

Pivoting to remote work

Take 3 for the Sea is a small non-profit with a big mission – to reduce plastic pollution in our oceans and waterways.

Formerly headquartered in Long Jetty, Australia, economic repercussions of the pandemic forced the close-knit organization of 10 employees to shut down their office and have employees become fully remote. Previously, they'd relied on in-person meetings and communications to get things done. But remote work was making those same tasks more difficult for the group.

Additionally, the organization was facing significant amounts of change as they were going through the process of expanding internationally. And, as with any organizational change, the team was facing a few challenges.

Solution

Given the organization's recent move to full-time remote work, they chose to do a team building session using the MBTI® Essentials Virtual Workshop.

This workshop provides a foundational understanding of the power of personality in the workplace. Participants are introduced to the Myers-Briggs personality framework and learn how they can collaborate more effectively by understanding and appreciating

Business Challenges

- Keeping a close-knit team communicating remotely when they heavily relied on in-person communication
- Dealing with change while expanding from a regional to an international organization
- Finding ways to work together more effectively

Company Profile

Working as a catalyst for change, [Take 3 for the Sea](#) helps people to see and understand the problem of plastic pollution, inspiring them to simple human-sized actions. They deliver educational, community and corporate programs to spread the word about the devastating impact of plastic pollution on the environment. Together, we can make a difference.

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personality differences. In addition, it gives participants an increased level of self-awareness to recognize their own motivations, frustrations, strengths, and stretches.

“One of my favorite ‘ah-hah’ moments was when I realised there was really no getting away from me. The tool accurately identified the innate ways I think, feel and act revealing the very essence of who I am!”, says Roberta Dixon-Valk, Co-founder and Head of Research, Development and Innovation for Take 3 for the Sea. “Some of the questions were so tight I could have chosen either but I tried to remember to go with my first instinct – my gut if you will – and I think the results really are a really good summary of me. Life is just about perspectives and perception and this tool reminds you to open your eyes and celebrate these differences.”

Towards the end of the workshop, participants are also encouraged to identify an individual action plan to leverage their learning and continue their professional growth.

Sensing vs. Intuition preferences in real life

One of the exercises in the MBTI Essentials Workshop is a real-time demonstration of the differences in perception between those that prefer Sensing (taking in information through the five senses, usually in concrete, data-driven way) and those who prefer Intuition (taking in information through patterns and symbols, often in a big-picture way).

The facilitator will show an image (usually a painting with some complexity), and divide the team into groups by preference: S or N. Each group talks through what they see, and then when time is up they share their findings with the other group.

“My type is ENTP, and when we had the workshop with the team, it was really interesting to see some of the different types in our organization,” says Nina Charbon, Head of Marketing and Engagement for Take 3 for the Sea.

Solution

- Focus on MBTI framework to build self-awareness and improve teamwork across the organization
- Use MBTI Essentials Virtual Workshop to bring a remote working group together

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“Some people would literally describe, ‘oh, I only see gray or blue or this or that’. And in my mind, I already had a whole story, in a very different way. That was a really big surprise for me, to see how other people who prefer Sensing interpret a picture versus what I see with my Intuition preference. It was an eye-opener when I noticed how other people were describing this painting.”

Virtual and agile

As a non-profit, Take 3 for the Sea had run into challenges before executing a team-building workshop with their limited resources. However, because the whole 2-hour workshop was virtual, it saved the team the cost of travel while still producing lasting results.

“We did it completely virtually,” says Roberta. “We all took the assessments individually, and then our facilitator took all the results and evaluated them for our team, telling us more about how we work together best and where some of those gaps might be.”

Results

The team’s response to the workshop was very positive, with many employees enriching their self-awareness and immediately finding ways in which they could communicate better with colleagues to work more effectively.

“Learning my MBTI type was quite amazing because although I knew people perceive the world in different ways, but I didn’t realize that within our small working team we would be so completely different in the way we approach information and the way we deal with that same information,” says Roberta.

“It’s fascinating to know how you can use personality types to get other people to better understand your perception and your perspective on things – it’s just a matter of reaching out to them in a relatable way. You can sell anything to anyone, if you can speak to

Results

- Virtual delivery meant the whole organization could enjoy the benefits of team development despite being geographically dispersed
- Awareness of differences helped teammates better understand each other and collaborate more efficiently

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them in a way that makes sense to them,” she added. “I’ve always believed that, so it’s just a matter of knowing how to package the information best to get people to understand what you’re talking about. When it comes to plastic pollution, being able to better communicate our message and have more people understand the risk our oceans are facing is critical to our company’s mission.”

The team also learned that when looking at their organization as a whole, the majority of people working for Take 3 for the Sea tended to prefer Extraversion, Intuition, and Feeling. That awareness helped the team understand where their similarities lie, but also where they could make sure to include other points of view in the discussion.

“It is interesting that none of our team are introverted,” says Roberta. “That makes sense in terms of our team meetings. Everyone wants their say!”

One employee, Katelyn Giuliano, Business Engagement and Events Coordinator, noticed that difference between herself and another member of the events team.

“My MBTI type is ENFP,” she says, “so Extraversion, Intuition, Feeling, and Perceiving. We’re very open to suggestions. We look at the bigger picture rather than being bogged down with the smaller ideas. We’re extraverted and we don’t really like conflict. So, we’re very easygoing and kind of go with the flow.

“For me, it was really good to identify who you’re working closely with and what their types are,” she adds. “For example, one of my colleagues in Events is the complete opposite of my personality type. So, she’s incredibly well organized. She’s very structured. She needs to know everything well in advance and she’s very planned. Whereas because I’m so easy going, I’m open to having different time slots and being able to slot into things a lot more openly than she is. And so, it’s just really nice to see how different we are, and then we’re able to work together to improve our event coordination and just make it easier for us.”

“I’d definitely recommend the MBTI Essentials Virtual Workshop to other organizations. It is a profound way to get to know people and can help you see into your team and work to people’s strengths, but also helps you identify the gaps where you might not have someone of a certain preference/perception.

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“It highlights the core of a person that you are often not likely to see until you are in a very intense situation. Having an insight on who you are dealing with and their probable reaction to situations, allows you to more clearly understand and manage situations.”

“I didn’t realize the extent of [people’s] differences until we did this workshop. Even at Take 3, we’re all here because we’re passionate about the ocean, plastic pollution, and making a difference so you would think we were all quite similar. But how everyone gets to that point isn’t the same depending on their personality type. We may take different routes and journeys to achieve the same goal.”



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