
politicians and personality

a councillor's guide to
understanding difference
working more effectively
getting your message across

'You are who you are. Believe in yourself and your ideas, but be prepared for resistance and make the change to get people to believe in your vision.'

Councillor Mahroof Hussain, cabinet member, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

'Listening to all views is important in leadership. But it is important to make choices and implement them.'

Councillor Paul Crossley, leader, Bath and North East Somerset Council

'In a nutshell you need to be prepared to speak out but also to listen; to focus on the here and now as well as the big picture stuff of the future; you need to develop empathy with people and motivate them but check out the business case and press for real outcomes; and you need clarity of thought and clear goals but not be too rigid but be able to adapt quickly to unforeseen circumstances and changes in plan.'

Dorothy Thornhill, elected mayor, Watford Borough Council

'Recognise that not every one thinks the way that you do. Not everyone is comfortable making decisions. Not every one wants to be a leader – strange as that may seem to you. Give people the space to be themselves and you will be amazed at what they will accomplish.'

Councillor Paul Buchanan, deputy leader, Somerset County Council

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dedication

This guide is dedicated to the hundreds of councillors who have attended the Leadership Academy over the past six years and who entered into the challenge of looking at their own personalities and those of others in the spirit of collective and collaborative inquiry that spanned all manner of political divides.

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politicians and personality

New research commissioned by the Improvement and Development Agency suggests that the politicians who head up local government differ significantly in their personalities from the rest of us.

The study looked at leading councillors who attended the IDeA's flagship Leadership Academy programme. It measured them on a number of axes and compared the results to what we know of the population at large. It also compared the findings with profiles of managers in the public sector.

Myers Briggs Type Indicator*

The specific psychological instrument used was the Myers Briggs Type Indicator. The Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is one of the most widely used personality profilers in the world today. MBTI identifies four different personality dimensions (giving eight preferences) that we all use at different times. However, each person will have a preference for one combination over the other combinations. This generates a possible 16 different 'types' of which we are all one.

The MBTI itself looks at:

- where people prefer to focus their attention and from where they draw their energy
- the way people prefer to take in information and what information they trust
- on what basis they prefer to make decisions
- how they orientate themselves to the outside world.

summary of results

Although each individual councillor would have a set of preferences (their Myers Briggs Type) more or less similar to the average member of the public, as a group there were significant and substantial differences.

Councillors are more likely to be extravert – 68 per cent compared to the general population's 52 per

cent – and less likely to be introvert than the population as a whole. That is, they are more at home being out and about and engaging in face-to-face conversations with large numbers of people. They will tend to have a broad range of interests and be energised by the cut and thrust of interaction.

Councillors are twice as likely to be future-orientated, see emerging patterns – the wood rather than the trees – and see the bigger picture. They are more likely to be motivated and inspired by a big vision. And that is how they will communicate.

Councillors will be more likely to take a hard objective look at the facts and generally will not be ruled by their emotions. They would generally be interested in reaching a solution that was objective and where the 'business case' stacked up while the majority of the population would be more concerned with the effect a decision had on people – councillors 67 per cent compared to the population's 46 per cent.

A major difference emerged between the population, 39 per cent of whom are relatively traditional and conservative and who need to know why any change is being proposed compared to only 18 per cent of councillors who do; and councillors, 36 per cent of whom seem to embrace change and what to progress things quickly compared to only 15 per cent of the population.

There was no statistical correlation between personality and the political party of choice.

* The Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®) is a registered trademark of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Trust. Further information on the Myers Briggs Type Indicator is available from www.opp.co.uk who will be able to put you in touch with a person qualified to administer the MBTI.



setting the scene

Are politicians different from the general population? This report takes a look at new research that suggests councillors differ in significant ways from the population at large. It then goes on to see how this plays out in various scenarios and suggests ways in which councillors can become more effective in their role if they become more aware of their own personality type and the personality types of those around them.

The research, commissioned by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), the local government improvement body, suggests that as a group the politicians that head up local government differ significantly in their personalities from the rest of us. The study looked at leading councillors who have attended the IDeA's flagship Leadership Academy. It measured them on a number of axes and compared the results to what is known of the population at large. It also compared the findings with the profiles of managers in the public sector.

The IDeA has been running the Leadership Academy programme for more than six years. It supports councillors in developing aspects of their personal, organisational, political and community leadership skills. As part of the programme councillors were asked to take the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®) assessment to increase self-awareness and how communication, leadership and change management skills can be enhanced through knowledge of one's own type and those of others.

The collective results of more than 600 councillors have been analysed and we can now conclude that there are significant differences when the population of councillors is compared to the general UK population and to the managerial population.

The purpose of this guide is four-fold:

- to explain in what ways councillors as a group

- have different personality profiles
- to highlight specific areas where councillors need to be aware of these differences
- to discuss these differences through typical case study scenarios
- to suggest ways in which councillors can extend their range of communication and leadership interventions to be more effective in their roles.

This guide will help you

- understand personality differences
- identify your personality type
- highlight areas of potential strength and weakness
- suggest strategies for extending your communication and leadership styles.

exploring personality

Whatever your personality it clearly has an impact on your attitudes and your behaviours.

Many of the conflicts and stresses in life come from personality clashes and the different communication styles of different personality types. This brief introduction to the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®) explains how and in what ways people differ. Understanding who you are and how you are different from others is a first step towards establishing mutually beneficial and productive relationships.

The MBTI® is one of the most widely used personality profilers in the world today. Based on initial work by analytical psychologist Carl Jung in the early part of the 20th century, the MBTI was devised by Katherine Briggs and her daughter Isabel Myers. It has been well documented and researched over the past 60 years.

The MBTI® identifies four different personality dimensions, giving eight preferences that we all use at different times (see Table 1). However each person will have a preference for one combination over the other combinations. This generates a

table 1

<p>extraversion preference You draw your energy from the outer world of people, things and actions</p> <p>You have a need to initiate things and involve others</p> <p>You tend to like verbal communication and talking things through with others</p> <p>You can engage others with a natural enthusiasm which needs to be reciprocated.</p> <p>You value communication and want to be heard</p> <p>You prefer action rather than reflection</p> <p>You value breadth over depth</p>	<p>E or I</p> <p>Extraversion or Introversion</p> <p>Where we get our energy from and where we focus our attention</p>	<p>introversion preference You draw your energy from the internal world of ideas, thoughts and concepts</p> <p>You need forewarning and time for reflection You tend to think things through and make considered comments³</p> <p>You prefer thoughtful communication and one-to-one discussions</p> <p>You need pauses in the communication to work out what you think</p> <p>You need some time to assimilate changes before taking action</p> <p>You value depth over breadth</p>
<p>sensing preference You like to know the specifics and details about what exactly is needed</p> <p>You are practical and pragmatic and prefer concrete and realistic things</p> <p>You like to see how what is required now fits with the past</p> <p>You like to focus on the present and the past and need realistic pictures of the future</p> <p>Clarity of objectives, roles, and responsibilities is important</p>	<p>S or N</p> <p>Sensing or Intuition</p> <p>Where we get are data from and what information we trust</p>	<p>intuition preference You like to know the bigger picture and the overall rationale</p> <p>You like working on the abstract, conceptual and theoretical levels</p> <p>You like an outline plan with a general direction</p> <p>You like a vision of the future and the opportunity to help design it</p> <p>Imagination, hunches and original ideas are important to you</p>

<p>thinking preference You need to know the logic, the reason, the business case for making a decision</p> <p>You require clarity in the decision making and planning process</p> <p>Analysing and systematising are important to you</p> <p>You value objectivity and approach things in a very reasonable fashion</p> <p>You value competence in the people you work with</p> <p>Fairness and equity are important</p> <p>You tend to adopt a questioning, fairly critical approach</p>	<p>T or F</p> <p>Thinking or feeling</p> <p>How we make decisions and judgements</p>	<p>feeling preference You need to know the impact on people of the decision under discussion</p> <p>It's important that people's needs will be addressed</p> <p>Inclusion in the planning and implementing process is important</p> <p>Valuing people and seeking harmony are key concerns</p> <p>It's important to you that managers care</p> <p>Appreciation and support are important</p> <p>You tend to adopt a more accepting compassionate approach</p>
<p>judging preference You prefer a clear plan of action with defined outcomes, clear goals</p> <p>You like to have time-frames and adopt a structured organised approach</p> <p>You prefer things to be planned and scheduled with no surprises</p> <p>You like to make an early start on projects and for decisions to be made and things brought to closure</p>	<p>J or P</p> <p>Judging or Perceiving</p> <p>How we deal with the external environment and live our lives</p>	<p>perceiving preference You prefer open-ended plans with flexibility and options</p> <p>You like to have opportunities to gather more information and to adjust plans as the process continues</p> <p>You are open-minded and willing to trust in the process</p> <p>You prefer to allow things to emerge, continue gather information and tend to be pressure-prompted</p>

possible 16 different ‘types’ into which we will all fit (see Table 2).

