MBTI®

MANUAL

A Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® Instrument

THIRD EDITION

ISABEL BRIGGS MYERS | MARY H. MCCAULLEY

NAOMI L. QUENK | ALLEN L. HAMMER

The Four Preferences That Make Up a Type

The MBTI instrument identifies four separate dichotomies: Extraversion versus Introversion, Sensing versus Intuition, Thinking versus Feeling, and Judging versus Perceiving. An individual is assumed to have a preference for one of each pair of opposites over the other. The four preferences direct the characteristic use of perception and judgment by an individual. The particular preferences that interact in a person affect not only *what is attended to* in any given situation but also how conclusions are drawn about what has been perceived. The four dichotomies of the MBTI instrument are described in the following sections and are outlined in Table 1.1. The MBTI instrument classifies the first and fourth dichotomies listed as *attitudes* or *orientations* and the middle two dichotomies as *functions* or *processes*. *Attitude* and *orientation* are used interchangeably throughout this manual, as are *function* and *process*.

Table 1.1 The Four Dichotomies of the MBTI® Instrument	
Extraversion–Introversion Dichotomy (attitudes or orientations of energy)	
Extraversion (E)	Introversion (I)
Directing energy mainly toward the outer world of people and objects	Directing energy mainly toward the inner world of experiences and ideas
Sensing–Intuition Dichotomy (functions or processes of perception)	
Sensing (S)	Intuition (N)
Focusing mainly on what can be perceived by the five senses	Focusing mainly on perceiving patterns and interrelationships
Thinking–Feeling Dichotomy (functions or processes of judging)	
Thinking (T)	Feeling (F)
Basing conclusions on logical analysis with a focus on objectivity and detachment	Basing conclusions on personal or social values with a focus on understanding and harmony
Judging–Perceiving Dichotomy (attitudes or orientations toward dealing with the outside world)	
Judging (J)	Perceiving (P)
Preferring the decisiveness and closure that result from dealing with the outer world using one of the Judging processes (Thinking or Feeling)	Preferring the flexibility and spontaneity that results from dealing with the outer world using one of the Perceiving processes (Sensing or Intuition)

Extraversion or Introversion (E–I) The E–I dichotomy is designed to reflect whether a person prefers Extraversion or Introversion in the sense intended by Jung (1921/1971). Extraverts are oriented primarily toward the outer world; thus they tend to focus their energy on people and objects. Introverts are oriented primarily toward the inner world; thus they tend to focus their energy on concepts, ideas, and internal experiences. Jung regarded Extraversion and Introversion as "mutually complementary" attitudes whose differences "generate the tension that both the individual and society need for the maintenance of life" (p. 160). Jung thus saw both Extraversion and Introversion as necessary for psychological adaptation.

Sensing or Intuition (S–N)[1] The S–N dichotomy is designed to reflect a person's preference between two opposite ways of perceiving. A person may rely primarily upon the process of Sensing (S), which attends to observable facts or happenings through one or more of the five senses, or a person may rely more upon the less obvious process of Intuition (N), which attends to meanings, relationships, and/or possibilities that have been worked out beyond the reach of the conscious mind.

Thinking or Feeling (T–F) The T–F dichotomy is designed to reflect a person's preference between two contrasting ways of making a judgment. A person may rely primarily on Thinking (T) to decide impersonally on the basis of logical consequences, or a person may rely primarily on Feeling (F) to decide primarily on the basis of personal or social values. In Jung's and Myers' approaches, the term *Thinking* does not imply intelligence or competence, and the term *Feeling* is not to be confused with *emotional.* Intelligence and emotional expression are independent of psychological typology.

