LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter students should be able to understand:
1. How personality reflects consumers’ inner differences.
2. How Freudian, Neo-Freudian, and Trait Theories each explain the influence of personality on consumers’ attitudes and behavior.
3. How personality reflects consumers’ responses to product and marketing messages.
4. How marketers seek to create brand personalities-like traits.
5. How the products and services that consumers use enhance their self-image.
6. How consumers can create online identities reflecting a particular set of personality traits.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

**Personality** can be described as the psychological characteristics that both determine and reflect how a person responds to his or her environment. Although personality tends to be consistent and enduring, it may change abruptly in response to major life events, as well as gradually over time.

Three theories of personality are prominent in the study of consumer behavior: psychoanalytic theory, neo-Freudian theory, and trait theory. Freud’s psychoanalytic theory provides the foundation for the study of motivational research, which operates on the premise that human drives are largely unconscious in nature and serve to motivate many consumer actions. Neo-Freudian theory tends to emphasize the fundamental role of social relationships in the formation and development of personality. Alfred Adler viewed human beings as seeking to overcome feelings of inferiority. Harry Stack Sullivan believed that people attempt to establish significant and rewarding relationships with others. Karen Horney saw individuals as trying to overcome feelings of anxiety and categorized them as compliant, aggressive, or detached.

Trait theory is a major departure from the qualitative or (subjective) approach to personality measurement. It postulates that individuals possess innate psychological traits (e.g., innovativeness, novelty seeking, need for cognition, materialism) to a greater or lesser degree, and that these traits can be measured by specially designed scales or inventories. Because they are simple to use and to score and can be self-administered, personality inventories are the preferred method for many researchers in the assessment of consumer personality. Product and brand personalities represent real opportunities for marketers to take advantage of consumers’ connections to various brands they offer. Brands often have personalities—some include “human-like” traits and even gender. These brand personalities help shape consumer responses, preferences, and loyalties.
Each individual has a perceived self-image (or multiple self-images) as a certain kind of person with certain traits, habits, possessions, relationships, and ways of behaving. Consumers frequently attempt to preserve, enhance, alter, or extend their self-images by purchasing products or services and shopping at stores believed to be consistent with the relevant self-image(s) and by avoiding products and stores they perceive are not. With the growth of the Internet, there appear to be emerging virtual selves or virtual personalities. Consumer experiences with chat rooms sometimes provide an opportunity to explore new or alternative identities.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

1. This chapter is designed to provide the reader with an understanding of how personality and self-concept are related to various aspects of consumer behavior.
   a) This chapter considers the important topics of brand personality, how the related concepts of self and self-image influence consumer attitudes and behavior.
   b) This chapter concludes with an exploration of virtual personality or virtual self.

WHAT IS PERSONALITY?

1. Personality is defined as those inner psychological characteristics that both determine and reflect how a person responds to his or her environment.
2. The emphasis in this definition is on inner characteristics—that specific qualities, attributes, traits, factors, and mannerisms that distinguish one individual from other individuals.
3. The identification of specific personality characteristics associated with consumer behavior has proven to be highly useful in the development of a firm’s market segmentation strategies.

The Nature of Personality

1. In the study of personality, three distinct properties are of central importance:
   a) Personality reflects individual differences.
   b) Personality is consistent and enduring.
   c) Personality can change.
Personality Reflects Individual Differences

1. An individual’s personality is a unique combination of factors; no two individuals are exactly alike.
2. Personality is a useful concept because it enables us to categorize consumers into different groups on the basis of a single trait or a few traits.

Personality is Consistent and Enduring

1. Marketers learn which personality characteristics influence specific consumer responses and attempt to appeal to relevant traits inherent in their target group of consumers.
2. Even though an individual’s personality may be consistent, consumption behavior often varies considerably because of psychological, sociocultural, situational and environmental factors that affect behavior.
3. Personality is only one of a combination of factors that influence how a consumer behaves.

Personality Can Change

1. An individual’s personality may be altered by major life events, such as the birth of a child, the death of a loved one, a divorce, or a major career change.
2. An individual’s personality also changes as part of a gradual maturing process.
   a) Personality stereotypes may also change over time.
   b) There is a prediction, for example, that a personality convergence is occurring between men and women.
      i) The reason for this shift is that women have been moving into occupations that have been dominated by men and have increasingly been associated with masculine personality attributes.

THEORIES OF PERSONALITY

1. There are three major theories of personality discussed in the chapter. They are:
   a) Freudian theory.
   b) Neo-Freudian personality theory.
   c) Trait theory.

Freudian Theory

1. Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory of personality is one of the cornerstones of modern psychology.
2. This theory was built on the premise that unconscious needs or drives, especially biological and sexual drives, are at the heart of human motivation and personality.

**Use Key Term psychoanalytic theory of personality Here**

**Id, Superego, and Ego**

1. Freud proposed that the human personality consists of three interacting systems: the id, the superego, and the ego.
2. The **Id** is the “warehouse” of primitive and impulsive drives, such as: thirst, hunger, and sex, for which the individual seeks immediate satisfaction without concern for the specific means of that satisfaction.
3. **Superego** is the individual’s internal expression of society’s moral and ethical codes of conduct.
   a) The superego’s role is to see that the individual satisfies needs in a socially acceptable fashion.
   b) The superego is a kind of “brake” that restrains or inhibits the impulsive forces of the id.
4. **Ego** is the individual’s conscious control, which functions as an internal monitor that attempts to balance the impulsive demands of the id and the sociocultural constraints of the superego.
5. Freud emphasized that an individual’s personality is formed as he or she passes through a number of distinct stages of infant and childhood development.
6. These distinct stages of infant and childhood development are: oral, anal, phallic, latent, and genital stages.
7. An adult’s personality is determined by how well he or she deals with the crises that are experienced while passing through each of these stages.

