Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator – MBTI®

Career Enhancement Committee
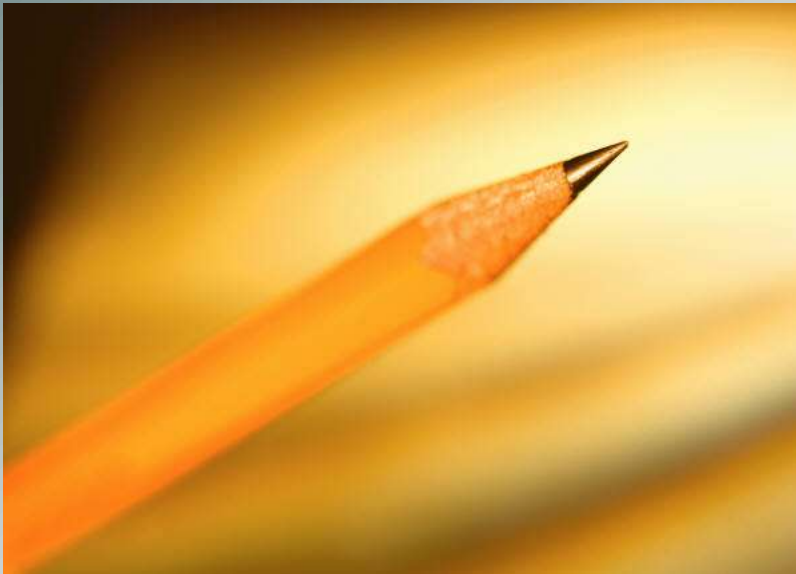**Kathy Prem**
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Introduction to Type Theory

- 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

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Innate Preferences

- Exercise:
  - *Write your name*

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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*

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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*

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Structure of the MBTI®

- The MBTI® instrument uses four dichotomies to identify preferences, which are then combined into one Type®
  - *A dichotomy divides items into <u>2 groups</u> where there is <u>no continuum or value</u> implied*

Four MBTI® Dichotomies

Extraversion – Introversion	Where do you prefer to focus your attention – and get your energy?
Sensing – Intuition	How do you prefer to take in information?
Thinking – Feeling	How do you make decisions?
Judging – Perceiving	How do you deal with the outer world?

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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.

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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?

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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?

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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?

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What is your S-N preference?

- Exercise
  - *How did you decide whom to support?*

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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?

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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?

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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?

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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

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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®

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
Management	Education	Religion	Scientific or technical fields
Administration	Health care	Counseling	Computers
Law enforcement	Religious settings	Teaching	Law
Accounting		Arts	
ISTP	**ISFP**	**INFP**	**INTP**
Skilled trades	Health care	Counseling	Scientific or technical fields
Technical fields	Business	Writing	
Agriculture	Law enforcement	Arts	
Law Enforcement			
Military			
ESTP	**ESFP**	**ENFP**	**ENTP**
Marketing	Health care	Counseling	Science
Skilled trades	Teaching	Teaching	Management
Business	Coaching	Religion	Technology
Law enforcement	Childcare worker	Arts	Arts
Applied technology	Skilled trades		
ESTJ	**ESFJ**	**ENFJ**	**ENTJ**
Management	Education	Religion	Management
Administration	Health care	Arts	Leadership
Law enforcement	Religion	Teaching	

Source: From *Introduction to Type and Careers*, A.L. Hammer, 1993, Consulting Psychologists Press

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What IS your Type?

- Composite Type$^\circledR$
  - *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

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