Judging or Perceiving (J–P) The J–P dichotomy is designed to identify the process a person tends to use in dealing with the outer world, that is, with the extraverted part of life. A person who prefers using a Judging (J) process typically uses either Thinking or Feeling (the Judging processes) when dealing with the outer world. A person who prefers a Perceiving (P) process reports a preference for using either Sensing or Intuition (the perceiving processes) when dealing with the outer world. It should be noted that Myers and Briggs believed this dichotomy was implicit in Jung's theory, but it was not explicitly described in Jung's writings. Chapter 3 elucidates Briggs and Myers' extension of type theory in this regard.

It is important to note that a preference for one alternative of each dichotomy does not mean that the opposite, less preferred alternative is never used. Both the theory and practical observations describe individuals as using each of

the eight preference categories at least some of the time. Thus a person who typically uses Thinking (T) when extraverting—a person with a Judging (J) attitude—may at times extravert the preferred or even less-preferred Perceiving (P) process, even though such an approach may not be typical for the person.

The 16 Types

According to theory, each of the 16 types results from a preference for one pole of each of the four dichotomies over the opposite pole. A preference on any one dichotomy is designed to be psychometrically independent of the preferences on the other three dichotomies.[2] Therefore, preferences on the four dichotomies yield 16 possible combinations called *types,* which are denoted by the four letters identifying the poles preferred (e.g., ESTJ, INFP).

The theory postulates specific dynamic relationships among the preferences. For each type, one process is the leading, or *dominant,* process and a second process serves as an *auxiliary* process that provides balance in the personality. Each type has its own pattern of dominant and auxiliary processes and the attitudes (E or I) in which these are habitually used. Determining these dynamic relationships is enabled by the J–P dichotomy of the MBTI instrument and is fully explained in Chapter 3. The distinctive characteristics of each type follow from the dynamic interplay of processes and attitudes.

In terms of the theory, people may reasonably be expected to develop greater comfort and facility with the processes they prefer to use and with the attitudes in which they prefer to use them. For example, if they prefer the Extraverted (E) attitude, they are likely to be more confident and effective in dealing with the outer world than with the Introverted (I) world of concepts, ideas, and inner experiences. If they prefer the perceiving process of Sensing (S), they are likely to be more confident and effective in dealing with facts and realities than in dealing with theories and possibilities, which are in the sphere of Intuition (N). If they prefer the judgment process of Thinking (T), they are likely to rely more heavily on objective Thinking judgments than on the values that underlie Feeling (F) judgments. And if they prefer to use Judging (J) rather than Perceiving (P) in interacting with the world around them, they are likely to be more comfortable when they can organize the events of their lives than when they can only experience and adapt to them. On the other hand, if a person prefers Introversion, Intuition, Feeling, and Perceiving (INFP), then the converse of the description above is likely to be true.

The preferences and the specific dynamics of their interactions are discussed further in Chapters 3 and 4 of this book, in *Gifts Differing* (Myers with Myers, 1980/1995), in *Introduction to Type® Dynamics and Development* (Myers & Kirby, 1994), and in other publications.

Identifying MBTI® Preferences

The main objective of the MBTI tool is to identify which of two opposite categories is preferred on each of the four dichotomies. The Indicator obtains a numerical score based on responses favoring one pole versus its opposite. These calculations are designed *not* as scales for measurement of traits or behaviors but rather as indications of preference for one pole of a dichotomy or its opposite. The letters E or I, S or N, T or F, and J or P are used to designate which of the opposite sides of a respondent's nature are preferred. The intent is to reflect a habitual choice between rival alternatives, analogous to right-handedness or left-handedness. One expects to use both the right and left hands, even though one reaches first with the preferred hand. Similarly, everyone is assumed to use both sides of each of the four dichotomies but to respond first, most often, and most comfortably with the preferred functions and attitudes.

Items and Preference Clarity Index

The MBTI items require forced choices between the poles of the dichotomy at issue. Choices are between seemingly inconsequential everyday events, chosen by Myers as stimuli to evoke the more comprehensive underlying type preferences. All choices reflect the two poles of the same dichotomy, that is, E or I, S or N, T or F, J or P. On the computer-scored versions of Form M, responses that best predict to total preference carry greater weight. On the self-scorable and template-scored versions, all the items have the same weight and are simply counted to determine which preference received the most answers. Technical details of item construction and weighting as developed and tested by Myers, as well as the methodology used in the current revision of the instrument, appear in Chapters 2 and 7.

