



How the Myers Briggs Type Indicator can Benefit Teams

A team is a group of two or more people working together to accomplish a task. Team members need to work together more effectively to accomplish tasks. In the past, most organisations have emphasised the interactions between managers and employees; the challenge for the future lies in the interactions among employees as equals (i.e., on teams). These teams may be cross-functional in nature and will operate without the benefit of a built-in hierarchy. Thus, team members may be less certain of their respective roles. The MBTI can help team members manage these roles and contribute to the team in their own unique style.

A team that works well together is not a chance event. People concerned about effective teams need to understand themselves first. They also need to know about how they function best in a

group setting. By analysing the collective preferences on a team, the team can discover and appropriately manage potential areas of strength and weaknesses. This does not mean assigning people tasks based on MBTI preferences only. While type can help determine the fit between a person and a given task, type should never be the sole criterion for assignment. Personal motivation, interests, and needs, as well as an even distribution of work, must be considered.

The MBTI specifically aids people on teams by:

- Improving communication through understanding the needs of the team you are working with.
- Identifying individual and team areas of strength and weakness and diagnosing a team's needs as a result.
- Clarifying team behaviour and helping team members apply their awareness of MBTI and type appropriately to their ongoing challenges.
- Helping match specific task assignments to certain MBTI types.
- Building an objective framework for dealing with conflict.
- Helping individuals understand how different perspectives and methods can lead to useful effective problem solving.
- Predicting potential problem areas.
- Teaching team members to value and work with the strengths of others and value diversity.
- Helping teams gain insight into organisational culture.

How the MBTI can help individuals understand:

- your natural preferences for focusing your energy, gathering information, making decision, and living a certain way;
- your preferred way to respond to team challenges;
- your style of interaction with others on the team; and
- the unique way that your preferences allow you to make a distinctive contribution to the team.

Characteristics of Effective Teams

- Effective teams differ in many ways, but they have some characteristics in common:
- A well-defined goal
- An understanding of individual responsibilities, relationships, and priorities
- A willingness to subordinate individual goals to group goals
- A co-operative, rather than competitive, climate
- An ability to deal with and appreciate conflict and different points of view
- An understanding of how the team fits in with other teams and with its larger environment
- A leadership pattern that balances appropriate direction and control with support and openness
- Camaraderie, competence, and trust, with resulting high morale
- The ability to keep communication lines open

So call us now on 01543-416242, and find out how **MBTI** can help you and your teams to perform better.



MBTI helps you determine why a team is lacking one or more of these characteristics.

Predictions About Teams

Certain consistencies about teams allow for predictions based on psychological type:

- The more similar the types on a team, the sooner the team members will understand each other; the more different the types, the slower the understanding.
- Groups with high similarity will reach quicker decisions but are more likely to make errors due to inadequate representation of all viewpoints. Groups with many different types will reach decisions more slowly (and painfully) but reach better decisions because more viewpoints are covered.
- Leadership roles may shift as the tasks to be done require the skills of different types on the team.
- Team members who are opposite on all four preferences may have special problems in achieving understanding; members who share two preferences from each of the opposites may be “translators.”
- The person who is the only representative of a preference (e.g., the only Introvert) may be seen as “different” from the other team members.
- Teams that come to appreciate and use different types may experience less conflict.
- Teams that are “one-sided” (i.e., have few different types) will succeed if they use different types outside the team as resources or if they make the effort to use their own less-developed functions as required by the tasks. One-sided teams may fail if they overlook aspects of problems that other types would have pointed out or if they stay “rigidly true to type” and fail to use other resources.
- Good decisions will be made when basic facts and realities have been addressed (Sensing), when new possibilities have been discovered (Intuition), when unforeseen inconsistencies and consequences have been exposed (Thinking), and when important values have been protected (Feeling).

Characteristics of Effective Team Builders

Some of the personal characteristics and ways of working that will help you to be an effective team builder.

- Work with the team to understand issues, gather data, apply interventions, and formulate solutions.
- Communicate clearly, be flexible, and remain aware of the human elements involved in the team building process.
- Be aware of your own type and type biases and how these may interact with the team leader’s type and the overall team type.
- Know your limits and know when to seek help.
- Know about group process, team development, and other team building models in addition to those that are reflected in this Guide.
- Help the team understand that effective team building takes place over a period of time - it is not a one-time event.
- Bring each section of the team building session to a conclusion by asking team members to decide on implementation plans or commitment at each point before moving on to the next section.

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