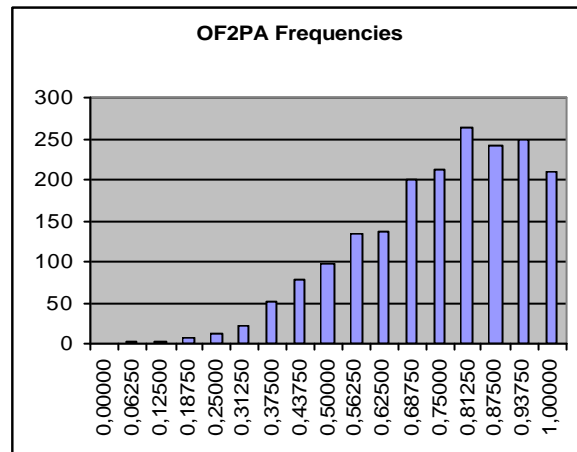
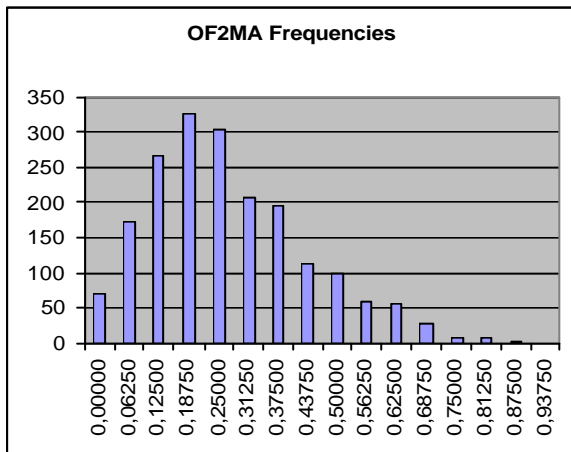
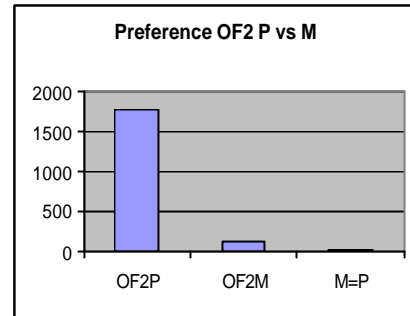


Action Direction: Focus on Goals or Problems

Metaprogram Research by Patrick E.C. Merlevede, Msc. of jobEQ – www.jobEQ.com

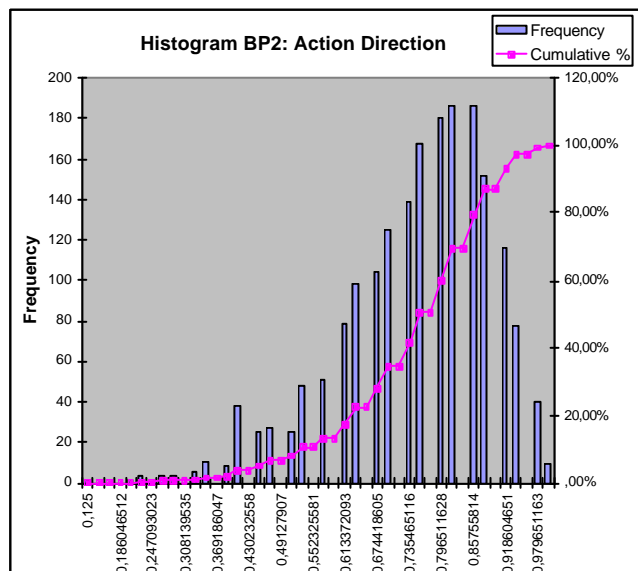
This pattern, also called “motivation direction” or “toward vs. away from,” shows how well a person maintains focus on the goals and whether the person is able to recognize the problems which would interfere with obtaining those goals. Since “away from” is often confused with “negative thinking” and people are taught to “think positive” and to “work towards goals,” it comes as no surprise that the majority of people will subjectively prefer “positive thinking” and “goal orientation” patterns. As you can see on the first frequency chart, subjectively, an overwhelming 92% of the respondents were motivated by “goals” more than “problems.” This preference is also reflected by the mean score and the form of the frequency charts for “focus on goals” (OF2P) and “problem focus” (OF2M).