The MBTI® itself looks at:

- where people prefer to focus their attention and from where they draw their energy
- the way people prefer to take in information and what information they trust
- on what basis they prefer to make decisions
- how they orientate themselves to the outside world.

The tool describes preferences – it describes rather than prescribes – not skills or abilities or competences. Different MBTI® types will have different:

- attitudes to the level of engagement and interaction with others
- communication styles
- ways of evaluating information and making decisions
- attitudes to living their lives.

This then has an impact on styles of learning, problem-solving and leadership. The philosophy behind MBTI maintains that all preferences are equally important, valuable and necessary.

note

If you don’t already know your type, go to Appendix One where there is a shortened type questionnaire. You can also read the descriptions that follow and form a self-assessment. It is recommended that the indicator is administered by a qualified person.

Table 2 below gives the MBTI table with a two-word heading and four key phrases for each type.

politicians are different

Although individual councillors will have a set of preferences – their Myers Briggs Type – which will be more or less similar to that of any one else in the population, when you look at the councillor

population as a group there are significant and substantial differences, both compared to the UK population and to the managerial population. The full report can be read in Appendix Two.

key findings

Councillors are more likely to be Extravert and less likely to be Introvert than the population as a whole. That is, they are more at home being out and about and engaging in face-to-face conversations with large numbers of people. They will tend to have a broader range of interests and be energised by the cut and thrust of interaction.

Councillors are much more likely to be future orientated, to see emerging patterns – the wood rather than the trees – and to take an overview of the bigger picture. They are more likely to be motivated and inspired by a big vision. And it will be on these terms and with this language that they will communicate.

Councillors are more likely to take a hard objective look at the facts and generally will not be ruled by their emotions as much as the general population. They would generally be more interested in reaching a solution that was objective and where the ‘business case’ stacked up compared to the majority of the population, who would be more concerned with the effect that a decision had on people.

A major difference emerged between the population, 39 per cent of whom are relatively traditional and who really do need to know why any change is being proposed – compared to only 18 per cent of councillors – and councillors, 36 per cent of whom seem to want to embrace change and want to progress things quickly – compared to only 15 per cent of the population.

One particular type (ESTJ) has nearly twice the number of councillors in it than the general population – 18 per cent of councillors but only 10 per cent of the population. This type is often seen as the stereotypical leader who respects the

<p>ISTJ Planner Inspector Thoughtful depth of focus</p> <p>Trust in facts</p> <p>Logical decision-making</p> <p>Planned and organised</p>	<p>ISFJ Protector Supporter Thoughtful depth of focus</p> <p>Trust in facts</p> <p>Harmony and understanding</p> <p>Planned and organised</p>	<p>INFJ Foreseer Developer Thoughtful depth of focus</p> <p>Open to bigger picture</p> <p>Harmony and understanding</p> <p>Planned and organised</p>	<p>INTJ Conceptualiser Director Thoughtful depth of focus</p> <p>Open to bigger picture</p> <p>Logical decision-making</p> <p>Planned and organised</p>
<p>ISTP Analyser Operator Thoughtful depth of focus</p> <p>Trust in facts</p> <p>Logical decision-making</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable</p>	<p>ISFP Composer producer Thoughtful depth of focus</p> <p>Trust in facts</p> <p>Harmony and understanding</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable</p>	<p>INFP Harmoniser Clarifier Thoughtful depth of focus</p> <p>Open to bigger picture</p> <p>Harmony and understanding</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable</p>	<p>INTP Designer Theoriser Thoughtful depth of focus</p> <p>Open to bigger picture</p> <p>Logical decision-making</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable</p>
<p>ESTP Promoter Executor Energised breadth of interest</p> <p>Trust in facts</p> <p>Logical decision-making</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable</p>	<p>ESFP Motivator Presenter Energised breadth of interest</p> <p>Trust in facts</p> <p>Harmony and understanding</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable</p>	<p>ENFP Discoverer Advocate Energised breadth of interest</p> <p>Open to bigger picture</p> <p>Harmony and understanding</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable</p>	<p>ENTP Explorer Inventor Energised breadth of interest</p> <p>Open to bigger picture</p> <p>Logical decision-making</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable</p>
<p>ESTJ Implementer Supervisor Energised breadth of interest</p> <p>Trust in facts</p> <p>Logical decision-making</p> <p>Planned and organised</p>	<p>ESFJ Facilitator caretaker Energised breadth of interest</p> <p>Trust in facts</p> <p>Harmony and understanding</p> <p>Planned and organised</p>	<p>ENFJ Envisioner Mentor Energised breadth of interest</p> <p>Open to bigger picture</p> <p>Harmony and understanding</p> <p>Planned and organised</p>	<p>ENTJ Strategist Mobiliser Energised breadth of interest</p> <p>Open to bigger picture</p> <p>Logical decision-making</p> <p>Planned and organised</p>

table 2

Adapted from MBTI table Berens and Nardi (1999) The sixteen personality types Telos, CA

hierarchy achieving things within the system. They have a down to earth approach, set clear and measurable targets, seek leadership directly and take charge quickly.

Where there is a preference for the public at large not to want to change things just for the sake of change the councillor population seem to be saying that that is their primary purpose! Not necessarily change for change's sake, but more that they have been elected on a platform for change and are willing to progress their manifesto on that account.

Perhaps voters elect people who say they want to change things but, when it actually comes down to it, are the first to complain.

the implications

Whatever your personality you will need to adjust the way you communicate if you want to get your message across to other people. So, whatever type you are, you need to foster self-awareness of your preferences and also be aware of others' preferences. The implications for politicians as a group are that they need to be aware of their tendency to be more of some particular types than others and have more of a preference for thinking and acting in certain ways, which the majority of the UK population and managers do not.

On an individual basis the advice is 'know your type' and on a collective basis the advice is to know how to communicate and act with other types.

The next few sections will take you through some of the major differences and look at specific examples where difference can lead to conflict or can lead to synergy.

extravert or introvert?

‘Two ears one mouth – use them in that proportion’

Paul Buchanan



<p>extraversion preference You draw your energy from the outer world of people, things and actions You have a need to initiate things and involve others You tend to like verbal communication and talking things through with others You can engage others with a natural enthusiasm which needs to be reciprocated. You value communication and want to be heard You prefer action rather than reflection You value breadth over depth</p>	<p>E or I Extraversion or Introversion Where we get our energy from and where we focus our attention</p>	<p>introversion preference You draw your energy from the internal world of ideas, thoughts and concepts You need forewarning and time for reflection You tend to think things through and make considered comments You prefer thoughtful communication and one-to-one discussions You need pauses in the communication to work out what you think You need some time to assimilate changes before taking action You value depth over breadth</p>
extraversion %	who	introversion %
68%	councillors	32%
52%	UK Population	48%
59%	Managers	41%

Councillors, as a group, are more likely to be Extravert – 16 per cent more than the general population – and less likely to be Introvert than the population as a whole. They are more at home being out and about and engaging in face-to-face conversations with large numbers of people. They

will tend to have a broad range of interests and be energised by the cut and thrust of interaction.

Some of the strengths of the Extravert councillor is that they are quite action orientated and enjoy interaction with people in general. Their style will tend to be energetic and animated and they will

‘Extraverts are ready to go, they need to move quick on ideas and don’t like people taking their time and giving long explanations.’

Mahroof Hussain

‘Extraverts have an openness, ability to talk with all sections of the community with ease, confidence in themselves and their ability.’

