

MBTI Module 1: Introduction to the Myers-Briggs Type Instrument

Course Description

Exceptional veterinary teams are comprised of individuals who understand their personal strengths. They apply this knowledge in their collaborative and leadership capacities, resulting in improved professional practice and personal morale based on increased abilities to be effective in interpersonal relationships, communication, and decision making.

The purpose of Module 1 is the acquisition of powerful information and insights that will help you understand your personal strengths in order to enhance your contribution to your veterinary team and to promote your effectiveness in relationships at home, at school, and in life.

Learning Objectives

- ◆ Learn the purposes of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality tool.
- ◆ Know how the MBTI is similar to and different from other personality inventories.
- ◆ Understand the concept of “personality type.”

Optional and Recommended

- ◆ Complete the MBTI. Register at myEVT.com.
- ◆ Review your assessment report to become aware of your type preferences.

Achieve an increased awareness of your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors:

- ◆ How you prefer to become energized.
- ◆ How you prefer to take in information.
- ◆ How you prefer to make decisions.

How you prefer to approach life.

Recognize and respect your strengths and challenges.

Develop awareness of how preference dichotomies impact others’ thinking, feeling, and behaviors.

Grasp that all preferences are equally valuable and useful.

Be motivated to use what you have learned to benefit yourself and others with whom you work or interact, such as the members of your veterinary team!



Course Content

Optional and Recommended: Take the MBTI

Part 1: The MBTI Tool

Personality assessment and the veterinary team

- ◆ Increasing self-awareness
- ◆ Understanding individual differences

Part 2: Understanding Type

Benefits of understanding personality type

Part 3: MBTI Comparison

How the MBTI compares to other psychological tests

- ◆ What makes the MBTI similar
- ◆ What makes the MBTI unique

Part 4: Carl Jung

What is personality type?

- ◆ Personality type theory
- ◆ Recommended reading

Part 5: The Four Dichotomies

The building blocks of personality type

- ◆ The four dichotomies
- ◆ The spice of life
- ◆ Exercise

Part 6: The Eight Preferences

Understanding your preferences

- ◆ The eight preferences

Required Materials

- ◆ Required course content is online.

Optional and recommended

- ◆ Take the MBTI online at the EVT discounted price.

1 The MBTI Tool

2 Understanding Type

3 MBTI Comparison

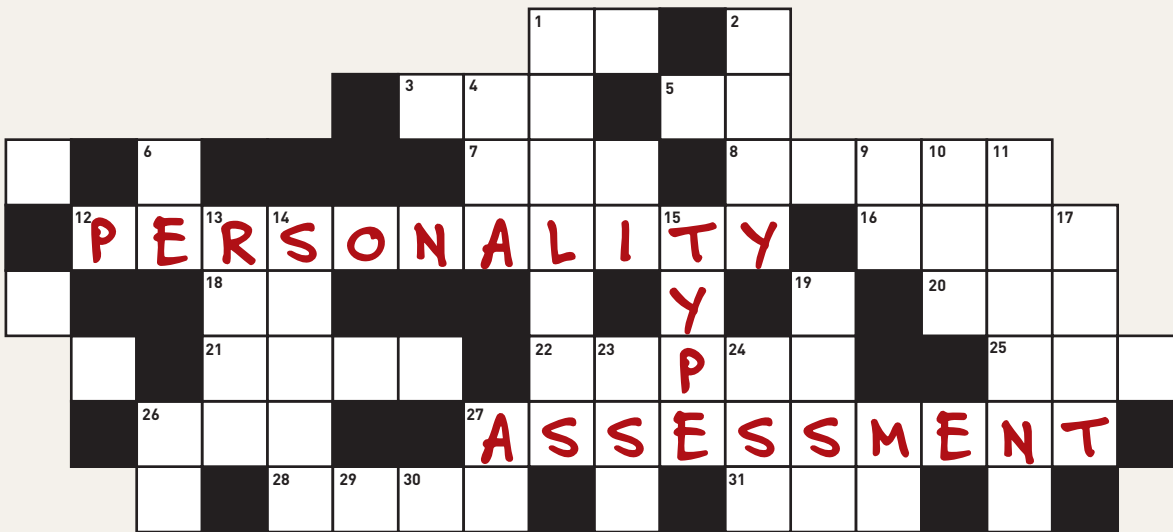
4 Carl Jung

5 The 4 Dichotomies

6 The 8 Preferences

1 The MBTI Tool

By Jeff Thoren, DVM, ACC



The purpose of learning about type is to help you understand yourself better and to enhance your relationships with others.

