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This booklet is dedicated to my mom and dad—who are always learning, always teaching, and always working to make the world a better place.

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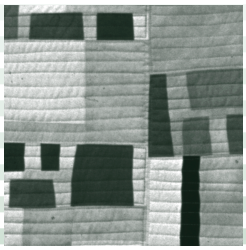
Introduction



Projects have been part of human activity since before the pyramids were built, and they have endured as a way to complete work. Communicating a story through paintings on a cave wall, printing the first book, constructing the first automobile, and traveling to the moon were all projects that helped shape and define human development.

In today's workplace, projects demand a tremendous amount of an organization's energy. Developing an innovative product, ensuring that a specific service is delivered to a new customer on time and how the customer wants it, completing a strategic plan that will drive the future—these are the projects that motivate many to arrive at the office early and stay late each day. At the core of these projects stand the project manager and the project team: a collection of people charged with producing a unique and valuable product or service.

Many organizations have discovered that a project team's work may be improved through the understanding of psychological type, as derived from administering and interpreting the world's leading personality assessment tool, the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*® (MBTI®) instrument. This booklet will help you use psychological type to make projects more successful.

Project management and psychological type are both powerful frameworks used in today's workplaces. This booklet brings them together to support each other for better project outcomes.

By understanding how different project teams direct and receive energy, take in information, make decisions, and are oriented toward the external world—characteristics assessed by the MBTI instrument—you can identify the possible strengths that could help the project and possible challenges the project team might face. By taking concrete actions based on this understanding, you can successfully get an at-risk project back on track and point a successful project to the next level of performance.

Understanding Project Management

If you are starting with a primary interest in *psychological type,* this booklet will help you better speak the language of project management. By increasing your understanding of project management principles and processes, you will be better positioned to

- Recognize how type preferences play out at the project level, providing a systematic framework for both assessing and intervening on a project
- More specifically tailor MBTI feedback sessions to the needs of project teams, making the theory of psychological type more immediately actionable and applicable for these audiences
- Communicate the benefits and immediate payoffs of psychological type and the MBTI assessment to project teams, converting skepticism about interpersonal skills development to receptiveness to type as a useful management tool

Understanding Psychological Type

If you are starting with a primary interest in *project management,* this booklet will introduce you to the tool of psychological type. By understanding this cognitive preference model, you will be better positioned to

- Systematically identify possible strengths and blind spots on a project, allowing for a more complete consideration of the factors that influence the project's success

- Successfully advocate the need for interpersonal and team skills training using the MBTI assessment by directly relating training to the immediate challenges faced by project teams
- Understand how your personality type may affect a project, in terms of both your similarities and differences with other project members

Structure and Purpose of This Booklet

This booklet begins with an overview of psychological type. Next is a review of the basic activities and processes of project management, as well as a guide to the types of project activities and deliverables that can help you quickly assess that project's possible strengths and blind spots. Following that is a review of the eight preferences of psychological type—what they look like on a project and how they might affect it. Then you have the opportunity to look at project management from the perspective of each of the 16 types, as well as methods for detecting imbalances on projects and for bringing all the preferences into play. Five type-specific case studies at the end of this booklet provide real-life examples of the power of psychological type applied to project teams.

Project management and psychological type are established resources in today's workplace. This booklet brings them together to help shape projects so that internal focus is balanced with external breadth, concrete facts with future possibilities, logical analysis with empathy for the customer, and a concern for closure today with openness to what will be new tomorrow.

ESTJ			
ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ

ESTJ Project Type

Extraversion, Sensing, Thinking, Judging

ESTJ Definition of a Project:

The structured delivery of a tangible product or service by mobilizing people and resources to meet stakeholder requirements on time and within budget

ESTJ Project Team Characteristics in Project Management

Management Arena	An ESTJ project team is likely to:
Mission and Scope	■ Frame the mission in terms of the specific tasks that will accomplish the goal but have difficulty presenting a summary-level mission or vision statement ■ Expand the project scope through frequent stakeholder contact, during which new needs and specifications evolve from active discussions
Schedule and Cost	■ Take a structured and directive approach; manage scope, time, and cost at a detailed level in an open forum, such as regular project update meetings ■ Spend too much time managing and communicating the schedule instead of delivering on it; may miss overall trends that signal undetected risks or reveal the root cause of an issue
External Stakeholders	■ Actively engage stakeholder groups in regular meetings to update them on progress but may miss connections, patterns, or integration points with other projects or organization efforts ■ Communicate the project's value by stressing practical outcomes, the project's delivery status, and linkages to past successes and experiences
Project Team	■ Implement and follow a chain-of-command hierarchy to ensure that specific roles and responsibilities are communicated clearly ■ Create a loud and energetic environment featuring extensive discussion and argument, with an emphasis on matter-of-fact and objective presentations of progress and risks
Deliverables and Project Outcomes	■ Have immediate concrete applications for products and deliverables—mapped against specific requirements—which are likely to be produced on time ■ Present deliverables verbally rather than in written form (e.g., briefings preferred over written status updates); include more detail than needed on deliverables and supporting project artifacts and fail to connect the product to the overall mission and customer needs

Possible Strengths and Blind Spots

Strengths

- Directive outreach to communicate the specific tasks and activities required to complete the project
- Effective organization and mobilization of people and resources to get things done
- Being concrete and precise and asserting logical arguments to present the next steps

Blind Spots

- Excess directness and assertiveness, causing others to feel they are not being heard
- Excess structure, leading to a rigidity that appears closed to change
- Lack of personalized attention, not taking into account individual needs

Supporting ESTJ Success

Most ESTJ project teams would benefit from:

- Slowing down to listen more carefully to stakeholder and team needs
- Taking a broader look at the implications or patterns at work
- Developing a more personal touch with individual team members and customer representatives
- Staying open to new data, options, and alternatives as the project evolves

Otherwise, ESTJ project teams risk:

- Railroading people and ignoring their perspectives
- Getting lost in the details and not recognizing overarching needs or threats
- Alienating both customers and team members
- Meeting deadlines but not the full range of stakeholders' needs

ESTJ Mini Case Study

An ESTJ quality assurance team was responsible for testing the prototype of a new cutting-edge product. After a detailed review, the team set up a meeting with the production staff to present a complete set of findings, which included a defect list and full list of test results falling outside specifications. After a few hours of this presentation, the production team cut off the discussion, asking for the results in writing, expressing frustration with the quality assurance team for being so "petty," and claiming that the quality team was setting up barriers to getting the project finished.

Clues to Project Type

E Presentation of test results in an open meeting rather than in writing or as a quiet one-on-one with the project manager

S Presentation of a long list of error reports, focusing on specifics and leading to the characterization of the report as "petty" by the production team

T Problem-focused reporting of a defect list, with one team's apparent lack of concern for how another team will perceive the feedback

J Communication of results in a way that leads others to think that the team perceives quality as a barrier rather than as a facilitator or enabler

Possible Action Steps

I Reconsider how to present results to a smaller set of people on the production team, avoiding the pressure and confrontation of long full-group meetings.

N Look for trends in the defect list. Do they point to root causes that would account for the defects and that a few targeted changes could address?

F Identify ways to express support for the production team for their hard work and dedication to the overall project.

T Analyze future bug lists and categorize defects by level of seriousness.

P Explore alternatives for building testing into the prototype development process at an earlier stage.