

# Personality Inventories



College is the most common time when students learn and become comfortable in defining their strengths and weaknesses as part of their overall persona. One way to do this is by taking personality inventories which report back typical behavioral preferences according to the results. While these are not tests in the traditional sense, the respondent answers questions based on his/her personality and behavior. The “score” is by no means meant to box a person into the general descriptors, but helps indicate how people generally respond when they fit a certain personality. Remember, that in the end there is no “best score to have” and that each preference is equally valuable.

Personality inventories can also be used as a larger team builder for groups. Once everybody has taken their inventory, the group can share what it is like to work with people of other preferences. Facilitators can ask group members to talk about what they value the most as a group and how they can learn to recognize the importance of other people’s preferred working style as well. The purpose of these inventories is to learn about self, and support better team work.

This website covers basic three common inventories: Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), True Colors, and Strengths Quest (Strengths Finder).

The MBTI (most commonly referred to as the Meyers-Briggs) organizes the way people work into 16 combinations of mental processes and orientations. The work began with Carl Jung and then translated by Meyers & Briggs into common language that most people can understand. The preferences of this test are broken up into two kinds of mental processes (how people perceive information and make judgments) and two kinds of mental orientations (energy orientation and outside world orientation).

## *Mental Processes:*

The first set of mental processes is two ways in which people perceive or take in information. In the MBTI result, the S (sensing) or N (intuition) is the second letter.

**S** Those who prefer *Sensing* perception favor clear, tangible data and information that fits in well with their direct here-and-now experience.

**N** Those who prefer *Intuition* Perception are drawn to information that is more abstract, conceptual, big-picture, and represents imaginative possibilities for the future.

The second set of mental processes is two ways in which people make judgments and decisions. In the MBTI result, the T (thinking) or F (feeling) is the third letter.

**T** Those who prefer *Thinking* judgment have a natural preference for making decisions in an objective, logical, and analytical manner with an emphasis on tasks and results to be accomplished.

**F** Those whose preference is for *Feeling* judgment make their decisions in a somewhat global, visceral, harmony and value-oriented way, paying particular attention to the impact of decisions and actions on other people.

#### *Mental Orientations:*

The first set of mental orientations is the way in which people get their energy. This is the first letter in the MBTI result.

**I** Those who prefer *Introversion* draw their primary energy from the inner world of information, thoughts, ideas, and other reflections. When circumstances require an excessive amount of attention spent in the "outside" world, those preferring Introversion find the need to retreat to a more private setting as if to recharge their drained batteries.

**E** In contrast, those who prefer *Extraversion* are drawn to the outside world as their elemental source of energy. Rarely, if ever, do extraverted preference people feel their energy batteries are "drained" by excessive amounts of interaction with the outside world. They must engage the things, people, places, and activities going on in the outside world for their life force.

The second set of mental orientations is the way in which people orient themselves to the outside world. This is the fourth letter in the MBTI result.

**J** Those who prefer *Judging* rely upon either their T (thinking) or F (feeling) preference to manage their outer life. This typically leads to a style oriented towards closure, organization, planning, or in some fashion managing the things and or people found in the external environment. The drive is to order the outside world. While some people employ an assertive manner, others "ordering touch" - with respect to people - may be lighter.

**P** Those who prefer *Perceiving* rely upon either their S (sensing) or N (intuition) preference to run their outer life. This typically results in an open, adaptable, or flexible style of relating to the things and people found in the outside world. The drive is to experience the outside world rather than order it; in general, lack of closure is easily tolerated.

In summary:

First Letter: E or I	Where do you get your energy from?
Second Letter: S or N	Which is your most favored perceiving mental process?
Third Letter: T or F	Which is your most favored judging mental process?
Fourth Letter: J or P	Which kind of mental process leads your outside world orientation?

