Lecture MBTI

Personality Interpretation: Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

This assessment is based on the work of Carl Jung that divides personality into 4 bipolar dimensions. It is frequently used in the work world. It is used in management training and team building. An inappropriate use is for selection, or hiring decisions. This assessment is not judgmental, you cannot do better or worse on it than someone else. It assesses your preferences on four personality dimensions and no score is good or bad. Your preferences may make you better suited for some settings and environments than others...meaning you would likely be more satisfied/comfortable, but your results do not suggest any limitations.

If you need to function in a way that is counter to your preference, you can (you just might not be very happy doing it for any length of time).

Understanding this theory and your assessment will help you understand yourself, and the ways in which you are similar/different from others, better. This can help you make sense of and resolve interpersonal conflicts, at work and in your personal life. It can also provide insights to guide you in your career planning & development process, including career choices and especially for career adjustment.

Interest assessments, like the Strong Interest Inventory, are more helpful if you are looking for career ideas. In contrast, the MBTI will help you choose the type of job that might be the best fit for you within a field of interest, and help you predict challenges of possible jobs/settings based on your personality preferences.

Your type is listed as a four-letter type code (beginning with E or I) highlighted among the 16 possible types.

Here they are with the words used to name each side of each dimension:
E---I (or Extrovert---Introvert)
S---N (or Sensing---Intuition)
T---F (or Thinking---Feeling)
J---P (or Judging---Perceiving)

PLEASE DO NOT GET HUNG UP ON THE SINGLE WORDS USED TO NAME EACH TYPE. They do NOT effectively describe the dimensions...you will need to read and understand the FULL descriptions of each dimension described later in this lecture!

To show you how to interpret and use your results, I’ll briefly describe each of the four scales or dimensions one at a time (below). PLEASE BE CAREFUL NOT TO FOCUS ON THE WORDS USED TO NAME EACH END OF EACH SCALE IN YOUR RESULTS! NO ONE WORD CAN CAPTURE WHAT THE DIMENSION IS ABOUT!

The language used to describe each scale can be misleading so we usually refer to types by letter instead of name.

For example, the first dimension, E-I is titled "Extroversion-Introversion":

...
E-I (Extroversion-Introversion) is NOT a measure of social skill, despite the fact that the words extroversion and introversion are often thought to suggest social skills, or lack thereof, respectively (we typically think of extroverts as charming, introverts as wallflowers, etc. but that is not the intended meaning of this scale).

In fact,

The first dimension, or scale,
E-I: MEASURES HOW PEOPLE GET ENERGY

E types:
-get energy around people from attending to people, events, and activities…they thrive on interaction, it energizes them (too much seclusion can actually exhaust them!)
-are externally focused and remember interactions (names/facts), they enjoy making connections with people, meeting people is fun
-are good at social multi-tasking, but may be easily distracted
-are external problem solvers: talk it through vs. think it through, develop their thinking through talking
-what you see is what you get, moods show
-external world is the arena where they live

In contrast…
I types:
-get energy from the world inside (battery operated, need to plug in)
-what goes on behind the face or in their head is more salient
-enjoy time by themselves or with 1 or 2 close friends
I folks have 2 or 3 close friends at any given time, maybe a dozen over a lifetime (Es have 2 dozen friends at any given time, but the definition of friend may be more casual)
-take a long time to warm up to people
-are internal problem solvers, think it over, stew before sharing, mull over things (where Es express instantly)
-like space to do a job, uninterrupted time to go deep into a project
-can concentrate well if uninterrupted (Es have no problem with interruptions, and like social contact)

The second dimension, or scale, is
S-N: HOW PEOPLE GET INFORMATION (write that down too!)
S types:
prefer practical, factual info, real world data, from their 5 senses…
-they want facts, trust facts, remember facts
-are oriented toward applied info, type that helps them do something,
seldom make errors of fact, pay attention to details
-have the ability to take an idea and put it to work
-take ideas and crunch into facts/figures in real world
-focus on what actually is, now, in the present, or in the past, rather than speculating about the future
-have acuity for world around them, notice details in the room they are in
-are interested in the trees (the individual parts/objects), not the forest (=the big picture/context)
-fully develop skills, repeat until they master something, -believe experience is the best teacher
-value quality over speed, thoroughness, don’t make typos
-like to use their skills
-prefer just the facts (don’t care about ideas)

However, on the other side of this dimension--
N types:
-are interested in the forest instead of the tress…
-prefer the main idea, theory, concept, big picture, and context, the abstract, conceptual world of ideas
-like info from their 6th sense…gut feelings, hunches, intuition
-are less interested in how something works, care more about WHY
-do something just until they get the point
-are good at looking at relationships between ideas, writing papers
-pay attention to insights, look for underlying meaning and relationships
-value speed over thoroughness (eager to get on to the next idea)
-future oriented, focus on the new, making changes, whatever “is” can be better
-repeat something just till they get it, then change it
-are creative in brainstorming, fascinated by hypotheses, potentials
-don’t break problems down in a systematic way
(S types can be pragmatic, get stuck in their ways, change is hard, prefer tried and true)

The third dimension, or scale, is
T-F: HOW PEOPLE MAKE DECISIONS (Write this down!)