**Use Learning Objective #3 Here; Use Figure #5-2 and #5-3 Here**

**Freudian Theory and Product Personality**

1. Those stressing Freud’s theories see that human drives are largely unconscious, and that consumers are primarily unaware of their true reasons for buying what they buy.
2. These researchers focus on consumer purchases and/or consumption situations, treating them as an extension of the consumer’s personality.

**Use Exercise #2 Here; Use Table #5-1 Here**

**Neo-Freudian Personality Theory**

1. Several of Freud’s colleagues disagreed with his contention that personality is primarily instinctual and sexual in nature.

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a) They argued that social relations are fundamental to personality development.

2. Alfred Adler viewed human beings as seeking to attain various rational goals, which he called style of life, placing emphasis on the individual’s efforts to overcome feelings of inferiority.

3. Harry Stack Sullivan stressed that people continuously attempt to establish significant and rewarding relationships with others, placing emphasis on efforts to reduce tensions.

4. Karen Horney focused on the impact of child-parent relationships, especially the individual’s desire to conquer feelings of anxiety. She proposed three personality groups: compliant, aggressive, and detached.
   a) Compliant individuals are those who move toward others—they desire to be loved, wanted, and appreciated.
   b) Aggressive individuals move against others—they desire to excel and win admiration.
   c) Detached individuals move away from others—they desire independence, self-sufficiency, and freedom from obligations.

5. A personality test based on Horney’s theory (the CAD) has been developed and tested.
   a) It reveals a number of tentative relationships between scores and product and brand usage patterns.

6. It is likely that many marketers have used some of these neo-Freudian theories intuitively.

*****Use Figure #5-4 Here*****

Trait Theory

1. Trait theory is a significant departure from the earlier qualitative measures that are typical of Freudian and neo-Freudian theory.

2. It is primarily quantitative or empirical, focusing on the measurement of personality in terms of specific psychological characteristics called traits.
   a) A trait is defined as any distinguishing, relatively enduring way in which one individual differs from another.

3. Selected single-trait personality tests increasingly are being developed specifically for use in consumer behavior studies. Types of traits measured include:
   a) **Consumer innovativeness**—how receptive a person is to new experiences
   b) **Consumer materialism**—the degree of the consumer’s attachment to “worldly possessions”
   c) **Consumer ethnocentrism**—the consumer’s likelihood to accept or reject foreign-made products

4. Researchers have learned to expect personality to be linked to how consumers make their choices, and to the purchase or consumption of a broad product category rather than a specific brand.

*****Use Discussion Questions #2 and #3 Here; Use Key Terms consumer innovativeness, consumer materialism, and consumer ethnocentrism Here; Use Table #5-2 Here*****
PERSONALITY AND UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER DIVERSITY

1. Marketers are interested in understanding how personality influences consumption behavior because such knowledge enables them to better understand consumers and to segment and target those consumers who are likely to respond positively to their product or service communications.

*****Use Learning Objective #5.3 Here*****

Consumer Innovativeness and Related Personality Traits

1. Marketing practitioners must learn all they can about consumer innovators—those who are open to new ideas and likely to try new products, services, or practices. Those innovators are often crucial to the success of new products.
2. Personality traits have proved useful in differentiating between consumer innovators and noninnovators.
3. Personality traits to be discussed include:
   a) Consumer innovativeness
   b) Dogmatism
   c) Social character
   d) Need for uniqueness
   e) Optimum stimulation level
   f) Sensation seeking
   g) Variety-novelty seeking

*****Use Key Term consumer innovators Here*****

Consumer Innovativeness

1. Measure of personality traits provide important insights into the nature and boundaries of a consumer’s “willingness to innovate.”
2. Consumer innovativeness has been linked to the need for stimulation, novelty seeking, and the need for uniqueness.
3. Previous studies treated innovativeness as a single trait.
4. A recent study developed a hierarchical model consisting of three levels of personality:
   a) Global innovativeness – a personal trait that exists independent of any context; one that represents the “very nature” of consumers’ innovativeness.
   b) Domain-specific innovativeness – a more narrowly defined activity within a specific domain or product category.
   c) Innovative behavior – a pattern of actions or responses that indicate early acceptance of change and adoption of innovations.
5. Research indicates a positive relationship between innovative use of the Internet and buying online.
6. Consumer innovativeness can be an important consideration when firms consider brand extensions.

| ****Use Table #5-3 Here; Use Key Terms global innovativeness, domain-specific innovativeness and innovative behavior Here**** |

**Dogmatism**

1. **Consumer dogmatism** is a personality trait that measures the degree of rigidity an individual displays toward the unfamiliar and toward information that is contrary to their established beliefs.
2. A person who is highly dogmatic approaches the unfamiliar defensively and with considerable discomfort and uncertainty.
3. A person who is low dogmatic will readily consider the unfamiliar or opposing beliefs.
4.  
   a) Consumers low in dogmatism (open-minded) are more likely to prefer innovative products to established ones and tend to be more receptive to messages that stress factual differences, product benefits, and other forms of product-usage information.
   b) Consumers high in dogmatism (closed-minded) are more likely to choose established product innovations and tend to be more receptive to ads for new products or services that contain an appeal from an authoritative figure.

| ****Use Key Term consumer dogmatism Here***** |

**Social Character**

1. Social character is a personality trait that ranges on a continuum from inner-directed to other-directed.
   a) **Inner-directed** consumers tend to rely on their own “inner” values or standards in evaluating new products and are likely to be consumer innovators. They also prefer ads stressing product features and personal benefits.
   b) **Other-directed** consumers tend to look to others for direction and are not innovators. They prefer ads that feature social environment and social acceptance.

