



THE IMPACT OF PERSONALITY IN THE WORKPLACE

We define personality as a set of **characteristics that influence our cognition (thoughts), motivations and behavior in various situations.** Personality is what enables us to conform to social norms, which in turn enables us to adapt to society and socio-professional organizations.

From a business organization perspective, personality is important for at least three main reasons:

- **When we recruit someone for a job, the candidate can always learn and develop his or her skills through training. On the other hand, personality is much harder to change when it doesn't fit the profile we're looking for.**
- **We spend more than 8 hours a day with our colleagues. What will determine the nature and type of relationships we have, is each person's personality, not their experience or professional skills.**
- **When we set up work groups and teams, it's the complementarities and compatibilities of our personalities that ensure the success of our projects.**

Personality is everything that makes a person who he or she is. The traits, or natural reflexes, that make up character are essential not only when it comes to predicting how individuals will interact with each other, but also how they will adapt to the tasks and responsibilities that are assigned to them. It's all these elements that define the quality of exchanges, the way decisions are made and the ability to work as a team, to perform at the highest level.

Enterprises are an economic and social microcosm where personalities interweave to deliver results and achieve high levels of performance. Understanding someone's personality, starting with one's own, means being able to determine the sources of motivation or de-motivation, the decision-making criteria and the environment in which the individual can flourish. Arguments, coldness and resentment have their source in personality incompatibilities between colleagues, even if other factors such as mismanagement, incompetence or lack of integrity can exacerbate conflicts.

Psychological theory and analysis aside, the **MBTI (Myers Briggs Test Indicator)** test, also known as the **Myers Briggs Personality Indicator (MBPI)**, is one of the most widely used tests in the world, often used in recruitment or career transition processes. The test is a tool for identifying a person's personality type.

There is no such thing as a good or bad personality. There are simply personalities more suited to certain situations than others, more suited to certain professions than others, or more compatible with other personalities. Coaching firms and Human Resources departments also use the MBTI test to support or improve their approach to specific or exceptional situations. This enables us to better understand the differences of each team member, to accept them but also to take advantage of them.

As a team leader, understanding the MBTI type of each of your team members offers a key to unlocking the power of their potential. Each type has its own distinctive strengths, sources of motivation and preferred ways of communicating and solving problems. By understanding these preferences, you can optimize teamwork, value diversity and maximize productivity. Better still, knowing your own MBTI type enables you to improve your leadership, by better understanding your strengths, challenges and relationships with your team.

The MBTI test, named after the psychologists who created the matrix, is a tool that maps human functioning into 16 profiles. These 16 psychological personalities differ in their relative preferences on 4 axes, and it is the combinations of these 4 preferences that each reflect an opposition between two principles:

- **Where do you draw your energy from ? :**

Extrovert (E) or Introvert (I)

- **What type of information do you use spontaneously ?:**

Sensing (S) or INtuitive (N)

- **What process do you use to make your decisions ? :**

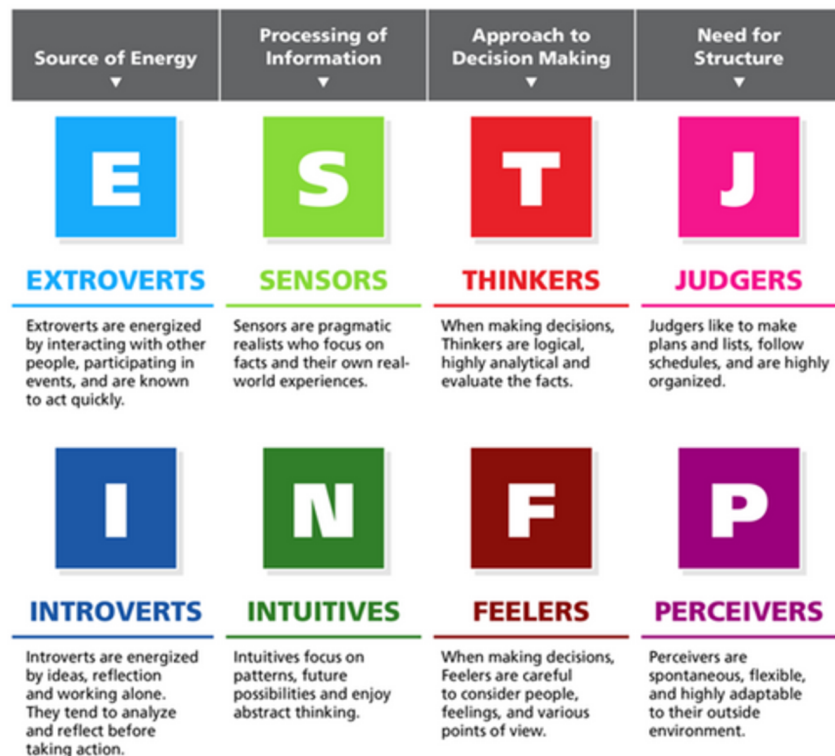
hinking (T) or Feeling (F)

- **How do you approach the world around you ? :**

Judging (J) or Perceiving (P) .