Some general behaviors of each type:

<p><b>(E) Extraverted Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act first, think/reflect later</li> <li>• Feel deprived when cutoff from interaction with the outside world</li> <li>• Usually open to and motivated by outside world of people and things</li> <li>• Enjoy wide variety and change in people relationships</li> </ul>	<p><b>(I) Introverted Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think/reflect first, then Act</li> <li>• Regularly require an amount of "private time" to recharge batteries</li> <li>• Motivated internally, mind is sometimes so active it is "closed" to outside world</li> <li>• Prefer one-to-one communication and relationships</li> </ul>
<p><b>(S) Sensing Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentally live in the now, attending to present opportunities</li> <li>• Using common sense and creating practical solutions is automatic-instinctual</li> <li>• Memory recall is rich in detail of facts and past events</li> <li>• Best improvise from past experience</li> <li>• Like clear and concrete information; dislike guessing when facts are "fuzzy"</li> </ul>	<p><b>(N) Intuitive Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentally live in the Future, attending to future possibilities</li> <li>• Using imagination and creating/inventing new possibilities is automatic-instinctual</li> <li>• Memory recall emphasizes patterns, contexts, and connections</li> <li>• Best improvise from theoretical understanding</li> <li>• Comfortable with ambiguous, fuzzy data and with guessing its meaning.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Thinking Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instinctively search for facts and logic in a decision situation.</li> <li>• Naturally notices tasks and work to be accomplished.</li> <li>• Easily able to provide an objective and critical analysis.</li> <li>• Accept conflict as a natural, normal part of relationships with people.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feeling Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instinctively employ personal feelings and impact on people in decision situations</li> <li>• Naturally sensitive to people needs and reactions.</li> <li>• Naturally seek consensus and popular opinions.</li> <li>• Unsettled by conflict; have almost a toxic reaction to disharmony.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Judging Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan many of the details in advance before moving into action.</li> <li>• Focus on task-related action; complete meaningful segments before moving on.</li> <li>• Work best and avoid stress when keep ahead of deadlines.</li> <li>• Naturally use targets, dates, and standard routines to manage life.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Perceiving Characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comfortable moving into action without a plan; plan on the go.</li> <li>• Like to multitask, have variety, mix work, and play.</li> <li>• Naturally tolerant of time pressure; work best close to the deadlines.</li> <li>• Instinctively avoid commitments which interfere with flexibility, freedom and variety</li> </ul>

**Details On Each of the 16 Types:**

**ISTJ:** Quiet, serious, earns success by thoroughness and dependability. Practical, matter-of-fact, realistic, and responsible. Decide logically what should be done and work toward it steadily, regardless of distractions. Take pleasure in making everything orderly and organized - their work, their home, their life. Value traditions and loyalty.

**ISFJ:** Quiet, friendly, responsible, and conscientious. Committed and steady in meeting their obligations. Thorough, painstaking, and accurate. Loyal, considerate, notice, and remember specifics about people who are important to them, concerned with how others feel. Strive to create an orderly and harmonious environment at work and at home.

**INFJ:** Seek meaning and connection in ideas, relationships, and material possessions. Want to understand what motivates people and are insightful about others. Conscientious and committed to their firm values. Develop a clear vision about how best to serve the common good. Organized and decisive in implementing their vision.

**INTJ:** Have original minds and great drive for implementing their ideas and achieving their goals. Quickly see patterns in external events and develop long-range explanatory perspectives. When committed, organize a job and carry it through. Skeptical and independent, have high standards of competence and performance - for themselves and others.

**ISTP:** Tolerant and flexible, quiet observers until a problem appears, then act quickly to find workable solutions. Analyze what makes things work and readily get through large amounts of data

to isolate the core of practical problems. Interested in cause and effect, organize facts using logical principles, value efficiency.

**ISFP:** Quiet, friendly, sensitive, and kind. Enjoy the present moment, what's going on around them. Like to have their own space and to work within their own time frame. Loyal and committed to their values and to people who are important to them. Dislike disagreements and conflicts; do not force their opinions or values on others.

**INFP:** Idealistic, loyal to their values and to people who are important to them. Want an external life that is congruent with their values. Curious, quick to see possibilities, can be catalysts for implementing ideas. Seek to understand people and to help them fulfill their potential. Adaptable, flexible, and accepting unless a value is threatened.

**INTP:** Seek to develop logical explanations for everything that interests them. Theoretical and abstract, interested more in ideas than in social interaction. Quiet, contained, flexible, and adaptable. Have unusual ability to focus in depth to solve problems in their area of interest. Skeptical, sometimes critical, always analytical.

