

Yin-Yang Wuxing Management : Vocational Aptitude Probe

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Abstract

Based on the Yin-Yang Wuxing Management, the test scale for vocational aptitude probe was designed. The Wuxing theory was derived via observing the nature by ancient Chinese people. It is made up of five elements, each one of them can interact with one another either in the cycle of mutual generation or in the cycle of mutual restraint. The logic undermines it, allows the construction of guidelines for the selection of personnel for an organization; more over, it allows the leader to find the one who deserves training. In addition, it helps one person to understand the strengths and weakness of one self and then to seek a suitable career. In this study, we made in-depth interviews with three staffs coming from different industries and brought back the questionnaires completed by their employees, respectively. Further careful analysis of these three cases revealed some of the correlation of the triad: work demands, characteristics of individual, performance of the individual. These data may provide suggestions for an organization to recruit coworkers or to improve oneself for job pursuit.

Key Words: *Yin yang, Wuxing, Five elements, C Theory, morality*

1. Introduction

In ancient China, during the time of Spring and Autumn (772 BC - 476 BC), Laozi said: Man takes his law from the Earth; the Earth takes its law from Heaven; Heaven takes its law from the Dao. The law of the Dao is its being what it is[1]. That tells us the law of nature, and this is the fundamental concept of Chinese philosophy. The view of the Yin-Yang theory is that the nature of everything or any phenomenon in the universe is contained with yin and yang [2,3,4,5,6,7,8]. In the *Book of Changes (Yijing)*, yin and yang are described as specific properties. The two properties, yin and yang, are complementary and usually kept in balance, forming the unique characteristics of the thing [9].

The central dogma of the Wuxing theory was also build up by the observation of nature and the environment where we live [10,11,12]. Recognizing these phenomena, ancient Chinese people developed the philosophy that everything or any substance can be classified into one of the five basic elements: Mu (Wood), Huo (Fire), Tu (Earth), Jin (Metal), and

Shui (Water), which represents one's own specific characteristics and properties[13]. Therefore, Wuxing theory is also known as the Five Elements Theory.

The five elements spontaneously form into two cycles: the cycle of generation and the cycle of restraint[14]. Drilling wood makes fire. Fire burns produces ash, creating earth. From the earth, metal is mined. When metal is heated and cooled, water will be condensed on the metal. On the other hand, water nourishes wood. While the cycle that generates, if the arrangement order of the five elements changed, the cycle of restraint occurs. Following the cycle of nature, the life philosophy is unveiled.

People linked the phenomenon of nature with human activities in the society, presenting the texture of yin-yang and the common spirits of Five elements within the whole world[1,3,15]. The Yin-yang Wuxing theory has been applied to the traditional medicine[16], numerology[17], feng shui[18,19], moreover the emperor of Han dynasty adopted it to govern the nation. The approval also indicated by western scholars, they investigated the human organization behavior, and found the yin-yang interplay being evident at the root of the common theories of motivation [1] .

Currently, it is used in educational management [20,21,22], especially, the Cheng's C theory, which integrates the Yin-yang Wuxing theory into the five educational goals: moral, intellectual, physic, group, and aesthetic educations. Of the C theory, the so-called "C" refers to the Chinese book (the *Book of Change*) and the Creativity. It points out that Gold represents the characteristics of a leader; wisdom, for making judgements, and with flexibility to cope with changes [23,24,25,26]. Understanding the core spirit of the five goals, in order to analyze a person's personality [27], we transform that into, morality, wisdom, individual, group, and beauty in this study.

Based on the principle of these theories and the harmony of nature, we construct the framework with four levels of performance to depict the unique character for each element. The aim of this survey is to make a market research, to see the benefit and feasibility of the theory, especially focus on the management of an individual and organizations.