The Old Way of Thinking

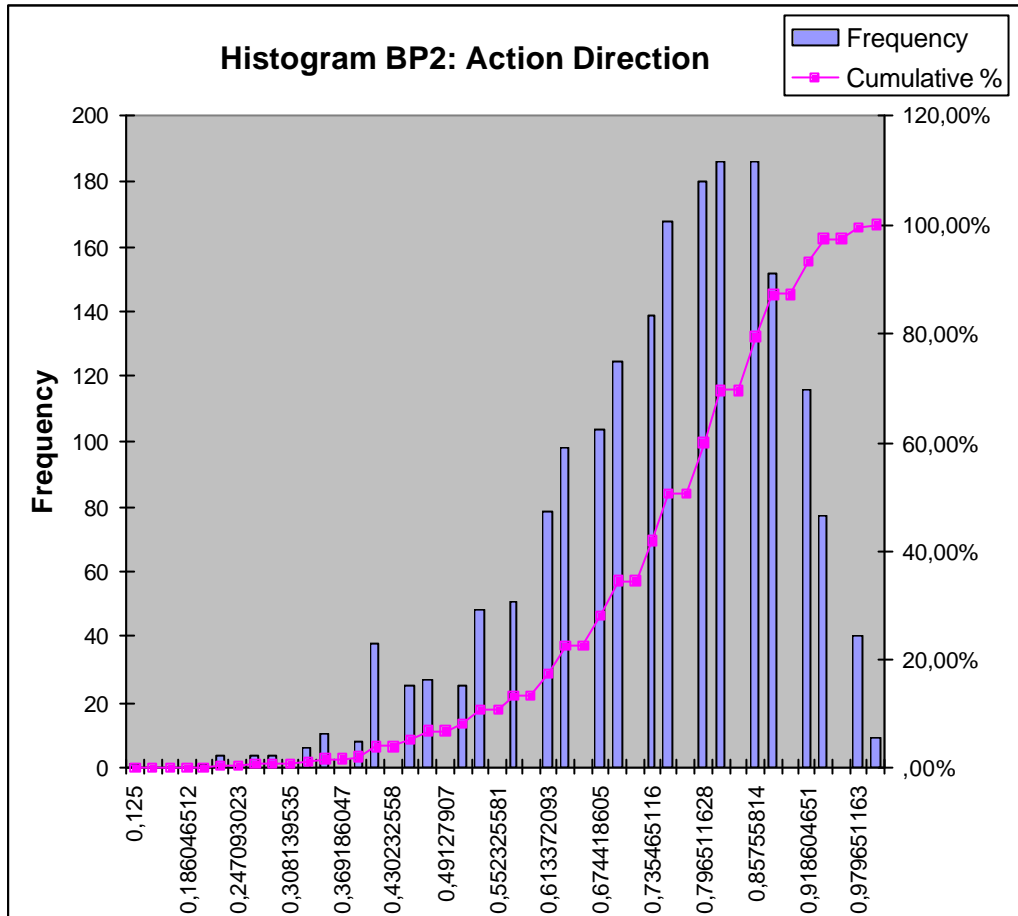
If we see this pattern as a dichotomy going from “towards” to “away from,” this leads us to these extreme points of view¹:

- “If he is goal-focused, he won’t recognize when things are going wrong. He will stay focused on his goals and not notice that rising problems may interfere with achieving those goals. And, he is able to maintain priorities.”
- “If he is not goal-focused, he is good at recognizing and finding problems. Whatever is going wrong becomes the highest priority for this person, and he is not afraid to face the problems.”



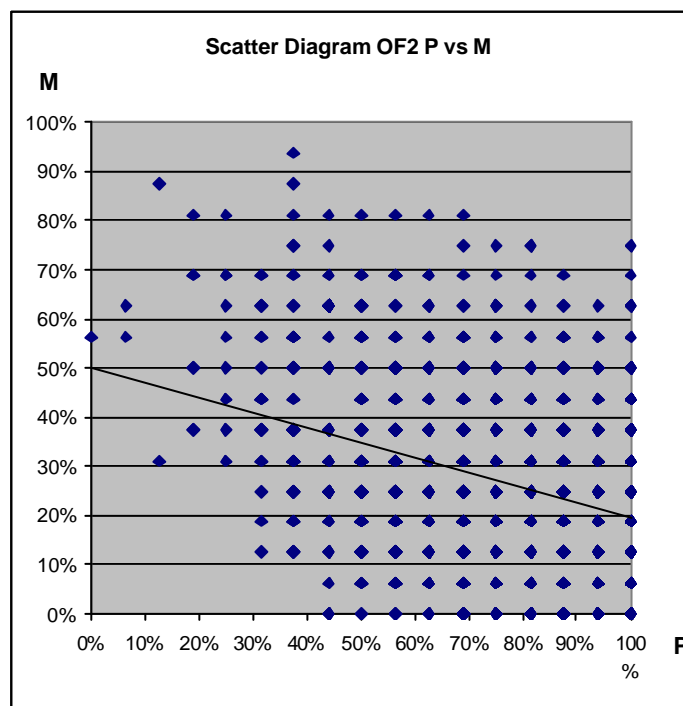
¹ The following 2 paragraphs are cited from the iWAM Profile management report, as is was originally developed by Rodger Bailey.