Form M computer-scored versions yield preferences based on an established midpoint. When a respondent's score is to the right of the midpoint, the preference indicated is I, N, F, or P. When the score is to the left of the midpoint, the person's preference is E, S, T, or J. Tied scores are designated as I, N, F, or P in both the Myers and Form M scoring. The preference letters indicate which of each pair of opposites the person prefers and presumably has developed or is likely to develop to a greater degree. For example, a preference letter E suggests that the person prefers extraverting to introverting and probably has spent more time extraverting than introverting. Consequently, that person is likely to seek out and be more comfortable with activities that call for Extraversion than activities that call for Introversion. For instance, such a person will presumably find greater satisfaction in a career that requires more extraverting than introverting.

As evidence that a preference has been accurately reported, MBTI results include an indication of clarity of preference termed a *preference clarity index.* Preference clarity indexes range from 1 to 30 on each of the four dichotomies.

The higher the index, the greater the clarity of preference that can be assumed. For example, a person whose preference clarity index for Thinking is T 28 could be said to be much more clear in this preference than a person with T 9—at least based on responses to the Indicator items. The characteristics associated with a preference *may* be (but are not necessarily) less apparent when a low clarity index is associated with a preference. A low preference clarity index results from almost equal votes for each opposite pair in a dichotomy. It is incorrect to assume, however, that the person with, for example, N 30 has greater facility with, confidence in, or keenness of Intuition than the person reporting N 15. *Similar cautions apply to all eight preferences identified by the preference clarity indexes.* Thus unlike trait scores, health, competence, or maturity cannot be inferred from the numerical preference clarity index of the MBTI instrument. Chapter 6 discusses these issues in greater detail.

Assumptions Underlying the Types

Each pole of a dichotomy is perceived as valuable and at times indispensable in its own area of operation. The theory assumes that all types can deal effectively with life in general and in their own areas of potential talent in particular. All types are viewed as necessary in a complex world that relies on diversity and specialization to progress toward important personal and societal goals. Each type has its own special gifts and strengths, its own areas of vulnerability, and its own pathway for development.

The *type description* presents these relationships in everyday terms. Each type is described in terms of effective use of the functions and attitudes and also in terms of the specific difficulties arising when type is less developed or not used effectively. The four letters that designate a type provide a compact definition of each type (e.g., ESTJ, INFJ, ESFP). The dynamic interrelationships of the preferences are described in Chapter 3 along with the behavioral characteristics associated with each preference pattern.

Uses of the MBTI® Instrument

The differences described by the MBTI instrument are a familiar part of everyday life. Jung's theory offers an explanation for these differences that makes it easier to recognize them and to use them in constructive ways. The theory is indispensable for understanding and using the MBTI instrument, but the majority of people who have found the MBTI instrument interesting and valuable did not have an original interest in Jung. Rather, general interest in this personality type tool is due to the fact that almost every human experience involves either perception or judgment and is played out in either the extraverted world of action or the introverted world of reflection. There is therefore a broad range of human activities where type differences are apparent. The five applications chapters that appear in Part V of this manual cover the major ways the MBTI instrument is currently being used.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided the context for understanding and using the MBTI tool. Users can effectively consult one or another chapter as appropriate to their stage of research or particular application. However, familiarity with the development and construction of the instrument (Chapters 2 and 7) and the theory underlying the instrument (Chapters 3 and 4) will maximize the explanatory and predictive potential of the MBTI instrument. Reviewing these chapters is therefore recommended.

