The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory

Brief User’s Manual
First Edition © 2003

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The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory
Brief User's Manual

Description of the Instrument

The PFAI measures the strength of individuals’ beliefs in five aversive consequences of failing. Scores are provided for each of these five lower-order fears of failing: (a) fear of experiencing shame and embarrassment, (b) fear of devaluing one’s self-estimate, (c) fear of having an uncertain future, (d) fear of important others losing interest, and (e) fear of upsetting important others. These scores are moderately- to strongly-correlated with each other and their common variance can be modeled with a single higher-order factor representing a general fear of failure. This general fear of failure can be interpreted as the strength of an individual's belief that failure is generally associated with aversive consequences.

Differences in PFAI Long Forms A & B.

Two forms of the PFAI are provided in this packet. Form A is identical to the form that has been used in all of the published research on the PFAI up to 2003. Form B includes a minor modification to one item (#12) that has been recommended in three studies of PFAI score validity (Conroy & Metzler, in press; Conroy, Metzler, & Hofer, in press; Conroy, Willow, & Metzler, 2002). Users are encouraged to use Form B to reduce measurement error and increase the stability of scores over time.

Research Using the PFAI (Validation and Substantive Research)


The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Long-Form, 25 Items)
Form A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Scale</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Believe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At All</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe 50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe 100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. When I am failing, it is often because I am not smart enough to perform successfully.
2. When I am failing, my future seems uncertain.
3. When I am failing, it upsets important others.
4. When I am failing, I blame my lack of talent.
5. When I am failing, I believe that my future plans will change.
6. When I am failing, I expect to be criticized by important others.
7. When I am failing, I am afraid that I might not have enough talent.
8. When I am failing, it upsets my “plan” for the future.
9. When I am failing, I lose the trust of people who are important to me.
10. When I am not succeeding, I am less valuable than when I succeed.
11. When I am not succeeding, people are less interested in me.
12. When I am failing, I am not worried about it affecting my future plans.
13. When I am not succeeding, people seem to want to help me less.
14. When I am failing, important others are not happy.
15. When I am not succeeding, I get down on myself easily.
16. When I am failing, I hate the fact that I am not in control of the outcome.
17. When I am not succeeding, people tend to leave me alone.
18. When I am failing, it is embarrassing if others are there to see it.
19. When I am failing, important others are disappointed.
20. When I am failing, I believe that everybody knows I am failing.
21. When I am not succeeding, some people are not interested in me anymore.
22. When I am failing, I believe that my doubters feel that they were right about me.
23. When I am not succeeding, my value decreases for some people.
24. When I am failing, I worry about what others think about me.
25. When I am failing, I worry that others may think I am not trying.
The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Long-Form, 25 Items)
Form B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Scale</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Believe At All</td>
<td>Believe 50% of the Time</td>
<td>Believe 100% of the Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. When I am failing, it is often because I am not smart enough to perform successfully.
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3. When I am failing, it upsets important others.
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13. When I am not succeeding, people seem to want to help me less.
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23. When I am not succeeding, my value decreases for some people.
24. When I am failing, I worry about what others think about me.
25. When I am failing, I worry that others may think I am not trying.
Feasibility of Experiencing Shame & Embarrassment (FSE)

\[
\begin{align*}
& (\text{item } 10 + \text{item } 15 + \text{item } 18 + \text{item } 20 + \text{item } 22 + \text{item } 24 + \text{item } 25) = \frac{\text{sum}}{7} = \text{score} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Fear of Devaluing One’s Self-Estimate (FDSE)

\[
\begin{align*}
& (\text{item } 1 + \text{item } 4 + \text{item } 7 + \text{item } 16) = \frac{\text{sum}}{4} = \text{score} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Fear of Having an Uncertain Future (FUF): scoring varies for Forms A & B

FORM A

\[
\begin{align*}
& (\text{item } 2 + \text{item } 5 + \text{item } 8 - \text{item } 12) = \frac{\text{sum}}{4} = \text{score} \\
\end{align*}
\]

