

Leadership and the Attitudes

This article, by Hile Rutledge, is excerpted from Type Talk At Work, by Otto Kroeger, Hile Rutledge and Janet M. Thuesen.

A seldom considered combination of preference pairings that has a tremendous impact on a person's likely leadership behavior is the Attitudes—Extraversion or Introversion paired with Judging or Perceiving. These preferences indicate the way in which and the frequency with which individuals and the team itself operate in the outer world. This outer world is the place of action, people, places, things, discussion and engagement where teams most often engage, so attitude pairings can tell us a lot about a team's behavior that will both create and inhibit effectiveness on both a group and individual levels.

EJ – ESTJ, ESFJ, ENFJ & ENTJ

Energized by the outer world, where they push for closure and control

IJ – ISTJ, ISFJ, INFJ & INTJ

Drained by the outer world, but when they are there, they push for closure and control

EP – ESTP, ESFP, ENFP & ENTP

Energized by the outer world, where they adapt and stay open to experience

IP – ISTP, ISFP, INFP & INTP

Drained by the outer world, and when they are there, they adapt and stay open to experience

Extraverted-Judgers -- The Natural Influencers

- Energized by and driven to order, schedule and control the outer world of people, places, things and events
- Sound confident, directive and sure (even when not)
- Gregarious and quick to engage, disclose and speak
- Quick with opinions and judgments—decisive

Research continually shows that the four Extraverted-Judging types (ESTJ, ESFJ, ENFJ, and ENTJ) tend to be the most overachieving of all types and the most successful at accomplishing anything to which they devote their energies, including attaining leadership positions. Extraverted-Judgers emit an aura of self-confidence, capability, competency, and assurance so that even when they are uncertain or wrong, they seem decisive and right. Isabel Briggs Myers found that Extraverted-Judgers have an oversupply of what she called “stamina” that gives them an edge in life toward success. Because of this stamina, when something does go wrong for EJs, one of their starting assumptions is that someone else caused it.

This tendency to externalize their reactions allows them to keep on moving and come out a winner, which gives them more confidence and tends to leave others around them somewhere between intimidated and wanting to follow them. And it is just the two preferences -- Extraversion and Judging, that have done that. Other preferences -- for Sensing or iNtuition and for Thinking or Feeling -- will fine-tune the effect that an EJ has on the world, but the preference for Extraversion and Judging alone will give an individual a boost toward success in leadership roles and will tend to draw followers.

Introverted-Judgers -- Strong, Silent Types

- Energized and compelled by the inner-world of ideas, thoughts and concepts, so often contemplative, reserved and contained.
- Seemingly slow or tentative in coming into the outer world of people, places and things, but when engaged externally, they structure, organize and control the world around them
- Slow to engage, but engagement can bring opinions, judgment and closure

Introverts who prefer Judging (ISTJ, ISFJ, INFJ, and INTJ) -- much like their EJ brethren -- lead with their judgments, so behaviorally they appear focused, decisive, closure-driven, directive, and overtly controlling. As Introverts, however, they are not drawn to the outer world of people, places, things, and action, but rather to their inner worlds of reflection, ideas, and concepts.

IJs are common leadership types and the list of the strengths they bring to leadership roles is long. It is this type combination that we know stereotypically as the pillar of strength or the strong, silent type, and we collectively appreciate the focus and reflection their introversion brings to our teams and organizations. But IJs can pay for their lack of Extraversion with the criticism from others that they are slow to engage and frequently appear disconnected, uninterested, or even arrogant. Introverted-Judgers, unlike their Extraverted counterparts, can seem indecisive given that the decisions and closure they put out in the outer world may later be revised or changed upon reflection in their own inner world. There is no doubt that Judgers have an advantage in gaining

and appearing successful in leadership roles; a preference for Introversion, however, makes it a mixed bag.

