

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® psychological assessment tool is a written instrument based on the work of Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, which "indicates" a person's likely psychological *type*. It was developed over four decades as questions were exhaustively tested and research collected on many thousands of people. The instrument has been re-normed, and re-tested for scientific reliability and validity year after year.

The goal of the work was to find a way to give people access to their Jungian type. To do this, Katherine Briggs and Isabel Myers created the framework of the four pairs of preferences resulting in the sixteen types. Psychological type describes the different ways we:

- ? are energized by the outside world or by the inner world, and
- ? prefer to take in information and what kind of information they tend to trust,
- ? prefer to make decisions,
- ? prefer to keep things open or to move towards closure.

The MBTI® instrument sorts these personality preferences into 16 different types, rather than reporting high or low amounts of a good or bad trait. The theory of psychological type says that people with different preferences *naturally* have different interests, perspectives, behaviors, and motivations. Awareness of preferences helps people understand and value others who think and act quite differently. All preferences are *equally* valuable and each type brings an important perspective to human interactions. For this reason, a mixture of types tends to lead to the most effective work in groups.

The MBTI® is the most widely used instrument for understanding normal personality differences. It is now used in almost every aspect of life to help people understand themselves and others and to value the differences. Psychological type is used in:

- ? Education
- ? Career counseling and outplacement
- ? Parenting, families, and couples
- ? Management and supervision
- ? Sales and influencing
- ? Teambuilding
- ? Conflict management
- ? Leadership training
- ? Healthcare
- ? Personal development (counseling and psychotherapy)
- ? Stress management
- ? Spirituality

New uses are consistently being developed and utilized!

MBTI® and Teams

Because teams are made up of small numbers of people with complementary skills, it is important to *maximize* the opportunities for each individual to contribute to the team goals.

To collaborate effectively, and especially under pressure, people need to understand each other better and appreciate personal differences. Converting these differences from a source of team conflict into a source of team strength dramatically increases the productivity of the team *and* the bottom line.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator benefits teams by:

- ? Reducing unproductive work
- ? Identifying areas of strength and possible areas of weakness for the team
- ? Clarifying team behavior
- ? Helping to match specific task assignments according to preferences
- ? Supplying a framework in which team members can understand and better handle conflict
- ? Helping individuals understand how different perspectives and methods can lead to useful and effective problem solving
- ? Maximizing a team's diversity in order to reach more useful and insightful conclusions

Since the publication of the MBTI® instrument for applied use in 1975, applications and research have increased exponentially:

- ? Hundreds of books and research projects have applied type to careers, relationships, counseling, parenting, business, education, and spirituality.
- ? There are now over 6,000 references in the instrument bibliography maintained by *Center for Applications of Psychological Type*, and the list continues to grow.
- ? Unlike many personality type instruments, the MBTI® has been continuously refined, tested, and validated through academic research.
- ? Use of the MBTI® has grown to 2 million per year, making it the most utilized measure of normal personality differences in the world.

The MBTI® is a powerful psychological tool. To avoid its superficial use, those who wish to administer the instrument and give feedback to others must be qualified through either their education and/or a qualifying program approved by the publisher, *Consulting Psychologist Press*.