—Isabel Briggs Myers

and the Veterinary Team

The purpose of the MBTI personality inventory is to make the theory of psychological types described by Carl G. Jung understandable and applicable. The essence of the theory is that much seemingly random variation in people's behavior is actually quite orderly and consistent, being due to basic differences in the way individuals prefer to:

- **Get energized**
- **Take in information**
- **Make decisions, and**
- **Approach life.**

These preferences are innate and hard-wired, in much the same way that you are born with a preference for either right- or left-handedness.

When combined, your preferences form one of 16 unique personality types, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. No type is inherently better or worse than any others. By understanding your type, and the type preferences of those around you, you gain powerful insights into maximizing your own effectiveness and your ability to work with others.

The MBTI tool is great for:

- **Increasing self-awareness.**

Self-awareness alone is a compelling predictor of success at work and accounts for one third of job performance. Awareness of your unique personality profile is an essential starting point.

- **Understanding individual differences.** Social awareness is the key to working well with others and the MBTI instrument helps people understand the differences in how people work and interact.

Using these powerful insights we can discover how each person's unique personality type contributes to team performance. Plus, we can learn new ways to increase collaboration and improve relationships, productivity, and efficiency at work by considering all points of view. ●

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a valuable tool for personal development and for building healthy and productive veterinary health care teams.



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Benefits of Understanding *Personality* Type

Understanding and applying a knowledge of personality type leads to:

- Enhanced leadership
- Improved teamwork
- Clearer communications
- Greater utilization of personal strengths
- Reduced conflicts
- Improved decision making
- Increased morale

In developing the MBTI, the aim of Isabel Briggs Myers, and her mother, Katharine Briggs, was to make the insights of type theory easy to grasp. After more than 50 years, the MBTI assessment continues to be the best known and most trusted personality tool available today. More than 2 million assessments are administered to individuals annually. ●

From developing more productive work teams to building closer families, the MBTI can improve the quality of life for anyone and any organization.



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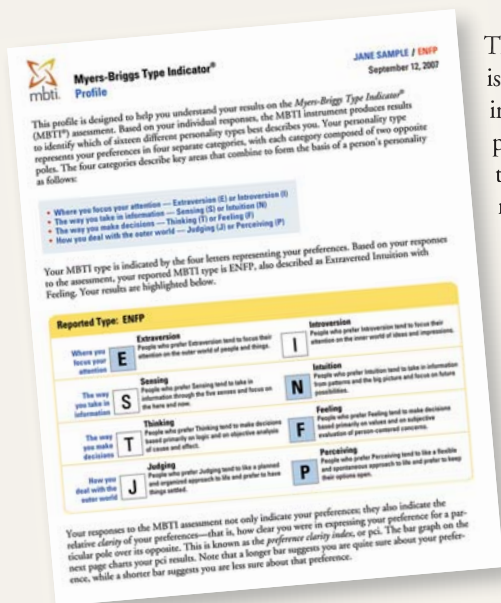
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How MBTI Compares to Other Psychological Tests



The Myers-Briggs Type MBTI Indicator (MBTI) is a psychological instrument that provides information about Jungian-based personality or psychological types. It is not considered to be a test or evaluation instrument, and there are no right or wrong answers. The responses to the questions give an indication of the person's psychological type, and all types are positive or good.

The MBTI is similar to other psychological instruments in that it is designed to assess some qualities of an individual's personality. People are asked to respond to questions about their preferences in various situations, and the result is an indicated "type" of personality. Knowing one's type gives insight into motives, behaviors, and interactions with others.

The MBTI instrument is unlike many other psychological instruments in that it is not an assessment of mental health, intelligence, or unhealthy personality types or patterns. The common psychological instrument may tell you, among other things, where you are deficient, lacking or disturbed. It is not possible to have an MBTI result that is bad or unhealthy. The MBTI instrument is intended for self-discovery—what is *right* with you.

It does not measure amounts of personality traits or quantities of thought or behavior. Most psychological instruments report high or low amounts of a good or bad trait. The MBTI instrument sorts personalities into different types that are qualitatively different. Just as apples are different from oranges, one personality type is different from other types. Trait theory would tell you how much orange and how much apple you are.

