Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator – MBTI®

Career Enhancement Committee
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Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung developed a theory early in the 20th century to describe basic individual preferences and explain similarities and differences between people.

**Main postulate of the theory is that people have inborn behavioral tendencies and preferences**

- Your natural response in daily situations
- Used when we are generally not stressed and feel competent, and energetic
- Could be defined as those behaviors you often don’t notice
Innate Preferences

Exercise:

- Write your name
Development of the MBTI® Instrument

- Jung’s theory important but inaccessible to the general population
- Isabel Myers and Katherine Briggs (mother-daughter team) expanded on Jung’s work by developing an instrument to help people identify their preferences
- The MBTI tool is an indicator of personality type (i.e. innate preferences) that has proven to be remarkably reliable and valid
  - Represents the result of over 50 years of research
  - Is used globally in both education and corporate settings; over 2 million people each year
Value of the MBTI®

- Distinctions from other psychological or career based tools
  - *Does not* assess psychological health
  - *Does not* “tell” the client what to do or be
  - Involves client feedback and “agreement” to Type
  - Involves no scaling or value
  - Inherent strengths and weaknesses associated with each type profile
The MBTI® instrument uses four dichotomies to identify preferences, which are then combined into one Type®.

- A dichotomy divides items into 2 groups where there is no continuum or value implied.
## Four MBTI® Dichotomies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dichotomy</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion – Introversion</td>
<td>Where do you prefer to focus your attention – and get your energy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensing – Intuition</td>
<td>How do you prefer to take in information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking – Feeling</td>
<td>How do you make decisions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judging – Perceiving</td>
<td>How do you deal with the outer world?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Caution: MBTI® Word Usage

Words used to describe preferences in psychology do not mean the same thing as they do in everyday life:

- *Extravert does not mean talkative or loud*
- *Introvert does not mean shy or inhibited*
- *Feeling does mean emotional*
- *Judging does not mean judgmental*
- *Perceiving does not mean perceptive*

- Etc.
E- I Dichotomy: Source of Energy

Most people who prefer Extraversion:
- “I like to talk to people”
  - Prefer action over reflection
    - May act quickly w/out thinking
  - Are attuned to external environments
  - Prefer to communicate by talking
  - Learn best through doing or discussing
  - Are sociable and expressive
  - Enjoy working in groups

Most people who prefer Introversion:
- “I like to read a book”
  - Prefer reflection over action
    - May not take action at all
  - Are attuned to inner world
  - Prefer to communicate in writing
  - Learn best through thorough mental practice and reflection
  - Are private and contained
  - Enjoy working alone or in pairs

Which is worse: no interruptions or frequent interruptions?
What is your E - I preference?

Exercise

- When you are going to a large party, what do you do?
- What do you consider a large party or group?
S - N Dichotomy: Take in Information

Most people who prefer Sensing:
- “I like to learn the facts”
  - Emphasize the pragmatic
  - Prefer facts & details/ specific information
  - Are oriented to present realities
  - Value realism
  - Observe and remember specifics through 5 senses
  - Build carefully and thoroughly to conclusions
  - Trust experience

Most people who prefer Intuition:
- “I like to imagine possibilities”
  - Emphasize the theoretical
  - Prefer general concepts/ high-level plans
  - Are oriented to future possibilities
  - Value imagination
  - See trends and patterns in specific data
  - Use a “sixth” sense
  - Move quickly to conclusions, follow hunches
  - Trust inspiration

Which is worse – no sense of present reality or no sense of future possibilities?
What is your S-N preference?

- Exercise
  - How did you decide whom to support?
T-F Dichotomy: Decision Making

- Most people who prefer Thinking:
  - “I like to decide logically”
    - Are analytical
    - Use cause-and-effect reasoning
    - Solve problems with logic
    - Strive for objective standard of truth
    - Described as reasonable
    - Search for flaws in an argument
    - Fair – want everyone treated equally

- Most people who prefer Feeling:
  - “I like to consider people”
    - Empathetic
    - Guided by personal values
    - Assess impact of decisions on people
    - Strive for harmony and positive interactions
    - Described as compassionate
    - Search for point of agreement in an argument
    - Fair – want everyone treated as an individual

Which is worse: working in an environment that lacks logic or that lacks harmony?
What is your T-F preference?

- **Exercise**
  - Little League Coach for the championship game and you can only take 11 of 13 players to the game
  - What do you do? How do you choose?
J - P Dichotomy: Lifestyle

Most people who prefer Judging:
- “I like to organize my schedule”
  - Are scheduled/organized
  - Strive to finish one project before starting another
  - Like to have things decided
    - May decide things too quickly
  - Try to avoid last-minute stresses; finish tasks well before deadline
  - Try to limit surprises
  - See routines as effective

Most people who prefer Perceiving:
- “I like to adapt to changes”
  - Are spontaneous/flexible
  - Start many projects but may have trouble finishing them
  - Like things loose and open to change
    - May decide things too slowly
  - Feel energized by last-minute pressures; finish tasks at the deadline
  - Enjoy surprises
  - See routines as limiting

Which is worse: “winging it” or adhering to a schedule?
What is your J-P preference?

- Exercise
  - Sending you on a vacation
  - $5,000
  - What do you do? How do you go about it?
Why should we care?

- Individual Benefits: Gain insights into personality
  - Reduce your defensiveness
  - Increase your openness to feedback (clues) from what is going on around you
  - Enhance your ability to appreciate differences in yourself and in others
Why should we care?

- Staff Benefits: Appreciate others
  - Make constructive use of individual approaches
    - Allow for creative problem-solving; Different types approach problems in different, yet valid ways
  - Understand and adapt to leadership’s management style
  - Respect people’s work preferences
  - Improve communication among supervisors, peers, employees, customers

- Example
  - Approach to staff meetings that accommodate both introverts and extraverts?
**Communication Breakdown**

- **Ideal Leader is...**
  - *Extravert*: action-oriented
  - *Introvert*: contemplative
  - *Sensing*: pragmatic
  - *Intuitive*: visionary
  - *Thinking*: logical
  - *Feeling*: compassionate
  - *Judging*: planful
  - *Perceiving*: adaptable
Understanding Type® in “uncomfortable” situations

- Potential Pitfalls
  - Characteristics when under stress or “uncomfortable” (out of Type®)

- Examples
  - Overcrowded schedule may force you to exhibit more judging traits than you may prefer
  - Team projects may force you to work as an extravert; brainstorming, talking through problems vs. thinking them through on your own
  - Concrete information may be more valued more than “gut-feeling” approach
  - Staff meeting may focus on everyone’s involvement first, when you would prefer to address the task first.
To Take to the Office with You

- With similar types on a team:
  - The team will understand each other easily and quickly
  - Will reach decisions quickly, but will be more likely to make errors due to not taking in all viewpoints
  - May fail to appreciate gifts of the “outlying” types

- With a variety of types on a team:
  - Longer to establish communication between the members of the team
  - Less likely to overlook possibilities and details
  - Longer to reach consensus
# Occupational Trends by Type

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<td>Education Health care Religious settings</td>
<td>Religion Counseling Teaching Arts</td>
<td>Scientific or technical fields Computers Law</td>
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What IS your Type?

- **Composite Type®**
  - *One letter from each dichotomy*
  - *Sum equals more than the parts*
    - It represents the dynamic interactions among the preferences in your type
  - *No hierarchy among the types; each identifies normal and valuable personalities*

1. Today’s discussion – self-estimate or assessment of your type
2. MBTI results will report the preferences you choose on the Indicator
3. Final type assessment requires agreement between self assessment and MBTI responses
The World’s Forum for Aerospace Leadership