2. Methods

Research framework

As shown in figure 1, the framework of this study, we put one's own nature in the middle. There are four different levels for each character, two are negatively oriented and the other two are more positively oriented. "Mu" represents the relationship of a person in a group; "Huo", the power of executive; "Jin", the skills that know how to deal with environmental changes; "Shui", the inner thinking, it decides one's own behavior; and "Tu", one's own nature – morality.

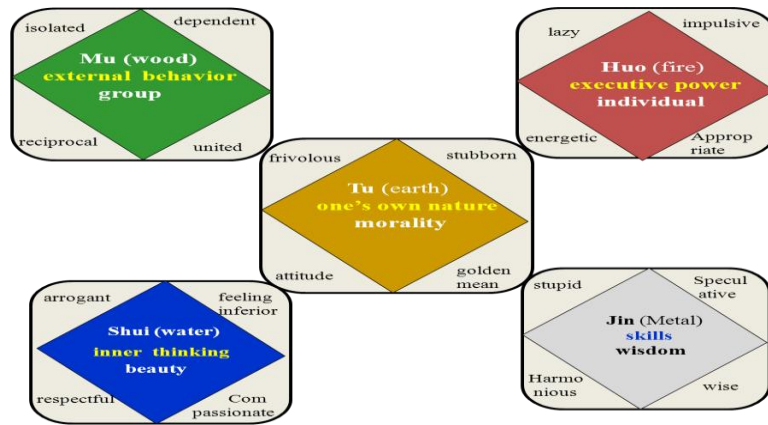


Figure 1 Research framework

The four different levels for each trait are indicated in the following:

1. Mu (external behavior expressed in a group): solitary, dependent, united, and reciprocal
2. Huo (executive power of an individual): lazy, impulsive, appropriate, and energetic
3. Shui (inner thinking that is beauty): arrogant, feeling inferior, compassionate, and respectful
4. Jin (skills that represents wisdom): stupid, speculative, wise, and harmonious
5. Tu (one's own nature that is morality): frivolous, stubborn, golden mean, and responsible

Questionnaire and Market survey

In this study, we made in-depth interviews with three bosses coming from different industries, to understand the ethics and work demands from owner's prospective in business. And brought back the questionnaires completed by their employees, respectively. The questionnaire for vocational aptitude probe is carefully designed to meet the objective, allowing an individual to understand the unique character of him.

The investigation is consisted of five aspects, the human relationship, executive power, working attitude, work skills, and inner thinking. There are five questions for each aspect. Upon testing, the five questions could be the same for either one of the five aspects, however, testers are asked to answer questions based on intuition. So, though facing the same problem, they may make different choice. The scale is defined according the property of the question, and each choice will be classified to one of the five elements; for example, if the answer is "A", then the tester gets one point of "Mu", and so on.

Table 1: Scale for vocational aptitude test

Choice \ Question no.	A	B	C	D	E
1	Bird's chirps	Blowing of the wind	Nothing to do with me	Sound generated from a passing airplane	Just an illusion
2	East	South	Middle	West	North
3	Mu	Huo	Tu	Jin	Shui
4	Group	individual	Morality	Wisdom	Beauty
5	Green	Red	Yellow	White	Blue
Wuxing category	Mu	Huo	Tu	Jin	Shui

3. Results and data analysis

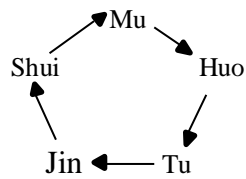


Fig. 2 The cycle of generation

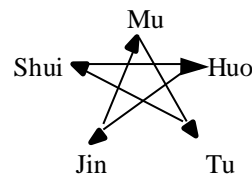


Fig. 3 The cycle of restraint

Table 2 Compiled scores for each tester

Aspect Job	Human relationship (Mu)	Executive power (Huo)	Work attitude (Mu)	Work skills (Jin)	Inner thinking (Shui)	Total score
Catering Miss Yang	2Mu 1Huo 1Jin 1Shui	2Mu 2Huo 1Jin	2Mu 1Tu 2Shui	2Mu 2Jin 1Shui	1Huo 1Tu 3Jin	8Mu 4Huo 2Tu 7Jin 4Shui
Interior design Mr. Chen	1Huo 2Shui 2Jin	2Shui 3Jin	4Jin 1Shui	3Jin 2Shui	2Shui 2Jin 1Huo	14Jin 9Shui 2Huo
Chinese massage Mr. Lin	5Mu	4Mu 1Jin	4Mu 1Tu	5Mu	4Mu 1Tu	22Mu 1Tu 2Jin

