



Type Casting: Assessing Personality Before a Hire



Can the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator take the guess work out of your next hiring decision?

BY MATTHEW ZIRWAS, MD

>> Most psychologists are familiar with the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator, a roughly 100-question personality test that classifies individuals as one of 16 “types.” Dermatologists, however, are likely not as well versed with the test or its possible uses in practice.

In a nutshell: individuals of the same type as gauged by Myers–Briggs will generally think and act in predictable and similar ways. As such, the results of the assessment can tell you what types of activities someone is likely to enjoy and be proficient at as well as how they will react to broad types of situations. This is information that can be rather helpful when interviewing and evaluating job candidates.

SWEET 16

The 16 personality types are based on certain key traits, including the following.

Extraverted (E) vs. Introverted (I). Extraverts direct their attention to the external world and derive energy from interacting with it. Introverts, however, direct their attention to their internal world and are drained of energy from dealing with the external world.

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Sensing (S) vs. Intuition (N). Sensing means you pay more attention to information that comes in through your five senses, while intuition is about paying attention to impressions or the meaning and patterns of information.

Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F). Thinkers make decisions based on cold, hard facts, while feelers rely on their gut instincts and the emotions of those involved to make a call.

Judging (J) vs. Perceiving (P). Judges are more structured, while those who are perceivers take a more flexible and adaptable approach to their lives.

When the results are tallied, personality types are given as acronyms such as ISTJ (Introverted, Sensing, Thinking, Judging) or ENTP, and 14 others.

IMPLICATIONS

Why does any of this matter? If you are looking to hire or promote an office manager, it likely doesn't matter if they are extraverted or introverted, but if she/he is more intuitive, this hire will likely be good at coming up with new ideas, whereas a candidate who is sensing may be more adept at tracking metrics. A thinking person may run an efficient office, but a more feeling one tends to foster happier employees. A judging person is very good at implementing and maintaining processes, while a perceiving one is skilled at handling unexpected events.

If you are looking to bring another dermatologist on board, the skill sets that you are looking for will differ. If they are judging, they may be more dogmatic and confident when making

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recommendations, but if they are perceiving, this doctor will likely be more flexible and hedging in recommendations.

Think about your patient population and what type of care they tend to respond to best to guide the decision.

TAKE NOTE

There is a lot that the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator and other assessments like it can't tell you, including a person's goals, values, ethics, intelligence, and motivation. That said, these tests all take 20 minutes to complete, are easy to administer, and can help make the right call when two candidates present with essentially the same resume or CV. The results will also provide a road map for how to mentor and motivate the new employee.

THINK BEFORE YOU IMPLEMENT

There can be legal concerns around using MBTI in hiring processes, so talk to your human resources specialist before considering implementing it for hiring decisions in your practice. For those interested in learning more about the MBTI, I recommend the books *Type Talk: The 16 Personality Types That Determine How We Live, Love, and Work* by Kroeger and Thuesen and *Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type* by Myers and Myers. ■

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This article is based on a presentation given at Cosmetic Surgery Forum (CSF) 2018. CSF moves to Nashville, December 4-7, 2019. For information, visit cosmeticsurgeryforum.com.

GET MORE



See excerpts of the presentation that Dr. Zirwas gave at Cosmetic Surgery Forum 2018. He reviews why and how the MBTI may work in your practice.

Watch now:

PracticalDermatology.com/portals/cosmetic-surgery-forum