Resources

The recommended resource for introducing type is the *Introduction to Type®* booklet (Myers, with Kirby & Myers, 1998). Using this booklet keeps the initial focus where it needs to be: identifying leaders' type apart from their work and the roles they play. *Introduction to Type® in Organizations* (Hirsh & Kummerow, 1998) provides type descriptions that relate specifically to work and include each type's normal leadership style. *Introduction to Type® and Leadership* (Richmond, 2008) can be used to help leaders understand type and apply type insights to become more effective in setting direction, inspiring others, and mobilizing a team to accomplish goals. *Introduction to Type® Dynamics and Development* (Myers & Kirby, 1994) provides the basis for using dynamics and development with leaders, including information that will be helpful in all the suggested applications above.

Hardwired Leadership (Pearman, 1998) provides insights into personality style and shows how to enhance your leadership style to increase personal and work effectiveness and transform group efforts into meaningful results.

Developing Leaders (Fitzgerald & Kirby, 1997b) includes an introduction to the MBTI instrument and discussion of the impacts of MBTI types of leaders (Chapter 1); an analysis of type and leadership development, including a survey of the literature on leadership (Chapter 2); a chapter on using type dynamics with leaders and another on using type development; and seven specific applications chapters, including using the MBTI tool with management simulations, using the MBTI Step II form with managers, STJs and organizational change, and strategies for improving leaders' communication.

WORKTypes (Kummerow et al., 1997) includes a chapter on leadership that examines TJ, TP, FJ, and FP leadership styles and offers advice for leaders on improving decision making. Barr and Barr (1994) integrate the MBTI instrument into their *Leadership Development: Maturity and Power,* providing descriptions, analysis, and development activities.

Research for Practitioners

The research literature on the MBTI instrument and management/leadership is extensive and can be overwhelming—to practitioners as well as their clients. Walck has published three surveys and analyses of research in this area: "Psychological Type and Management Research: A Review" (1992a); "Management and Leadership" (1996); and "Using the MBTI® in Management and Leadership: A Review of the Literature" (1997). Each of these has extensive references to literature and will provide a useful starting point for practitioners to identify research findings that will be relevant in their work.

Using the MBTI® Tool with Other Instruments Most
leadership development programs and coaching inter-actions involve use of more than one instrument for providing feedback to leaders. This is appropriate: Different instruments are designed to identify a variety of characteristics and behaviors important to leaders, and use of instruments looking at different aspects adds value for leaders.

It is important for professionals to assist leaders in integrating this information (Fleenor, 1997). In using the MBTI tool with other instruments, practitioners need to explore research studies relating the MBTI tool to those other instruments and be prepared to give concise information to clients that will assist them in making use of the information, rather than being overwhelmed by sometimes conflicting data. *Developing Leaders* (Fitzgerald & Kirby, 1997b) includes six chapters reporting research using the MBTI tool with leaders, including the relationship between the Indicator and several 360-degree feedback instruments and other measures of leadership. It also includes a model for using two instruments together in Schnell and Hammer, "Integrating the FIRO-B® with the MBTI®: Relationships, Case Examples, and Interpretation Strategies" (1997). The *Journal of Psychological Type* is the other primary source for reports of studies on the MBTI tool and other instruments. Practitioners are urged to consult these resources to assist their use of the MBTI tool with other instruments, as well as to expand their understanding of common effects of the MBTI preferences in management styles and behaviors.

Using Type in Analyzing Organizations

Psychological type describes individual personality structures; therefore application of type categories to groups such as teams, organizations, and cultures must always proceed with caution, and practitioners cannot assume that knowledge of a particular type's dynamics can be transferred directly to the dynamics of groups.

With that caveat, type can play a useful part in analyzing organizations and providing valuable information about organizational culture and presses on individuals in the organizational environment. The concept of environmental press (Brehm & Kassin, 1993) states that, at some point, groups have enough uniform behaviors, attitudes, and values that group members are expected to conform. Applied to organizations, it is similar to the more familiar concept of organizational cultures that, like other cultures, identify appropriate behavior, manners, dress, values, and so on.

