

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® Instrument Highlights: A DiSC Comparison

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) Instrument Overview

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) instrument is the most widely used personality assessment in the world. Formally translated into 16 languages, it is a growing force in team building, leadership and individual development in organizations. Based on the breakthrough work of Carl Jung, the MBTI assessment provides a description of individuals' preferences for two cognitive activities: taking in information and organizing and processing the information in order to make decisions

People make use of their entire range of cognitive processes but tend to have a preference for using one over all the others. Understanding these preferences and the role they play in people's behavior can help increase collaboration and improve relationships, productivity, and efficiency in a work environment.

Key Applications

The DiSC instrument was designed to be administered with the individual considering a specific situation when responding. The MBTI assessment is a more general instrument that provides a set of preferences and a model for understanding the behavior of self and others across a variety of situations.

Various applications of the MBTI and DiSC instruments are detailed below.

MBTI Instrument	DiSC Assessment
Leadership Development	
MBTI tool helps leaders better understand their preferences and behavior in key dimensions of management and leadership.	N/A
Communication	
MBTI tool provides strategies for understanding the communication styles and needs of self and others and explores ways to meet those needs to enhance communication in workplace settings.	DiSC instrument helps improve communication skills by identifying how individuals work in their environment.
Team Development	
MBTI tool helps identify potential sources of conflict and explores how to effectively influence others, how each member contributes to the team, and how to maximize team effectiveness.	N/A
Career Development	
MBTI tool can be used to help individuals identify careers that best match their preferences. Can also be used in conjunction with the <i>Strong Interest Inventory</i> ® instrument to develop a more comprehensive understanding by examining both MBTI preferences and interests.	N/A
Organizational Understanding	
MBTI tool can be used to help groups of people better understand the impact of preferences on the corporate culture and optimize the strengths of individual preferences.	N/A
Emotional Intelligence (EQ)	
MBTI tool can be used to help people of all 16 types increase their level of empathy, persist in the face of obstacles, and control impulses. EQ is believed to enhance leadership ability, enrich relationships, and extend influence.	N/A
Stress and Coping	
MBTI tool predicts how each of the 16 MBTI types reacts to stressful situations and provides suggestions for managing stress. Also explains how each individual behaves under stress and what can help individuals return to productive behavior.	DiSC requires the administration of the Coping and Stress Profile®. Not appropriate to compare Graph I and Graph II and examine the differences (Inscape Publishing, 1996).

Career and Life Span Utility

The MBTI instrument offers lifelong development and learning opportunities for all individuals. Once the instrument has been administered and adopted into a corporate culture, it can become a useful tool for cost-effectively ensuring a shared understanding of individual preferences among all members of the organization. Many training professionals tailor the delivery of the MBTI assessment and reports to employees at all different levels of the organization.

One key advantage of online MBTI administration is that once a participant has completed the instrument, multiple reports can be generated from the same set of answers. Different training sessions, based on the needs of the trainees, can be developed based on the results of a single assessment. These reports differ in terms of the information provided, and can be used by employees to support their long-term career growth.

MBTI Instrument	DiSC Assessment
Assessments and reports developed for use with employees at different levels of sophistication.	Same assessment and feedback regardless of employee level
Non-Exempt Employees	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form M Self-Scorable • Score, administer, and interpret individually or in group settings • Inexpensive support materials 	N/A
Supervisors & Middle Managers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form M online using CareerID.com • Multiple reports for higher development 	N/A
Managers & Executives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form Q online using CareerID.com • 4-letter type plus 20 facets • Achieve in-depth understanding of their own and others' behavior 	N/A

Interpreting Results

Benefits of instruments such as the MBTI and DiSC assessments are enhanced by the use of a qualified trainer or coach to help participants understand their individual results. Once the results are received, a qualified trainer can help guide an individual with the practical application of the results in his or her professional life. MBTI trainers and coaches receive comprehensive qualification training that equips them to provide insightful and unique interpretation sessions with an individual. This process also helps ensure that interested participants have the information they need to complete further discovery and exploration on their own.

MBTI Interpretation	DiSC Interpretation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hours minimum for individual interpretation • Half day or full day for seminars • Group or individual settings • Completed in conjunction with a coach, trainer, or facilitator • Wide variety of focal areas or applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 hours minimum • Half day or full day for seminars • Group or individual settings • Completed in conjunction with a coach, trainer, or facilitator

Assessments and Administrations

There are two basic versions of the MBTI instrument, Step I (Form M) and Step II (Form Q). Step I provides the individual with his or her four-letter type preference and an introductory understanding of type. The Form M Self-Scorable enables individuals to complete the instrument on their own and score their own results. Internet administration, scoring, and report generation is also available via Psychometrics' CareerID.com site.

