

## The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Assessment: An Overview

### **WHAT IS THE MBTI?**

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment is a psychological tool used to help people understand personality preferences with respect to:

- How they channel their energy
- How they perceive and gather information
- How they make decisions
- Whether they prefer to be planned and decisive or spontaneous and flexible

The tool is structured as a **questionnaire** that asks questions about your preferences with respect to each of the scales listed above. The **output** of the MBTI is a four-letter personality "type." There are 16 different types, each of which represents a unique combination of the four preferences.

The MBTI is based upon the work of C.G. Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist who developed one of the most comprehensive theories explaining human personality. His work was popularized by Katharine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, who translated Jung's theory of personality types into a format more practical and useful in people's lives.

OKA built its reputation by presenting the MBTI assessment as a tool to unlock the complexities of communication, team dynamics, decision making and leadership. We are a leading "train the trainer" organization for those conducting MBTI workshops – in fact, OKA has qualified over 13,000 people over the last 30 years. Additionally, we teach advanced workshops on type-related topics several times a year, both at OKA and at client sites.

### **PURPOSES SERVED BY THE MBTI**

#### **The MBTI is:**

- A useful and practical tool for achieving an understanding of the differences of others.
- A way to assess an individual's preferences.
- A positive look at the characteristics that define how we live and work.

#### **The MBTI is not:**

- A test. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers or types.
- An indicator of abilities, likelihood of success, intelligence, or skills.
- A tool for selecting employees, assigning tasks, or evaluating performance.

### **USING THE MBTI**

OKA has used the MBTI Assessment with organizations across the country, including the Department of Defense, Fortune 500 companies, and government agencies to:

- Help people become aware of their differences, and reduce conflict through the appreciation of those differences.
- Examine decision making and problem solving processes in the organization and with customers and clients.
- Build and facilitate teams, by identifying strengths, weaknesses and blind spots
- Build understanding with respect to the organization's communication patterns, norms and cultures.

### **GETTING STARTED**

The MBTI can only be provided and interpreted by a qualified administrator. Here's how the process works.

- OKA will provide MBTI pre-work materials to a point person on your staff to distribute to participants – completion of the indicator must be voluntary. It takes about 20-30 minutes to complete the assessment.
- OKA "scores" the instrument for each participant, and prepares a confidential report for each.
- OKA conducts a seminar to explain the MBTI, help each participant validate his/her type, and facilitate a dialogue about what the type differences suggest for the organization.