Analyzing Organizational Character

William Bridges (2000) developed an approach to analyzing the "character of organizations" using Jungian type categories and the type dichotomies of the MBTI instrument. He is careful to point out that simply adding together the

number of people with each type preference to determine which are in the majority does not indicate an organization's character (a position supported by comparing type distributions in national samples to analyses of cultural values). Instead, he describes organizational values and behavior related to each of the preferences. Extraverted organizations, for example, are oriented to the market, allow access to decision making, and act quickly, whereas Introverted organizations are oriented toward their internal culture and technology, restrict access to decision making, and respond only after careful study. Bridges also describes the 16 types of "organizational character" and then examines how organizational character affects the ways in which organizations respond to change, growth, and development.

Groups or individuals who have been introduced to type usually enjoy and are quick to use type understanding to characterize their organization, though they may have trouble agreeing on one or more of the preferences. Practitioners can take advantage of these spontaneous connections clients make by structuring an activity analyzing the organization's character. Groups can then identify what opportunities the organization may be missing, difficulties the organization may experience, and so on. They can also profitably discuss the ways the character of the organization may affect employees, especially those who have type preferences different from those supported by organizational values and behavior.

Analyzing Organizational Type Distributions

A different, but related, use of type for organizational analysis involves collecting data about type distributions in different functions or levels of the organization. Though individual type results cannot be shared, grouped data such as type distributions can, with clients' permission, be used to create type tables of different functions. This information can then be used in a variety of ways to help the organization and individuals within it.

For example, Barger (personal communication, 1995) reported using the MBTI assessment with a company that designed, built, and sold houses. Serious conflicts arose between the sales agents and the construction crews, and Barger was asked to negotiate what had become an explosive situation. Because she had used the MBTI assessment with both groups, she was able to identify significant type differences: The sales agents were primarily ENPs and had identified their work in those terms. The construction supervisors were predominantly ISTJs and had related those type preferences to their group. As in the example earlier in this chapter, in "Using Type as a Bridge in Dealing with Other Conflicts," beginning with analysis of group type differences immediately depersonalized a number of the hottest issues and created a climate in the groups that allowed them to negotiate other important issues.

Pearman (1993) reported another use of type distribution information that can be very helpful to organizations:

comparing type distributions of different levels. In working with supervisors, managers, and executives of a multinational manufacturing organization, Pearman collected type data about each group and a group designated by the company as "future managers." He used self-selection ratios to determine types that were over- and underrepresented in higher levels of management, compared to their presence in the lower-level groups. The primary type-related pattern he found indicated that Intuitive types were significantly more likely to be promoted to higher levels of responsibility than were Sensing types. Pearman presented his analysis to the executive management group and led them through an examination and revision of hiring and promotion policies and practices.

Resources

Bridges' (2000) *The Character of Organizations* is the only thorough attempt to apply MBTI type to organizations. Rytting, Ware, and Prince (1994) reported a study of 348 successful moderate-size companies in the service sector, about half of which were family owned. They compared data on the MBTI type of the chief executive officer of a company and the company's "character" using Bridges' (2000) *Organizational Character Index.* The most significant relationship they found was that companies headed by types that extravert their Thinking process were rated as more Extraverted than companies whose leaders introvert their Thinking process. These relationships were independent of whether CEOs preferred Extraversion or Introversion, leading the authors to conclude that introversion of the Thinking process may lead employees to feel excluded from decision making.

Reynierse (1993, 1997), Reynierse and Harker (1995), and Oswick and Mahoney (1993) provide various kinds of analysis of type distributions at different levels of organizational leadership. Their studies can guide practitioners who wish to use this approach to assist organizations in examining their hiring and promotion practices.

