

How Resilient Are You?

Find Out How to Bounce Back From Problems

Fall seven times, stand up eight. – Japanese proverb.

Imagine that you've been working on a report for several weeks. You're pleased with what you've produced, and you can't wait to hear what your boss thinks. However, the next day she meets with you to discuss your work, and she asks you to rewrite your report.

You're disappointed, of course, but do you sit down and despair, or do you start drafting the next version?

Resilience is our ability to bounce back when things don't go as planned. It's a quality that we all possess to some degree, but some of us can draw on it more easily than others can. Resilience is important because it keeps us on track until we reach our goals, it allows us to deal with difficult situations, and it helps us to grow by encouraging us to look at the positives and to manage stress.

However, it's not about trying to carry on regardless of how we feel, and it's not about being superhuman! Instead, it's about understanding why we feel the way we do, and developing strategies to help us deal with situations more effectively.

This quiz will help you understand and assess how resilient you are, and it provides advice and guidance that you can use to become even more resilient.

Self-Assessment Questions

For each of the 16 statements below, pick the answer that best describes you from:

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Agree Nor Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Answer questions as you actually are (rather than how you think you should be), and don't worry if some questions seem to score in the 'wrong direction'. When you are finished, use the mark sheet to work out your score. Then read the guidance that follows.

1. When given a new task, I'm confident that I'll succeed.
2. When one attempt fails, I learn from it and change my approach next time.
3. When a task doesn't go to plan, it affects my self-belief.
4. I have few people at work who I can speak to about issues in the office.
5. When I encounter a difficulty, I lose sight of my goal quickly.
6. Sometimes I question my commitment to my job.
7. I have strategies in place for dealing with stress.
8. I find it easy to ask my colleagues for help.
9. I feel positive about the future.
10. I worry about issues that I have no control over.
11. Asking for assistance reveals weakness.
12. When there is fundamental change, I struggle to come around to new ways of thinking.
13. I have strong goals that are clear in my mind.
14. I am able to discuss my job and its challenges with people outside of work, such as family members and close friends.
15. I am more likely to say "yes" than "no."
16. Failures are hard to forget and successes are hard to remember.

Score Interpretation

Score	Comment
16-37	You have little resilience in the workplace, and this may affect your ability to do your job. However, don't let this get the better of you! It's important to identify the causes of this, so that you can take specific action. Perhaps your confidence is shaky, or you have a negative outlook. Maybe you don't have effective strategies to cope with stress, or you're trying to deal with issues that are beyond your control. Don't give up - there are lots of tools that you can use to unlock resilience and become a positive, productive team member.
38-59	You're not easily defeated, but there's still plenty of room for improvement. Perhaps you need strong goals to focus your efforts, or it could help to reframe your problems as challenges. Maybe you need to address the strength of your working relationships. Have a look through your answers, and try to pinpoint where you need to focus your efforts. You may need to build your skills in just one or two areas, or make small changes in several.
60-80	Well done, you're a resilient team member and you're prepared to keep trying until you succeed! You most likely have a solid network of colleagues who you can rely on for support, you deal effectively with stress, and you're flexible in your approach. You're goal oriented, you have a positive disposition and strong values, and you're willing to take on challenges and help people out. However, there's always room for improvement. Check out our tools and strategies below to see how you can become even more resilient.

We've based this quiz on the four elements of resilience identified by Professor Cary Cooper, professor of organizational psychology and health at Manchester University, Jill Flint-Taylor, and Michael Pearn. They published their model in the 2013 book, "Building Resilience for Success." The four elements are:

1. Confidence.
2. Social support.
3. Adaptability.
4. Purposefulness.

By addressing these four elements, you'll find that your resilience levels improve and you grow stronger. Let's look at each one in more detail, and explore how it relates to the quiz and to your resilience.