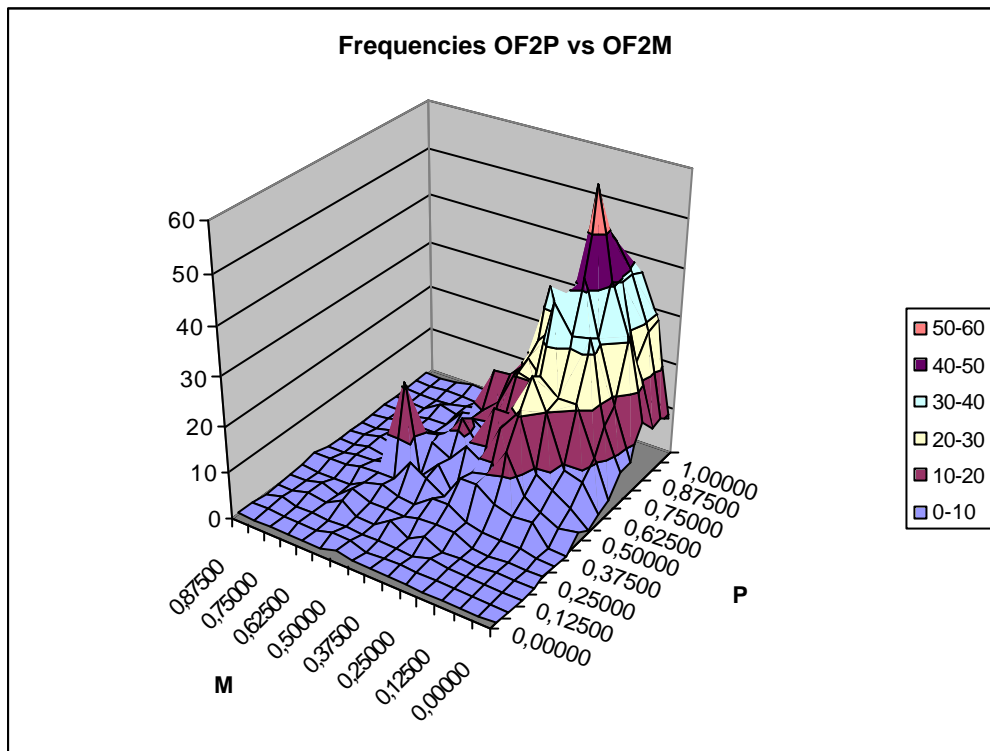
From this kind of thinking, we can represent Action Direction as $(OF2P + (1-OF2M))/2$. This gives us the following frequency chart:



The New Way of Thinking

The reality, however, is that goal orientation and problem focus aren't direct opposites, but that the data is scattered in a larger field. In statistical terms: the correlation between OF2P and OF2M is -34%. This is shown by the following 2 graphs. The Scatter dia gram offers a 2D view. On that graph, if goal orientation and problem focus would have been direct opposites, all dots would have fallen around the trend line (a correlation of 100%). The 3D graph on the following page shows the frequencies for each of the points of the area. The form of the peaks indicates the trend line. You can see there is a smaller, second peak in the area where $M > 0.55$ and $P < 0.5$.





If we build a standard group for OF2P and OF2M, (see <http://www.jobeq.com/course/STDGRP.php>) the grey area on the graph indicates the average score ± 1 standard deviation. For OF2P, the average lies at 0.75 (75%) with a standard deviation of 18.6%. For OF2M, the average lies at 27% with a standard deviation of 16.7%. The following table summarizes the scatter diagram and the 3D chart in numbers, taking into account the standard group. In the table a grey area indicates the standard group.

	M < 0.10	0.10 < M < 0.27	0.27 < M < 0.43	M > 0.43
P < 0.56	0.52%	4.03%	3.51%	6.07%
0.56 < P < 0.75	3.77%	17.06%	7.27%	7.64%
0.75 < P < 0.93	4.19%	13.34%	5.70%	3.09%
P > 0.93	4.03%	12.56%	4.55%	2.67%

We can summarize this graph in the following 3 zones:

- 24.49% of people are rather **problem focused** (the upper right quadrant in the table, where M > average and P < average).
- 34.12% of people are more **goals oriented** (the lower left quadrant, with M < average and P > average). Many of these people can be really discouraged or disheartened by having to cope with problems.
- The remaining 41.39% can be considered to be **both** (upper left and lower right quadrants. However, the respondents who score in the upper left quadrant (25.38%) have indicated that neither parameter is