**ESTP:** Flexible and tolerant, they take a pragmatic approach focused immediate results. Theories and conceptual explanations bore them - they want to act energetically to solve the problem. Focus on the here-and-now, spontaneous, enjoy each moment that they can be active with others. Enjoy material comforts and style. Learn best through doing.

**ESFP:** Outgoing, friendly, and accepting. Exuberant lovers of life, people, and material comforts. Enjoy working with others to make things happen. Bring common sense and a realistic approach to their work, and make work fun. Flexible and spontaneous, adapt readily to new people and environments. Learn best by trying a new skill with other people.

**ENFP:** Warmly enthusiastic and imaginative. See life as full of possibilities. Make connections between events and information very quickly, and confidently proceed based on the patterns they see. Want a lot of affirmation from others, and readily give appreciation and support. Spontaneous and flexible, often rely on their ability to improvise and their verbal fluency.

**ENTP:** Quick, ingenious, stimulating, alert, and outspoken. Resourceful in solving new and challenging problems. Adept at generating conceptual possibilities and then analyzing them strategically. Good at reading other people. Bored by routine, will seldom do the same thing the same way, apt to turn to one new interest after another.

**ESTJ:** Practical, realistic, matter-of-fact. Decisive, quickly move to implement decisions. Organize projects and people to get things done, focus on getting results in the most efficient way possible. Take care of routine details. Have a clear set of logical standards, systematically follow them, and want others to also. Forceful in implementing their plans.

**ESFJ:** Warmhearted, conscientious, and cooperative. Want harmony in their environment; work with determination to establish it. Like to work with others to complete tasks accurately and on time. Loyal, follow through even in small matters. Notice what others need in their day-by-day lives and try to provide it. Want to be appreciated for who they are and for what they contribute.

**ENFJ:** Warm, empathetic, responsive, and responsible. Highly attuned to the emotions, needs, and motivations of others. Find potential in everyone; want to help others fulfill their potential. May

act as catalysts for individual and group growth. Loyal, responsive to praise and criticism. Sociable, facilitate others in a group, and provide inspiring leadership.

**ENTJ:** Frank, decisive, assumes leadership readily. Quickly see illogical and inefficient procedures and policies; develop and implement comprehensive systems to solve organizational problems. Enjoy long-term planning and goal setting. Usually well informed, well read; enjoy expanding their knowledge and passing it on to others. Forceful in presenting their ideas.

More detailed information on the MBTI can be found by talking to a staff member at the counseling center. The best way to figure out your type is by taking the actual test, but there are a number of shorter, free tests available online.

## True Colors

Similar to the MBTI, True Colors is an inventory that a model for identifying personality styles by grouping common attributes into four colors - blue, orange, green, and gold. This simple model of understanding behavior patterns at work, at home, in relationships, in stressful situations, and at play helps individuals develop a deeper understanding of who they are and how they relate to the world.

Truecolors.org is the official website to learn more about the instrument. Here is a sample of the various personalities:

**Orange** represents energy, action, consuming physiological potency, power, and strength. Orange is the expression of vital force, of nervous and glandular activity. Thus, it has the meaning of desire and all forms of appetite and craving. Those with Orange as a primary color feel the will to achieve results, to win, to be successful. They desire all things that offer intense living and full experience.



Orange generates an impulse toward active doing: sport, struggle, competition, and enterprising productivity. It stimulates enthusiasm and creativity. Orange means vitality with endurance. In temporal terms, Orange is the present.

**Gold** is the body's natural perceptions. It represents a need to be responsible, to fulfill duties and obligations, to organize and structure our life and that of others. Those with Gold as a primary color value being practical and sensible; they believe that people should earn their way in life through work and service to others.



Gold reflects a need to belong through carrying a share of the load in all areas of living. It represents stability, maintenance of the culture and the organization, efficiency, planning and dependability. It embraces the

concepts of home and family with fierce loyalty and faithfulness.

**Green** expresses itself psychologically as human will in operation: as persistence and determination. Green is an expression of firmness and consistency. Its strength can lead to a resistance to change if it is not proven that the change will work or is warranted. Those with Green as a primary color value their intellect and capabilities above all else. Comfort in these areas creates a sense of personal security and self-esteem.