Paul Crossley

respond quickly to situations. They will have a tendency to think out loud and will have a bias for action over reflection.

*scenarios
consultation process*

Typically, Extravert councillors will tend to organise larger group meetings where there will be lots of oral communication with opinions being exchanged and decisions being made in the here and now. Lots of ideas might be forthcoming with no real sense of how they can be filtered back. The energy and enthusiasm of the consultation meetings will have an accent on doing things as soon as decisions have been made.

The Introvert councillor will tend to organise smaller groups for more in-depth discussion, maybe even have some one-to-ones, and their approach will be ‘well considered, with a degree of written communication. Decisions will take longer and the pace will be slower. There will be an accent on reflection rather than action.

If councillors behave to type, then the effect on councillors of the public could well be that they feel overwhelmed, not listened to, and bulldozed into making decisions without have either the personal one-to-one contact they desire or the time to reflect on the decision and its implications.

council meetings

During meetings Extravert councillors will do most of the talking, kick starting the meeting and bringing a real sense of energy and enthusiasm to it. There may well be a lot of ‘thinking aloud’, with half formed ideas being generated at quite a rate. This energy, apart from leading to too many ideas might also result in a tendency to make decisions and take immediate actions.

Introvert councillors, on the other hand, will have given the various agenda items some considerable forethought and may even have reached a conclusion before the meeting has even started. They will be slow to take the centre stage and the

Extravert councillors may be willing to fill that gap. The Introvert councillors, if and when they make a contribution, may make it too little and too late.

The effect on the decision making process of having a majority of Extraverts is that there can be a tendency to generate lots of ideas and actions and then come to decisions without really having a chance to think the implications through in any detail. There could be a lack of prior preparation and not enough time allowed for reflection. Individuals' contributions will not necessarily be based on their knowledge or competence but on their desire and willingness to voice an opinion.

canvassing

Extravert councillors can get quite energised by going out and meeting people from the community and engaging them in a wide variety of discussions. They will have the positive energy to enjoy a good argument on a range of possible subjects.

The Introvert councillor can find canvassing quite exhausting, as it can be quite energy sapping to talk to too many people. They prefer people who are interested in particular subjects and where they can have a 'worthwhile' conversation, by which we mean a deep conversation. Given that they are not inclined to say too much, the canvassing conversation can have a number of pauses for thought in it.

Apart from the need for councillors to get their point across, another important aspect of canvassing is eliciting views from constituents and developing a worthwhile relationship. Clearly understanding that different constituents will have different preferences when it comes to engaging in discussion suggestions, councillors need to be able to tailor their approach to engage with people in a number of ways and a number of forums, relating to more people in their preferred style.

Councillor Tony Jackson, leader of East Herts District Council recognises the strengths and weaknesses of being an Extravert:

'There's a willingness to engage and draw from others and being prepared to put forward ideas for others to react to. Extraverts have the passion and enthusiasm to make a genuine difference.

However you also need to have patience with those who may wish to move more slowly and try not to react adversely to those with negative dispositions. You need to ensure the application is measured and proportionate.

Extraverts need to work hard to ensure that listening to others is done genuinely. They must be prepared to put forward ideas in the knowledge that they may not be the best ideas but might stimulate others to arrive at the best solution'

Brendan Jameson, leader of South Lakeland District Council describes some of the positive qualities of the Extravert councillor: 'There's a willingness and ability to engage with others. They like to get involved and demonstrate their commitment and enthusiasm. However, they don't always think things through enough. Sometimes they shoot from the hip.' He goes on to say that if you're an Extravert leader you need to 'make sure you have a deputy who can do the things you are poor at. Treat them well and be aware of your own shortcomings'.

Sarah Content is an Introvert and leader of West Wiltshire District Council. She says one of the characteristics of being an Introvert leader are 'the capability for rationalisation and informed decision making. There's an innate ability to listen to others, to pace yourself and think things through by mapping out things out and forward planning. However, Introverts can cause impatience in others as they cannot be rushed into things. Others may think that you are weak if you do not jump up and speak when others may think you should. So in that sense you can also be perceived as stand offish on occasions.'

She also has advice for fledgling Introvert leaders: 'Try to push yourself out of your comfort zone every now and then, as there are times when one needs to be a bit out of character to inspire and lead and if you can practise on small things to gain confidence you will find it easier later when you need to make an impact. Sometimes, snap decisions need to be made. Mentally, give yourself a fixed time period (say ten minutes) to think it through but then stand by your decision. Don't worry if people think you are too quiet at times, as there will be times when you do speak and as long as you are forthright and insistent on being heard as necessary, people will be more likely to listen.'

implications

Extraverts prefer considerable contact time with others, while Introverts need time alone with their own thoughts and reflections. Extraverts can find Introverts withdrawn and cool, while Introverts can find Extraverts superficial, intrusive and domineering. However, Extraverts need Introverts to complement them by building in time for reflection and ensuring there's a real depth to the understanding. Likewise Introverts need Extraverts to make the contact, build the networks and to take action.

detail person or big picture person?

‘You need to focus on the here and now as well as the big picture stuff of the future.’

Dorothy Thornhill

<p>sensing preference You like to know the specifics and details about what exactly is needed You are practical and pragmatic and prefer concrete and realistic things You like to see how what is required now fits with the past You like to focus on the present and the past and need realistic pictures of the future Clarity of objectives, roles, and responsibilities is important</p>	<p>S or N Sensing or Intuition Where we get are data from and what information we trust</p>	<p>intuition preference You like to know the bigger picture and the overall rationale You like working on the abstract, conceptual and theoretical levels You like an outline plan with a general direction You like a vision of the future and the opportunity to help design it Imagination, hunches and original ideas are important to you</p>
sensing %	who	intuition %
50%	councillors	50%
76%	UK Population	24%
47%	Managers	53%

Councillors as a group are significantly different from the UK population in where they obtain data and what information they trust. They are twice as likely to be future orientated, see emerging patterns – the wood rather than the trees – and want to view the bigger picture. They are more

likely to be motivated and inspired by a big vision. And that is how they will communicate.

Compared to councillors, the UK population is twice as likely to rely on current facts gleaned from the present and the past. People see things in terms of what is rather than what might be, and

they require tangible evidence to be convinced of an argument. So we have many more councillors than the general population having a preference for seeking the bigger picture and future possibility. They are more likely to want to build towards a future state and will think about these things strategically and with a future focus. They are more likely to want to pick up on trends and patterns.

scenarios

neighbourhood working

Neighbourhood working to an Intuition preference would involve grand schemes of wonderful visions of coordinated, integrated working across council departments and other agencies, which create a sense of community where people are inspired to be part of the new order of things.

Neighbourhood working for a Sensing councillor would have a specific location where a councillor could contact the council who would get the lighting department talking to the highways department to ensure the street lights shone on the muck on the pavement so the works department could scoop it up.

managing change

When managing change councillors with a Sensing preference will want specific, evidence-based reasons why change is necessary and will want to manage the change in clear, straightforward steps. They will be motivated by the idea of clear goals and outcomes for the change and knowing there is a detailed way of getting from here to there. Resources and risk management will be important.

Councillors with a preference for Intuition will be motivated and inspired by a vision of the future, whether or not the current situation warrants change. They will need to see how this particular change fits into the grand design, but will not necessarily be insistent on details. If necessary they

‘Strategic thinking, seeing the whole game board not just the pieces; recognising tactical losses are a necessity to win the long term game.’

Paul Buchanan

‘Ability to take in the bigger picture and not need to get bogged down with detail.’

Dorothy Thornhill

reverse-engineer the plan to make it fit with current reality.

the impact of intuition preference on sensing people

The effect on the public of councillors building a high level view or inspiring big picture vision is that they may well not be motivated by it – however motivating it is for the councillor. Three quarters of the population are Sensing – practical, pragmatic and sensible. They need big visions to be translated into meaningful, tangible, down to earth ideas and actions. They need to understand why something is going to change and precisely how something is going to change. Big words – freedom, democracy, vision – have to be made real with compelling reasons. It is fine for politicians to think global but they need to remember that people want them to act local.

implications

Sensing people find Intuition people impractical and difficult to follow in their ideas and concepts. The Intuition person finds sensing people rather bound in current reality and taking a more pessimistic view on life. So the Sensing person needs the Intuition preference to prepare for the future and to think outside the box. On the other hand the Intuition person needs the realism and reminder of the facts that the Sensing person can bring.

