
CAPABILITIES AWARENESS PROFILE[©]

Interpretive Guide

Introduction

The CAP is intended to be used for personal growth; to help you be more aware of your personal strengths and challenges regarding how you relate to yourself and others.

The CAP measures social-emotional intelligence. Social-emotional intelligence is the ability to understand yourself, cope with stress, experience healthy emotions, and relate well with others. In this report, we divide emotional intelligence into self and relational competencies. Self competencies have to do with how you deal with yourself, what goes on inside of you. Relational competencies refer to how you relate to other people.

This interpretive guide will help you make sense of your CAP results. Beliefs in our abilities are one of the best predictors of our behavior and performance. Just like the self-fulfilling prophecy, our beliefs can influence how things actually turn out for us. This is true in a variety of areas including academics, athletic performance, medical treatment, teacher effectiveness, management and leadership, business productivity and job performance. Compared to intellectual abilities that don't change much throughout our lives, social-emotional intelligence can grow. We can increase our belief in our abilities through experiences of success, watching others we respect who demonstrate these abilities, and through the support and encouragement from others.

Self and relational competencies influence how we deal with the ups and downs in life. Although each person responds in their own unique way to life's challenges, we all deal with common things such as success and disappointment, frustration and loss, problematic relationships at home or at work, health concerns, financial uncertainties, and questions about the meaning and purpose of life, to name a few. Our belief in our abilities is more important than our intellectual abilities in affecting how we actually deal with the demands in our life.

CAP scores range from 60 – 120, and are separated into three ranges – Growth Assets, Growth Potentials, and Growth Challenges.

Scores between 100 and 120 are called Growth Assets. If you score in this range, you probably feel fairly confident in that competency area and function effectively *most of the time*. In general, the higher your score, the more confident you feel in that particular competency.

Scores between 80 and 99 are called Growth Potentials. If you score in this range, you may experience distress and doubt in your capabilities *some of the time*, which can lead to problems in functioning. When you are under stress, you are more likely to second-guess yourself rather than focus on what you need to get done. However, you have probably also experienced some success in this particular area and may find yourself feeling confident *some of the time*. Maybe you believe it would be worth your effort to improve. Growth Potentials are full of opportunities for personal growth.

Scores between 60 and 79 are called Growth Challenges. If you score in this range you may struggle when you need that particular competency to deal with change and stress. You might avoid situations in which that competency is involved or get discouraged easily and give up without trying very hard. These situations take you out of your comfort zone and may cause discomfort or even panic. We all tend to avoid situations where we don't feel confident in our abilities. However, positive change often means facing and dealing with our growth challenges. Although this can feel risky, it gives us the opportunity to begin trying new ways of coping that can be more effective.

The CAP is like a road map or guide, showing where you are, where you want to go, and how to get there. Some of the paths are well developed and are indicated by green (Growth Assets). These are like interstate highways and are easily and smoothly traveled. The yellow paths (Growth Potentials) are like two lane highways that require more effort to avoid potholes, and require you to pay more attention. The blue routes (Growth Challenges) are the unpaved back roads that twist and turn and may seem dangerous. Travel is slower, but there is a lot to discover and it can be a rewarding journey for those willing to take on the adventure. Of course, in severe weather such as ice and snow (stress!), all routes become difficult to travel and require more energy and willpower to make it safely to your destination. In the face of difficult conditions, the green routes make it easier to overcome the hazardous conditions. A map is only a map, not the actual terrain. Each individual's map is unique. Like a map, this report is a guide to help you and others who might be assisting you to identify personal change goals that you might want to pursue.

Self and Relational Competencies Scales

Self Competencies scale measures your **beliefs** about your ability to manage your internal experiences such as thoughts, feelings, and motivation. There are eight sub-scales covering a variety of areas that make up Self Competencies.

Relational Competencies scale measures your **beliefs** about your ability to relate and communicate effectively with others. There are three sub-scales covering several areas that make up Relational Competencies.

Role Competency scale is a single scale measuring your **belief** in your ability to comply with rules and expectations.

Self Competency Sub-Scales

Self Awareness Subscale

Awareness of your beliefs, values, expectations, needs, feelings, limits and weaknesses, and belief in your ability to accept responsibility for your mistakes.

Self Acceptance Subscale

Belief in your ability to accept both positive and negative parts of yourself, not being too critical of yourself, feeling confident in yourself, feeling good about yourself, and believing in yourself.

Self Actualization Subscale

Belief in your ability to “be all that you can be” - live up to your potential by setting challenging goals, raising your personal standards, and trying things that take you out of your comfort zone. This scale is associated with seeking activities and challenges that lead to a more meaningful and full life.

Self Regulation Subscale

Belief in your ability to manage your thoughts and feelings, and remain calm under pressure.

Adaptability Subscale

Belief in your ability to solve problems by being flexible, creative, and turning ideas into action. It is the ability to see the big picture, look at situations from different perspectives, and set priorities to solve problems.

Motivation Subscale

Belief in your ability to get started and stick with it in order to accomplish goals. An important part of coping with stress involves perseverance, and the ability to stick with difficult situations and tasks.

Optimism Subscale

Belief in your ability to stay positive and hopeful about the future, even when the going gets tough and there are setbacks or disappointments. It measures your ability to look at the future with confidence and keep a positive attitude.

Assertiveness Subscale

Belief in your ability to express your thoughts and feelings in a way that doesn't hurt others. It also measures your ability to communicate ideas and feelings in straightforward ways so that your own needs and boundaries are respected.