For case 1, because ‘Mu’ is the core of relationship and Miss Yang possesses 2 of it in this aspect, therefore her relationship is good; but there is also a Jin, that means she will be jealous by others, since Jin restrains Mu (Fig. 3). Moreover, the presence of Huo and Shui also indicates that she knows how and has the enthusiasm to get along with others (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Personality analysis based on Wuxing - Case 1

Case 1 Catering Boss: more than 10 yrs Employee : 8 yrs	Wuxing analysis	Personality analysis	Boss’s demands or recommendations
Relationship Mu	2Mu 1Huo 1Jin 1Shui Mu generates Huo Shui generates Mu Jin restrains Mu Huo restrains Jin	Good relationship, Enthusiastic, Active Easy to commit villain	With an initiative to understand customer’s need Behave properly
Executive power Huo	2Mu 2Huo 1Jin Mu generates Huo Huo restrains Jin Jin restrains Mu	Impulsive, Easily moved by a clamor	More encouragement and praise Create a positive environment for service
Attitude Tu	2Mu 1Tu 2Shui Mu restrains Tu Tu restrains Shui Shui generates Mu	Humble Harmonious	Respectful Merciful
Skills Jin	2Mu 2Jin 1Shui Jin restrains Mu Jin generates Shui	Believe in oneself Not easy to listen to the advice of others	Know how to get along with others Service-oriented

Thinking Shui	1Huo 1Tu 3Jin Tu restrains Shui Tu generates Jin Jin generates Shui	Flexible, but a little bit stubborn	Calm Patient Compassionate
Total score	8Mu 4Huo 2Tu 7Jin 4Shui Mu generates Huo Huo generates Tu Tu generates Jin Jin generates Shui	Good relationship Behave properly Not too stubborn Respectful, Humble	With sound personality Zealous Humble Work for the sake of company

Mister Chen, an interior designer, he gets three points of Jin and two points of Shui for the aspect of skill (Table3.2). According to the Wuxing theory, we may say that he is very wise and skillful in his work performance. Because not only that Jin is the main spirit of skill but it also promotes the generation of Shui (Fig. 2).

Table 3.2 Personality analysis based on Wuxing – Case 2

Case 2 Interior design Boss: more than 10 yrs Employee: 3 yrs	Wuxing analysis	Personality analysis	Boss's demands recommendations
Relationship Mu	1Huo 2Shui 2Jin Mu generates Huo Shui generates Mu Shui generates Mu Jin restrains Mu	Passionate Like thinking, somebody appreciate, but somebody do not	Calm Listen tentatively Communicate with customer and give recommendation
Executive power Huo	2Shui 3Jin Shui restrains Huo Huo restrains Jin Jin generates Shui	Think too much Careful planning Lack of executive power Good in communication	Meet customer's requirements Complete designs and has a considerable profit
Attitude Tu	4Jin 1Shui Tu generates Jin Jin generates Shui Tu restrains Shui	Money first Cautious Work steaily	Be careful and cautious in assessment Complete work and earn a lot
Skills Jin	3Jin 2Shui Jin generates Shui	Skillful Good in communication	Persuasive Communicate and let customer satisfied with the work
Thinking Shui	2Shui 2Jin 1Huo Jin generates Shui Shui restrains Huo Huo restrains Jin	Pondering, especially in finance Like to order Conflict in inner thinking	Attentive Can design good work Make customer satisfied
Total score	14Jin 9Shui 2Huo Jin generates Shui	Smart Profit first Considerate	Thorough consideration and steady attitude in design, Communication and consultation will be able to bring the profit for the company