Administering and Interpreting the MBTI® Tool in Organizations

Chapters 5 and 6 in this manual provide general guidelines for administering and interpreting the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* personality inventory. Professionals using the MBTI tool in organizations need to develop policies and procedures to ensure that those guidelines will be followed by the organizations with which they are working. This includes anticipating potential problems created by organizational cultures and practices in general, as well as identifying factors within specific organizations that could affect working within the guidelines.

This section addresses issues that commonly arise in relationship to administering and interpreting the MBTI instrument in organizations and offers solutions experienced practitioners have developed to respond to those concerns.

Questions About Administration

The questions in this section deal with three essential guidelines for practitioners administering the MBTI tool in organizational settings:

- Respondents to the Indicator must know the purpose for which the MBTI instrument is being used.
- Completing the Indicator must be voluntary.
- Results are confidential and belong to the individual.

Practitioners can develop clear policies and practices to ensure that each of these guidelines is understood and followed by organizational clients.

1. **What are valid uses for the MBTI instrument in organizational settings?**
   Type information should be used to enhance individual and group satisfaction rather than to restrict or limit individual or group functioning. This chapter has outlined a number of appropriate organizational uses of the Indicator: increasing self-understanding, enhancing group interactions, improving individual and group effectiveness at work, and providing an ethical context and tools for dealing with identified problems.

   People in organizations contracting for administration and interpretation of the MBTI tool sometimes plan to use the results in inappropriate ways, usually because they misunderstand the meaning of psychological type and the correct interpretation of MBTI results. This confusion arises because they are familiar with trait measures, which give information about people's skills, knowledge, or behaviors—for example, the *Management Skills Profile,* the FIRO-B tool, the *California Psychological Inventory* tool, the *Kirton Adaptation Innovation Inventory,* and so on. Trait measures yield results that allow organizations to assess an individual's skills, performance, and behaviors in specific areas. Insofar as the traits measured relate directly to the job and the instrument used is reliable and valid, results may be appropriate indicators of an individual's suitability for hiring, promotion, or selection for particular jobs and teams.

   > The MBTI tool is not a measure of traits; MBTI results do not indicate intelligence, knowledge, or skills.

   The MBTI tool is a type-sorting instrument designed to indicate underlying patterns in personalities. When research is conducted on groups who share one or more preferences, there are frequently correlations with specific scales on trait measures;

this indicates that, for many people, acting on their type preferences leads to predictable patterns in behavior, values, and motivations. Such research does *not* indicate whether individuals in these type groups use the behaviors with skill, whether their values are fully considered and consciously direct their actions, whether they are well-developed individuals, or whether they enjoy performing certain activities. And the research groups data that may or may not apply to specific individuals.

> It is inappropriate to use the MBTI tool for hiring, promotion, or selection. Results on the Indicator simply do not give information that will be helpful in these functions.

If a manager or group needs a person with well-developed skills that frequently relate to a particular MBTI preference, they need to use in their decision making past performance with similar tasks or trait measures that indicate whether individuals have those skills and use them well. Deciding that a certain position requires a Sensing type, for example, and selecting a person who reports Sensing on the MBTI tool for that position is unfair to Intuitive individuals who have developed Sensing skills and is liable to result in disappointing results for the manager and group.

Practitioners need to be clear about the meaning of MBTI results and be able to identify appropriate and inappropriate uses confidently. Chapters 1, 2, and 3 in this manual discuss the differences between results on trait measures and type-sorting instruments more fully and can assist practitioners in developing their own knowledge and confidence. If they have additional questions, practitioners can consult the publisher of the MBTI instrument or the ethical guidelines of professional organizations such as the Association for Psychological Type, the American Counseling Association, the American Psychological Association, or other groups concerned with appropriate uses of psychological instruments.

Experienced MBTI practitioners have found it helpful not only to clarify these issues with organizational clients but also to include in a letter of agreement their understanding of the purposes for using the instrument. This section includes suggested contents for a letter of agreement that can help practitioners ensure their clients use MBTI results appropriately.