| ****Use Discussion Question #4 Here; Use Key Terms inner-directedness and other-directedness Here; Use Figure #5.5 Here***** |

**Need for Uniqueness**

1. We all know people who seek to be unique.
2. These people avoid conformity.

| ****Use Table #5-4 Here***** |
Optimum Stimulation Level

1. Some people prefer a simple, uncluttered, and calm existence, although others seem to prefer an environment crammed with novel, complex, and unusual experiences.
2. Persons with high optimum stimulation levels (OSLs) are willing to take risks, to try new products, to be innovative, to seek purchase-related information, and to accept new retail facilities.
3. OSL scores also seem to reflect a person’s desired level of lifestyle stimulation.
   a) Consumers whose actual lifestyles are equivalent to their OSL scores appear to be quite satisfied.
   b) Those whose lifestyles are understimulated are likely to be bored.
   c) Those whose lifestyles are overstimulated are likely to seek rest or relief.
4. This suggests that the relationship between consumers’ lifestyles and their OSLs is likely to influence their choices of products or services and how they manage and spend their time.

Sensation Seeking

1. Closely related to the OSI concept is sensation seeking (SS) which has been defined as “a trait characterized by the need for varied, novel, and complex sensations and experience, and the willingness to take physical and social risks for the sake of such experience.”

Variety-Novelty Seeking

1. This is similar to OSL.
   a) Primary types are variety or novelty seeking
2. There appear to be many different types of variety seeking: exploratory purchase behavior (e.g., switching brands to experience new and possibly better alternatives), vicarious exploration (e.g., where the consumer secures information about a new or different alternative and then contemplates or even daydreams about the option), and use innovativeness (e.g., where the consumer uses an already adopted product in a new or novel way).
   a) The use innovativeness trait is particularly relevant to technological products.
3. Consumers with high variety seeking scores might also be attracted to brands that claim to have novel or multiple uses or applications.
4. There seems to be a relationship between variety seeking and time of day.
   a) There is greater variety-seeking behavior when the consumer is experiencing arousal lows.
5. Variety seeing can be domain specific.
6. Consumer innovators differ from the noninnovator in terms of personality orientation.
This knowledge can help marketers select target segments for new products and to design promotional strategies for specific segments.

Cognitive Personality Factors

1. Market researchers want to understand how cognitive personality influences consumer behavior.
2. Two cognitive personality traits have been useful in understanding selected aspects of consumer behavior. They are:
   a) Need for cognition.
   b) Visualizers versus verbalizers.

Need for Cognition

1. Need for cognition (NFC) is the measurement of a person’s craving for or enjoyment of thinking.
2. Consumers who are high in NFC are more likely to be responsive to the part of an advertisement that is rich in product-related information of description.
   a) They are also more responsive to cool colors.
3. Consumers who are relatively low in NFC are more likely to be attracted to the background or peripheral aspects of an ad.
   a) They spend more time on print content and have much stronger brand recall.
4. Need for cognition seems to play a role in an individual’s use of the Internet.

Visualizers versus Verbalizers

1. Visualizers are consumers who prefer visual information and products that stress the visual.
2. Verbalizers are consumers who prefer written or verbal information and products that stress the verbal.
3. This distinction helps marketers know whether to stress visual or written elements in their ads.
4. A recent research effort found that there are two distinctly different types of visualizers.
   a) Object visualizers encode and process images as a single perceptual unit.
   b) Spatial visualizers process images piece by piece.
From Consumer Materialism to Compulsive Consumption

1. Consumer researchers have become increasingly interested in exploring various consumption and possession traits.
2. These traits range from consumer materialism to fixated consumption behavior to consumer compulsive behavior.

Consumer Materialism

1. Materialism is a trait of people who feel their possessions are essential to their identity.
2. They value acquiring and showing off possessions, they are self-centered and selfish, they seek lifestyles full of possessions, and their possessions do not give them greater happiness.
3. A recent study found that the most important predictor of the amount of time a consumer shopped and the amount he or she spent was that individual’s total score on the materialism scale.
4. In terms of “willingness to spend” consumer often react differently than they would like to.
5. Materialism has often been linked to advertising, and researchers have suggested that in the United States there has been an increasing emphasis on materialism in the print media.
6. The extent of consumer materialism can vary from country to country, and marketers must be careful when trying to export a successful U.S. marketing mix to another country.
7. During consumption dreaming, a consumer dreams about material objects and experiences.

Fixated Consumption Behavior

1. Somewhere between being materialistic and being compulsive is being fixated with regard to consuming or possessing.
2. Like materialism, fixated consumption behavior is in the realm of normal and socially acceptable behavior.
3. Fixated consumers display their purchases and their involvement is shared with others.
4. Fixated consumers’ characteristics:
   a) A deep (possibly “passionate”) interest in a particular object or product category.
   b) A willingness to go to considerable lengths to secure additional examples of the object or product category of interest.
   c) The dedication of a considerable amount of discretionary time and money to searching out the object or product.
5. This profile of the fixated consumer describes many collectors or hobbyists (e.g., coin, stamp, antique collectors, vintage wristwatch, or fountain pen collectors).

Compulsive Consumption Behavior

1. Compulsive consumption is in the realm of abnormal behavior.

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2. Consumers who are compulsive have an addiction; in some respects, they are out of control, and their actions may have damaging consequences to them and those around them.
3. There have been some research efforts to develop a screener inventory to pinpoint compulsive buying behaviors.
4. Some consumers exhibit impulse buying tendencies which might be considered harmless fun. Chronic levels of impulse purchasing are a serious matter.

