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# **Notes and Handouts for Myers Briggs Type Indicator MBTI**



## 1. About these Notes

The lecture and these notes will give you only a brief understanding of a tool for a personality type indicator. You will however obtain a better understanding of how and why people communicate and operate differently. It does not replace the extensive assessment and debrief which can be carried out by professionally accredited MBTI practitioners. The information is only a guide; a full assessment is recommended if you want to know your precise type.

## 2. Knowing You means Understanding Others

Your type preference forms a filter through which you look at people, situations, ideas etc. We hope that you will leave this workshop with a better understanding of your filters, of others and their preferences and of how you can better understand them and more effectively relate to and appreciate others.

## 3. Preferences

### Activity 1 – Using Innate Preferences

1. Pick up your pen and sign your name.

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2. Put the pen into your other hand (the hand you do **not** use for handwriting). Sign your name again.



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The hand you used the first time was your **preferred** hand. Therefore, the hand you used the second time was your **non-preferred** hand.



3. Write a few words to describe how it felt to write with your **preferred** hand?

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4. Write a few words to describe how it felt to write with your **non-preferred** hand?

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## A Brief Overview of Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a tool or framework for understanding the way we prefer or tend to operate and the way others tend to operate. It helps us recognize and understand the motives and behaviours of other people, particularly those whose minds operate quite differently to our own. The primary purpose of the development of the MBTI was to "give individuals access to the benefits of knowing their personality type." (Briggs Myers et al, 1999).

*"Understanding and using the knowledge of MBTI can affect your daily personal life as well as how you operate in your studies and later in the work environment."*

The theory behind personality types, as proposed by Jung, relies on the fact that everyone uses four basic mental functions or processes. These four functions are essential for daily living and are identified as:

Sensing (S) and Intuition (I)                      and                      Thinking (T) and Feeling (F)

The theory suggests that some people prefer sensing while others prefer intuition. Likewise, some prefer thinking while others prefer feeling. These terms are very old and thus easily misunderstood in the current context. It's important to understand that 'feeling' refers to personal values as opposed to emotions and that a thinking preference does not suggest a higher level of intelligence nor that they have no feelings.

Jung's earliest observation was that there were two types of people, extraverts and introverts. Jung described extraverts as those whose energies are primarily orientated outward towards people and events in their external environment and introverts as those whose energies are directed inward toward thoughts and experiences in their inner environment.

Thus Jung identified 6 of the 8 functions used in the MBTI. The last two, Judging and Perceiving, were added by Briggs and Myers.



Judging and Perceiving refer to our preferred behaviour when interacting with the external environment.

Katharine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers built on the model developed by Carl Jung and published in his 1923 book *Psychological Types*, expanding it and giving it a practical application. In the 1940's Briggs and Myers developed a test instrument, an "indicator", which has been translated into 16 languages and is now taken by over 2 million people per year. It is referred to as the MBTI personality type indicator.

The MBTI preferences are your **natural inclinations**. Their development is therefore natural. However, they may be influenced by the environment.

Preferences are innate, which means that just as you were born with a natural inclination to use either your left or right hand, you were born with a natural inclination that reflects how you see and interact in the world. Having natural inclinations does not mean you are unable to use your non-preferred functions.

When you can't write with your preferred hand, you use your non-preferred hand. Although it may feel awkward and appear to the reader to be clumsy, it is still effective. The same goes for your non-preferred preferences, they are used when required. However, your non-preferred functions may appear clumsier than your preferred functions.

This is applicable in your studies. You may have an inclination to be free and easy and let time slip by but in your studies, knowing that timeframes are important, you are comfortable adhering to the deadlines etc.

What you will often find is that you consume considerably more energy when you are working in what we call your *shadow*. If for instance attention to minute detail (accounts, writing computer programs) is required and you are more of a "big picture" person you can still do it but you will consume a great deal of energy staying concentrated.

Some people have found that after understanding their own preferences that they are trying to do work with others that suits the "shadow" and wonder why they are always tired. Knowing what your preferences are can overcome some of these difficulties.

It is important though not to box yourself or others in and make it a stick to use.

*"I can't help it I am just a ....."* or

*"Well what do you expect you're just a ...."*

Use the knowledge to improve your understanding of yourself and others and how you can maximize the "shadow" to best effect"

Let us look at the four levels, firstly Extroversion and Introversion.