This is an impressive example, as shown in Table 3.3, all the scores of the five aspects indicated are quite uneven. Mr. Lin gets full points for the aspect of relationship, at first glimpse, it seems quite well since Mu represents the central element for this category, but as we catch the spirit of Wuxing theory, it just telling us, there is something wrong. He is too dependent to have his own opinion. Again, the same thing appeared in all the other aspects. Just like this, in the category of work attitude, he relies on others to tell him how to do (too many Mu, that restrains Tu) (Fig. 3). Usually, working as a masseur, one should provide his professional ability to serve visitors, thus skillful communications may be needed to gain the approval and trust from customers; but to the contrary, as the test shows, he has no skills at all (Mu only, without any Jin).

Table 3.3 Personality analysis based on Wuxing – Case 3

Case 3 Chinese massage Boss: more than 10yrs Employee: 3 months	Wuxing analysis	Personality analysis	Boss's demands recommendations
Relationship Mu	5Mu	Too dependent	Be confident I am professional
Executive power Huo	4 Mu 1 Jin Mu generates Huo Huo restrains Jin	Lack one's own opinion	Calm attentive Be assertive Appropriate consideration
Attitude Tu	4 Mu 1Tu Mu restrains Tu	Attached to others	Learn specialized ability Do not attached
Skills Jin	5 Mu Jin restrains Mu	No skill in communication	Understand customer's need Behave properly
Thinking Shui	4 Mu 1Tu Shui generates Mu Tu restrains Shui	Feel good about oneself Conflict in thinking	Respectful Golden mean
Total score	22Mu 1Tu 2Jin Mu restrains Tu Tu generates Jin Jin restrains Mu	Too dependent No confidence	Profession Confidence Act appropriately Golden mean

4. Discussion

We have conversations with both these three employees and their corresponding boss of companies. Because different companies differ in business, therefore, the work requirements are varied. Miss Yang serves in catering; her personality analysis indicates that she is very suitable in this kind of work; actually, she does feel competent for the work. In accordance, her boss is pleased with her performance, and they get along very well. Although the personality of Mr. Chen is quite different from Miss Yang, the former is an interior designer, he also performs very well. Mr. Chen is attentive and skillful in both

communication and specific ability; these characters contribute to the excellent performance of him on the job. By the way, he is devoted to and enjoys his work very much, and thus earns the appreciation and commendation from his boss. As for the masseur, there is a big gap in between his performance and work requirements. It seems that he does not have the confidence to his work. Though he works laboriously, he is reluctant. As we have seen, the similar personality hides in all his performance. All the conditions can be explained by the evaluation. As shown in Table 3.3, he is too dependent, too attached, and not knowing how to act as a professional in his specific work (no skill). Therefore, he should strengthen in the area of self confidence and human interaction, in order to be competent for the job.

Based on the nature of the Five elements, the interaction among them, either promoting a generation or a restraint, creates a change that makes things versatile in the universe and express their own unique characters. The survey allows us to discover the nature of a person; of the three cases, we do find variance among them. According to the present three tests, the characteristic of an individual is reflected in the performance of work; if one's personality matches work demands, then one will perform well and feel good for the work.

Therefore, if this is true, application the Wuxing theory may provide an effective way for an organization to recruit coworkers. Finding a right person and locating him a suitable position. Or pick up a man of potential to be cultivated as a seed for an important professional. Moreover, knowing which element(s) predominates for our personalities, we can understand ourselves. Either for an individual, a company or any modern enterprise, this is the most economic and human management. We will be encouraged to perform further more extensive surveys and would like to send this message to anyone who wanting to join the study.

5.Acknowledgements

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