These eight values are symbolized by a letter that corresponds to the first letter of the word in English, enabling us to determine 16 personality types represented by 4 letters (**ISTJ, ESTJ, ISTP, ESTP, ISFJ, ESFJ, ISFP, ESFP, INFJ, ENFJ, INFP, ENTP, INTP, ENTJ, INTJ**). A professional will help you to validate and decipher your personality type to better help you understand and adapt to situations for better decision-making and greater professional and social effectiveness.





Imagine human diversity ; each person is unique, yet shares commonalities with others. This is the principle behind the MBTI type. It describes general patterns of thinking and functioning that guide our interactions with the world, our decision-making processes and the way we recharge our batteries.

Personality types provide crucial details about an individual's psychological preferences. In fact, **your personality is more than a 4-letter code**. Each individual will tend to make decisions based on his or her MBTI profile (Thinking or Feeling) and not on social conventions.

MBTI test results are illustrated, for example, with historical or popular figures such as **Einstein INTP**, **Martin Luther King INFJ**, **Churchill ESTP**, **Kennedy ESFP**, **Mandela INFJ** and **many more**. Each corresponds to a particular profile in line with his or her life experience.

In a company, our relationship with the acquisition, assimilation and processing of information is different. Some people are able to make quick, abstract links between available data, while others need more visual support and factual examples demonstrating how the idea would be transposed into their day-to-day reality.

The importance of personality in a professional setting is that it helps you to define the most effective way of interacting with your colleagues or co-workers and making them feel at ease. So you may be too direct in your approach to a colleague who needs to feel involved and appreciated above all else. Or perhaps you didn't choose your words carefully when you made a funny, innocent remark to a colleague, who may have misunderstood and feels the victim of a personal attack.

Once again, understanding personality in a professional setting can provide valuable information to improve communication and teamwork by taking into account personality differences between people to:

- **work more effectively with those who may have a very different approach to problems and decisions than you do**
- **Manage your work and personal relationships with greater insight and effectiveness**
- **Understand your preferences in terms of work environment, and identify the activities where you feel most at ease**
- **Deal more effectively with the daily conflicts and stresses of work and life**

On a sociological level, and more specifically in African societies, there are three stages in adult life (young adulthood, middle adulthood and senior age). Each has its own particular attributes and personality, which must be taken into account in social and professional relationships.

1. As a young adult, the individual has generally discovered himself and knows what he wants to be. A sense of personal identity has been created, along with a feeling of independence from parents. It's a time when families are formed, and mature love, work and close relationships with certain people predominate. Work becomes central to developing a professional, social and personal identity. The opposite leads to isolation, marginalization and even deviance.



2. In mid-adulthood, action and creativity are essential. When a person has found his or her own identity and acquired a clear awareness of his or her abilities, advising and encouraging the next generation becomes a new interest. Organizational socialization, helping newcomers cope with the challenges of corporate life, is fostered by the generative process. The opposite of this professional and social maturity is self-absorption, rumination and hostility, which often stem from emotional immaturity or an inability to relate to the next generation.



3. The last stage of the human life cycle, senior age, is a time of reflection or wisdom. It is a time when a person is able to stand back, accept the achievements of his life, feel comfortable with them, and experience a certain satisfaction from the work accomplished. Only then is it possible to achieve a sense of serenity. If we fail to achieve this state of emotional acceptance, and perceive our life as an accumulation of failures and missed opportunities, then bitterness and despair may set in, making life and interactions with others in general more difficult.



As a leader, your role is to encourage diversity and build a strong, complementary team and a harmonious environment for everyone's professional development. The MBTI is a map to help you navigate this complex task. It gives you a common language to talk about differences in a respectful and positive way. It encourages every team member to value their own talents and those of others

Knowing and understanding your own personality and that of others is like holding a lantern in a tunnel. This light enables you to see potential obstacles to your team's productivity and find personalized solutions. Imagine having the ability to understand the sources of stress for each team member and adapt your approach accordingly. These are fundamental elements in managing human capital towards harmony and performance.