## Extroversion (E) Vs Introversion (I)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| An extrovert's essential stimulation is from the environment, the outer world of people and things. | An introvert's essential stimulation is from within - the inner world of thoughts and reflections. |
| <b>Primary Difference</b>   | <b>Primary Difference</b>  |
| An extrovert is energised by other people and external experiences.                                 | An introvert is energised by inner resources and internal experiences.                             |
| <b>Characteristics</b>  | <b>Characteristics</b>   |
| Does their best work externally and in action   | Does their best work internally in reflection  |
| Their interests have breadth  | Their interests have depth   |
| Usually communicates freely - expressive  | Communication is usually reserved until they know and trust a person                               |
| Usually acts first, then reflects, then acts again  | Usually reflects first, then acts, then reflects again   |
| Thinks best when talking to others  | Thinks best when alone – shares with other people when clear about what they believe               |
| Usually takes the initiative when making contact with other people                                  | Usually lets other people initiate contact   |
| Has broad friendships with many people – gregarious   | Has a few deep friendships – intimacy  |
| Prefers to talk and listen  | Prefers to read and write  |





## Sensing (S) Vs Intuiting (N)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Gathers information by way of five senses – sight, sound, feel, taste and smell either from the outer world or from stored impressions | Processes information by way of a “sixth sense” or hunch           |
| <b>Primary Difference</b>  | <b>Primary Difference</b>  |
| Looks at specific parts and pieces   | Looks at patterns and relationships                                |
| <b>Characteristics</b>   | <b>Characteristics</b>   |
| Deals with known facts   | Deals with possibilities   |
| Lives in the present or past, enjoying what is, or what was  | Lives toward the future, anticipating what might be                |
| Trusts experience  | Trusts theory more than experience                                 |
| Prefers problems that are similar to previously solved ones  | Likes new problems and developing new solutions                    |
| Likes the concrete   | Likes the abstract   |
| Learns sequentially – step by step   | Learns by seeing connections – jumps in anywhere, leaps over steps |
| Drawn to precise work  | Drawn to creating designs  |



### Activity 3 – Sensing or Intuiting

Decide whether you have a preference for sensing or intuiting and record your conclusion on the scale below.

S ————— N

You can stay with your current group as the next exercise is individual.

**4. Bryan will ask you to describe something.**

**5. Describe it in words or phrases or both without discussing it with others.**

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## Thinking (T) Vs Feeling (F)

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Makes decisions based on logic and objective considerations           | Makes decisions based on personal, subjective values  |
| <b>Primary Difference</b>   | <b>Primary Difference</b>   |
| Tends to decide things impersonally, based on analysis and principles | Tends to decide things based on what they like or don't like, their values, or on the impact of decisions on people |
| <b>Characteristics</b>  | <b>Characteristics</b>  |
| Trusts logic  | Trusts personal reactions   |
| Fairness is important   | Harmony is important  |
| Spontaneously finds flaws, criticises                                 | Spontaneously looks for ways to connect, appreciates  |
| Good at analysing plans   | Good at understanding people  |
| Values reasonableness   | Values compassion   |
| Tends to question – asks why?   | Tends to accommodate  |



## Activity 4 – Thinking or Feeling

Decide whether you have a preference for thinking or feeling and record your conclusion on the scale below. Join the appropriate group in the room.

**T** \_\_\_\_\_ **F**

Once in your group, work through the following exercise together.

**You are traveling back from the south coast on the deserted gravel road between Nowra and Braidwood. You have come across what appears to be a seriously injured possum on the side of the road which could die if not given treatment. You are running late for a very important appointment which could affect your future.**

**Note:**

**There are no roadside phones or mobile coverage and the road is no traffic or houses.**

Describe what you would do and how you would handle the situation?

Record your actions/decisions on a piece of butcher's paper.



## Judging (J)

Vs

## Perceiving (P)

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Lifestyle is decisive, planned, orderly                            | Lifestyle is flexible, adaptable and spontaneous          |
| <b>Primary Difference</b>  | <b>Primary Difference</b>                                 |
| Enjoys being decisive  | Enjoys being curious, discovering surprises               |
| <b>Characteristics</b>   | <b>Characteristics</b>                                    |
| Feels comfortable establishing closure                             | Feels comfortable maintaining openness                    |
| Works best when can plan and follow the plan                       | Enjoys working on different projects as interest surfaces |
| Schedules and plans to avoid anxiety resulting from too many tasks | Energised by deadlines – enjoys last minute rushes        |
| Does not tolerate uncertainty easily                               | Able to tolerate ambiguity                                |
| Likes definite order, structure                                    | Likes going with the flow                                 |

### Activity 5 – Judging or Perceiving

Decide whether you have a preference for judging or perceiving and record your conclusion on the scale below.

**J** ————— **P**

Once in your group, work through the following exercise together.

**You are going on a touring holiday around western NSW.**

Discuss with the team what plans you would make.



## 6. How Preferences Combine

### Combinations of Perception & Judgement

**ST, SF, NF, NT** each of these combinations produces a different kind of personality.

Others with the same combination are apt to be the easiest to understand and like. They will tend to have the same interests, since they share the same perception, consider the same things important and they share the same kind of judgement

On the other hand, people who differ on both preferences will be harder to understand and harder to predict. Many destructive conflicts arise simply because two people are using opposite kinds of perception and judgment.

Things usually move faster for an extravert and in a more considered direction for the introvert.

Under type theory, people create their 'type' through exercise of their individual preferences regarding perception and judgment. The interests, values, needs and habits naturally result from any set of preferences and tend to produce a recognisable set of traits and behaviours.