One of the key differences between the Sensing and the Intuition preferences is how to get your message across. The Sensing person likes all the details and information to be based on reality, whereas the Intuition preference prefers the general picture and some discussion around possible options. So the Sensing person really needs to allow the Intuition person to provide the overall picture first, with the relevant details later. The Sensing person needs the relevant detail first, or at least understands that the idea is, perhaps, only half-formed or at a high-level.

Sarah Content has a preference for Intuition: 'As Leader, one has so much to do, learn, understand and manage, being able to see the big picture without requiring all the details means that you can better manage the workload. Intuition is very helpful when it comes to dealing with personalities especially with people you do not know very well. It encourages people to be confident in speaking and being creative and innovative which is positive if you are trying to change practices and the prevailing ethos.

However you mustn't end up being a bit vague as people do not really like acting on hunches until they realise that the leader's hunches are right. That process can be a bit frustrating for everyone. When working with someone who needs the details it can sometimes feel as if you are talking with an alien and they feel the same way!

My advice would be to stick to your guns, if you believe you are right, Try to realise people think differently and need different types of communication and information than maybe you do. So if you feel as if you are getting nowhere on a matter, try changing tack or approach to get your message across."

Dorothy Thornhill recognises that intuitives 'could be too fluffy and don't get the detail. There is always the need for successful outcomes. You need to focus on the here and now as well as the big picture stuff of the future. Make time to get the detail right.'

Tony Jackson suggests that you 'ensure that there are other councillors on the team who are more able to focus on detail and are used to provide the necessary cover. Have patience with those who require more data and information before arriving at a decision.'

head or the heart?

‘A balance of head and heart is needed issue by issue’

Clyde Loakes, leader, Waltham Forest Council

<p>thinking preference You need to know the logic, the reason, the business case for making a decision You require clarity in the decision making and planning process Analysing and systematising are important to you You value objectivity and approach things in a very reasonable fashion You value competence in the people you work with Fairness and equity are important You tend to adopt a questioning, fairly critical approach</p>	<p>T or F Thinking or feeling How we make decisions and judgements</p>	<p>feeling preference You need to know the impact on people of the decision under discussion It's important that people's needs will be addressed Inclusion in the planning and implementing process is important Valuing people and seeking harmony are key concerns It's important to you that managers care Appreciation and support are important You tend to adopt a more accepting compassionate approach</p>
<p>thinking %</p>	<p>who</p>	<p>feeling %</p>
<p>67%</p>	<p>councillors</p>	<p>33%</p>
<p>46%</p>	<p>UK Population</p>	<p>54%</p>
<p>85%</p>	<p>Managers</p>	<p>15%</p>

Compared to the UK population, councillors will be more likely to take a hard objective look at the facts and generally will not be ruled by their emotions when it comes to making decisions. They will generally be interested in reaching a solution that was objective and where the

business case stacked up compared to the majority of the population – who would be more concerned with the effect a decision had on people.

Managers have a 84 per cent preference for Thinking, which far outstrips the UK population

and indeed the councillor population. Although one can rationalise why managers should be logical, rational, and objective, it does highlight one potential reason why human factors are often left out of the decision making process, or at least come lower down the priority list.

Councillors fall somewhere between UK managers and the UK population on the Feeling function. In that sense, councillors could act as a bridge between the more logical, analytical, business case driven world of managers and the 54 per cent of people in the population who are more concerned with the impact that decisions have on people. However, it also means that there is the potential for conflict between councillors and managers as their approach to problem solving and decision-making and communication will be different as two groups. Clearly values and impact on people are much more important to a larger group of councillors than managers.

scenarios

closing a residential home

A councillor with a preference for Thinking will want to ensure that there has been logical analysis concerning the change and will ask challenging questions of all involved. They will be interested in whether the costs and benefits have been calculated and keen to ensure the decision is objectively made on the benefits of this analysis. They will want to ensure that the process and the people have been handled fairly and equitably and that the right decision is made, taking into account the efficient use of resources and the common good.

A councillor with a Feeling preference will want fully to understand the effect on the people involved and know that there are adequate plans to support people through whatever decision is made. They will seek to understand the disparate views and empathise with all concerned, especially those most affected by the change. They will take into full account their own feelings on the subject

and how it impacts on people and on values. They will seek to do what is right in a particular situation.

Councillors, as a group, will exhibit more Thinking rather than Feeling behaviour when it comes to making decisions. This can mean people will consider that councillors have not taken their feelings into account, nor the impact that their decisions will have on the community. People may well impute that councillors are only concerned with the costs and benefits – the business case – rather than the people. Senior managers will exhibit even more of this behaviour and can come across as even more uncaring and only wedded to the idea of deciding what is right via a totally dispassionate appraisal of the pros and the cons of any situation, taking no account of people's feelings or indeed that feelings have any legitimacy.

helping a ward constituent

A councillor with a preference for Feeling will want to empathise with their constituent's dilemmas. Whether it is trying to understand how they might obtain social housing or whether it's about a traffic-calming scheme on their road the constituent will most likely feel heard and understood after the conversation.

When the councillor takes these issues up with the appropriate council department they may well get a different reaction. The officer, with a Thinking preference, will not understand. They will see the councillor trying to influence the established policies. In relation to the housing question there will be a sense that the councillor is trying to push this person's case and influence the agreed decision making process. In terms of the traffic calming scheme the officer will be able to quote scientific data that 'proves' the traffic scheme is in the best interests of everyone. Councillor and officer are seeing the world in entirely different ways.

In the same way that councillors outnumber the UK population in their preference for Thinking over Feeling – 67 per cent of councillors with a Thinking preference compared to only 46 per cent of the UK population – managers outnumber councillors on 85 per cent.

The effect on officer-councillor relations is interesting because they come from different legitimacies. Councillors speak from a position of representing people in the community, which puts faith in people's opinions and feelings, whereas officers speak from a professional or expert position that puts faith in objective facts.

implications

The Thinking preference can come across as unsympathetic and critical of others' views. The Feeling preference can appear as illogical and willing to agree with others too quickly and settle for compromise. The Thinking preference needs the Feeling preference to remind them of the effects their decisions have on people and how appreciation and points of agreement are important components of mutually beneficial relationships. Feeling types need to learn from the Thinking types how to include reasons and a rationale for their ideas and maintain a certain objectivity at times in the decision making process.

The Thinking person may well find the Feeling person illogical and overly emotional, while the thinking person can come across as insensitive and rather critical. But the two types can complement each other by the Feeling person helping the Thinker get in touch with their feelings, to seek harmony and empathy and reconciliation and mediation. On the other hand, the Feeler needs to learn how to be tough from the Thinker and how to analyse the costs and the benefits in a more objective fashion.

feeling preference

Sarah Content describes some of the characteristics of the Feeling dimension of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator: 'As an elected leader with this type of personality you will rarely forget the people who put you there and they will always be your main concern in any decision as will councillors or staff within your organisation. Others really appreciate that and feel cared about. It gains respect. It also means that consultation is effective and meaningful and then you feel that decisions being taken truly reflect what is desired or required. It means that people see you as approachable and human so, even if you cannot solve a problem, people appreciate that you have tried and that you care.

It is really tough when you have to make decisions that you know are going to upset people. It can be emotionally exhausting and one tends to get tired very quickly because of the emotional pressure that being an elected councillor, let alone leader, can cause. One tends to feel slighted or take criticism to heart when it may bounce off others.

Try not to take criticism or some of the nastier pieces of politics seriously or personally. Develop a harder exterior shell without losing who you are. Try to ensure that you give yourself proper 'me' time for at least 15 minutes each day and turn your phones and computers off at least once every week and catch your breath – the world will not end if you do although you may feel as if it will!

thinking preference

'You need to know the team can deliver the plan. You want to be fair and allow everyone to contribute but need to take tough decisions and be critical. This could alienate councillors of the team and you may not see the full impact on people.'

