

Using Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to evaluate yourself for better job selection



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The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment makes practical use of Jung's theory of personality types in helping people make good choices about their careers and lives. The assessment is all about discovering a person's psychological type.

What are psychological types?

Myers-Briggs theory says that people are either born with, or develop, certain preferred ways of thinking and acting. The MBTI sorts some of these psychological differences into four opposite pairs to come up with 16 possible psychological types.

It's important to understand that there is no such thing as a best type. The idea behind the assessment is to understand and appreciate the differences in people, and use their types to help them make good decisions.

Assessing people by function

First of all, the MBTI assesses people according to the following functions:

- **Extroverted** people focus their energy mainly outwardly to the world of activity, people and things. **Introverted** people direct their energy mainly inwardly, toward their reflections, feelings and ideas.
- **Sensing** people gain from the five senses: sight, sound, feel, smell and taste and practical applications. **Intuitive** people prefer to focus on patterns, connections and possible meanings through their senses.
- **Thinking** people base their judgments on objective analysis. **Feeling** people prefer to base decisions on a value process, considering what is important to people.
- **Judging** people like a planned, organized approach to life. **Perceiving** people like a flexible, spontaneous approach and prefer to keep their options open.

What are the personality types?

The different personality types are usually referred to by a combination of the abbreviation of four letters, one for each of the four functions described above:

Function	Type	Abbreviation	Type	Abbreviation
Attitudes	Extraversion	E	Introversion	I
Information-gathering functions	Sensing	S	Intuition	N
Decision-making functions	Thinking	T	Feeling	F
Lifestyle functions	Judging	J	Perceiving	P

When the abbreviations of these types are used in all their possible combinations, they give us 16 broad personality types. So, for example, one person could be an ESTJ type; a very different kind of person could be an INFP type.

MBTI and career choice

Research shows personality type shows correlation to job selection.

- NF people are likely to choose human resources management and audit, psychology, psychiatry and social work or religious occupations. They may also teach at primary or secondary schools, or take up fine arts or environmental science.
- NT people are likely to choose management consultancy, research and development, architecture or computer analysis.
- ST people are likely to choose finance and commerce, administration, become IT operators and programmers, technicians or carpenters, or join the police or armed forces.
- SF people are likely to choose customer service positions, become community workers, health care specialists, waiters or flight attendants.

What about accountants?

A student survey of 119 Napier University accounting degree students found them to be mainly extroverted rather than introverted; sensing rather than intuitive; thinking rather than feeling; and judging rather than perceiving. Perhaps not surprisingly, they match the ST category – which is attracted to finance, commerce and administration.

MBTI is not an exact science, as you will always find different personality types in various occupations. However, when professionals like accountants are in an occupation that requires them to act outside their preferences for long periods of time, they are likely to become much stressed! The question becomes, for each of the professionals, is the stress and tension worth it.

Conclusion

An MBTI assessment gives accountants useful information based on what they report about themselves. Nevertheless, people knowing something and being able to use this knowledge effectively in their lives are two vastly different things.



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After taking the MBTI assessment, many accountants go on to get more information, set new goals, and improve their decision-making and relationships based on what they learn from taking the assessment and from the extra effort they put in after taking it. An important message is that accountants, like everyone else, can change and improve themselves based on own efforts, regardless of their inborn personality, with the insights that the MBTI assessment can give.