

## CCR Decision Matrix for “Character”

### Criteria:

- One word (simple and elegant)
- Most recognizable (even by normal citizens)
- Already used widely by schools/countries/jurisdictions
- No negative charge about being immutable/non-changeable

Word	Oxford Dictionary Definitions	Merriam-Webster Dictionary Definitions	Positives	Negatives
Agency	A person that acts to produce a particular result	A person through which power is exerted or an end is achieved	Concept of Doing	Academic, not understood or misunderstood by general public. Common meaning differs. No concept of socio-emotional aspects. Doing is “Skills”.
Aptitudes	A natural ability to do something	A natural ability to do something or to learn something	Concept of Doing	“Natural” implies no learning involved. No concept of Behaving. Doing is “Skills”. No connotation of proper or moral.
Attitudes	A settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically one that is reflected in a person’s behavior	A feeling or way of thinking that affects a person’s behavior ...that people regard as unfriendly, rude, etc.	Thinking and feeling	Confusion on meaning: “attitude = bad attitude”. Way of thinking, no concept of Behaving.
Attributes	A feature regarded as a characteristic or inherent part of someone	An inherent characteristic	Neutral	“inherent” may imply non-changeable. Not as common as other

				terms. Too broad, yet does not imply social, emotional, or moral/proper
Behaviors	The way in which one acts or conducts oneself	The way a person or animal acts or behaves	Concept of behaving Neutral	Too broad, yet does not imply social, emotional, or proper/moral
Character	The mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual	The way someone thinks, feels, and behaves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Understandable by any non-academic.</b></li> <li>• <b>Used widely: By Schools around the world.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>In many jurisdictions (Asian and other).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Broad meaning: Combines social and emotional including a sense of right/wrong. Combines inter-personal and intra-personal aspects.</b></li> <li>• <b>Combines moral and performance aspects.</b></li> </ul>	Concerns in US/UK about morality leanings in reaction to religious groups (relativists vs absolutists).
Compass	An instrument containing a magnetized pointer that shows the direction of magnetic north and bearings from it.	A device for determining directions by means of a magnetic needle or group of needles turning freely on a pivot and pointing to the magnetic north	Used in conjunction with “moral” as in “moral compass” with the directional metaphor.	Not used standalone. Does not include social or emotional dimensions. Does not include behaving or acting.
Dispositions	A person’s inherent qualities of mind and character	The usual attitude or mood; a tendency to act or think in a	Neutral	“Inherent” implies non-learnable. References Character.

		particular way		
Mindsets	The established set of attitudes held by someone	A mental attitude or inclination	“Growth mindset” as a quality	Seems inflexible, not learnable. Confusing now due to “Growth Mindset” literature. Quality not category. Pertains to Meta-Learning.
Morality	Principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behavior	Beliefs about what is right behavior and what is wrong behavior	Moral aspect inherently	Narrow meaning, missing the social and emotional dimensions. Missing behavior/action
Personality	The combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual’s distinctive character	The set of emotional qualities, ways of behaving, etc., that makes a person different from other people	Portrays Character as the end-goal	Interpreted by many as immutable. No connotation of what is proper or moral – does not make sense as educational goal.
Temperament	A person’s or animal’s nature, especially as it permanently affects their behavior	The usual attitude, mood, or behavior of a person	Behavior-centric	Sense of permanence, “Nature” suggests it is immutable
Values	A person’s principles or standards of behavior; one’s judgment of what is important in life	Something (as a principle or quality) intrinsically valuable or desirable	Moral aspect inherent	No performance aspect. No social or emotional aspect, only moral.
Social & Emotional Skills	n/a	n/a	Used in academia	Too verbose. “Skill” is confusing. Not clear to normal people.
Soft Skills	n/a	n/a	Used colloquially	Too verbose. Perpetuating

				misunderstanding and underappreciation from a learning sciences perspective
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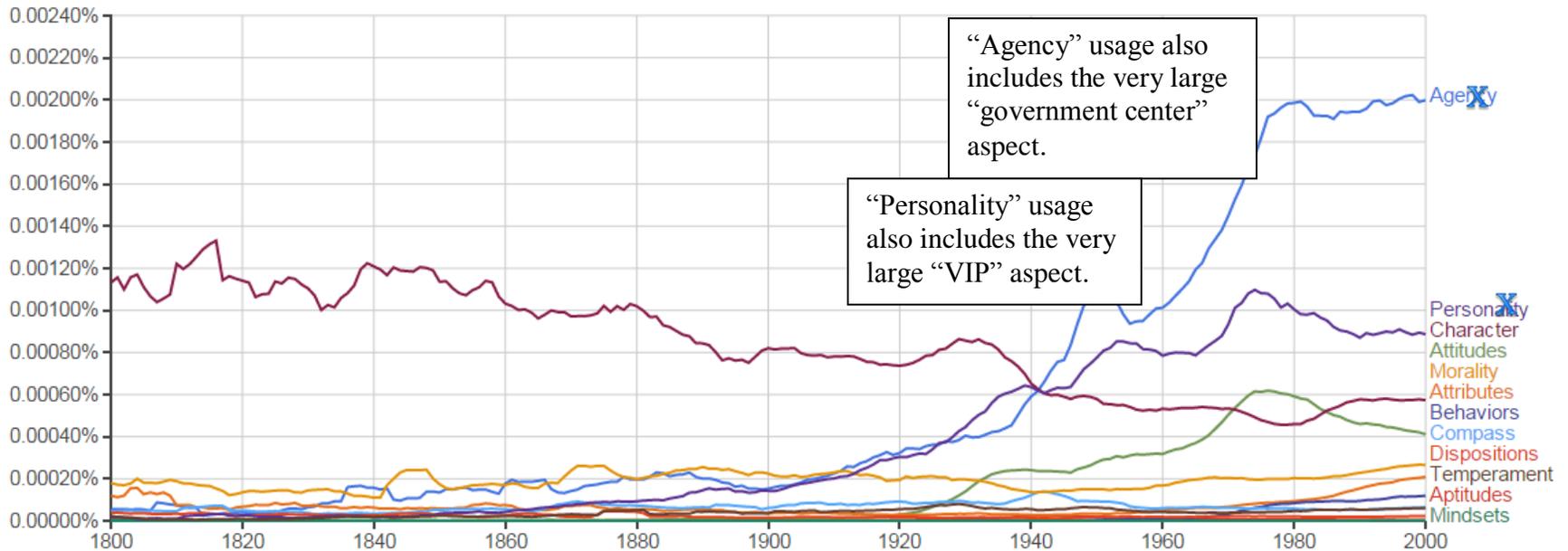


Table: Common usage over the past 200 years in English language books, via Google n-gram

**Based on the semantic analysis above, CCR has retained “Character” as the best descriptor for a broad, confusing category.**