Mahroof Hussain

'People, resources and the correct tools accomplish the goals...you have to be able to separate the person from the task and have the ability to be a critical friend. You can overlook the human impact of decisions, and it's sometimes difficult to put yourself into the mind-set of a Feeling person so you need to adapt messages and strategies to win hearts as well as minds. Again, balance your own style with others who have different strengths.'

Paul Buchanan

close down or open up?

‘Keep an open mind about new ideas that can be included in the plan.’

Mahroof Hussain

<p>judging preference You prefer a clear plan of action with defined outcomes, clear goals You like to have time-frames and adopt a structured organised approach You prefer things to be planned and scheduled with no surprises You like to make an early start on projects and for decisions to be made and things brought to closure</p>	<p>J or P Judging or Perceiving How we deal with the external environment and live our lives</p>	<p>perceiving preference You prefer open-ended plans with flexibility and options You like to have opportunities to gather more information and to adjust plans as the process continues You are open-minded and willing to trust in the process You prefer to allow things to emerge, continue gather information and tend to be pressure-prompted</p>
<p>judging %</p>	<p>who</p>	<p>perceiving %</p>
<p>56%</p>	<p>councillors</p>	<p>44%</p>
<p>58%</p>	<p>UK Population</p>	<p>42%</p>
<p>64%</p>	<p>Managers</p>	<p>36%</p>

The UK population and councillors are relatively well aligned in terms of the proportions of Judging and perceiving preferences. Managers as a group, have a tendency to be more systematic, structured and organised, as one would expect from their roles and responsibilities with organisations. Some

conflicts can occur when officers want to tie you down to making a specific decision before you think it necessary.

Major differences between the Judging and Perceiving preferences occur when the two types are working together on a joint endeavour – a

project team for example. The Judging person will want plans and time frames and surety that things are being done. They will want everything to be done in advance of deadlines. The Perceiving person will want things to be more open ended and flexible and will be energised by working right up to deadlines and feel 'micro-managed' if they get too constrained by structure and plans.

scenarios

the project-planning meeting

Councillors with a preference for Judging will be energised and quite focused at a project-planning meeting. They will see the necessity for such a meeting feeling that it's both valid and useful. The more structured and organised both the meeting and the resulting plan, the better.

Those with a preference for Perceiving will show considerable antipathy to the meeting. Indeed they might not show up on time and even question the rationale for having a project planning meeting in the first place. They will be relatively uninterested and unenthusiastic in the meeting and in developing the plan. The more flexible and open-ended and provisional the plan is the happier they will be. The more structured the plan, the more lacking in ownership.

implications

The Judging preference can come across as too rigid and inflexible, the Perceiving preference as too disorganised and irresponsible. The important aim is for both preferences to strive towards adaptability and structure, while making room for more information gathering but not totally at the expense of completing the task.

Judging people can appear over-controlling by being too structured, organised and needing to close everything down. On the other hand, Perceiving people can appear too flexible and adaptable, in their behaviour and ideas. The important thing is for Judging people to allow some flexibility when working with people of a

Perceiving preference when it comes to meetings, planning and structuring workload. Likewise the Judging preference does need some planning and structure and some clear decision-making process.

using the judging preference

'You have increased confidence in the knowledge that things are in place and planned for. An ability to organise resources is necessary to deliver outcomes and so is good time management. Confidence can be undermined when there is a lack of clarity about the future. This approach is potentially less flexible and less adaptive to changing circumstances, thereby missing opportunities. So you need to be more prepared to back one's instincts occasionally. Review plans and goals frequently, and be prepared to accept changes to them to reflect the current circumstances.'

Tony Jackson

'Time and financial management are very important to local government organisations as they need to meet any performance management, audit, Treasury or Government timescales and of course public accountability. So, by ensuring that projects are well mapped out, timetabled, SMART and within a fixed budget, it means that one can quickly see when things might be going wrong and can deal with issues before they become major problems affecting the whole project. It helps with budgeting and forward planning, meeting priorities. Everyone knows where they stand and what is expected of them and why and by when. Then it is up to them to ensure they deliver accordingly.'

One must always accept that the best-laid plans can go wrong and one must ensure that there is flexibility built into any project. It can be irksome for everyone when, right at the beginning of a project one is asking for information and details that others have not even considered...being forward thinking and planning mean at times you are so far ahead of everyone else that you have lost them. As leader you need to take most people with you in order to achieve. Ensure that you can have as much information available at the time, and make clear to others right at the beginning why. Explain in detail if necessary to take people with you.

But 'Be Flexible' – I think that is actually the key.'

Sarah Content

using the perceiving preference

'You have flexibility. It encourages and allows input from others and therefore more likely to generate enthusiasm. However it can lead to too much ambiguity and therefore not enough clarity and detail for some people. So you need to seek opposing views. They too may have merit, and help refine your own view.'

Councillor Brendan Jameson, Leader, South Lakeland District Council

'You are not constrained by your own self-set timescales – you can amend and adapt. Though this can sometimes be seen as indecisive. You'll need to make clear statements without caveats. Be willing to stick to a plan even if you know it needs to be changed. Perception and reality often get blurred and being seen to stick to your guns can be more important than you realise.'

Paul Buchanan

'This leads to a more flexible approach and the ability to amend as circumstances and events change. One could change course too easily. But always have a Plan B with more than one option available on it!'

Paul Crossley

3

Grouping the MBTI® types into four broad categories, we have four types of personality in all organisations who will exhibit significant differences in their behaviour. Taking the E-I and S-N dimensions we have:

- Thoughtful Realists (IS) concerned with practicalities; they learn pragmatically and by reading and observing; they focus their change efforts on deciding what should be kept and what needs changing; and their motto is 'if it isn't broke don't fix it'.
- 'Action-Oriented Realists' (ES) concerned with actions; they learn actively and by experimentation; they focus their change efforts on making things better; and their motto would be 'Let's just do it'.
- 'Thoughtful Innovators' (IN) concerned with thoughts, ideas, concepts; they learn conceptually by reading, listening and making connections; they focus their change efforts on generating new ideas and theories; and their motto would be 'Let's think ahead'.
- 'Action-orientated Innovators' (EN) concerned with new ways of doing things; they learn creatively and with others; they focus their change efforts on putting new ideas into practice; and their motto would be 'Let's change it'.

Organisations need all four types and all four types can complement each other. However, there is also the possibility of the types coming into conflict. Using the type indicator and the descriptions you can decide what you are and how you might complement or come into conflict with other councillors of your team.

thoughtful realists

Their motto would be something like 'If it aint broke don't fix it!'

Their focus is on practical considerations and continuity

They want to see the difference between what should be preserved and what could be changed

They are concerned with what needs to be kept

They hate brainstorming, being rushed, empty promises

They can irritates others by wanting to take their time over things; looking into the detail; and being unwilling to embrace change for change's sake

You can help them by ensuring that something stays the same; giving them plenty of time to adjust; and giving them relevant things to read and think about

action oriented realists

Their motto would be something like 'Let's just do it!'

Their focus is on practical actions, performance enhancement and results

They want to get things to run more effectively and efficiently

They are concerned with improving results

They hate long winded reviews, theoretical discourse, and long emails

They can irritate others by starting without thinking; ignoring interpersonal niceties; and bulldozing things through

You can help them by giving them some practical first steps to get on with; establishing clear targets for them; and setting a focussed direction

thoughtful innovators

Their motto would be something like 'Let's think ahead!'

Their focus is on thoughts, ideals and vision

They want to develop an internal vision of the future which 'stacks up'

They are concerned with new ideas and theories about what needs doing

They hate instruction manuals, training courses, things that don't make sense

They can irritate others by taking too much time to think things through; wanting to know how everything fits together; and planning at the expense of doing

You can help them by ensuring that the big picture makes sense; giving them time and space to think things through; and making sure there's room for new ideas and strategies

action oriented innovators

Their motto would be something like 'Let's change it!'

