



An opportunity for insight...

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Insights are necessary for learning and growth. Learning ensures that we stay relevant to our workplaces and society. Being open to learning everyday is key to our personal effectiveness and to staying in front of our competition. My ongoing experience in organizations working with leaders on their development reinforces the critical value of continuously creating opportunities for insight.

The area of insight I address in this note intersects with the highly valued competency of **relationship management**, and more thorough **self-knowledge** for greater success in all your relationships. Most of you have taken the MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator¹). Unfortunately, while many executives have the opportunity to take the MBTI I have found they rarely have the opportunity to mine it for the amazing value it offers.

The MBTI is an important tool with strong validity, and it is based on the personality theory of the famous Swiss psychologist, Carl G. Jung². Jung was noted in a recent journal article as one of two people shaping the ideas of many of the prominent scientists, philosophers, researchers and others at the leading edge of their fields. I have been both studying Jung's work and using this assessment with clients for many years. It has proven over time to be one of the best instruments to provide the kind of insights that help a person develop to their fullest.

Through the MBTI you can begin to get some clear insights as to how you see the world and how others see it differently. This helps us to not make such rash judgments about other's styles or types. Most people easily fit into one of 16 types.³ Each of the 4 polarities (Extraversion/Introversion; Sensing/Intuition; Thinking/Feeling; Judging/Perceiving) have facets or subscales that offer a host of ways we can have differences within a basic type.

So, with that background and perhaps reminder of the value of the MBTI let's focus on a very specific opportunity for insight. **We need relationships to get work done.** We need senior level relationships, peer relationships, and direct report relationships, often referred to as **stakeholder management**. The more you know the people that have a stake in your success the more success you can generate. Learning more about type can provide us with the insights necessary to see deeper into these key relationships.

The pronouncement that we can't change others, we can only change ourselves is a crucial understanding. When we know who we are and we take the time to reflect on that knowledge as we find ourselves mixing with others we can have great insights...and make an invaluable impact. When we are drawn into thinking about how others could or should change we typically get stuck. And, often we then make ourselves the victim of someone else's behavior, or attitude. This is one way we can get caught in a self deception that holds us from further development.

"Know thyself" is an insight dating back to the Delphi Oracle and Socrates. While it may sound like an easy task, it is not. It is the work of a lifetime, and Jung refers to the work as that of *individuation*. Individuation is a process of psychological maturing – a process of becoming more fully our selves. A leader who takes on this work has the strongest possibilities for dynamic leadership and the ability to be a positive force to everyone they engage.

What actions will you take today to know yourself more fully?

¹The MBTI is a personality assessment tool available in many languages and in my experience is used globally in many of today's Fortune 500 companies for Team Effectiveness and Leader Development. It is noted to be administered to over 3 million people each year.

² Jung, C.G., Collected Works 6, Psychological Types.

³Googling MBTI can connect you with several sites where you can review the definitions of the various types.