2. **How can an organization ensure that individuals are taking the MBTI instrument voluntarily?**
   This can be a difficult issue in organizations. In addition to simply communicating the requirement, practitioners need to find ways to implement it when a manager's or a team's decision may bring pressure,

and individuals may find it difficult to assert their own reluctance or opposition. Ideally, practitioners can conduct interviews with group members before administration. This step allows practitioners to ensure that clients know that responding to the MBTI items is voluntary, to inform them about the general nature of MBTI results, to clarify how results will and will not be used, and to prepare ahead of time to deal with issues of authority, trust, and group interactions.

Regardless of whether individual interviews are possible, in conversation with the contracting individual or group practitioners can ask a number of questions to ensure voluntary completion of the MBTI items:

- How was the decision made to use the MBTI tool?
- Were group members involved in the decision-making process?
- What information do group members have about the MBTI instrument and its appropriate uses?
- Do the leader and contracting person understand that each individual may decide whether to complete the Indicator?
- What consequences do they see if one or more individuals in the group choose not to complete the MBTI form?
- Are the leader and group prepared to accept each individual's decision and, if necessary, defend it?
- What questions do they have?

If practitioners have clarified the leader's and group's position on voluntary participation to their satisfaction but have not had an opportunity to speak with each individual, they can include in a letter to each respondent the principle that taking the MBTI instrument is voluntary along with an invitation to contact the practitioner with any concerns or issues. This section includes suggested contents for an e-mail telling the participant how to respond to the MBTI items from the secure Web site.

Practitioners occasionally find that one or more members of a group choose not to complete the MBTI instrument. This may relate to an individual's previous experience with other instruments; to previous experience of poor interpretations or uses of the MBTI tool; to personal issues with the leader, group, or organization; to concerns about protecting privacy; or to group trust issues. If possible, practitioners should speak directly with such individuals to clarify their issues and respond supportively and informatively. If the issue is trust within the group, the practitioner may decide that that issue needs to be dealt

If, even after supportive clarification, a group member chooses not to complete the Indicator, practitioners need to have ways to support that decision.

with first. In a group in which distrust abounds, the MBTI instrument is not likely to be useful. Suggestions for dealing with reluctant participants are included later in this chapter.

3. **How can practitioners ensure that MBTI results remain confidential?**
Practitioners who use the Web-based administration and scoring option, a SkillsOne site, maintain confidentiality with a secure login ID, password, and unique system-assigned user ID. Practitioners who use answer sheets need to clarify how the MBTI will be distributed to respondents, how answer sheets will be returned, and where the results will be stored. In organizations, MBTI booklets and answer sheets usually are distributed by mail or in a group meeting prior to the MBTI interpretation session. When practitioners are not administering the MBTI face-to-face, as is most often the case, they need to include a cover letter for each participant to accompany the booklet and answer sheet, with instructions for returning the materials to the practitioner.

MBTI results are returned only to the respondent, and results should not be included in an organization's files. Practitioners may keep individuals' results (often useful for follow-up sessions) and should store them in a secure location.

The information presented later in this section on dealing with reluctant participants discusses protecting confidentiality during interpretation sessions.

4. **What are appropriate methods for administering the MBTI instrument in organizations?**
Practitioners have four administration options. The method chosen depends on the client's purpose, the professional situation, and practitioner resources. (All online options require a SkillsOne site, available to certified practitioners through CPP, Inc.).

a. Administer MBTI®Complete online. This option includes the 93 MBTI Form M questions and an interactive interpretation of type, including a basic introduction, an opportunity to self-assess, and a report on the client's best-fit four-letter type. It can be useful when face-to-face time with clients is limited, when working with virtual teams at a distance, and when bringing in a new member to a type-knowledgeable team. In all these situations, practitioners should follow up this administration with a brief review to check understanding, give or solicit appropriate examples, and ensure that the client is comfortable with the type selected. Clients should expect to spend 60 to 90 minutes on MBTI®Complete.