Their focus is on systems, relationships and change

They want to talk with others, be creative and try something different

They are concerned with putting new ideas into practice

They hate small chunks of disconnected work; long periods of reflection; repetition; and lack of vision

They can irritate others by wanting to change things quickly; moving from one initiative to another; and having too much enthusiasm for change rather than consolidation

You can help them by allowing them to take charge of a significant area of work; talking things through with them enthusiastically; and tapping into their creativity

	sensing	intuition
introvert	<i>thoughtful realists</i> councillors 18% UK Population 39% Managers 21%	<i>thoughtful innovators</i> councillors 14% UK Population 9% Managers 19%
extravert	<i>action oriented realists</i> councillors 32% UK Population 37% Managers 27%	<i>action oriented innovators</i> councillors 36% UK Population 15% Managers 33%

A major difference emerged between the population, 39 per cent of whom are relatively 'conservative' with a small c and who really do need to know why any change is being proposed – compared to only 18 per cent of councillors – and councillors, 36 per cent of whom seem to embrace change and want to progress things quickly – compared to only 15 per cent of the population. While there is a preference for the public at large not to want change for the sake of change, the leading councillor population seem to be saying that that is their primary purpose. Not necessarily change for change's sake, but that they have been elected on a platform for change and are willing to progress their manifesto on that account.

Perhaps voters elect people who say they want to change things but, when it actually comes down to it, are the first to complain.

The table below highlights some of the things that you may wish to do to get those people on board who are in a different quadrant to you.

thoughtful realists

- Realistic reasons for the changes
- Realistic data to support the reasons
- Realistic goals and timescales
- An understanding of 'Why?'
- A well thought out plan
- Complete information about what's going on
- An understanding of 'How?'
- Opportunity to develop practical plans & structures
- Being able to use their experience to assist
- Loyalty from others – above and below
- Some reassurance, understanding and support
- Knowing what's expected of them
- Ongoing evaluation of progress
- Time and space of their own

action oriented realists

- To know the who, what, when, where and why?
- To understand the purpose of the change
- Opportunities to quickly plan what actions are necessary and be able to take them
- Information and the opportunity to talk about it
- Commitment and accountability from everyone
- To have access to the necessary resources
- Opportunities to take action
- To just do it!
- Support if necessary
- Opportunities to talk with like-minded people
- Everyone pulling together in the same focussed direction
- Not to get too bogged down in the bureaucracy

thoughtful innovators

To understand the bigger picture & where it all fits together

Independence

To evaluate the situation by their own standards

Time and space

Not being pushed

A part to play in getting the ideas in place, being in on the planning

Opportunities to critique the plans

Acceptance of their personal style

Support if necessary

Thought, action, closure

action oriented innovators

To have their analysis and solutions heard

To move it all forward

To stay positive about the future

Opportunities to talk about their ideas for the changes

Opportunities to generate further possibilities

A sense of options, possibilities, movement

Contact with and inspiration to and from others

Have their insights and values listened to and validated

An opportunity to engage and participate

Being included in the process

action orientated innovator

'The great thing about being an Action Oriented Innovator is the willingness to challenge the status quo and to act in a "constructively discontent" manner. We can generate the ideas and concepts quickly to move things forward. We think differently and positively always encouraging others to do their best. Key words for us would be enthusiasm, energy, decisiveness, calculated risk taker, visionary agents of change. We like to lead from the front, be clear in what needs to be achieved and make the changes. We don't like people who take their time or who do not want to move with the ideas. We recognise that things change, things need to change. Let's embrace it – its not so scary — but we need to make it work for our communities.

We must be wary of getting the change wrong – its too late once its up and running. Ideas can be formulated too quickly and might consequently be flawed. Occasionally we move at a pace that is too fast for other councillors of the team, causing frustration and a feeling of alienation.

We need to ensure we have fully evaluated the risks associated with the change before we start and involve others in formulating the ideas. We need to be more patient, and willing to allow others time to make an input. Helping people to make the same journey, rather than feeling that they are being dragged along.'

thoughtful innovator

'Being Thoughtful Innovators means that by forward planning we can envisage the end result before needing to do something. It saves time if it is not going to work. It means we can inspire as we can see the end result. When needing to bring about culture change within an organisation or group, we can bring the ideas and examples and allow the big picture thinkers to run with it and inspire those who have never thought that things need to change – we'll help them see the benefits of change rather than the negativity of change, which they might otherwise focus on. We create debate which may never have been had before. It helps make people think outside of the box.

It does mean doing some thinking and some research. If we don't understand something we can very quickly lose interest or be seen as pedantic or picky for constantly asking questions especially, the who, how, why, what, where and by when ones when others are just wanting to get on with it. However we mustn't inundate others with too much creativity and ideas in one go, we need to pace ourselves and take people with us slowly. You may have lots of ideas for change for the better but others need to be persuaded. So try not to get too frustrated with the big picture types, they can be very helpful without realising it by giving you an idea that you know with tweaking and planning can work.'

action orientated realist

'Being an Action Oriented Realist means having the ability to cut through the cr** know when you are conned by a so called expert . Though we do need to trust others to just get on with it without being always on their case. We can get irritated easily when we have "got it" and others haven't which can be negative and demotivating for them. You can miss some stuff by being impatient. In that sense you need to give yourself time for reflection and others time to catch up! Once we're up and running there's no stopping us – so it's important to ensure that you've set off in the right direction in the first place. We prefer to focus on results and improvements rather than this blue sky thinking. We're quite happy to get done what we can see needs to be done and let others sit around and navel gaze. We bring energy, action and direction to the project'

thoughtful realist

'We Thoughtful Realists are sometimes accused of not wanting change. Actually we've very much in favour of improving everyone's lot – just not change for changes sake. Indeed we bring a lot of thought to the process of change and often are able to question and challenge the steps during the change process – all with a view to making the process more efficient and effective. Sometimes we're accused of being slow but actually we think we're more in tune with the populace who don't like dramatic revolutionary change but are more equipped for step change'

Local politicians differ as a group in a number of significant ways from the UK populations and local government managers. This report has highlighted a number of them and shown where conflicts or misunderstandings might happen. A number of scenarios have described real life experiences drawn from a cross section of councillors, with suggested ways of mitigating some of the potential pitfalls.

Our personalities contribute to who we are, how we think and how we behave. An awareness of who we are and how we act are important components in becoming as influential and effective as we can be.

Knowledge of others' personality types is also essential if you want to get your message across in a way that can be heard.

Mike Green
June 2007

'Recognising your own weaknesses is a strength. Be honest with yourself; it allows you to be honest with others. Learn to treat opposing views on their merit. Always be prepared to adapt your own views, and accept the views of others. Never be afraid to ask, when you do not know. The person who does not ask in order to avoid appearing a fool remains ignorant. The person who appears foolish by asking, becomes wiser.

Brendan Jameson
leader
South Lakeland District Council

I would like to thank the following people who were involved in the Politicians and Personality project.

Judi Billing, Richard Masters and Pascoe Sawyers from the IDeA contributed ideas, effort, inspiration and funding.

Richard McBain of Henley Management College helped develop the research methodology and 'crunched the numbers' for the statistics.

Councillors Paul Buchanan, deputy leader, Somerset County Council; Sarah Content, leader, West Wiltshire District Council; Paul Crossley, leader, Bath and North East Somerset Council; Tony Jackson, leader, East Herts District Council; Brendan Jameson, leader, South Lakeland District Council; Clyde Loakes, leader, Waltham Forest Council; Mahroof Hussain, cabinet member, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council; and Dorothy Thornhill, elected mayor, Watford Borough Council, gave freely of their time to discuss the various characteristics of the different personality types.

Mhairi Cameron, Andrew Holder and Sue Roberts co-facilitated the personal leadership module of the Leadership Academy where the original Myers Briggs Type Indicator assessments were made.

research

The research on politicians and personality was conducted by Mike Green (Transitional Space) and Richard McBain (Henley Management College) in 2006.

Research on public sector managers was conducted by Ashridge Business School and written up in Training Journal 2005: Curd, J., Dent, F., and Carr, M, 'Development Challenges: Looking at the Future', Training Journal, pp 36–39, January 2005.

In 1996 OPP commissioned the Office of National Statistics to collect data, including responses to the MBTI Step I questionnaire, from a representative sample of the UK population. Source OPP Ltd

Myers Briggs Type Indicator

Visit one of the many Internet sites that describe Myers Briggs and read a profile of your type. Reflect on how your personality might impact other types and how their personality complements or comes into conflict with your own.