*****Use Key Term compulsive consumption Here; Use Figure #5.8 Here; Use Table #5.7 Here*****

Consumer Ethnocentrism: Responses to Foreign-Made Products

1. To identify consumer segments receptive to foreign-made products, researchers have developed and tested the consumer ethnocentrism scale—CETSCALE.
   a) CETSCALE results identify consumers with a predisposition to reject or accept foreign-made products.
2. Consumers who are highly ethnocentric feel that it is wrong to purchase foreign-made products because it would hurt the domestic economy.
   a) Non-ethnocentric consumers tend to evaluate foreign-made products more objectively.

*****Use Table #5-8 Here *****

Country by Country Ethnocentrism

1. Ethnocentrism has been found to vary by country and product.
2. For some consumers, country of assembly and/or country of design play a role in their decision to purchase or not.

Targeting the Ethnocentric Consumer

1. Marketers can appeal to ethnocentric consumers by stressing nationalistic themes in their promotional efforts.
2. One study showed that domestic country bias varied among product categories.
3. Another study found that low-knowledge consumers’ product attitude is more strongly influence by country-of-origin perceptions that high-knowledge consumers’ product attitude.
4. Many personality traits relate to ethnocentrism.

*****Use Discussion Question #5 Here; Use Tables #5-9 and #5.10 Here; Use Figures #5.9, #5.10 and #5.11 Here*****

Cosmopolitanism

1. The consumer trait of cosmopolitanism is opposite of an ethnocentric view.
2. Consumers with a cosmopolitan orientation consider the world to his or her marketplace and are attracted to products, experiences, and places from other cultures.

BRAND PERSONALITY

1. It appears that consumers tend to ascribe various descriptive “personality-like” traits or characteristics—the ingredients of brand personalities—to different brands in a wide variety of product categories.
2. A brand personality provides an emotional identity for a brand, and encourages consumers to respond with feelings and emotions toward the brand.
3. A brand’s personality can either be functional (“dependable and rugged”) or symbolic (“the athlete in all of us”).
4. There is common sense and research evidence to conclude that any brand personality, as long as it is strong and favorable, will strengthen a brand.
5. Research studies have found that a strong, positive brand personality leads to more favorable attitudes toward the brand, brand preference, higher purchase intentions, and brand loyalty, and is a way for consumers to differentiate among competing brands.
6. Brand personality may also play a greater role in the consumable product category than in the durable product category.
   a) Service brands have personalities.

*****Use Learning Objective #5.4 Here; Use Table #5.10 Here

Product Anthropomorphism

1. Anthropomorphism is loosely defined as attributing human characteristics to something that is not human.
2. A recent study found that the ease with which consumers could anthropomorphize an offering was a function of how the product was presented to the public and the inclusion or absence of human-like product features.
3. Products presented as human but which lack human features tend to be evaluated less favorable by consumers than products that are presented as human and have human-like attributes.

Brand Personification

1. A brand personification recasts consumers’ perception of the attributes of a product or service into the form of a “human-like character.”
2. It seems that consumers can express their inner feelings about products or brands in terms of association with a known personality.
3. Identifying consumers’ current brand-personality links and creating personality links for new products are important marketing tasks.
4. There are five defining dimensions of a brand’s personality (“sincerity,” “excitement,” “competence,” “sophistication,” and “ruggedness”), and fifteen facets of personality that
flow out of the five dimensions (e.g., “down-to-earth,” “daring,” “reliable,” “upper class,” and “outdoors”).

5. Consumers sometimes develop a relationship with a brand that is similar to the relationships they have with other humans.
   a) In some instances they give their products names and actually speak to their product.
   b) In an “exchange relationship” the consumer gets something back in return.
   c) Brand zealots develop a “communal relationship” with the product and demonstrate a passion that is typically associated only with family and friends.

Product Personality and Gender

1. A product personality, or persona, frequently means that the product or brand has a “gender.”
2. This assigning of a gender as part of personality description is fully consistent with the marketplace reality that products and services, in general, are viewed by consumers as having a gender.
3. Armed with such knowledge of the perceived gender of a product or a specific brand, marketers are in a better position to select visual and copy-text for various marketing messages.

Product Personality and Geography

1. Marketers learned a long time ago that certain products, in the minds of consumers, possess a strong geographical association.
2. By employing geography in a product’s name, the product’s manufacturer creates a geographic personality for the product.
3. Using the geographical association can create a geographic equity.
   a) This means that in a consumer’s memory, the knowledge of the brand reflects a strong geographic association.
4. The real question is, “Does location (geography) add to the brand image and to the product’s brand equity?”

Personality and Color

1. Consumers also tend to associate personality factors with specific colors.
   a) In some cases, various products, even brands, associate a specific color with personality-like connotations.
   b) It appears that blue appeals particularly to female consumers.

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c) Yellow is associated with “novelty,” and black frequently connotes “sophistication.”

d) For this reason, brands wishing to create a sophisticated persona (e.g., Minute Maid juices or Pasta LaBella) or an upscale or premium image (e.g., Miller Beers’ Miller Reserve) use labeling or packaging that is primarily black.

2. Many fast-food restaurants use combinations of bright colors, like red, yellow, and blue, for their roadside signs and interior designs.
   a) These colors have come to be associated with fast service and food being inexpensive.

3. In contrast, fine dining restaurants tend to use sophisticated colors like gray, white, shades of tan, or other soft, pale, or muted colors to reflect fine leisurely service.

*****Use Tables #5-13 and #5-14 Here*****

SELF AND SELF-IMAGE

1. Self-images, or “perceptions of self,” are very closely associated with personality in that individuals tend to buy products and services and patronize retailers with images or “personalities” that closely correspond to their own self-images.