Extraverted-Perceivers -- Energizing Forces

- Energized by and attentive to the outer world of people, places and things
- Tend to observe, adapt and stay open to the outer world, rather than schedule or control it
- Gregarious and quick to engage, disclose and speak
- Quick with options, questions, ideas and initiatives
- Flexible and spontaneous
- May have leadership role by reacting well and ending up there—rather than having sought or fought for it.

Extraverted-Perceivers (ESTP, ESFP, ENFP, and ENTP), like all Extraverts, are energized by the external world, drawn to interactions with people, things, and events. They will naturally be verbal, engaging, action-oriented leaders, but as Perceivers, they will not be overtly focused on closure, schedules, or order, but rather on flexibility, curiosity, and adaptability. It is this open-endedness that tends to be EP's biggest stumbling block to winning or thriving in positions of leadership, and they are uncommon in leadership ranks.

As leaders, Extraverted-Perceivers are seen as energizing forces for change and creativity, but they frequently are also seen as flighty, indecisive, and chaotic. The popularly held belief -- which for many Extraverted-Perceivers is the truth -- that EPs tend to get overextended with limited results -- is the reason many people with this type combination do not rise within organizations to leadership roles despite the many benefits of Extraverted-Perceiving to such positions of power.

Introverted-Perceivers -- Quiet and Reflective

- Energized and compelled by the inner-world of ideas, thoughts and concepts, so often contemplative, reserved and contained.
- Seemingly slow or tentative in coming into the outer world of people, places and things, but when engaged externally, they tend to observe, adapt and stay open to the outer world, rather than schedule or control it
- Often unassertive source of options, questions, ideas and initiatives
- Sound tentative and open, even when sure and closed
- Likely have leadership role by reacting well and ending up there—rather than having sought or fought for it.

In terms of how successful any given person will be -- on average -- in influencing people or groups, Extraverted-Judgers have the edge followed by the Introverted-Judgers, and then the Extraverted-Perceivers. Unfortunately, research consistently shows that Introverted-Perceivers (ISTP, ISFP, INFP and INTP) -- sharing the benefits of neither Extraversion nor Judging -- have the greatest challenges in achieving success in general and in leadership roles in particular.

Diametrically opposed to the self-confidence, directiveness, and assertiveness of the Extraverted-Judger, Introverted-Perceivers tends to be quiet, reflective, and oriented toward internal values and principles that center and compel them toward more reflection than expressed decision. It is rare for these principles and values to be revealed or given much voice; therefore, IPs often seem mysterious and even inconsistent. Their flexibility, openness, casual, non-hierarchical style is often interpreted (especially in our Extraverted-Judging-dominated systems) as weak and indecisive. The Introverted-Perceiver's natural self-doubt and questioning manner often is seen as unconfident and wavering. Even when Introverted-Perceivers are confident in their conclusions, when they open their mouths to engage with the world, what comes out, most often, is open to change and sounds tentative, wanting, and lacking conviction.

Where Extraverted-Judgers tend to -- upon doing something wrong -- assume that the fault lies elsewhere, Introverted-Perceivers are apt to assume personal responsibility for things, events, and decisions that have nothing to do with them. All these factors contribute to a seeming lack of self-confidence and a diminished ability to influence people and groups in a world more often compelled by and drawn to the EJ's forcefulness, directiveness, and bravado.

An important conclusion

The previous data reveal some troubling trends and some blatant type biases that we collectively hold, and though they do reflect reality in terms of overall trends and typological tendencies, no one's professional or personal capabilities or skill sets are determined by psychological preferences alone. Indeed, nearly everyone has the makings of an effective leader. We've known talented IPs to rise to the top of their organizations, and EJs who have failed spectacularly as leaders. Our point is not that Extraverted-Judgers make better leaders; they merely tend to fit into conventional leadership roles more naturally. Conversely, Introverted-Perceivers will find more hurdles between them and success in most leadership positions, and there will, as a result, be far fewer of them in such spots.