Confidence

(Questions 1, 3, 9, 16)

Confidence is doing the "right thing" despite opposition, being willing to take risks, admitting your mistakes and learning from them, and accepting praise graciously. It's an essential part of resilience, and it's related to positivity, self-efficacy and optimism.

Building self-confidence isn't easy, but it is achievable. Resilient people are confident that they will succeed, despite any setbacks that they experience. They have the self-belief to take risks, and they understand that failure is just another step toward success. Read our three-step strategy to discover how you can become more self-confident.

One simple way to improve your confidence is to reframe issues more positively. Leading psychologist Martin Seligman says that the way we explain setbacks to ourselves is important. Read our article on the ABC Technique for more about this.

Thought awareness, mindfulness and Cognitive Restructuring are also essential for resilience. When you fear the future, put yourself down, criticize yourself, doubt your abilities, or expect failure, you're thinking negatively and you may not realize it. Thought awareness is where you observe your thinking patterns and become aware of this negativity. Once you've identified these thoughts, you can begin to challenge them and use positive thinking to counter them. Picking yourself up after a setback will soon become much easier.

Social Support

(Questions 4, 8, 11, 14)

Cooper explains that social support is about building good relationships with others in the workplace, and seeking support and help from them in dealing with problems.

You can't face every challenge alone, particularly when they are large or complex. Being able to approach people in a crisis can help to lower your stress levels and produce a more positive outcome. Our article, [Building Good Work Relationships](#), has a nine-step plan that you can use to forge effective working relationships with your colleagues, and our article, [Leading Equals](#), has tips for improving the way you manage a team of peers.

The people you build these supportive relationships with become your allies, and they can help you achieve your objectives. Anyone in your organization can fill this role, from team members to your boss. You can even form bonds with people outside of your workplace, such as your family members, friends and community members. Any person you can call on when the going gets tough is a potential ally.

Adaptability

(Questions 2, 7, 12, 15)

Being adaptable is important for building resilience, as strength rarely comes from inflexibility. Adaptability is understanding your failures, reflecting on them, being open to new ideas and situations, and finding ways to complete difficult tasks, rather than giving up. Learning to become adaptable means trying to identify and deal with any self-sabotaging personality traits, such as a fear of uncertainty or change.

Dr Cal Crow, co-founder and program director of the Center for Learning Connections, believes that resilient people are introspective. He says that they can reflect on their behavior and thinking, and make positive changes where necessary. They are able to ask themselves whether something is working, take corrective action, and learn from their mistakes and failures. So, look carefully at your own behavior, and ask yourself whether you need to make any changes.

Learning how to manage stress is also an important part of becoming more adaptable. When you're relaxed, you're able to withstand setbacks and focus more clearly. You're also less likely to "lose your cool" when things don't work out. Keeping stress in check starts with how you look after yourself outside of work. Make sure that you get a good night's sleep (roughly seven to eight uninterrupted hours), try to keep to a routine, and add regular exercise to your schedule.

Purposefulness

(Questions 5, 6, 10, 13)

You're more likely to demonstrate resilience if you enjoy your job, you're passionate about it, and it gives you a sense of purpose. Purposefulness implies having a fixed and clear goal, and focusing on it at all times, no matter what setbacks you experience.

Psychologists Susan Kobasa and Cal Crow say that resilient people are committed to their lives and to their goals, which gives them drive and a compelling sense of purpose. They say that these people also feel in control of their lives, and spend time and energy focusing on situations and events that they can influence, which makes them feel empowered and builds their confidence.

Setting and working toward goals is an important aspect of purposefulness. Goals provide long-term vision and short-term motivation, and reduce the likelihood of problems or setbacks knocking you off course. How you set your goals is important, regardless of their size or importance. Make sure that they're SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound), and that they match your personal values.

Being committed to your job is a fundamental part of purposefulness. If you're enthusiastic about what you do, you're more likely to have the motivation to pick yourself up after a setback. So, if you find yourself struggling and your resilience faltering, ask yourself whether you are in the most appropriate position, or whether a different role in another department might be a better fit.

