



### Change & Excitement – Your Needs

#### How much excitement do you need in your life?

For each question, choose option A or B and put a tick to the right of your answer. There will be some statements where you are undecided; don't ponder for too long, just go with your first gut instinct.

1. A There are some films I enjoy seeing a second or third time  
B I can't stand watching a movie that I've seen before
2. A I often wish I could be a mountain climber  
B I can't understand people who risk their necks to climb mountains
3. A I dislike all body odours  
B I like some of the earthy body smells
4. A I get bored seeing the same old faces  
B I like the comfortable familiarity of everyday friends
5. A I like to explore a strange city by myself even if it means getting lost  
B I prefer a guide when I'm in a place I don't know well
6. A I dislike people who do or say things just to shock or upset others  
B If you can predict what a person will do or say, they must be a bore
7. A I don't enjoy a film or play when I can tell what will happen in advance  
B I don't mind watching a film or play when I can tell what will happen
8. A I enjoy trying out new restaurants I haven't tried before  
B I like to stick to restaurants where I know I'll get good food and service
9. A I like to talk to people who do unusual jobs for a living  
B I am not very interested in what other people do at work
10. A I avoid activities that are dangerous  
B I sometimes do things that are a little frightening
11. A I like to try new foods that I have never tasted before  
B I order the dishes I know so as to avoid disappointment
12. A I enjoy looking at home videos  
B Watching someone else's home videos bores me rigid
13. A I would like to have a go at water skiing  
B The thought of water skiing frightens me
14. A I would like to try surfboarding  
B I would not like to try surfboarding
15. A I would like to take off on a trip with no pre-planned routes or timetable  
B When I go on a trip I like to plan my route and timetable fairly carefully

# Self-Checks

16. A I prefer down to earth kinds of people as friends  
B I like to make friends with different groups such as artists or bikers
17. A I prefer to keep my feet on the ground  
B I would like to fly an aeroplane
18. A I prefer the surface of the water to the depths  
B I would like to go scuba diving
19. A I prefer to go to new places on holiday, where I haven't been before  
B I enjoy going back to the same tried and tested destination
20. A I would like to try parachute jumping  
B I don't want to jump out of a plane with or without a parachute
21. A I prefer friends who are excitingly unpredictable  
B I prefer friends who are reliable and predictable
22. A Good art has clarity, symmetry of form and harmony of colours  
B I find beauty in clashing colours and irregular forms in modern art
23. A I enjoy spending time in the familiar surroundings of home  
B I get very restless if I have to stay around home for any length of time
24. A I like to dive off the high board  
B I don't like the feeling I get standing on the high board
25. A The worst social sin is to be rude  
B The worst social sin is to be a bore
26. A I like people who are sharp and witty, even if they insult others  
B I dislike people who have their fun at the expense of others
27. A People should dress according to some standard of taste and style  
B People should dress in individual ways even if the effects are strange
28. A Sailing a long distance in a small craft is foolhardy  
B I would like to sail a long way in a small but seaworthy vessel
29. A I have no patience with dull or boring people  
B I find something interesting in almost every person I talk to
30. A Skiing down a mountain is a good way to end up on crutches  
B I think I would enjoy the sensation of skiing very fast down a high mountain

## Scoring Key

There are 3 sub-scales on the sensation seeking scale, each consisting of ten items. These are:

- **Thrill and Adventure Seeking**
- **Experience Seeking**
- **Boredom Susceptibility**

# Self-Checks

To find your score on each sub-scale, tick each time the answer you chose agrees with the scoring key:

<b>Thrill and Adventure Seeking</b>	<b>Experience Seeking</b>	<b>Boredom Susceptibility</b>
2 A	3 B	1 B
10 B	5 A	4 A
13 A	8 A	6 B
14 A	9 A	7 A
17 B	11 A	12 B
18 B	15 A	21 A
20 A	16 B	23 B
24 A	19 A	25 B
28 B	22 B	26 A
30 B	27 B	29 A

Now add the number of ticks in each column

The higher you scored on these scales, the more likely you are to be bored with routine work, the more excitement you crave in your life and the more stress you are likely to be able to handle comfortably. The majority of people's scores are between:

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
<b>Thrill and Adventure Seeking</b>	6 and 10	5 and 9
<b>Experience Seeking</b>	4 and 7	4 and 7
<b>Boredom Susceptibility</b>	3 and 6	2 and 5

If you have scored towards the **lower end** of the scales given, ask yourself:

- Do you prefer staying in the same job or team for a long time?
- Do you ever feel you've been passed over for a promotion for which you were well qualified or experienced?
- Do you perhaps not push yourself to develop yourself or your career as much as you might have?

If you have scored towards the **top end** of the scales given, ask yourself:

- Do you crave frequent promotions or moves from one job or team to another?
- Do you find you've quickly got bored with work tasks more often than your colleagues have?
- Do you think that project work moving from one initiative to another and maybe not having a regular base or hours would suit you?

## About Sensation Seeking

Research indicates that sensation seeking is one of a handful of core-traits that can be used to describe human personality. As you can see from the scoring, this can be divided into sub scales.

### Thrill and Adventure Seeking

Thrill and adventure seeking is fairly self-explanatory. People who score high on this sub scale enjoy activities that may involve some physical risk such as rock climbing, sky diving or white water rafting.

### Experience Seeking

High scorers on the experience seeking sub scale seek out novel experiences even if they do not involve excitement or danger. For instance, they are likely to volunteer

for an experiment on meditation or hypnosis simply because they haven't done such things before.

## **Boredom Susceptibility**

Boredom susceptibility is self-explanatory. These individuals find the ordinary and expected downright painful. The routines that most of us develop and find comfortable are distasteful to these people. They can become quite agitated and distressed if they cannot satisfy their needs for novelty.

## **Uses at work**

Sensation seeking has its advantages and disadvantages. People such as Christopher Columbus and Neil Armstrong were undoubtedly high in this trait. Sensation seekers are the ones who are likely to make new discoveries or break new ground. They are not afraid to try something new and different.

On the other hand, if they cannot channel their energies into socially acceptable ways, their tendencies may get them into trouble. Sensation seeking can be a double-edged sword. High scorers may be regarded as mavericks, as they seek new ways of working, or short cuts to established systems and procedures. They will be more likely than average to adapt well to change, particularly where this is frequent or unpredictable.

It may be that their preferred way of working is suited to a project team role, or to a situation where risk taking is called for, where the success or failure of an initiative will be extreme, rather than a middle-of-the-road result. They may take more risks that would be normal in their role. They may do well in a pressured environment, such as sales or in a rapid response role where each day will bring new and unexpected challenges – maybe a service role.

Consider your score and your answers to the questions for low or high scorers. What do these tell you about your current role and what you might choose to do in your career?

## **Further Development**

Consider the following questions and note your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers; this is to give you food for thought.

- How appropriate is your level of excitement & change compared to the amount you want?
- What effect do you think this may have on your dealings with your manager, colleagues or customers?
- How will it affect the way you are perceived by them?

# Self-Checks

- What effects could this have on your career?
- Do you need to do anything to change your level?
- How will you do this?

**For related topics see Top Tips:**

- **Change Management**
- **Stress Management**
- **Career Management**