2. Such concepts as one or multiple selves, self-image, and the notion of the extended self and the possibilities or option of altering the self-image, are explored by consumer behavior researchers.

*****Use Key Term extended self Here; Use Learning Objective #5.5 Here*****

One or Multiple Selves

1. Historically, individuals were thought to have a single self-image and focused on products accordingly.

2. It is more accurate to think of consumers as having multiple selves.
   a) This suggests that a consumer is quite likely to be or act differently with different people and in different situations.

3. The healthy or normal person is likely to display a somewhat different personality in various situations or social roles.

4. Marketers should target their products and services to consumers within the context of a particular “self,” and in certain cases, offer a choice of different products for different selves.

*****Use Key Terms multiple selves and roles Here*****

The Makeup of the Self-Image

1. A person has a self-image of him/herself as a certain kind of person.
   a) The individual’s self-image is unique; the outgrowth of that person’s background and experience.
2. Products and brands have symbolic value for individuals who evaluate them on the basis of their consistency with their personal pictures or images of themselves.
3. Consumers use brands to help define themselves.
4. Research shows that consumers who have strong links to particular brand see such brands as representing an aspect of themselves.
5. For marketers, such connections are an important step in the formation of consumer loyalty and a positive relationship with consumers.
6. Purchase intent is strong when there is a good fit between brand image and self-image.
7. Four aspects of self-image are:
   a) Actual self-image—how consumers see themselves
   b) Ideal self-image—how consumers would like to see themselves
   c) Social self-image—how consumers feel others see them
   d) Ideal social self-image—how consumers would like others to see them
8. Some marketers have identified a fifth and sixth self-image.
   a) Expected self-image—how consumers expect to see themselves at some specified future time
   b) “Ought-to” self—traits or characteristics that an individual believes it is his or her duty or obligation to possess
   c) In different contexts, consumers might select different self-images to guide their attitudes and behavior.
9. The concept of self-image has strategic implications for marketers.
10. Marketers can segment their markets on the basis of relevant consumer self-images and then position their products or stores as symbols for such self-images.

The Extended Self

1. Consumers’ possessions can be seen to “confirm” or “extend” their self-images.
2. The above suggests that much of human emotion can be connected to valued possessions.
3. Possessions can extend the self in a number of ways:
   a) Actually: by allowing the person to do things that otherwise would be very difficult or impossible to accomplish (e.g., problem-solving by using a computer)
   b) Symbolically: by making the person feel better or “bigger” (e.g., receiving an employee award for excellence)
   c) By conferring status or rank: (e.g., status among collectors of rare works of art because of the ownership of a particular masterpiece)
   d) By bestowing feelings of immortality: by leaving valued possessions to young family members (this also has the potential of extending the recipients’ “selves”)
   e) By endowing with magical powers: (e.g., a cameo pin inherited from one’s aunt might be perceived as a magic amulet bestowing good luck when it is worn)
Altering the Self

1. Consumers often wish to change themselves—to become a different or improved self.
2. It seems consumers are trying to express their individualism or uniqueness by creating and maintaining a new self.
3. In using self-altering products, consumers are frequently attempting to express their individualism or uniqueness by creating a new self, marinating the existing self, and extending the self.
4. Sometimes consumers use self-altering products or services to conform to or take on the appearance of a particular type of person.
5. Clothing, cosmetics, jewelry, grooming aids, and all kinds of accessories offer consumers the opportunity to modify their appearance and thereby to alter their selves.
6. Personal vanity and self-image are closely related.
7. There is research evidence to suggest that self-monitoring may serve as a moderating variable when it comes to how well a person is guided by situational cues regarding social appropriateness.
   a) Low self-monitors are individuals who are typically guided by their inner feelings, whereas high self-monitors claim that they act differently in different situations and with different people.
   b) Consequently, high self monitors might be more prone to employ a self-altering product in order to enhance their ideal social self-image.

VIRTUAL PERSONALITY OR SELF

1. There has been a tremendous growth in the use of online chat rooms.
2. People who are visiting chat rooms are able to carry on real time conversations about themselves and topics of mutual interest with people from all over the globe.
   a) The participants commonly never get to see each other.
   b) This creates an opportunity for chat room participants to try out new identities or to change their identities while online.
3. In terms of personality, one can change from mild-mannered to aggressive or from introvert to extravert.
4. The notion of a virtual personality or virtual self provides an individual with the opportunity to try on different personalities or different identities, much like going to the mall and trying on different outfits in a department or specialty store.
5. If the identity fits, or the personality can be enhanced, maybe we keep the new personality in favor of our old personality.
6. The Internet is redefining human identity, creating an “online self.”
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **How would you explain the fact that, although no two individuals have identical personalities, personality is sometimes used in consumer research to identify distinct and sizable market segments?**

   Because the inner characteristics that constitute an individual’s personality are a unique combination of factors, no two individuals are exactly alike. Nevertheless, many individuals tend to be similar in terms of a single personality characteristic. For instance, many people can be described as “high” in sociability (the degree of interest they display in social or group activities), although others can be described as “low” in sociability. **Personality** is a useful concept because it enables us to categorize consumers into different groups on the basis of a single trait or a few traits. If each person were different in all respects, it would be impossible to group consumers into segments, and there would be little reason to develop standardized products and promotional campaigns. Marketers seek to identify those particular personality characteristics that are shared by those individuals who constitute a particular market segment.

