

The mobile phone object and how it reveals a person' s personality

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Introduction

The objective of the essay is to pick an object that is regularly used in everyday life and to evaluate it in terms of how it demonstrates personality. In this case the mobile phone will be the object of choice. The essay will explain what the phone reveals about people and the social forces that are related to it and that shape everyday life. The first part of the essay will explain the phone object and describe how it shows a person's character or personality. The next section will employ the five factor model/theory of personality to demonstrate the concept of self and self presentation. The relevant academic references will be used to support the interpretation.

Analysis

The way a person receives or makes a call tells a lot about his or her personality. For instance, people who answer phone calls saying "John here" are viewed by experts as time savers. Barondes (2011), explained that unconventional people do not use regular words like "Hello". Cantoni & Xiang (2013) and Ling (2004) also argued that the individuals who receive calls by saying funny are considered to be happy or cheerful people, whose view of the environment and activities is based on humour. Cantoni and Xiang (2013) pointed out that a person with a sunny-side personality responds to phone calls using very short phrases and just simple, sweet sounding words as "Hi". According to Cantoni and Xiang (2013), such a person can be described as a friendly, cheerful and optimistic individual. On the other hand, a person who receives a phone call by saying something like "Go" or "I'm" is said to have a cool laid-back personality (Ling and Pedersen 2006). Based on the information presented by Ling and Pedersen (2006), if a person responds like "Good afternoon, this is Mrs Jane, what help can I offer you?", then it is very likely that he or she must be a very helpful, happy, supportive and optimistic. It also gives an indication that the person could be very open regarding relationships or business transactions.

On a separate note, it is believed that the phone is the centre of all activities in business, just like it is in the office. According to Bernstein et al. (2011), the professional attitude demonstrated toward the caller is critical to the performance and success of the business. It may take a person only ten seconds to learn the caller's attitude, just from listening to the tone of the voice. This implies that creating an excellent telephone client

service both in words and tone is a valuable skill that should be acquired. A person becomes his or her own director of the first impression in the office. For example, in a medical setting, since the phone call is often the very first contact with a patient, the manner of speaking, and the empathy demonstrated significantly influence the patients' view and image regarding the medical provider (Ling & Pedersen 2006; Byrne & Findlay 2004). The voice of the caller in this case forms part of the individual's personality and over the phone the voice shows exactly who the person is.

A person who responds with formality, such as "Hello, this is John, who am I speaking to?", may be viewed as a diplomat. According to the psychologists, diplomats can always be relied upon to make reliable statements and perfect pronunciation, they often demonstrate politeness, but may be free with emotions (Bernstein et al. 2011; Brereton & O' Connor 2007; Maier 2006). Most people receive phone calls by simply saying "hello" and in Bernstein et al. (2011)'s view, people who do so may be considered honest and unpretentious. Psychological experts believe that such people are straightforward, dependable and steady.

Famous theorists, Robert McCrae and Paul Costa formulated the five factor analysis theory in order to help explain the people's personality traits (Costa & McCrae 1992). The theoretical descriptions regarding personality to a great extent helps to explain the people's behaviour and self presentation and clarifies why people behave in a certain way when making or receiving phone calls. According to the five factor model of personality traits, character traits are drawn from just five high order traits that are commonly known as the "big five". They include extraversion, openness, neuroticism, friendliness and conscientiousness.

The first is the extraversion, which signifies people who show an outgoing, upbeat and sociable behaviour and that are assertive and unreserved (Weiten 2012; Campbell & Park 2008). This explains why people who receive calls by quoting funny words are usually considered to be happy or cheerful. They show cheerful and sociable behaviour. According to the theorists, extroverts tend to be happier and show a more positive attitude toward life, they appear to be very motivated and delighted to pursue social contacts, interdependence and intimacy (Ling & Pedersen 2006).

The second is the neuroticism, which denotes people who tend to be anxious, awkward, hostile and insecure. According to the theorists, as opposed to extraversion, neurotic people tend to overreact and their responses are often triggered by some pressure, stress or discomfort (Ling & Pedersen 2006). This clearly explains why some people tend to show unprofessional attitude and overreact toward others even on the phone. Anxiety and feelings of insecurity make some people uncomfortable, so they become hostile and overactive (Weiten 2012).

The next higher order trait in the five factor model of personality is the openness of experience. Theorists believe that openness is strongly linked to flexibility and curiosity. They also believe that openness reflects frankness, imaginativeness and vivid fantasy as well as artistic sensitivity, which creates exceptional attitudes. A person who scores high on openness is believed to be a very tolerant individual, that easily discloses issues. According to Ling & Pedersen (2006), openness promotes liberalisation, which is a key determinant of an individual's political attitude and personal principles. This explains that just by examining a person's first response on a call, it is easy to tell whether he or she is an understanding, supportive or tolerant person. It also explains why those who receive calls by using funny words should be regarded as happy or cheerful people. The evidence presented by the theorists shows that a good-humoured response could indicate that the person is helpful, supportive and optimistic.

The next higher order trait in the five factor model of personality is the agreeableness. Based on the five factor theory, individuals who score high on agreeableness tend to show friendliness, sympathy, trust and cooperation (Weiten 2012). The theorists believe that people who score high at the opposite end tend to be suspicious, aggressive and antagonistic. This perhaps provides a reliable explanation as to why some individuals respond cruelly and harshly on the phone. Friendly people tend to show sympathy, cooperation and trust.

The last high order trait in the five factor model of personality is the conscientiousness. According to the model, individuals who score high on conscientiousness tend to be well organised, disciplined and dependable. The theorists mainly associate this theory to a strong self-discipline and self-control. Ling and

Pedersen (2006) and Weiten (2012) have also revealed that conscientiousness promotes dependability and diligence. Considering the theorist's arguments, there is a clear justification why some people respond with formality and why they are viewed as diplomats. In most instances, the responses point to the dependability and the meticulousness demonstrated by the individuals. The people who prefer to respond with formality can certainly be relied upon because they show politeness and are often very precise when they speak on the phone (Weiten 2012; Beede & Kass 2006).

Conclusion

In conclusion, how a person receives or makes phone calls tells a lot about his or her personality and qualities. Certain words or responses on phone could be interpreted to show that an individual is happy or cheerful. Certain reactions on the phone may also indicate that the caller or recipient has a cool laid-back personality or that he or she is a helpful, supportive and optimistic individual. By examining a person's response on the phone, it is easy to tell whether he or she is an open person, unprofessional or diplomatic. The factor analysis theory formulated by Robert McCrae and Paul Costa explain the variation in people's behaviour and show that people's behaviours are mainly drawn from the five main personality traits including extraversion, openness, friendliness, neuroticism, and conscientiousness.

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