T types: try to make decisions objectively
-logical, step-wise, sequential, linear, left-brain thinking
-objective, impartial analysis of info
-how someone feels is only one point of info
-important to be perceived as fair, try to logically and impersonally weigh pros and cons
-speak their minds and hold their ground
-“head” decision makers, do the smart thing
-perceived as cold/cool because their focus is on info

F types: make decisions subjectively
-value driven, right brain decision makers…can be hard for them to articulate the decision process (b/c it comes from the side of the brain that has no language)
-decisions are subconscious, subjective, personalized
-consider likes-dislikes
-very influenced by feelings
-“heart” decisions, do what is right
-being kind is important, what matters to the person and to others is important

It can be difficult to function as an F type because mainstream US culture emphasizes the thinking method:
So, F types start to make decisions in a thinking way but then loose their notes, paper, etc… After they get over the pressure to do it the thinking way, they check out congruence with self/values “Is that really me? Does this feel right?” for each option.

The last of the 4 dimensions, or scales, is
J-P: IF people make decisions, or HOW PEOPLE PREFER TO LIVE-WITH DECISIONS MADE, OR OPTIONS OPEN (write that down!)
J types:
-prefer to have things decided
-like a plan, schedule for sense of security
-are frustrated with things being up in the air
(prefer a poor decision to being up in the air)
-are organized, efficient, focus on completing the task at hand
-are time oriented, prompt
-prefer structure, planning control, stability
-neatness counts, straightening things up is a high priority

In contrast for people on the other end of this dimension
P types:
-decisions make them feel trapped
-need to keep all options open, open to and eager for new info, looking for opportunities and alternatives
-process oriented (not time oriented) so they get caught up in what they are doing, not structured by time
-prefer flexibility and spontaneity…adapting, going with the flow
-schedules make them feel hurried and over-controlled

Decision-making typically involves: gathering info, making decision
J = strong on making decisions, weak on gathering info
P = good at gathering info, difficulty making decisions

You should be able to see how when people fall on opposite ends of a dimension, conflict is likely. Understanding this model of personality and your scores on it will help you know yourself better, so you can make better decisions and figure out the root causes of conflict with people who are different from you so these conflicts can be more easily resolved.

The four scales combine into 16 possible personality types (represented by the four letters from the four scales)...for example, I am “ENFP”.
Your results from the MBTI provide career information connected to your 4-Letter type. You will need to read your results carefully to better understand how the four dimensions combine into one 4-letter type, and refer to this lecture to interpret your scores on each of the 4 dimensions.

To interpret your results...
Think about yourself, can you think of things you do or ways you do things that make sense given your scores on this assessment?
What do you do that demonstrates your type?
Think about your own relationships, can you think of examples where you are on one end of one of the four dimensions and someone you interact with (partner, sibling, parent, co-worker, boss, etc.) is on the other?
Think about yourself at work and in your relationships…how does your type fit you?
What are some things you do or some ways that you do things at work and/or in your relationships with other people that make sense given your scores, your personality type?
I’d like you to Think and Write about how your scores fit you:
Identify pieces that fit and then provide an example to demonstrate HOW each piece fits you.

Do this 2 ways:
1) each dimension one at a time
2) 4 letter type

Take about 15 minutes and write down your interpretations of how your scores fit you…then go to “Discussions”, look for and reply to the question on personality to share and learn more from examples about how types can be individually interpreted. As you discuss how the type fit each of you, identify and comment on similarities, things you have in common related to your scores on each dimension, AND differences that you can explain based on differences in types and scores.

The 3rd way to interpret your scores is to look at:
3) temperaments:
   there are 4 temperaments—SJ, SP, NF, NT
Your “Temperament” describes your preferred mental processes (see p.5 of your report for details).

If you are an “S” (on the S-N dimension)...then you are an “SJ” or an “SP” (determined by your score on the J-P dimension)

If you are an “N” (on the S-N dimension)...then you are an “NF” or an “NT” (determined by your score on the T-F dimension)

Each temperament has different preferences when it comes to relating with the outside world and attention to the inner world of ideas.

These are reflected in your MBTI.
Follow instructions in this lecture to interpret your scores, then read through your report carefully and join Discussions about personality.