Key Points

Resilience is important because it keeps us on track to achieve our goals, regardless of the setbacks or problems that we may experience. According to Cary Cooper, Jill Flint-Taylor, and Michael Pearn, resilience has four essential elements:

1. Confidence.
2. Social support.
3. Adaptability.
4. Purposefulness

You can boost your resilience and ensure that you'll succeed by focusing on these areas, no matter how many failures you experience. You can help to protect and grow your resilience

by looking after your health and wellbeing, building your support networks, and changing your thinking from negative to positive.

How Resilient Are You?

1. When given a new task, I'm confident that I'll succeed. *(Confidence)*

Strongly Agree = 5	Agree = 4	Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3	Disagree = 2	Strongly Disagree = 1
--------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------------

2. When one attempt fails, I learn from it and change my approach next time. *(Adaptability)*

Strongly Agree = 5	Agree = 4	Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3	Disagree = 2	Strongly Disagree = 1
--------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------------

3. When a task doesn't go to plan, it affects my self belief. *(Confidence)*

Strongly Agree = 1	Agree = 2	Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3	Disagree = 4	Strongly Disagree = 5
--------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------------

4. I have a few people at work who I can speak to about issues in the office. *(Social Support)*

Strongly Agree = 1	Agree = 2	Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3	Disagree = 4	Strongly Disagree = 5
--------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------------

5. When I encounter a difficulty, I lose sight of my goal quickly. *(Purposefulness)*

Strongly Agree = 1	Agree = 2	Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3	Disagree = 4	Strongly Disagree = 5
--------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------------

6. Sometimes I question my commitment to my job. *(Purposefulness)*

Strongly Agree = 1	Agree = 2	Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3	Disagree = 4	Strongly Disagree = 5
--------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------------

7. I have strategies in place for dealing with stress. *(Adaptability)*

Strongly Agree = 5	Agree = 4	Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3	Disagree = 2	Strongly Disagree = 1
--------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------------

8. I find it easy to ask my colleagues for help. *(Social Support)*

Strongly Agree = 5	Agree = 4	Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3	Disagree = 2	Strongly Disagree = 1
--------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------------

9. I feel positive about the future. *(Confidence)*

Strongly Agree = 5	Agree = 4	Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3	Disagree = 2	Strongly Disagree = 1
--------------------	-----------	--------------------------------	--------------	-----------------------

10. I worry about issues that I have no control over. (*Purposefulness*)

Strongly Agree = 1

Agree = 2

Neither Agree Nor
Disagree = 3

Disagree = 4

Strongly
Disagree = 5

11. Asking for assistance reveals weakness. (*Social Support*)

Strongly Agree = 1

Agree = 2

Neither Agree Nor
Disagree = 3

Disagree = 4

Strongly
Disagree = 5

12. When there is a fundamental change, I struggle to come around to new ways of thinking.
(*Adaptability*)

Strongly Agree = 1

Agree = 2

Neither Agree Nor
Disagree = 3

Disagree = 4

Strongly
Disagree = 5

13. I have strong goals that are clear in my mind. (*Responsibility and Reliability*)

Strongly Agree = 5

Agree = 4

Neither Agree Nor
Disagree = 3

Disagree = 2

Strongly
Disagree = 1

14. I am able to discuss my job and its challenges with people outside of work, such as family members and close friends. (*Social Support*)

Strongly Agree = 5

Agree = 4

Neither Agree Nor
Disagree = 3

Disagree = 2

Strongly
Disagree = 1

15. I am more likely to say "yes" than "no." (*Adaptability*)

Strongly Agree = 5

Agree = 4

Neither Agree Nor
Disagree = 3

Disagree = 2

Strongly
Disagree = 1

16. Failures are hard to forget and successes are hard to remember. (*Confidence*)

Strongly Agree = 1

Agree = 2

Neither Agree Nor
Disagree = 3

Disagree = 4

Strongly
Disagree = 5