It does not compare your results to that of other individuals. Most psychological tests evaluate you by comparing you to some normal or pathological standard. With the MBTI instrument your responses are the only values used to indicate your psychological type.

Whether or not you are an extravert or an introvert is the important issue, not how you compare to other extraverts or introverts.

It does not tell you what you are. Usually the results of a psychological instrument are the final word. You are depressed or dysfunctional in some way and the test told you so. With the MBTI instrument, the type that the person reports on the Indicator is a hypothesis that needs to be verified by the respondent as he or she considers the descriptions of the reported and different types. This leads to a best-fit type, and continued self-assessment may result in an accurate indication of type that is different from the reported results. Remember: you are the expert on you. It is up to you to decide how and if type can enhance your life. ●

► Source: capt.org/mbti-assessment/mbti-test-comparison.htm

What Makes MBTI Unique

- The MBTI instrument does not evaluate mental health; there are no bad or unhealthy results.
- The MBTI instrument sorts individuals into opposite categories, both of which are desirable. Many instruments measure the amount or degree of a trait, such as shyness or detail-orientation. Usually, it is desirable to have more or less of a trait, whereas with the MBTI instrument both categories are desirable.
- The MBTI instrument does not compare your results to those of other people; it does not evaluate you by comparing you to any normal or pathological standard.
- The MBTI instrument describes the interaction between all preferences (called type dynamics) to create a whole type pattern rather than just adding up the qualities of each separate preference.
- The MBTI instrument allows you to determine your own personality type through a personal verification process, leaving the final assessment of your type in your hands.

► Source: <http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/different-from-other-instruments.asp>

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What Is Personality Type?

Personality type (also referred to as *psychological type*) is based on the theory described by Carl Jung that seemingly random variation in people's behavior is actually consistent and orderly. The concept is a practical and convenient framework for understanding and appreciating the differences among individuals.

An underlying personality pattern results from the dynamic interaction of basic preferences, environmental influences, and our own choices. We tend to develop behaviors, skills, and attitudes associated with our type, and those with different types will likely be opposite to you in many ways, while people with the same personality types naturally have similar interests and views, behaviors, and motivations.

Each type represents a valuable and reasonable way to be. Each has its own potential strengths, as well as its likely blind spots. Awareness of differences between types can help people understand and value other people who think and act quite differently. ●

Just remember that, in the words of Isabel Myers, "Type does not explain everything. Human personality is much more complex."



Take a moment to think about the people you work with in your practice. You can probably identify team members who think and operate differently from you. As you continue through this learning module, pay particular attention to see if some of these differences may be explained by differences in personality type.

Recommended Reading

There are a vast number of books and articles that will help you better understand the MBTI and how to use it. Some of classics in the field:

1. *Health Care Communication Using Personality Type: Patients are Different!* Allen J—Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis, 2000.
2. *People Types and Tiger Stripes*. Lawrence G—Gainesville: Center for Application of Psychological Type, 2000.
3. *Please Understand Me: Character and Temperament Types*. Keirsey D, Bates—Del Mar, CA: Prometheus Nemesis Books, 1984.
4. *Please Understand Me II: Temperament, Character, and Intelligence*. Keirsey D, Bates—Del Mar, CA: Prometheus Nemesis Books, 1998.



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THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF PERSONALITY TYPE

There are four key building blocks that make up our personality type. Each of the four building blocks is made up of a pair of opposite preferences. So there are two possible ways we can choose to use each building block at any given moment in time.

In type terms, these building blocks are called dichotomies and their pairs of opposite preferences are called poles. The MBTI reports preferences related to the following four dichotomies.

The Four Preference Dichotomies

- **Extraversion/Introversion** **How you prefer to get energized**
- **Sensing/Intuition** **How you prefer to take in information**
- **Thinking/Feeling** **How you prefer to make decisions**
- **Judging/Perceiving** **How you prefer to approach life**

It is important to understand three key points.

- 1. You can and do use each of these eight preferences at different times.** We use both poles at different times and in different contexts. However, we can't use both at exactly the same time and we don't use both with equal confidence.
- 2. Although you use all of the preferences, you tend to use one preference in each pair more than the other; one feels more comfortable, more natural.** Neither is wrong. You can do both, but you prefer one.
- 3. Most importantly all eight of the preferences are equally valuable.** All preferences are equally valuable and each type brings an important point of view when people interact.

The Spice of Life

A variety of types is best for a work group or team because many views are represented. Although each type approaches situations differently, and another person's approach may not be what you would choose, each way can be effective.

