

The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory

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 (removing the negative wording in item #12) that has been recommended in psychometric research with the PFAI (Conroy, Metzler, & Hofer, 2003; Conroy, Willow, & Metzler, 2002). Users are encouraged to use Form B to reduce measurement error and increase the stability of scores over time.

The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Long-Form, 25 Items)
Form A – NOT RECOMMENDED FOR USE

Response Scale				
-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Do Not Believe At All		Believe 50% of the Time		Believe 100% of the Time

- _____ 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 – RECOMMENDED FOR USE				

Response Scale				
-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Do Not Believe At All		Believe 50% of the Time		Believe 100% of the Time

- _____ 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 worry 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.

Scoring Template:
Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (25-Item Long Form)

Fear of Experiencing Shame & Embarrassment (FSE)

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{10} + \frac{\quad}{15} + \frac{\quad}{18} + \frac{\quad}{20} + \frac{\quad}{22} + \frac{\quad}{24} + \frac{\quad}{25} \right) = \frac{\quad}{7} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

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

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{1} + \frac{\quad}{4} + \frac{\quad}{7} + \frac{\quad}{16} \right) = \frac{\quad}{4} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

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

FORM A

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{2} + \frac{\quad}{5} + \frac{\quad}{8} - \frac{\quad}{12} \right) = \frac{\quad}{4} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

FORM B

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{2} + \frac{\quad}{5} + \frac{\quad}{8} + \frac{\quad}{12} \right) = \frac{\quad}{4} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

Fear of Important Others Losing Interest (FIOLI)

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{11} + \frac{\quad}{13} + \frac{\quad}{17} + \frac{\quad}{21} + \frac{\quad}{23} \right) = \frac{\quad}{5} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

Fear of Upsetting Important Others (FUIO)

$$\text{item \#} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{3} + \frac{\quad}{6} + \frac{\quad}{9} + \frac{\quad}{14} + \frac{\quad}{19} \right) = \frac{\quad}{5} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

General Fear of Failure

$$\text{Scale} \quad \left(\frac{\quad}{\text{FSE}} + \frac{\quad}{\text{FDSE}} + \frac{\quad}{\text{FUF}} + \frac{\quad}{\text{FIOLI}} + \frac{\quad}{\text{FUIO}} \right) = \frac{\quad}{5} = \frac{\quad}{\quad}$$

The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Short-Form)

Response Scale				
-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Do Not Believe At All		Believe 50% of the Time		Believe 100% of the Time

- _____ 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)
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General Fear of Failure

Item $(\frac{\quad}{1} + \frac{\quad}{2} + \frac{\quad}{3} + \frac{\quad}{4} + \frac{\quad}{5}) = \frac{\quad}{5} = \underline{\quad}$

Key References for the PFAI

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Studies from the Lab Using the PFAI

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Additional Papers or Chapters from the Lab Discussing the PFAI

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