2. **Contrast the major characteristics of the following personality theories: a) Freudian theory, b) neo-Freudian theory, and c) trait theory. In your answer, illustrate how each theory is applied to the understanding of consumer behavior.**

   a) **Freudian** (or psychoanalytic) theory is based on the premise that subconscious needs, especially biological and sexual needs, are the center of human motivation and personality. Because of its clinical origin, this theory stresses measurement of personality through qualitative or subjective approaches (e.g., projective techniques). The major application of Freudian theory to consumer behavior is Ernest Dichter’s work.

   b) **Neo-Freudian** theory contends that social relationships are fundamental to the development of personality. For example, Adler proposed that overcoming feelings of inferiority is the major factor in human motivation, and Sullivan viewed reduction of anxiety as a key factor. The most systematic application of neo-Freudian theory in consumer research is the development of the CAD scale—a personality test based on Karen Horney’s proposition that individuals can be classified into three personality types: compliant, aggressive, and detached. These personality types and the research findings of studies that used the CAD scale are described in the text.

   c) **Trait theory**, in contrast to Freudian and neo-Freudian theories, is quantitative in its orientation. It views personality as a set of enduring traits rather than the result of subconscious drives. These traits are usually expressed in numerical scores obtained on self-administered paper-and-pencil tests. Single trait personality tests have been...
particularly successful in adding to the understanding of consumer behavior, and such
tests are increasingly being developed for use in consumer research. Personality traits
have been linked to many consumption behaviors including purchase patterns of various
products (but seldom to consumption of specific brands), store choices, purchasing
foreign made products, and to differentiating between innovators and non-innovators.

3. Describe personality trait theory. Give five examples of how personality traits can be
used in consumer research.

Trait theory constitutes a major departure from the qualitative measures that typify the
Freudian and neo-Freudian movements (e.g., personal observation, self-reported experiences,
dream analysis, projective techniques). **Trait theory** is primarily quantitative or empirical; it
focuses on the measurement of personality in terms of specific psychological characteristics,
called traits: “any distinguishing, relatively enduring way in which one individual differs
from another.” Selected single-trait personality tests (which measure just one trait, such as
self-confidence) are increasingly being developed specifically for use in consumer behavior
studies. These tailor-made personality tests measure such traits as consumer innovativeness,
consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence, materialism, and consumer ethnocentrism.

Examples:
- The Consumer Innovativeness Scale can be used to study how receptive consumers are to
  new products or services.
- Consumer researchers recently developed a scale that measures consumers’ susceptibility
to interpersonal influence.
- In testing a new materialism scale, researchers found that materialistic people value
  acquiring and showing off possessions, are self-centered, etc.
- In an effort to distinguish between consumer segments that are likely to be receptive to
  foreign-made products and those that are not, researchers have developed and tested the
  consumer ethnocentrism scale.
- Need for cognition measures the person’s craving for, or enjoyment of, thinking.

4. How can a marketer of cameras use research findings that indicate a target market
consists primarily of inner-directed or other-directed consumers? Of consumers who
are high (or low) on innovativeness?

*Inner-directed* and *other-directed* consumers have different preferences with respect to
promotional messages. Because inner-directed people tend to depend on their own inner
values in evaluating new products and services, they prefer advertisements that emphasize
product features and personal benefits. As other-directed individuals turn to other people for
direction, they are most likely to prefer ads that feature a social environment or social
acceptance. They would evaluate a product in terms of its potential for social approval.
Therefore, a manufacturer of cameras who advertises to inner-directed consumers should
stress the ability to take better pictures and the resulting personal satisfaction. An ad aimed at
other-directed consumers should portray photographing others (e.g., photographing friends
standing near a famous landmark) or showing friends pictures or slides taken during a trip. Consumers who are high on innovativeness are more receptive to new products than persons who are low on innovativeness. Thus, when introducing a new model or new product features, the camera’s marketer should advertise to those who are high on innovativeness because they approach unfamiliar products with considerable openness and little anxiety.

5. **Describe the type of promotional message that would be most suitable for each of the following personality market segments and give an example of each:** (a) highly dogmatic consumers, (b) inner-directed consumers, (c) consumers with high optimum stimulation levels, (d) consumers with a high need for cognition, and (e) consumers who are visualizers versus consumers who are verbalizers.

   a) Highly dogmatic consumers are likely to respond favorably to a new product when the advertising message is presented in an authoritarian manner (e.g., celebrity endorsement or expert testimonials).

   b) Inner-directed consumers tend to use their own values and standards in evaluating a new product; therefore, ads aimed at them should depict the attainment of personal achievement and satisfaction.

   c) Consumers with a high optimum stimulation level are more open to risk-taking, more likely to be innovative, try products with many novel features, and shop in new retail outlets. Consumers with high OSL are likely to respond favorably to promotional messages stressing more rather than less risk, novelty, or excitement.

   d) Consumers with a high need for cognition are ones who often crave or enjoy thinking. They are likely to be responsive to ads that are rich in product-related information or description and are unresponsive to the auxiliary or contextual aspects of an advertisement.

   e) Marketers should stress visual dimensions in attracting visualizers (i.e., consumers who prefer visual information, products that stress the visual) and detailed descriptions and explanations in targeting verbalizers (i.e., consumers who prefer written and verbal product information).

6. **Is there likely to be a difference in personality traits between individuals who readily purchase foreign-made products and those who prefer American-made products? How can marketers use the consumer ethnocentrism scale to segment consumers?**

   The consumer ethnocentrism scale, called CETSCALE, is designed to identify consumers with a predisposition to accept (or reject) foreign-made products. Consumers who are highly ethnocentric feel that it is inappropriate or wrong to purchase foreign-made products, and a domestic marketer can attract them by stressing ethnocentric themes in its advertising. Non-ethnocentric consumers tend to evaluate foreign-made products more objectively for their extrinsic characteristics than for where the products were manufactured.
7. A marketer of health foods is attempting to segment a certain market on the basis of consumer self-image. Describe the four types of consumer self-image and discuss which one(s) would be most effective for the stated purpose.