FORM B

\[
\begin{align*}
& (\text{item } 2 + \text{item } 5 + \text{item } 8 + \text{item } 12) = \frac{\text{sum}}{4} = \text{score} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Fear of Important Others Losing Interest (FIOLI)

\[
\begin{align*}
& (\text{item } 11 + \text{item } 13 + \text{item } 17 + \text{item } 21 + \text{item } 23) = \frac{\text{sum}}{5} = \text{score} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Fear of Upsetting Important Others (FUIO)

\[
\begin{align*}
& (\text{item } 3 + \text{item } 6 + \text{item } 9 + \text{item } 14 + \text{item } 19) = \frac{\text{sum}}{5} = \text{score} \\
\end{align*}
\]

General Fear of Failure

\[
\begin{align*}
& (\text{item } 10 + \text{item } 15 + \text{item } 18 + \text{item } 20 + \text{item } 22 + \text{item } 24 + \text{item } 25) = \frac{\text{sum}}{5} = \text{score} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Scale: FSE, FDSE, FUF, FIOLI, FUIO
# Profile Sheet

Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Long Form – Form A)

Client Name: _______________________________ Date: ______________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fear of Experiencing Shame &amp; Embarrassment</th>
<th>Fear of Devaluing One’s Self-Estimate</th>
<th>Fear of Having an Uncertain Future</th>
<th>Fear of Important Others Losing Interest</th>
<th>Fear of Upsetting Important Others</th>
<th>General Fear of Failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75%</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
<td>-0.84</td>
<td>-1.18</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>-0.77</td>
<td>-1.25</td>
<td>-1.41</td>
<td>-1.70</td>
<td>-1.41</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Short-Form)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Scale</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Believe At All</td>
<td>Believe 50% of the Time</td>
<td>Believe 100% of the Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ 1. When I am failing, I am afraid that I might not have enough talent.
_____ 2. When I am failing, it upsets my “plan” for the future.
_____ 3. When I am not succeeding, people are less interested in me.
_____ 4. When I am failing, important others are disappointed.
_____ 5. When I am failing, I worry about what others think about me.

Scoring Template:
Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Short Form)

General Fear of Failure

( _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ + _____ ) = ____ / 5 = ____

Item 1 2 3 4 5
Normative Data – Form A

The norms presented below were drawn from a sample of 440 college-aged females and males. Details about this sample can be found in Conroy, Willow, & Metzler (2002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Skewness (SE)</th>
<th>Kurtosis (SE)</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSE</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>-0.26 (0.12)</td>
<td>-0.37 (0.23)</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>+2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDSE</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.38(^a)</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>-0.11 (0.12)</td>
<td>-0.57 (0.23)</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>+2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUF</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.01 (0.12)</td>
<td>-0.64 (0.23)</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>+2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIOLI</td>
<td>-0.60</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.40 (0.12)</td>
<td>-0.30 (0.23)</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>+2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUIO</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.40 (0.12)</td>
<td>-0.52 (0.23)</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>+2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FF-Long</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>-0.02 (0.12)</td>
<td>-0.15 (0.23)</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>+1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FF-Short</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>-0.08 (0.12)</td>
<td>-0.50 (0.23)</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>+2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Multiple modes existed for FDSE scores and the number in the table is an average of the modes. The actual values are 0.25 and 0.50.