Myers-Briggs websites:

www.opp.co.uk will be able to put you in touch with a person qualified to administer the MBTI

<http://www.teamtechnology.co.uk/mb-types/mb-types.htm>

www.keirsey.com

bibliography

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Myers Briggs Type Indicator – short version

instructions: circle one of the two words in each pair below as best describing who you are.

reflective	detached	open	practical
sociable	humane	structured	conceptual
specific	gregarious	general	firm
general	deep	practical	involved
sociable	flexible	involved	planned
deep	planned	detached	open
humane	conceptual	reflective	structured
firm	specific	gregarious	flexible

scoring

Count how many times you circled the words sociable or gregarious	E
Count how many times you circled the words reflective or deep	I
Count how many times you circled the words practical or specific	S
Count how many times you circled the words conceptual or general	N
Count how many times you circled the words involved or humane	F
Count how many times you circled the words detached or firm	T
Count how many times you circled the words flexible or open	P
Count how many times you circled the words planned or structured	J

Your score for each letter will range from 0 to 4. The higher score in each pair indicates your type.

Your overall type is: _ _ _ _

the research

Table A2.1

A study of councillors attending the IDeA's Leadership Academy was undertaken in June 2006. All 647 councillors who attended the programme between 2003 and 2006 formed the total population. Each councillor completed the MBTI Step 1 European English 1998 version under normal test conditions and received a score that categorised them into one of 16 different 'types'.

descriptive analysis

Table A2.1 provides details of the number and percentage of councillors in each of the 16 categories or Types.

The modal (most common) types are: ESTJ (17.9%), followed by ENTP (11.9%), ENFP (11.1%), ISTJ (10.0) and ENTJ (7.7%).

comparative analysis

The analysis of the data compares the scores of the councillor population (n = 647) with the scores from a study of the UK population (n = 1634) and from a study of MBTI scores of European managers (Ashridge, 2005). The latter study included data on UK managers (n = 4575) and on public sector managers (n = 1755) in the UK, and comparisons were made with these groups. Two types of analysis were undertaken.

The first used a method employed in the Ashridge (2005) study, which calculated a 'self-selection ratio' (SSR). This calculates whether a certain type is more or less likely to self-select into an area than would be expected. A score greater than 1 means that more of that type than would be expected are found in this area and scores less than 1 show an under-representation of the type (Carr et al, 2005). Table 3 shows the SSRs for a comparison of the councillor population data with the UK population (column 2), UK managerial population (column 3) and UK public sector managerial population (column 4). The UK managerial population and UK public sector managerial population are also compared (column 5)

MBTI type	percentage of sample	number/ frequency
ISTJ	10.0	65
ISFJ	3.2	21
INFJ	0.8	5
INTJ	6.8	44
ISTP	3.4	22
ISFP	1.2	8
INFP	3.2	21
INTP	3.2	21
ESTP	5.9	38
ESFP	4.2	27
ENFP	11.1	72
ENTP	11.9	77
ESTJ	17.9	116
ESFJ	4.5	29
ENFJ	4.8	31
ENTJ	7.7	50
Total	99.8	647

<i>column 1</i>	<i>column 2</i>	<i>column 3</i>	<i>column 4</i>	<i>column 5</i>
MBTI type	SSR of sample compared to UK Population	SSR of sample compared to UK Managerial Population	SSR of sample compared to UK Public Sector Managers	SSR of UK Managerial Population compared to UK Population
ISTJ	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.2
ISFJ	0.3	1.9	1.5	0.2
INFJ	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.8
INTJ	4.9	0.7	0.6	6.5
ISTP	0.5	0.9	0.8	0.7
ISFP	0.2	1.8	1.4	0.2
INFP	1.0	2.0	1.9	0.6
INTP	1.4	0.4	0.4	2.8
ESTP	1.0	1.2	1.5	0.9
ESFP	0.5	3.8	3.5	0.1
ENFP	1.8	2.9	2.9	0.6
ENTP	4.3	1.0	1.1	3.8
ESTJ	1.7	1.0	1.1	1.8
ESFJ	0.4	3.8	1.7	0.2
ENFJ	1.7	2.9	2.1	0.7
ENTJ	2.7	1.0	0.6	4.7

Table A2.2
Current study,
Ashridge 2005
and OPP 1998

Table A2.2 shows that:

- In comparison to the UK population, the councillor population has more INTJs, INTPs, ENTPs, ENTJs, ENFPs, ENFJs and ESTJs and fewer ISFPs ISFJs, INFJs, ISTPs and ESFJs than would be expected
- In comparison to the UK managerial population, the councillor population has more ISFJs, ISFPs, INFPs, ESFJs, ESFPs, ENFPs, and ENFJs, and fewer ISTJs, INTJs, INTPs and INFJs than would be expected
- In comparison to the UK public sector manager population, the councillor population has more ESFPs, ENFPs ENFJs, and fewer INTPs, and INFJs than would be expected
- A comparison of the differences between the councillor population and the UK population, UK managers and UK public sector managers, suggests that the councillor population is most similar to the latter and most different from the UK population

The second type of analysis undertaken on the data was a series of chi-square tests to compare the councillors with the UK population, UK managers and UK public sector managers.

The tests indicated that the results from the first analysis highlighted some significant and substantial differences (see Note 3)

discussion

The chi-square tests show that the MBTI type scores for the councillor population are significantly different from those that could have been expected from the frequencies found in the UK population as a whole, and in the UK manager and UK public sector manager populations, as identified from previous studies (Ashridge and OPP). The SSR scores show which types are more common, or less common than could have been expected. The councillor population seems to be most similar to the UK public sector manager

group, and most different from the UK population as a whole. This analysis indicates that the key areas of difference in the councillor population from the 3 other groups are:

- 1 The greater prevalence of INTJs, INTPs, ENTPs, ENTJs, ENFPs, ENFJs and ESTJs than in the UK population, and more ISFJs, ISFPs, ESFPs, ESFJs, INFPs, ENFPs and ENFJs than in the UK managerial and UK public sector manager populations.
- 2 Fewer ISFPs ISFJs, ISTPs, INFJs, ESFPs and ESFJs than would be expected in the UK population, and fewer ISTJs, INTJs, INTPs and INFJs than would be expected in either managerial population.
- 3 When you compare the differences between the UK population and the UK managers with the differences between the UK population and councillors they have a similar pattern apart from ENFP and ENFJ where councillors are more and managers are less. Likewise they are under-represented on ISTJ whereas managers are somewhat over-represented.
- 4 When looking at the Quadrants, councillors are over-represented in Quadrants 2 and 4 compared to the UK population and councillors are over-represented in Quadrant 4 compared to UK managers.
- 5 When we look at the Function pairs, councillors are over-represented in Columns 3 and (especially) 4 compared to the UK population and councillors are over-represented in Columns 2 and 3 compared to UK managers
- 6 When looking at Temperaments, councillors are over-represented in Columns 3 and (especially) 4 compared to the UK population and councillors are over-represented in Column 3 compared to UK managers

ISTJ Planner Inspector councillors 10.0% Uk Population 13.7% Managers 14.4%	ISFJ Protector Supporter councillors 3.2% Uk Population 12.7% Managers 1.7%	INFJ Foreseer Developer councillors 0.8% Uk Population 1.7% Managers 1.2%	INTJ Conceptualiser Director councillors 6.8% Uk Population 1.4% Managers 9.2%
ISTP Analyser Operator councillors 3.4% Uk Population 6.4% Managers 4.0%	ISFP Composer producer councillors 1.2% Uk Population 6.1% Managers 0.7%	INFP Harmoniser Clarifier councillors 3.2% Uk Population 3.2% Managers 1.6%	INTP Designer Theoriser councillors 3.2% Uk Population 2.4% Managers 8%
ESTP Promoter Executor councillors 5.9% Uk Population 5.8% Managers 4.7%	ESFP Motivator Presenter councillors 4.2% Uk Population 8.7% Managers 1.1%	ENFP Discoverer Advocate councillors 11.1% Uk Population 6.3% Managers 3.9%	ENTP Explorer Inventor councillors 11.9% Uk Population 2.8% Managers 12.2%
ESTJ Implementer Supervisor councillors 17.9% Uk Population 10.4% Managers 17.9%	ESFJ Facilitator caretaker councillors 4.5% Uk Population 12.6% Managers 2.5%	ENFJ Envisioner Mentor councillors 4.8% Uk Population 2.8% Managers 2.2%	ENTJ Strategist Mobiliser councillors 7.7% Uk Population 2.9% Managers 14.7%

table A2.3 MBTI

Table showing distribution of all three populations across the sixteen types councillor population (n = 647)

UK population (n = 1634)

UK managers (n = 4575)

understanding the patterns

1 the greater prevalence of INTJs, INTPs, ENTPs, ENTJs, ENFPs, ENFJs and ESTJs than in the UK population.