Four different self-image constructs have been identified: (1) actual self-image (e.g., how the consumers in fact see themselves), (2) ideal self-image (e.g., how consumers would like to see themselves), (3) social self-image (e.g., how consumers feel others see them), and (4) ideal social self-image (e.g., how consumers would like others to see them). Other research has identified a fifth type of self-image, expected self-image (e.g., how consumers expect to see themselves at some specified future time) and a sixth self-image, the ought-to self (e.g., consists of traits or characteristics that an individual believes it is his or her duty or obligation to possess). The expected self-image is somewhere between the actual and ideal self-images. It is somewhat like a future-oriented combination of “what is” (the actual self-image) and what consumers would like “to be” (the ideal self-image). Moreover, because the expected self-image provides consumers with a realistic “opportunity” to change the “self,” it is likely to be more valuable to marketers than the actual or ideal self-image as a guide for designing and promoting products. In targeting consumers of health foods, the marketer can use the expected self-image to attract consumers who would like to enhance the quality of their lifestyles through better nutrition, and ideal social self-image to appeal to consumers who are likely to adopt health foods due to peer influence and pressure.

EXERCISES

1. How do your clothing preferences differ from those of your friends? What personality traits might explain why your preferences are different from those of other people?

Instructor’s Discussion

This discussion-based exercise should help students reflect on the impact of personality on common consumer choices and the challenges the use of personality-related segmentation criteria presented by marketers. Be sure that students examine the personality traits explored in the Personality and Understanding Consumer Diversity section of the chapter. Consider the following general traits and apply these to the exercise at hand: innovativeness, dogmatism, social character (e.g., inner- and other-directedness), the need for uniqueness, optimum stimulation level (OSL), sensation seeking, variety seeking, and novelty seeking. Students can also explore cognitive personality factors, consumer materialism, consumer compulsive behavior, and ethnocentrism.

2. Find three print advertisements based on Freudian personality theory. Discuss how Freudian concepts are used in these ads. Do any of the ads personify a brand? If so, how?
Instructor’s Discussion

This discussion-based exercise should help students apply in concrete terms the elements of Freudian personality theory. Notice which of the ads might appeal to the id, ego, or super ego. Also explore the “product personality” examined in Table 5-1. How do the ads match to this table?

3. **Administer the nine items from the materialism scale (listed in Table 5-5) to two of your friends. In your view, are their consumption behaviors consistent with their scores on the scale? Why or why not?**

Instructor’s Discussion

This exercise provides students with practical material to work with in their application of and understanding of consumer behavior and personality. Students may also wish to expand this exercise to include the Internet and e-commerce. Notice that the chapter suggests that recent consumer research indicates a positive relationship between innovative use of the Internet and buying online.

**S.T.A.R. PROJECTS**

**Ethical Issues in Consumer Behavior**

**S.T.A.R. Project #1**

The AdForum is a place where advertising agencies can display creative work. This intriguing Web site boasts that the viewer can find 23,500+ domestic and global ads with a click of the mouse. In addition, AdForum has up-to-the-minute news about the advertising world and how viewers, readers, and listeners respond to this world. Go to the AdForum Web site at www.adforum.com and find three (3) domestic or international examples of advertisements that display good ethical behavior with respect to focusing on personality as a creative advertising theme. These ads could show people making good choices, making ethical decisions, or be scenes where personality traits match to correct ethical choices or decisions.

a. Describe or download the ads.
b. Describe the situations found in the ads and comment on the ethics involved
c. How do the situations relate to the personality variable in consumer behavior?

Instructor’s Discussion

Typically, the AdForum Web site will have at least one cover story that will spark the student’s interest with respect to ethics. With a little reading and appreciation of the material contained in the chapter, the student should be able to make a connection between the ethical situation involved in the advertisement and the personality variable. For example, in a recent commercial sponsored by the Partnership for a Drug Free America, a young teen is shown being pressured by
peers to inhale cocaine—“a little bit won’t hurt,” say the friends. In a later scene, the teen’s nose begins to bleed in school—“a little bit won’t hurt!” This exercise will practice students on finding and recognizing ads that feature the personality theme and ads that have an ethical message or situation featured.

**S.T.A.R. Project #2**

Few of us would misidentify who said “What’s Up Doc?,” and “Tickle Me Elmo” is not usually mistaken as a directive to a friendly relative. Warner Bros. and Sesame Street Productions have a unique position in our society. They also have a unique responsibility in that their messages are seen and acted upon by thousands of children on a daily basis. To children, the characters from these two creative giants are real and not imaginary. The personalities of the characters are often emulated by youth. Go to the Looney Tunes Web site (http://looneytunes.kidsweb.com) and Sesame Street (www.sesamestreet.com) Web sites and observe how cartoon personalities are developed.

a. What ethical responsibilities do Warner Bros. and Sesame Street Productions shoulder?

b. Examine the personalities of characters on each of the two Web sites. Give two examples of characters that exhibit human personality characteristics or traits. Explain.

c. Discuss what you perceive to be correct and incorrect product endorsement by cartoon or puppet characters. Explain your thinking.

**Instructor’s Discussion**

The students will find a wealth of information about cartoon and puppet characters on these two Web sites. Matching these characters to personality types will make an interesting in-class discussion. Discussing ethical ramifications is more difficult. Focus on part “c” to extend this discussion.