Form A norms for college-aged females and males (N = 440; Conroy et al., 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Z</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
<th>FSE</th>
<th>FDSE</th>
<th>FUF</th>
<th>FIOLI</th>
<th>FUIO</th>
<th>FF-Long</th>
<th>FF-Short</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.645</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1.718</td>
<td>1.354</td>
<td>1.336</td>
<td>0.788</td>
<td>1.168</td>
<td>0.949</td>
<td>1.342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.280</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1.408</td>
<td>1.029</td>
<td>0.993</td>
<td>0.478</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>0.700</td>
<td>1.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.037</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>1.201</td>
<td>0.812</td>
<td>0.764</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.632</td>
<td>0.535</td>
<td>0.831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1.036</td>
<td>0.639</td>
<td>0.581</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>0.461</td>
<td>0.402</td>
<td>0.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.675</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>0.894</td>
<td>0.491</td>
<td>0.425</td>
<td>-0.036</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>0.289</td>
<td>0.527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.524</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.766</td>
<td>0.357</td>
<td>0.283</td>
<td>-0.164</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>0.400</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.645</td>
<td>0.233</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>-0.283</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.284</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.535</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>-0.395</td>
<td>-0.057</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.173</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.427</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-0.092</td>
<td>-0.503</td>
<td>-0.169</td>
<td>-0.085</td>
<td>0.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td>-0.110</td>
<td>-0.210</td>
<td>-0.610</td>
<td>-0.280</td>
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<tr>
<td>-0.126</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>-0.222</td>
<td>-0.328</td>
<td>-0.717</td>
<td>-0.391</td>
<td>-0.255</td>
<td>-0.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.253</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>-0.335</td>
<td>-0.448</td>
<td>-0.825</td>
<td>-0.502</td>
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<tr>
<td>-0.385</td>
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<td>-0.008</td>
<td>-0.453</td>
<td>-0.572</td>
<td>-0.938</td>
<td>-0.619</td>
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<tr>
<td>-0.524</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-0.126</td>
<td>-0.577</td>
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<td>-0.675</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-0.254</td>
<td>-0.711</td>
<td>-0.845</td>
<td>-1.184</td>
<td>-0.874</td>
<td>-0.629</td>
<td>-0.607</td>
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<tr>
<td>-0.742</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-0.396</td>
<td>-0.859</td>
<td>-1.001</td>
<td>-1.326</td>
<td>-1.021</td>
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<td>-0.747</td>
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<tr>
<td>-1.037</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-0.561</td>
<td>-1.032</td>
<td>-1.184</td>
<td>-1.491</td>
<td>-1.192</td>
<td>-0.875</td>
<td>-0.911</td>
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<tr>
<td>-1.280</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-0.768</td>
<td>-1.249</td>
<td>-1.413</td>
<td>-1.698</td>
<td>-1.406</td>
<td>-1.040</td>
<td>-1.115</td>
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<tr>
<td>-1.645</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>-1.574</td>
<td>-1.756</td>
<td>-2.000</td>
<td>-1.728</td>
<td>-1.289</td>
<td>-1.422</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Items Organized by Factors:
Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (25 Item Long Form)
Form A

Fear of Experiencing Shame and Embarrassment
10. When I am not succeeding, I am less valuable than when I succeed.
15. When I am not succeeding, I get down on myself easily.
18. When I am failing, it is embarrassing if others are there to see it.
20. When I am failing, I believe that everybody knows I am failing.
22. When I am failing, I believe that my doubters feel that they were right about me.
24. When I am failing, I worry about what others think about me.
25. When I am failing, I worry that others may think I am not trying.

Fear of Devaluing One’s Self-Estimate
1. When I am failing, it is often because I am not smart enough to perform successfully.
4. When I am failing, I blame my lack of talent.
7. When I am failing, I am afraid that I might not have enough talent.
16. When I am failing, I hate the fact that I am not in control of the outcome.

Fear of Having an Uncertain Future
2. When I am failing, my future seems uncertain.
5. When I am failing, I believe that my future plans will change.
8. When I am failing, it upsets my “plan” for the future.
12. When I am failing, I am not worried about it affecting my future plans. (Reverse)

Fear of Important Others Losing Interest
11. When I am not succeeding, people are less interested in me.
13. When I am not succeeding, people seem to want to help me less.
17. When I am not succeeding, people tend to leave me alone.
21. When I am not succeeding, some people are not interested in me anymore.
23. When I am not succeeding, my value decreases for some people.

Fear of Upsetting Important Others
3. When I am failing, it upsets important others.
6. When I am failing, I expect to be criticized by important others.
9. When I am failing, I lose the trust of people who are important to me.
14. When I am failing, important others are not happy.
19. When I am failing, important others are disappointed.

Note. Items 7, 8, 11, 19, 24 can be used to create a short-form measure of general fear of failure.