b. Administer MBTI Form M online. This option provides any one of the computer-generated reports to the certified practitioner for review with the client. Each report includes information about reported type. Clients typically require 20 to 30 minutes to complete Form M online.

c. Administer the MBTI Form M Self-Scorable. The carbonless booklet contains the 93 MBTI items and an answer sheet, with directions for self-scoring to get the four-letter type and the preference clarity categories. This administration does not require a SkillsOne site, and client responses are not computer-scored. When using this option, practitioners must integrate administration and scoring into the MBTI session. Self-scorable forms should not be distributed to individual clients outside the session. Practitioners should allow 30 minutes for clients to answer the questions before explaining type, using a standard introductory session (see outline in this section). After clients have self-assessed their type, the practitioner has them score their responses to get their reported type and then leads them through a type verification process. Completing Form M Self-Scorable typically requires 20 to 30 minutes; scoring to obtain reported type requires 15 to 20 minutes. Thus, the introductory session requires, on average, an additional 45 minutes.

d. Administer the MBTI Form Q online. This form includes the 93 Form M questions plus an additional 51 questions (total of 144). It produces the four-letter type plus a report on clients' scores on 20 facets, components of the overall preferences. Practitioners can select any of the Form M or Step II reports. Clients typically require 30 to 45 minutes to complete the 144 items on Form Q.

5. **What should be included in a letter of agreement with the contracting group or person?**
Administration issues can be dealt with most effectively by using contracts or letters of understanding prior to administration and by providing a cover letter e-mail to accompany each invitation to respond to MBTI items at the secure Web site. The following issues need to be first clarified in conversation with the contracting person and then included in a letter of agreement:
- The appropriate purpose for using the MBTI tool
- The voluntary nature of completing the Indicator
- The confidentiality of results—they are for the respondent and will be shared only by the respondent
- The procedures that will be used in administering, returning, and scoring the Indicator
- The places where results will be stored (and not stored)
- Provisions for return of results to participants who do not attend the session
- The requirement that all restricted materials (e.g., question booklets and answer sheets) be returned to the qualified practitioner

It may be useful to include a phrase such as "in accordance with the ethical principles of (professional organization)," which gives the context for the agreements.

6. **What should be included in the cover letter to participants?**
When clients will respond to the MBTI items via Web-based administration, send a letter or e-mail with the following information:
- A brief description of the instrument (e.g., "The MBTI instrument is a self-report inventory focusing on how people prefer to take in information, arrive at decisions, and orient themselves to the world.")
- The appropriate purposes for which the MBTI instrument will be used
- The statement that completing the Indicator is voluntary
- The confidentiality of results (they will be given only to the respondent)
- The provision of a person-to-person interpretation for each respondent (or a Web-based, interactive expert interpretation if the practitioner uses MBTI®Complete)
- A brief statement of directions (e.g., "Read and follow the directions for responding to MBTI items that appear on the screen after you have entered your login information and password.")
- The practitioner's name, address, phone number, and e-mail address, with an invitation to call or write with questions or concerns

When clients will respond to the MBTI items using an item booklet and answer sheet, include the seven points above (adapt as needed to reflect use of print materials) as well as information about returning the item booklet and answer sheet.

Summary

The nature of organizational life—with its time pressures, focus on results, and explicit or implicit authority relationships—makes clarification of the issues discussed in this section particularly important for obtaining valid results on the Indicator in an organizational setting. This is doubly true when the supervisor, manager, or leader of the group is participating in the session. Ensuring correct administration is a practical matter as well as an ethical one: individual results are more likely to be reliable and valid when guidelines for administration are carefully implemented.

Questions About Interpreting MBTI® Results

The general guidelines for providing an interpretation of MBTI type and returning results are thoroughly outlined in Chapter 6 of this manual. This section will address implementing the steps in organizational settings, focusing on group interpretations and feedback.

1. **What do practitioners need to present before returning MBTI results?**