The ESTJ type, of all the Sensing types, is the one most closely associated with leadership with a down to earth approach; likes setting clear measurable targets; and seeks leadership directly and takes charge quickly.

The six types on the intuitive side all have Intuition in common. The Intuition preference is a preference for seeking the bigger picture and future possibility. They are more likely to want to build towards a future state and will think about these things strategically and with a future focus. They will tend to pick up on trends and patterns more.

The four NT types, sometimes called the Rationalists, tend to focus their attention on broad concepts and issues and are quite at home with idealistic, complex structures. They tend to focus on the more distant global macro-issues. They are somewhat visionary and innovative in finding and solving new problems and creating new goals.

The two NF types, sometimes called the Idealists, will look towards longer-term human goals, contributing to people's well-being, often in a global sense, pushing for adherence to a set of values or guiding principles.

2 More ISFJs, ISFPs, ESFPs, ESFJs, INFPs, ENFPs and ENFJs than in the UK managerial and UK public sector manager populations

This view suggests that councillors fall somewhere in between UK managers and the UK population on the Feeling function:

	thinking	feeling
leading councillors	67%	33%
UK population	46%	54%
UK managers	85%	15%

In that sense councillors could act as a bridge between the more logical, analytical, 'business case' driven world of managers and the 54 per cent of people in the population who are more concerned with the impact decisions have on people.

However it also means there is the potential for conflict between councillors and managers as their approach to problem solving and decision-making and communication will be different.

SFs and NFs will contribute through customer service and ideals worth striving for as opposed to theoretical concepts; have as goals helping others and empowerment as opposed to mastery; have questions about who will it affect and how will it be communicated rather than what is the most relevant strategy. NF's are more likely to experience conflict when their values are ignored or crossed.

Clearly values and impact on people are much more important to a larger group of councillors than managers.

3 Fewer ISFPs ISFJs, ISTPs, INFJs, ESFPs and ESFJs than would be expected in the UK population

In the same way that managers have less of an interest in values and the impact on people of their decisions leading councillors appear to have less of an interest in the immediate impact of day-to-day human relations and are more interested in longer-term human goals. Whether there is a correlation between 'ordinary' councillors having ongoing casework as a significant part of their role compared to the more strategically minded 'leading' councillors is an avenue for further enquiry.

4 Fewer ISTJs, INTJs, INTPs and INFJs than would be expected in either managerial population

This could be a function of the need for councillors to be more Extravert and quietly organised people don't necessarily put themselves forward for

upfront leadership positions.

5 When you compare the differences between the UK population and the UK managers with the differences between the UK population and councillors they have a similar pattern apart from ENFP and ENFJ, where councillors are more and managers are less. Likewise they are under-represented on ISTJ whereas managers are somewhat over-represented. Although 10 per cent of the councillor population is ISTJ, it is the only type that statistically has fewer than the UK population and managers. This type is an important leadership type – delivering leadership through:

- thoroughness and prudent planning
- careful structures
- clear targets and systems
- respecting traditional approaches
- building on reliable, consistent performance.

It can be seen to be maintaining or improving the status quo rather than making a significant difference and impact in the community. It is more about managing the detail of complexity rather than leading change.

As mentioned earlier the ENFs stand out as being the two types where statistically councillors have significant more of them than either UK population or managers.

Key attributes of these two types are their ability to marry the strategic with the diplomatic:

‘I count the days with Gandhi the most fruitful of my life. No other experience was as inspiring and as meaningful and as lasting. No other so shook me out of the rut of banal existence and opened my ordinary mind and spirit.’ William Shirer

	sensing	intuition
introvert	<i>thoughtful realists</i> councillors 18% UK Population 39% Managers 24%	<i>thoughtful innovators</i> councillors 14% UK Population 9% Managers 19%
extravert	<i>action oriented realists</i> councillors 32% UK Population 37% Managers 27%	<i>action oriented innovators</i> councillors 36% UK Population 15% Managers 30%

table A2.4

6 When looking at the Quadrants, councillors are over-represented in Quadrants 2 (IN) and 4 (EN) compared to the UK population and councillors are over-represented in Quadrant 4 compared to UK managers.

This suggests that councillors, like UK managers, are more likely to be thinking ‘bigger picture’ are future focused and more likely to be Extravert in doing that.

7 Looking at the IS and EN quadrants (Table A2.4), what is interesting is that the councillor population and UK population are almost mirror images of each other.

Where there is a preference for the public at large not to want to change things just for the sake of change the leading councillor population seem to be saying that that is their primary purpose! Not necessarily change for change's sake, but more that they have been elected on a platform for change and are willing to progress their manifesto on that account. Of course maybe the population has elected those people who say they want to change things but when it actually comes to their doing it they are the first people to complain.

8 When looking at the Function pairs councillors are over-represented in Columns 3 (NF) and (especially) 4 (NT) compared to UK population and councillors are over-represented in Columns 2 (SF) and 3 (NF) compared to UK managers.

This is covered in the earlier analysis point 6 and Point 2 above.

9 When looking at Temperaments, councillors are over-represented in Columns 3 (NF) and (especially) 4 (NT) compared to UK population and councillors are over-represented in Column 3 (NF) compared to UK managers.

This is covered in the earlier analysis point 6 and Point 2 above.

The group of councillors who attended the Leadership Academy programme have MBTI type scores significantly different from those that would have been expected from the frequencies found in the UK population as a whole, and in the UK manager and UK public sector manager populations, as identified from previous studies.

As a group, when interacting with the UK population the major differences are in accessing and trusting where they get their data from and how they use it (S-N); and in their attitudes to initiating and managing change.

As a group, when interacting with the UK managers the major differences are in the Thinking-Feeling function.

The underlying reasons and motivations for why councillors have self-selected in this way is one possible avenue for further research as is an investigation of specific types ENFP, ENFJ and ENTP.

note 1 UK population

In 1996, OPP commissioned the Office of National Statistics to collect data, including responses to the MBTI Step I questionnaire, from a representative sample of the UK population. The sample consisted of 1,634 people living in the United Kingdom. 748 (46 per cent) were male and 865 (54 per cent) female. 94 per cent of the sample were white and 6 per cent came from other ethnic groups. Ages ranged from 16 to 65 years with 50 per cent aged between 30 and 50. The sample included people of all educational levels. 69 per cent were currently employed, with 40 per cent at supervisory/first level management or above. A wide range of industry sectors was represented. Source OPP Ltd

note 2 manager population

Curd, J., Dent, F., and Carr, M, 'Development Challenges: Looking at the Future', Training Journal, pp 36–39, January 2005.

note 3 second analysis Chi-square tests

A one sample 'goodness of fit' chi-square test between the X sample observed frequencies and the frequencies that could have been expected had the UK population frequencies (H_0) been found produced a χ^2 (15 df) = 585.99, which is statistically significant a $p < .05$. The effect size, 'w', of this statistic is 0.95, which is greater than 0.5 and therefore may be considered large (Cohen, 1988).

A comparison with the frequencies that could have been expected using UK managerial population frequencies produced a χ^2 (15 df) = 250.41, which is statistically significant a $p < .05$, and a large effect size, 'w' of 0.62.

A comparison with the frequencies that could have been expected using the UK public sector managerial population frequencies produced a χ^2 (15 df) = 244.75, which is statistically significant a $p < .05$, and a large effect size, 'w' of 0.62.

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