Relational Competency Subscales

Social Identification Subscale

Belief in your ability to feel connected with others and experience a sense of belonging, acceptance, and security.

Empathy Subscale

Belief in your ability to be aware of, sensitive to, and appreciative of others' thoughts and feelings. It measures your ability to respond to others in an understanding and caring manner.

Positive Emotions Subscale

Belief in your ability to experience a variety of positive emotions, which is associated with greater satisfaction and contentment in your work and personal life.

Role Competency

Role Compliance describes your belief in your ability to comply with rules and expectations.

Using Your CAP[®] as a Personal Development Tool

First, it is helpful to begin by finding your highest and lowest subscale scores. If these seem to fit with your experience, the high scores are probably areas that you rely on to help you and can be useful when making changes. The low scores might be areas that have caused some problems for you and you may want to work on them in order to gain a greater sense of confidence and success. If all of your scores are similar, you may want to select one or two specific areas for personal growth – perhaps an area affecting current problems in your life. Working on growth in one area often ends up building other areas. This is because your competencies work together to form a network of beliefs about your abilities. Or you may be satisfied with your scores and experience no need to work on any of the areas of your profile.

If you select some areas to work on, the following suggestions may be helpful for achieving your goals:

- Identify an area or areas for growth. It is useful to step back and reflect on your belief about your abilities in these areas. Take a more objective, detached perspective toward yourself. Ask others how they experience you in these areas.
- How do your beliefs about yourself in these areas affect you? Remember that our beliefs in our abilities have a strong effect on how we actually act. Having these beliefs might limit the possibilities available to you. If we don't believe in our abilities in an area, we tend to avoid activities in that area. Unfortunately, by avoiding these areas we prevent ourselves from improving these areas.
- Look for discrepancies that might cast doubt on your belief. Are there *exceptions* to your belief in your current ability? Do you *always* function at the level you reported about yourself? Is there reason to believe that you might function with a higher level of competency, at least some of the time, than you give yourself credit for? During times when you felt more capable, how did you respond differently? Was there something different about the circumstances? In other words, your belief about your abilities may change according to circumstances and current life conditions.
- Look at the reasons why you have this specific belief. When did this belief first begin to operate in your life? Were there any negative experiences that led to this belief? Did others reinforce this belief? If you were to make changes in this belief, how would it affect the picture you have of yourself as a person? If you were to improve your sense of competency, what difference would this make in your life? Are your current beliefs about yourself your *preferred* way of interacting with the world, or would you prefer to act differently?

- Test your beliefs by setting goals that challenge them. Set realistic goals so that you can experience success. Keep a record of how you are doing. Goals keep us focused on the things that matter and keep us energized. Sticking with a goal improves the chance of success. Notice how your beliefs in your abilities change as you experience success.

Focus on the positive!

Sometimes it's best to start by focusing on what's working! Why not build on the strengths you already have – your highest CAP competency areas. Or, if you feel overwhelmed by your growth challenges, or don't think it will make a difference, try these exercises to help build your confidence. These exercises are adapted from an article published by Seligman, Steen, Park and Peterson, 2005, in the American Psychologist.

You at Your Best

- ❑ Reflect on a time in your life when you were at your best. Write a short story about this time. When you have completed your story, reflect on your story and make a list of the competencies (CAP scales) displayed in your story. Bring your story and list to share with the group (supervisor, coach, therapist, facilitator etc.).
- ❑ Review this story once a day for a week and reflect on the personal strengths you have identified.
- ❑ (Optional) – Each week, or between each session, repeat exercise with a different time in your life.

Identifying Signature Strengths

- ❑ Review your CAP profile and identify your top 5 "signature strengths." Each day for the next week, your task is to use these strengths more often.
- ❑ Journal on your experience and share with the group (therapist, coach, etc.). Continue exercise as needed.
- ❑ (Optional) – As your strengths profile changes and grows (seen on follow-up administration of CAP), revise your list or chose CAP Growth Potentials to focus on. Repeat exercise.

Using Signature Strengths in a New Way

- ❑ Review your CAP profile and identify your top 5 "signature strengths." Each day for a week, your task is to use one of these top strengths in a new and different way.
- ❑ Journal on your experience and share with the group (therapist, coach, etc.). Continue exercise as needed.
- ❑ (Optional) – As your strengths profile changes and grows (evidenced by follow-up administration of CAP), revise your list or chose CAP Growth Potentials to focus on. Repeat exercise.

Each person is unique, and has a unique set of CAP scores – Your CAP profile is a unique reflection of your personality and life experiences. It is not necessary or realistic to strive to have all of your competencies in the Growth Assets area, or to try to achieve a profile like someone else you know. Rather, seek to gain balance in your competencies, because this is what helps build confidence to deal with whatever comes your way.

Being aware of your Growth Potentials and Growth Challenges makes you more aware of the choices you face as you deal with the challenges in your life. Your life is a reflection of the choices you make. In times of change, do you make the choice to grow and be challenged, or chose to stay in your comfort zone? Do you open yourself up to new opportunities for growth, or hide from the opportunity to develop your potential in new ways?

If you are seeking help through coaching, therapy, supervision, or other means, your CAP profile can be a useful tool for setting goals and deciding where to focus your efforts. You may want to complete a CAP again at a later date to check progress, see where you are at, and adjust you goals.

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