above on the combination of impression management HICs are potentially “faking good” when responding to the assessment items.

2. How often do we see impression management in our data?

Of the over 145,000 individuals in our Global Normative Dataset, 25% score a 12 or higher across the three impression management HICs. Slightly more (34%) score a 12 or higher among the 43,000+ individuals in our US Normative Dataset.

3. Should you be concerned if a large percentage of your sample is demonstrating impression management?

No. During everyday social interactions, individuals try to manage how others view them. Responding to personality items is a form of social interaction, which serves as the basis for one’s reputation. We’ve designed our assessments to predict reputations at work, which are the best source of information concerning how individuals will perform in the future. Therefore, responding to items in a socially desirable manner reflects how a person is likely to behave in potential job-related situations.

For more information on measuring personality and the impact of impression management, we recommend the following (all of which we have available, just ask):


