

How a world-champion judoka redefined herself with MBTI insights

A world-champion sports star retires but does not know what to do next. Can she find the direction she needs?

Physically, Edith Bosch could have continued as a professional athlete until 2016. Mentally, however, she was ready for a change much earlier. By 2009, aged 29, she no longer knew what she wanted – not as an athlete, not as a manager at Dutch railway company NS, nor in her private life. Her soul-searching led to tough decisions. A year later she resigned from NS and ended her relationship with her partner.

Edith was slowly coming to accept that she was not perfect – something she had always strived to be. “In 2008 I had two Olympic medals, I was world champion and several times European champion, and it was still not good enough,” she says. “I always expected too much of myself, and of others too, which means you’ll always be disappointed.”

She had been living behind a ‘mask’ in order to excel in her sports career; but it had come at a high price. Despite reaching the top of her game, she was unable to find contentment. Martijn Smit, Bosch’s life coach, explained that in order to succeed at the top level in judo, she had adopted ESTJ preferences as a survival strategy.

In 2013 she made the decision to bring her judo career to an end and began to think of where to go next in her professional life.

Business Challenges

- Career development
- Lack of direction

Company Profile

After winning the European Judo Championships in 2012, the Olympian and former World Champion Edith Bosch decided to end her sports career and retired in 2013. She now has her own private coaching practice and feels more fulfilled than ever. It has been not only a change of profession, but a change in how she expresses her personality. Edith now lives a life that fits her natural preferences – as an ENFP, according to the language of the MBTI® assessment, a completely different type to the ESTJ persona she had adopted as a professional athlete.

Edith Bosch

Solution

Bosch was already familiar with Jungian type concepts when she retired from her chosen sport, but it was former top hockey player Floris Evers who drew her attention to the MBTI assessment. The idea of making a transition to coaching had been growing in her mind, and the MBTI framework seemed the perfect tool to carry the plan forward and to help others in their personal development.

After gaining MBTI Step I certification in 2014, she began her new career as a coach.

It was during the feedback session in the MBTI program that Bosch realized she had ENFP preferences – preferences almost diametrically opposite to the personality type she had embraced as a judoka. Although she recognized this straight away, she still calls the discovery a revelation. Looking back on her judo years through the MBTI lens, she had behaved as an ESTJ due to pressures from the environment she was working in, and from her own perfectionist drive for ever-greater success. She feels much more comfortable now with a best-fit type of ENFP.

“When I found out, I felt really liberated,” she says. “I had hidden my feelings for 30 years. The MBTI helps you get to know yourself and gives insight into what you feel and what feels natural. Personally, I couldn’t suppress my feelings any longer.”

The impact of this is that Bosch received more compliments for this personal victory than all the titles and Olympic medals she had won during her sports career.

Results

The former judo star has now used the MBTI assessment with teams and individuals, and sees more and more space for coaching and personal development based on a growing interest in developing ‘soft skills’.

“There is a desire to be more human and vulnerable in professional settings,” she says. “The MBTI creates great openings for this. By examining preferences, it maps the options out. It is a conversation

Solution

- MBTI certification
- Self-awareness
- Clarity of best-fit type

“ The MBTI helps you get to know yourself and gives insight into what you feel and what feels natural. Personally, I couldn’t suppress my feelings any longer ”

Edith Bosch,
Life coach

Edith Bosch



starter for both extraverted and introverted types. People consciously think about where they feel most comfortable and natural, at point A or point B.”

Bosch acknowledges the MBTI framework as both a practical conversation opener and a means of going ‘deep’ with clients. Her preferred approach is to go deep. The tool gives people a language to share their experience of MBTI-derived revelations.

“The MBTI is not just a tool to test something quickly, but a starting point to really probe and investigate whether your behaviour is inherent or learned,” she says. “It helps you get to know yourself, giving insight into what feels natural to you. You can always choose to live in another way, but you know on a fundamental level what your natural preferences are.”

Results

- Deep understanding of personality type, contributing to coaching success
- Increased self-awareness and understanding of motivation and drive
- Personal satisfaction and fulfilment



ABOUT THE MYERS-BRIGGS COMPANY

In our fast-changing world, your edge lies in harnessing 100 percent of your talent – whether you're at work, home, college, or anywhere in between. Your success and sense of fulfillment aren't just about what you know and what you can do, they hinge on your relationships and interactions with others.

The Myers-Briggs Company empowers individuals to be the best versions of themselves by enriching self-awareness and their understanding of others. We help organizations around the world improve teamwork and collaboration, develop inspirational leaders, foster diversity, and solve their most complex people challenges.

As a Certified B Corporation®, The Myers-Briggs Company is a force for good. Our powerfully practical solutions are grounded in a deep understanding of the significant social and technological trends that affect people and organizations.

With over 60 years in assessment development and publishing, and over 30 years of consultancy and training expertise, a global network of offices, partners and certified independent consultants in 115 countries, products in 29 languages, and experience working with 88 of the Fortune 100 companies, we're ready to help you succeed.

© Copyright 2016, 2018 The Myers-Briggs Company and The Myers-Briggs Company Limited. MBTI and The Myers-Briggs Company logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of The Myers & Briggs Foundation in the United States and other countries.