SUMMARY OF MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR®

A Personality Profile Assessment

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Why do we do what we do? For thousands of years, people have asked this question.
Is it because of:
- nature -- our actions are preordained (programmed within us)?
- nurture -- we learn to do what we do (from our upbringing)?
- free will -- we willingly choose (make conscious decisions) to do what we do?

Scientists have not yet been able to create experiments to prove the free will explanation; and
the consensus is that nature and nurture has some effect on our behavior.

Fortunately, we have instruments to categorize personality, which generally concerns a
description (a profile) regarding characteristic behavior of the individual person. The Meyers-
Briggs instrument weighs preferences rather than actual behaviors. Therefore, on average, it
indicates some probability re what a person may prefer to do rather than what that person most
likely will do. In other words, use it as a guide to average truth rather than absolute truth.

Katherine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Myers developed today’s most popular personality
profile assessment -- the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI).

From WHAT TYPE AM I? Discover Who You Really Are by Renee Baron, the MBTI is a
system for understanding personality types. This system is based on the idea that people are
born with preferences, i.e. we naturally have ways in which we “prefer” to do certain things.

MBTI lists four pairs of opposite preferences:
Extroverting (E) and Introverting (I) -- what energizes us,
Sensing (S) and iNtuitioning (N) -- how we prefer to take in information,
Thinking (T) and Feeling (F) -- how we evaluate information and take decisions,
Judging (J) and Perceiving (P) -- our preferred lifestyle.

Be aware that some people control their behavior to match the situation they are in.
For example, I am an E or an I depending on which side of the lectern I’m on.
The above four pairs of opposite preferences result in all together sixteen types, interacting in
different ways and in varying degrees to make each person unique. Furthermore, these sixteen
types indicate four temperaments:
Duty Seekers    Knowledge Seekers    Action Seekers    Ideal Seekers

Temperament defines what we need and value and what we hunger for. When we know what
someone’s temperament is, we can have a good idea as to what they will do in most situations
most of the time.

After determining someone’s type, i.e. testing reveals which one of the sixteen possible types
one might be, their particular temperament might be indicated:

if testing reveals any of the four Sensing Judging types (SJ), either ESTJ, ESFJ, ISTJ, or
ISFJ, then they are Duty Seekers,

if testing reveals any of the four Intuiting Thinking types (NT), either ENTJ, ENTP, INTJ, or
INTP, then they are Knowledge Seekers,

if testing reveals any of the four Sensing Perceiving types (SP), either ESTP, ESFP, ISTP, or
ISFP, then they are Action Seekers,

and finally, if testing reveals any of the four Intuiting Feeling types (NF), ENFJ, ENFP, INFJ,
or INFP, then they are Ideal Seekers.

For a description of these sixteen types and four temperaments, please refer to the above book
by Renee Baron.

For additional information refer to PLEASE UNDERSTAND ME by Keirsey and Bates.

Furthermore, from the MBTI Team Building Program: Leader’s Resource Guide by Sandra
Krebs Hirsh © 1992 by Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., the below guidelines may help
with practical application of MBTI:
WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH SJ’s, NT’s, SP’s & NF’s

When working with Duty Seekers (SJ’s) remember:

- Their focus is on the end result
- They will take roles, responsibilities, and assignments very seriously
- If responsibility is given to them, they will take whatever decisions they see as necessary
- Overall, they will give most consideration to the opinions of superiors and authorities
- They will not consider bending the rules or “working,” the system
- They see methodology and documentation as absolutely necessary to complete the job
- They have an extreme commitment to being reliable and dependable

When working with Knowledge Seekers (NT’s) remember:

- They have very high standards for themselves and everyone else
- They expect structures and systems to support movement toward results
- They will “beat the system” if they think it is necessary to reach a goal
- Their thinking focuses on long-term, and they always move to the global
- They view their skepticism and questioning as helpful
- They will always opt for the new problem, the start-up phase; maintenance and repetition bore them.
- They respect technical power and intelligence, not authority
- They need time to work things through

When working with Action Seekers (SP’s) remember:

- Their focus is on now
- They see methodology and documentation as futile
- For them, meetings to solve problems are a waste of time
- They want to do problem solving “on the spot”
- They want immediate response from others
- They enjoy crisis situations
- They have great endurance for grueling schedules
- They are bored by stability
- They are realists—for them, work is concrete

When working with Ideal Seekers (NF’s) remember:

- For them, enthusiasm and commitment go together
- They usually feel undervalued
- They will always put people before work if possible
- They may “give in” to create harmony
- Friendship with colleagues is important to their job satisfaction
- They see failure to communicate as conflict
- They will often take criticism personally