

The Use of Myers-Briggs Type as an Aid In Team Formation and Development in the Workplace

There is currently a strong trend in business towards the use of teams to perform work objectives. Studies reveal ninety-percent of America's one thousand largest companies employ the use of teams on a regular bases.

Along with the wide and multiple uses of teams by organizations organizational development practitioners have put forth a concerted effort to:

1. Extract and properly utilize the individual strengths each team member brings to the team endeavor.
2. Build constructive working relationships.
3. Produce a harmonious and cohesive team environment, which fosters a quality process and produces a successful outcome.

Many innovative organizations in which the corporate leadership values development and promotion of skills and knowledge of its members have discovered an understanding of Myers-Briggs personality type helps develop better working relationships and maximizes team performance.

There are two principal assumptions fundamental to the use of the MBTI with team development. The first assumption is knowledge of individual differences will help teams identify the unique abilities each team member is capable of contributing towards the goal of task accomplishment. The second assumption is knowledge of individual differences when attributed to personality type can help reduce conflict by redirecting potential sources of misunderstanding.

Organizational development theorists are of the opinion that improvements in conflict resolution contributes greatly to the improvement of the team process as a whole. Through knowledge of type preferences a conflict can be diagnosed and attributed to naturally occurring type differences. Within the context of type theory blaming and other negative elements of conflict can be managed.

Each of the sixteen types exhibit unique characteristics and tendencies when functioning as a team member in a work environment. The following is a cursory summation of some of these characteristics and tendencies.

ENFJ: Focus on interpersonal relationships; their innate tendencies to be diplomatic and persuasive enable them to be natural team builders.

ISTJ: Bring clarity and structure to team goals and objectives by concentrating on precise facts, they take nothing for grant it.

ISTP: Resourceful self-starters skilled at accomplishing difficult task in an efficient

timely manner and excel in a team environment that promotes autonomy and individuality.

ENTJ: Critical and challenging by nature; demand competence and efficiency from other team members. They cannot not lead.

INFP: Possess boundless idealism. They are skilled listeners apt at facilitating and motivating other team members, when they choose to do so.

ISFJ: Unselfishly and willing take on work of any type or magnitude in order to benefit the team effort. They are the ultimate team player.

ENTP: Skilled negotiators that have a natural gift for getting others excited about ideas. They are very apt at mobilizing other team members and getting projects underway.

ESTJ: Belonging, tradition and camaraderie are important. They have a keen sense of Organization and are proficient at focusing on team goals. They are very dependable and through.

ESFJ: Highly committed and loyal to the pursuit of team goals and expect the same from others.

INTP: Have an ability to analyze complex problems and find unorthodox solutions. They enjoy working in a team atmosphere that is flexible and unstructured.

ESFP: Keenly aware of what is going on “behind the scene”, thrive on social interaction, strive to make-work fun and tend to enjoy working in a team-structured environment.

ESTP: Excel at troubleshooting and negotiating and lend a common sense approach to focusing on team goals and objectives.

ISFP: Demonstrate personal loyalty to the team and its’ members. They promote a team environment, which is egalitarian, cooperative, and allow others to lead whenever possible. They do not particularly desire to lead.

INFJ: Seek ways for the individual to fit into the organization and are gifted at motivating team members to want to work together.

INTJ: Natural decision-makers who enjoy coming to new understandings. They enjoy working in a team environment, which allows them to generate ideas that challenge and change the status quo.

While enlightening, it is unrealistic to expect the administration of the MBTI accompanied by a one-time session to fully impact team members and improve performance.

In order for the MBTI to achieve acceptance and fully impact performance it is necessary to integrate the MBTI and the theory it is based upon into the culture of the organization in which it is being used.

Some of the organizations that Paladin Associates has assisted in successfully integrating Myers-Briggs type into their company cultural to maximize team performance include:

- ✍ US Army
- ✍ Catholic Church
- ✍ Las Vegas Valley Water District
- ✍ John-Deere
- ✍ Oregon State Government
- ✍ Sara Lee
- ✍ Ascension Health Organization

If you are involved in an organization that could benefit from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator contact us at sbeasley@paladinexec.com or 307-235-1253. We offer a wide range of seminars that can be tailored to your organization's specific needs and budget requirements.

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Some of the information in this newsletter was derived from;
Business, (1999) Pride, Hughes, and Kapoor
MBTI Applications, (1996) Allen L. Hammer