For example, let's say you have a colleague at work named Nicole. Nicole's type may lead her to like doing things at the last minute, while you are uncomfortable if everything isn't scheduled and planned in advance. Nicole may feel constrained when she has to plan far in advance. You are not right and Nicole wrong. Nicole is not right and you wrong. Different ways, based on different personality types, work for one of you and not for the other.

Of course when you and Nicole work together, your differences can be irritating. This is when knowing about personality type can help. You can accept her way as valid and she can accept yours.

"There is no right or wrong type, and there are no better or worse combinations of types in work or relationships."
- Isabel Briggs Myers

Exercise

In her studies of people and extensive reading of Jung's theories, Isabel Myers concluded there were four primary ways people differed from one another. She labeled these differences "preferences," drawing a similarity to "hand preferences" to illustrate that although we all use both of our hands, most of us have a preference for one over the other and "it" takes the lead in many of the activities in which we use our hands.

To experience this concept, try this simple exercise:

- Take out a piece of paper and sign your name as you normally do.
- Now, sign your name again, but this time use your other hand.
- How would you describe the experience of writing your name with your preferred hand?
- With your nonpreferred hand?
- Most people who try this immediately notice a number of differences:

Preferred Hand

- Feels natural
- Didn't think about it
- Effortless, easy
- Looks neat, legible, adult

Nonpreferred Hand

- Feels unnatural
- Had to concentrate while doing it
- Awkward and clumsy
- Looks childlike legible, adult

The words used to describe the preferences for one hand over the other illustrate the theory of preferences in the MBTI: You can use either hand when you have to, and you use both hands regularly; but for writing, one is natural, while the other often requires more effort and doesn't come quite as easily.

► Source: *Introduction to Type, 6th ed. Myers IB—Palo Alto, CA: CPP, 1998.*

notes

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“Become aware of your type biases (we all have them!) to avoid negative stereotyping.”
- Isabel Briggs Myers

Understanding Your Preferences

Your results from the MBTI instrument help you become aware of your personality preferences.

A preference is what you like. You may like, or prefer, peppermint candy over butterscotch. You may prefer reading over watching movies. This doesn't mean you won't sometimes choose, or be pressured to choose, butterscotch candy or movies. But in general you will prefer to choose peppermint and reading.

There are no right or wrong preferences. Reading is not better than watching movies; each has its strengths and its problems. Most people have the ability to do both, even if they don't like one or the other.

Personality type, also called psychological type, is what you prefer when you are using your mind or focusing your attention. Studies and experience have shown that there are consistent patterns for each person. There are many benefits to understanding your own preferences, including how they affect you, how they affect your style of communication, and how they are different from what other people prefer. Preferences allow us to have different interests, different ways of behaving, and different ways of seeing the world.

While all the preferences are equal, each has different strengths and different challenges. Knowing these personality strengths and challenges for yourself and others can help you understand and appreciate how everyone contributes to a situation, a task, or the solution to a problem.

The Eight Preferences

How you prefer to get energized	E	Extraversion People who prefer extraversion tend to focus on the outside world and get energy through interacting with people and doing things.	I	Introversion People who prefer introversion tend to focus on the inner world and get energy through reflecting on information, ideas and/or concepts.
How you prefer to take in information	S	Sensing People who prefer sensing tend to notice and trust facts, details, and present realities. They like to take in information through the five senses	N	Intuition People who prefer intuition tend to pay attention to and trust interrelationships, theories, and future possibilities. They are drawn to the big picture.
How you prefer to make decisions	T	Thinking People who prefer thinking tend to make decisions using impartial, logical, and objective analysis.	F	Feeling People who prefer feeling tend to make decisions to create harmony by applying person-centered values.
How you prefer to approach life	J	Judging People who prefer judging tend to like a planned approach to life and are organized, orderly, structured, and decisive.	P	Perceiving People who prefer perceiving tend to adopt a more spontaneous approach to life and are flexible, adaptable, and like to keep their options open.

Note: to avoid confusion, N is used as the abbreviation for Intuition and I for Introversion.

Four of these eight preferences (E or I, S or N, T or F, J or P) make up a person's MBTI type, also called psychological or personality type. As you act on your type preferences, you create a unique approach to the world, to information, to decisions, and to other people.

When the preferences are combined in all possible ways, they form 16 distinct personality types.