Step II provides both the respondent's four-letter type and results for five facets underlying each type preference, helping to explain the individual's expression of his or her preferences. The DiSC 2800 series is similarly available in self-scorable, personal computer, and Internet versions of the assessment, and reports.

MBTI Assessments	DiSC Assessments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step I (Form M)—four-letter type • Step II (Form Q)— four-letter type and 20 facets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2800 Series Personal Profile High score letter D, I, S, or C and profile

MBTI Administration Options	DiSC Administration Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step I (Form M) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-Scorable ○ Paper and pencil, mail in for scoring ○ Online: CareerID.com • Step II (Form Q) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paper and pencil, mail in for scoring ○ Online: CareerID.com • Internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2800 Series Personal Profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-Scorable ○ Personal computer software ○ Internet

Measurement Properties

Both the DiSC assessment and the MBTI instrument have reasonable psychometric, or measurement, properties. Generally, two criteria are used to evaluate the measurement properties of an instrument: reliability and validity. Reliability of measurement is the consistency of results obtained from an assessment. Validity of measurement has to do with whether the assessment measures what it is supposed to measure. A common measure of reliability is internal consistency reliability, which provides an indication of the internal consistency of the scale. Another indicator is test-retest reliability, which is an indicator of the constancy of the measure over time. Validity is a more complex concept, and it is typically examined by looking at the measure's relationships with similar and dissimilar constructs. Both the MBTI assessment and the DiSC instrument report a number of differing validity studies, which suggest that both assessments possess reasonable reliability and validity.

MBTI Internal Consistency Reliability Ranges		DiSC Internal Consistency Reliability Ranges	
Reliability	Form M ¹ & Q	Reliability ²	
• E-I	- .91	• D	- .84 to .95
• S-N	- .92	• I	- .74 to .87
• T-F	- .91	• S	- .74 to .88
• J-P	- .92	• C	- .75 to .85

Supporting Resources and Training Materials for the MBTI® Instrument

A key advantage of the MBTI tool is the wide range of support and training materials that are available to organizations, trainers, and HR professionals to help guide individual, team, and leadership development.

MBTI practitioners have continued to generate and share lessons about the MBTI instrument. Support materials for and training on the MBTI assessment are available from Psychometrics.com

Brief History of the MBTI® Instrument

Based on the breakthrough work of Carl Jung, the *Myers-Briggs Indicator* (MBTI) instrument was developed by the mother-daughter team of Katharine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers. Their vision of an uncomplicated but far-reaching instrument to provide people with insight about themselves formed the foundation for what has become the most powerful personality inventory in history. Today, the MBTI instrument is trusted by more than 30 million people in not-for-profit and profit organizations, and it is known around the world for its comprehensive depth and inviting ease of use.

How the MBTI Instrument Works to Help Your Organization

The MBTI instrument uses the answers to easy-to-understand questions to classify each organizational member as one of the 16 basic personality types. By helping all members discover their own personality types and learn about the types of others, you can increase their understanding of and appreciation for one another's strengths and challenges and thereby improve their interactions. The results, once applied are powerful. Combining the answers to the MBTI questions with various interpretive materials can create a pathway to new levels of cooperation, productivity, and performance throughout your organization.

Summary

Both forms of the MBTI instrument provide employees who complete the assessment and the organizations who use type for development and learning with a complete system for understanding the behavior of self and others. There are a variety of methods of administration and reports, which provide the opportunity for organizations to use the same language and approach to training across the entire workforce, and over an employee's entire career through different applications. Understanding of type can provide insight into the behavior of self and others in a wide variety of situations, both at work and outside of work. Both forms of the MBTI instrument are reliable and valid, and were developed using state-of-the-art statistical techniques.

For ease of administration, acceptance by organizational members, and ability to improve relationships, collaboration, and productivity, the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* instrument has no equal.



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¹ Myers, I. B., McCaulley, M. H., Quenk, N. L., & Hammer, A. L. (1998). MBTI® Manual: A guide to the development and use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Palo Alto, CA: CPP, Inc. (Note: Reliability for Forms M and Q are the same for type preferences, since the same items are used to define the preference scores on both assessments).

² The Personal Profile System® 2800 Series Research Report, Inscape Publishing, Report Number O-255.

Inscape documents obtained from <http://www.inscapepublishing.com/research.asp>

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