

Developments In Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 22, 1995

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE THEORY

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BIOGRAPHY

Kevin Wentworth, is an international trainer for:

- the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) Qualifying Program, which trains trainers in the administration of the MBTI and the theory behind its' development
- Team Building Using Type and Adventure Learning Program, which incorporates type and experiential learning for team building and
- introductory sessions for groups or individuals interested in learning about type.

Kevin also has experience in outdoor education through Inner Quest of Virginia and the National Outdoor Leadership School of Wyoming. He has over 6 years experience teaching and educating people about the out-of-doors while a ranger in the National Park system and as a naturalist for Special Expeditions.

TYPE RESOURCES, INC.

Type Resources' mission is to be the most comprehensive and responsive professional resource for users of type. To fulfill that mission:

- TR is a leading international training firm in the applications of type and temperament for trainers, organizational consultants, counselors, educators, and religious leaders
- TR provides consulting and mentoring services to corporate and government executives and managers
- TR is the only organization authorized by Consulting Psychologist Press, Inc., the publisher of the MBTI, to both provide MBTI Qualifying training and distribute MBTI, EAR, TDI, and MMTIC testing materials
- TR distributes an extensive selection of books (over 250 titles), training aids, and other materials related to type, temperament, and Jungian concepts.

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE THEORY

Psychological type theory was developed by Carl Jung of Switzerland in the early 1900's. This theory was then used as the basis for the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, developed by Katharine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Myers in the 1940's. The MBTI is a psychological instrument used to help a person choose which one of sixteen psychological types is a "best fit." The basic assumptions from Jung's theory used when creating the MBTI were:

- everybody has preferences
- a persons type is innate
- preferences are bipolar
- type is a system not just the sum of the preferences in the type code
- type development is a lifelong process
- development occurs between innate and environmental factors
- preferences are not the same as skills

With these basic assumptions set forth, the eight preferences are described:

Extraverting/Introverting - the difference in how peoples energy flows. People who prefer extraverting tend to like to be around and are energized by people and things in the external world. People who prefer introverting are energized by being able to focus on their inner world of thoughts, feelings and reactions.

Sensing/Intuiting - the difference between how and what information people prefer to collect. People who prefer sensing tend to like to have information in a concrete form as received from the five senses. People who prefer intuiting tend to like information in a more abstract or theoretical manner or in a pattern recognition form.

Thinking/Feeling - the difference between how people make decisions. People who prefer thinking tend to make decisions from an objective point of view using weighted criteria to make a decision. People who prefer feeling make decisions from a subjective point of view using a hierarchy of personal values to make a decision.

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Judging/Perceiving - the difference between how people like their outer world. People who prefer judging tend to like their outer world structured and organized. People who prefer perceiving tend to like the outer world flexible and open.

Introduction to Temperament Theory

Temperament theory has been integrated into psychological types theory. It was developed by David Keirsey in the 1940s. This theory describes four themes or patterns of personality called temperaments. These temperaments are described as:

Rationals - people who feel drawn toward knowledge and have a driving need for competence in all their activities.

Idealists - people who feel drawn to helping others and themselves reach their true potential as unique individuals.

Guardians people who are driven by a sense of duty and responsibility to family and organizations to which they belong.

Artisans - people who are driven by a need for action and the freedom to act on their impulses in order to make an impact.

Uses for Type & Temperament Theories

Psychological type and temperament theories are being used by personal, career, and couple counselors; religious leaders; people performing team building; managers; and educators.

The power of type is its ability to give a view into the individual as well as group functioning. For the individual, the knowledge of their preferences for energy flow, information gathering, decision making and how they like their outer world can give insight as to where their strengths may lie and where they may need to develop.

Type can also give insight into why a person might be feeling tension in some area of their life. They may be trying to use preferences, which are not well developed and require more energy than their developed preferences.

For example, if a person who prefers introverting

is required to deal with people all day long without sufficient quiet time, they may find themselves exhausted, especially if they are also not getting that quiet time at home. Likewise, if a person who prefers extraverting if they are required to sit at a desk with little personal interaction all day they may start to feel anxious and hyper.

Using Type and Temperament in Teams

Type theory is helpful in understanding group dynamics. Exploring how an individual may differ from the other people on the team is the first step to opening communication and making better decisions. For example, if a person who prefers sensing asks for a rough draft, they are probably expecting something, which is in the presentation format and has concrete information. A person who prefers intuition will probably assume that a rough draft is simply the overall outline or idea, which may not include any of the actual concrete information which has been gathered.

Some problems are more easily addressed, using type awareness. Problems can be described in a way that doesn't introduce bias. A tense person who prefers introverting could make sure that somehow they get a little more quiet time each day. For a person who prefers extraverting, it should be all right for them to leave their desk every so often to chat with co-workers. This isn't goofing off, it is, in actuality, probably going to increase productivity.

For the communication problem between the person who prefers sensing and the person who prefers intuiting, if each realizes how the other gathers information they can work on an understanding of what the actual format for a rough draft should be instead of assuming that each has the same definition.

Summary

Over 7,000,000 people worldwide have been exposed to Type and Temperament theory through the MBTI. Most report this new knowledge has made a significant difference in their understanding and acceptance of themselves and their ability to interact more effectively with those who have different preferences.