Green characteristics seek to increase the certainty of their own values through being assertive and requiring differences from others in intellectual areas. They are rarely settled in their countenance, since they depend upon information rather than feelings to create a sense of well-being. Green expresses the grounding of theory and data in its practical applications and creative constructs.

**Blue** represents calm. Contemplation of this color pacifies the central nervous system. It creates physiological tranquility and psychological contentment. Those with Blue as a primary color value balance and harmony. They prefer lives free from tension... settled, united, and secure. Blue represents loyalty and a sense of belonging, and yet, when friends are involved, a vulnerability. Blue corresponds to depth in feeling and a relaxed sensitivity. It is characterized by empathy, aesthetic experiences, and reflective awareness.



Blue is the color of inspiration, sincerity, and spirituality. Blue is often the chosen color by conservative people. Using Blue to relax will encourage feelings of communication and peace.

## StrengthsQuest

A final tool for individuals and groups to use is StrengthsQuest which builds upon students nature talents and the way they naturally think and feel as unique individuals. As the title suggest, the program builds on positive strengths rather than improving areas of weakness.

Here are a few sample descriptions. There are about 34 descriptions in all.

### **Achiever**

Your Achiever theme helps explain your drive. Achiever describes a constant need for achievement. You feel as if every day starts at zero. By the end of the day you must achieve something tangible in order to feel good about yourself. And by “every day” you mean every single day—workdays, weekends, vacations. No matter how much you may feel you deserve a day of rest, if the day passes without some form of achievement, no matter how small, you will feel dissatisfied. You have an internal fire burning inside you. It pushes you to do more, to achieve more. After each accomplishment is reached, the fire dwindles for a moment, but very soon it rekindles itself, forcing you toward the next accomplishment. Your relentless need for achievement might not be logical. It might not even be focused. But it will always be with you. As an



Achiever you must learn to live with this whisper of discontent. It does have its benefits. It brings you the energy you need to work long hours without burning out. It is the jolt you can always count on to get you started on new tasks, new challenges. It is the power supply that causes you to set the pace and define the levels of productivity for your work group. It is the theme that keeps you moving.

## **Belief**

If you possess a strong Belief theme, you have certain core values that are enduring. These values vary from one person to another, but ordinarily your Belief theme causes you to be family-oriented, altruistic, even spiritual, and to value responsibility and high ethics—both in yourself and others. These core values affect your behavior in many ways. They give your life meaning and satisfaction; in your view, success is more than money and prestige. They provide you with direction, guiding you through the temptations and distractions of life toward a consistent set of priorities. This consistency is the foundation for all your relationships. Your friends call you dependable. “I know where you stand,” they say. Your Belief makes you easy to trust. It also demands that you find work that meshes with your values. Your work must be meaningful; it must matter to you. And guided by your Belief theme it will matter only if it gives you a chance to live out your values.

## **Strategic**

The Strategic theme enables you to sort through the clutter and find the best route. It is not a skill that can be taught. It is a distinct way of thinking, a special perspective on the world at large. This perspective allows you to see patterns where others simply see complexity. Mindful of these patterns, you play out alternative scenarios, always asking, “What if this happened? Okay, well what if this happened?” This recurring question helps you see around the next corner. There you can evaluate accurately the potential obstacles. Guided by where you see each path leading, you start to make selections. You discard the paths that lead nowhere. You discard the paths that lead straight into resistance. You discard the paths that lead into a fog of confusion. You cull and make selections until you arrive at the chosen path—your strategy. Armed with your strategy, you strike forward. This is your Strategic theme at work: “What if?” Select. Strike.

## **Woo**

Woo stands for winning others over. You enjoy the challenge of meeting new people and getting them to like you. Strangers are rarely intimidating to you. On the contrary, strangers can be energizing. You are drawn to them. You want to learn their names, ask them questions, and find some area of common interest so that you can strike up a conversation and build rapport. Some people shy away from starting up conversations because they worry about running out of things to say. You don't. Not only are you rarely at a loss for words; you actually enjoy initiating with strangers because you derive satisfaction from breaking the ice and making a connection. Once that connection is made, you are quite happy to wrap it up and move on. There are new people to meet, new rooms to work, new crowds to mingle in. In your world there are no strangers, only friends you haven't met yet—lots of them.