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INTRODUCTION

This guide is intended to support professional use of the Leadership Report Using the FIRO-B® and MBTI® Instruments. While the report can stand alone as a basis for interpretation, clients will benefit from an informed discussion of the material provided to them. Such discussion allows the report recipient to verbally process the information and ask questions about wording and about individual aspects of his or her results. With this background, the guide aims to

- Present the logic and philosophy behind the report and its organization
- Provide background on the sources of material in the report
- Offer a strategy and specific ideas for guiding clients through the report
- Highlight key interpretation points and issues surrounding the use of instrumentation in leadership development

Deciding to Use the Joint Report

As the use of instrumentation in leadership development activities has grown, the advantages and disadvantages of viewing human behavior through multiple lenses have become evident. The key advantage is the opportunity to capture the complexity of human personality and of leadership. Each instrument contributes one part of the puzzle, and in the aggregate, individuals are able to get a better view of their strengths, contributions, and developmental needs.

The primary disadvantage is that each instrument requires clients to step into the theoretical framework of the instrument in order to fully understand their results. The outcome has been an increased publication of individualized results that do not require clients to understand every aspect of an instrument. Some of these reports even combine results from multiple instruments, sparing the client from having to dig into each instrument to find areas of convergence and divergence.

The Leadership Report brings together in the context of an individualized report two instruments widely used in leadership development. Both the FIRO-B® and the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*® (MBTI®) tools contribute significantly to our understanding of leadership orientations and behaviors, and their use together in the report provides a broad platform for coaching leadership development. The potential downside of this approach is that some clients will struggle to understand the specific source of interpretive points, which is embedded in the computer code and not readily available to them.

The information in this guide will allow you to reconstruct the sources of specific lines and paragraphs that have been printed in the report. This should prevent clients from seeing their report as a type of horoscope that lacks scientific underpinnings. Clients will be best served if when you share this information with them (a) they have prior familiarity with and a working understanding of at least one of the instruments, and (b) adequate time is available to address the depth of information provided in the report and to answer complicated questions.

Clients may present situations that are optimal for the use of two instruments, such as the following:

- They feel labeled or pigeonholed by the interpretation of any one instrument.
- They are unable to reconcile apparent contradictions in the results of any one instrument.
- They question the validity of the results from an instrument due to its response format or theoretical underpinning.
- They have experienced complaints or concerns that are easily linked to the FIRO-B or MBTI results.

The Leadership Report lends itself well to discussing and understanding complaints and concerns that anyone in a leadership position might hear from those with whom he or she interacts. The Quick Reference to Development Issues on page 21 of this guide shows the supporting sections in the report that link to commonly presented complaints and concerns regarding the development of leaders.

The report was designed with two significant intentions. First, it covers issues at multiple levels of experience: individual, interpersonal, group, and organizationwide. Thus the sections range from stress management to role taking, team interactions, and organizational culture. Second, it not only addresses the insights about leadership revealed by each instrument but also sheds light on additional topics—such as what is shown first in a leadership role, expectations from other leaders, and dealing with change and stress.

General Interpretation Guidelines

As with any instrument-based approach, coaches and other interpreters of the Leadership Report should keep in mind sound principles for use. Users should not overlook the need for appropriate framing of instrumentation because this is an application report. The report is generated after submission of MBTI type preferences and FIRO-B scale results. Therefore, interpreters should first determine whether those individual instruments have been appropriately processed. If not, clients should be allowed to verify their results and spend additional time on pages 4–6 (for the FIRO-B) and/or pages 7–8 (for the MBTI). The following are some important interpretation guidelines and principles:

- Conditions that increase measurement error should be explained to clients.
- Clients should be informed that the results are not evaluations or skill assessments.
- Results should be interpreted with a neutral tone and without personal judgment (of “positive” or “negative” results) or with language that connotes abnormality, diagnosis, or clinical labeling.
- Interpretive statements should be treated as hypotheses to test with the client.
- The client should be engaged as a joint investigator who can provide additional evidence that confirms or disconfirms an interpretation.
- Caution should be used when making generalizations from report interpretations to estimations about effectiveness (that is, specific knowledge of the performance conditions and context is required).

The MBTI and the FIRO-B are drawn from two different psychological traditions. The MBTI relies primarily on Jungian ideas, while the FIRO-B carries a psychoanalytic tone, with direct contributions from T. W. Adorno, Erich Fromm, and Wilfred Bion. These two traditions make different assumptions about the nature of the human psyche. In addition, the two instruments represent different ideas about measuring personality constructs. The richness of the Leadership Report is derived from placing these two distinct approaches side by side to address different aspects of leadership. Bear in mind that seemingly similar concepts across the two instruments are drawn from complex models of personality with very different notions about the dynamics that underlie human behavior.

Given these different theoretical and psychometric foundations, inconsistencies and apparent contradictions in the report are to be expected. The client should be encouraged to discover themes across all the different findings. To test different hypotheses about the client's approach to leadership, attention can be given to areas where the two instruments converge and where they diverge. Where divergent findings occur, clients should be given a chance to offer their own explanations rather than dismiss either instrument. Interpreters should also avoid leaving the client with an impression that divergent findings necessarily indicate a clinical abnormality. The same is true when sharing the research findings. Clients should not conclude that differences between their results and the research are an indicator of dysfunction.

How to Use This Guide

Each Leadership Report presents client results in eight key sections: Overall Leadership Orientation, Basic Interpretation of Your FIRO-B® Results, Basic Interpretation of Your MBTI® Results, Interpersonal Relations, Working with Groups and Other Leaders, Power and Organizational Culture, Dealing with Change and Stress, and Action Plan. The information presented in these sections varies for each set of client FIRO-B results and MBTI preferences.

This guide provides context and background for the statements made in each of the report sections. The tips and suggestions are organized under the following five headings: General Purpose and Use of the Section, Basis for Interpretation, Interpretation Strategies, Potential Problems and Mistakes, and Emphasize This Section When Interpreters of the report should study this guide closely to familiarize themselves with the bases, workings, and combinations of statements possible in every section of the report.