### Looking at 2 opposite types: NF and ST

The NF type will show preferences for seeing the world and thinking in the big picture, using concepts and patterns, linking relationships and thinking laterally. The NF will also show a preference for basing decisions on a personal set of values and the impact of decisions on other people.

The ST type will tend to see the world in detail, recognizing what is seen, heard, smelt, felt and tasted, using senses to perceive and tends to see and understand smaller pieces and details. The ST type will also show a tendency to make decisions based on objective analyses and facts, trusting experience and logic.

## 7. Valuing differences

### Monday mornings and weekends

How often have you noticed the different ways that people get back into their studies on Monday morning? Some will enjoy the Monday morning chat about the weekend and seem to be in no hurry to get to their work, others prefer to dispense with the social chit chat and get straight into their work. Some will come up to speed immediately, on the telephone or visiting others, to



get things moving, often on new issues whereas some others need time to catch up with where they left off last week and to organise themselves for this week. Weekends can often show up different types of preferences. Some people already know by Thursday or before what they are doing on the weekend. Others haven't a clue and worry even less. They would prefer to see what comes along, go with the flow, or if they do organise themselves, they rarely stick to the plan.

Diaries are another giveaway. Have you noticed that some people either don't use a diary or if they do enter details/appointments in it then forget to refer to it, whilst others spend an inordinate time making copious notes in the diary and meticulously stick to it.

I am describing extreme behaviour for both preferences but you will identify yourself and others somewhere along the continuum.

## **Types of differences**

The above example is a very clear illustration that people are unique and different from each other. The causes of differences are many and there are as many differences as there are people in the world.

There are however some standard ways that make people different:

- personal beliefs and values
- preferences for handling information and making decisions
- gender, ethnic background
- roles and work backgrounds,
- leader/management style – control/compliance – support/coaching
- local interpretation of your organisation's Values.



## 8. How does valuing differences help?

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>Know yourself</i>            | The better you know yourself, the more effective you will be. You will know your strengths and weaknesses and be better able to exploit them and to compensate for them respectively.   |
| <i>Know your people</i>         | The corollary of the above is that the people you work with will also have their own strengths and weaknesses. The better you (a) appreciate this fact in the first place, and (b) get to know them, the better you will be able to communicate with them and motivate each other.  |
| <i>Know your team</i>           | An extension of knowing the people you work with as individuals is to understand the composition of the team – the mix of strengths and weaknesses. In this way you can work with your team mates to capitalise on their unique and individual strengths, to create a better team result.   |
| <i>The path and the outcome</i> | Valuing differences leads everyone to being aware that that your way may be the best way for you, but not necessarily the best way for everybody else. In fact there are many “best ways” to the same outcome. As an effective team member, you would support other team members to be the best they can, using their unique perspectives, ideas, strengths and weaknesses. |

### Two ways of handling information, two ways of making decisions

The better you understand yourself, the better you will interact with your colleagues in tutorials, projects and meetings. We will now consider two of the fundamental ways in which people differ and which in turn influence their approach to performance-based interactions in any situation. The two concepts explored are two preferred ways of handling information and two preferred ways of making decisions. Refer to Jung’s points (page 3).

In cases where each person has the same preference, you are more likely to progress smoothly, with a good shared understanding. Where you have differing preferences, miss-communication and miss-understanding are more likely.

To make use of this concept, you should each:

- be aware of your own preferences and
- try to understand the preferences of the other person.



## Handling information

It is useful to think about handling information as occurring in either of two ways. There are those who mostly prefer a detailed, step by step approach and those who mostly prefer a big picture, ideas approach. Which of these two styles is your strength?

If both of you have the **same preference**, the upside is you understand each other well, but the downside is that you may not explore issues fully or you may make arrangements/agreements that are impractical to keep.

If you each have a **different preference**, the upside is that you will probably fully debate all aspects of an issue, but the downside is that you may not communicate very well with each other.

## 9. Personal Values

### Beliefs about “right”

Personal values are your beliefs about things in life that you hold to be important - about how to live and to behave. They may be things you hold to be morally right, eg. “a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay”, or things you hold to be effective, or the best way of doing things, eg. “the only way to motivate colleagues is to be firm”.

### Applying your values to the organisation

Your personal values are neither intrinsically strengths or weaknesses - their impact upon your effectiveness is only determined by (a) how well you are aware of them and (b) how appropriately you apply them.

In your own personal time write down your own values, what you hold dearly and then compare them with the team’s values and the Faculty.



## 10.What do I now know about myself

Each person has their own personal gifts, expertise values and personalities that they bring to a team. From what you have learnt about yourself today make some notes/observations below summarising who you think you are in MBTI terms and how you need to modify some of your behaviours to function more effectively when dealing with other people in your personal life and when working with other team members in my UNI projects.

### **Myself**

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### **What I can improve on**

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### What I will do to improve

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