**Small Group Projects**

**S.T.A.R. Project #3**

Have you ever been to a SlamBall match? Probably not. Warner Bros. and TNN network, however, are betting that you soon will. What is SlamBall? Think about combining basketball, hockey, roller derby, and trampolines. Sound exciting? SlamBall is played four on four on a full court. Hockey-style rules make dribbling the SlamBall (similar to a basketball) somewhat difficult so innovations in ball control are encouraged. There are basket goals that may be approached from the front, side, or rear. The court is enclosed in plexi-walls to keep the ball in play. HotSpot trampolines extend play to heights of up to 17 feet above the game floor. At present there are six professional teams, however, this number is expected to grow as this new extreme sport catches on. For more information visit the SlamBall Web site at www.slamball.net.

a. Using the personality traits discussed in the chapter, your group should profile the type of consumer that might be interested in SlamBall. Explain your group’s rationale.

b. Take the profile developed above and indicate how SlamBall might reach these consumers. Part of the group might examine the media, endorsements, publicity, or
other venues.
c. Comment on what your group perceives to be the future of extreme sports like SlamBall. Explain your group’s forecast and judgment.

Instructor’s Discussion

Small teams or groups will enjoy learning about this new extreme sport. The Web site allows for some action downloads. At present the SlamBall league has six teams, however, this may grow. Students should focus on the personality of the extreme sports enthusiast by first considering what an extreme sport is. Next, the teams should consider how to reach these enthusiasts. What companies would most be interested in this personality group?

S.T.A.R. Project #4

How does a consumer achieve an optimum stimulation level? How do you? To explore this subject more carefully have your group visit the Sprite (www.sprite.com) and Kit-Cat (www.kit-cat.com) Web sites. The Sprite Web site is one of the hottest hip-hop sites going according to contemporary news media. Sprite Radio has become a mainstay for many teens. The Kit-Cat Web site puts a retro-spin on an old product and produces stimulation in an unusual way.

a. After your team visits both Web sites, divide the group into two parts. Working separately, each team should list the OSL scores (devise your own scale) that would be given to both Web sites.

b. Compare the two score lists. How could the looser enhance OSL?

Instructor’s Discussion

The Sprite Web site is full of stimulation, therefore the natural tendency is to give it the stimulation award quickly, however, the Kit-Cat clock has been around longer than Sprite. Therefore, Kit-Cat must be doing something right. Have the groups discuss their stimulation scales in class. What were the components? How were judgments made? Discuss differences.

Using the Internet to Study Consumer Behavior

S.T.A.R. Project #5

Are you a visualizer or a verbalizer? Crayola is betting that your visual side is the stronger of the two. Crayola has constructed a great Web site for your visual pleasure (see www.crayola.com). While on the Web site, the visitor can find many activities, ideas, create cards, learn about color, how crayons are made, and get helpful information to make a rainy day pass more quickly. One of the most interesting features is giving the consumer the ability to design his or her own color box of crayons. The color choices are endless.

a. What visualizer techniques does Crayola use to enhance the need for visualization in consumers?

b. What verbalizer skills are used on the Web site?

c. Describe the colors you selected for your box of crayons. Why did you select the colors that you did? What does the color selection say about you and your personality?
### Instructor’s Discussion

This colorful Web site is a great example of the visualizing aspect of a consumer’s personality. The students will find many areas of visual stimulation. For a unique discussion, have the class name the new Crayola color (a contest). This Web site is a great way to cover the aspect of color mentioned in the text. To extend the project, have students match their color preferences to the tables sited in the chapter.

### S.T.A.R. Project #6

Are you a chocoholic? Are you compulsive (see Table 5-5). For many Americans, the one sin that is permissible is consuming chocolate. Hershey’s (www.hersheys.com) and Godiva (www.godiva.com) are more than ready to feed this insatiable taste for chocolate. As explained on their Web sites, the history of chocolate and chocolate consumption (obsession) is long and pleasurable. Think about chocolate while you answer the questions below.

- **a.** What are your feelings toward chocolate? Would you describe these feelings as compulsive? Explain.
- **b.** Did you find anything on the two Web sites that would indicate that some people have problems with eating too much chocolate? Should the companies address these compulsions?
- **c.** Design your own chocolate t-shirt by visiting www.hersheyshappiness.com. What was the message on your shirt? What does this message say about personality and compulsions?

### Instructor’s Discussion

This is a fun assignment and good way to address the difficult subject of compulsion. By talking about chocolate, the instructor can work in a discussion of the more difficult compulsions described in the chapter. The t-shirt assignment is also one that can say something about one’s personality and compulsions. If all else fails, give the class some Hershey’s Kisses and enjoy.

### CASE COMMENTS

#### Case One: Hello Starbucks!

Answers will certainly vary widely, with some students being Starbucks aficionados. Other students, however, may have never tried Starbucks, because they are not coffee drinkers, or may have found the taste of Starbucks coffee not to their liking (e.g., some people find Starbucks coffee much too strong and bitter tasting). Having students present their answers in class should make for a lively discussion of brand personality and brand personification.

#### Case Two: Where Was Your Food Grown?

1. Students’ views on this may vary and the actual origin of food products can be a sensitive issue and a key component of consumer ethnocentrism. A large number of multinational
companies will take positive steps to incorporate at least a part of the production or packaging process within the market in which the product is sold, as it is often perceived to be a negative if the product is viewed as wholly foreign.

2. Religious groups in particular are well served by having this additional certification. Not only does it ensure that the food product complies with religious requirements, but also that it is locally certified. It is, however, only part of the answer, as regardless of religious affiliation large numbers of consumers have a preference to purchase home grown produce, especially in cases where the home grown produce is perceived to be as high in terms of quality as imported varieties.