

# Personality-typing Tool to Improve Team-Building <sup>1</sup>

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This article presents a rapid 'do-it-yourself' (DIY) personality-typing methodology to supplement an organization's approach for assessing individuals as potential project managers and team members; as well as enhancing the ability of team leaders to identify the working-style proclivities of existing team members, in order to manage them more effectively.

No matter what the nature of a project may be, it takes effective teamwork to bring it to fruition; and aphorisms -- such as "*There is no "I" in Team*" -- abound, reaffirming that projects are best planned and implemented through collective efforts, rather than by individuals. Nevertheless, teams are comprised of unique individuals; and despite possessing requisite knowledge and skillsets in common, people differ widely from one another. Each individual brings to the team unique pre-dispositions, personality traits, attitudes and perspectives as well as sets of strengths and weaknesses forged from prior experiences. Consequently, **melding disparate individuals into an effective working team requires individuals who can size up other people and interact easily with them, rather than product-oriented leader-managers.**

Although executives and Human Resource administrators in large organizations give lip service to the **team approach** for managing and implementing projects, they often unwittingly undermine this premise on two fronts. **First, they prioritize the organization's functional structure and management over that of the project.** Assigning individuals concurrently to multiple teams and fragmenting & dispersing team members to specialty silos throughout the organization under functional managers violates the 'one master' chain-of-command,<sup>2</sup> **relegating the team leaders to secondary 'follow-up coordinating-management' roles**, as well as having to compete with other managers for the shared resources. **Team cohesiveness is also hampered** by the lack of propinquity to other team members. [*This issue is worthy of a separate discussion.*]

**The second self-defeating issue is that organizations tend to assign or promote their best technical professionals to project managerial positions -- or hire new managers -- based on their technical credentials, rather than people-managerial competence.** Unfortunately, many technical individuals appointed to managerial positions become martinet micromanagers, expecting everyone else to be as eager and industrious as themselves. When others fall short, these managers pick up the slack, striving to retain their workaholic image as '*triple threats*,' ascribing to the adage "*If you want it done right you have to do it yourself.*" Immersing themselves in everything in this mode, such individuals eventually succumb to '*Peter Principle*' mediocracy and crash when confronted with unfamiliar situations; or burn out in the process.

**This is not to say that technical professionals *cannot* be good managers; but rather that people-management requires different skills from subject-matter know-how, and**

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<sup>2</sup> "*No one can serve two masters: Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.*" Matthew 6:24

**personality talents with which all are not equally endowed.** Being outstanding in one area may have warranted recognition of an individual and possible appointment to a leadership/management position, but the role also incurs new burdens he/she may be less suited or prepared to handle.

Instead of valiantly tackling everything themselves when assuming the role of project manager / team leader, they need to accept they are now **primarily responsible for managing other people.** Talents are unequally distributed, and individual possession of pertinent characteristics to manage &/or work in a team mode are attributes to be identified, recognized and exploited. In order to accomplish the organization's objectives, team leaders need to relinquish their prior preeminent technical role and delegate those -- *and related* -- duties to other team members, while concurrently assuming new managerial responsibilities.

**Personality typing is an effective tool, both for those initially appointing project managers and team leaders, as well as an emancipating tool for managers/leaders after appointment.** Judicious timely utilization and administration of personality typing tools can enable leaders (and others) to identify team members more suited -- *and willing, or even eager* -- to handle various assignments; as well as to delegate duties otherwise anathema to themselves. In almost every situation, **manager-member working assignments, on-the-job relationships -- and ultimately improved project performance -- can be facilitated by managers paying more attention to the personality characteristics of their team members.**<sup>3</sup>

Although personality typing was not a component in my career track training, serendipitously I was deeply immersed in an experience utilizing the **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** methodology during a "**Marriage Encounter**" retreat. **MBTI's** systematic categorizing the wide disparity of human behavioral patterns opened my eyes -- *as never before* -- to the fact that many of my redoubled efforts as a team leader/manager were misdirected; as both my former technical duties, and limitations in my new role, could be complemented and enhanced by others strengths.

Since then, I have also been exposed to several other personality-typing tools using different variables, but which tend to produce similar findings. However, **Myers-Briggs** -- which identifies the **16 distinct personality-types** outlined on the following page -- is the most comprehensive.

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<sup>3</sup>*While 'preaching' now, rather than a paragon of virtue, I only came to realize my shortcomings in this regard, and ameliorated my behavior rather belatedly in my career; so -- for what it ' worth -- am passing along the 'lesson learned' for others.* FYI: I pursued **two professional career tracks** concurrently -- in the U.S. military and civilian government working environments; **two diametrically opposed paradigms!** Following initial aptitude & interest testing, throughout my highly-structured Air Force career from Basic Airman to 'Bird' Colonel, in addition to substantive military 'tradecraft' skills training I received formal training in leadership & management at appropriate stages; specifically, **NCO Academy, Squadron Officer School, and Air Command & Staff College.** On the other hand, while climbing the civilian career ladder -- *initially the Civil Service, but culminating in the hybrid Foreign Service of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) [a semi-autonomous agency of the U.S. Department of State] as a project manager, evaluator and advisor to host-country counterparts in international development (with stints as a Program & Portfolio manager)* -- training after my initial internship was entirely task-oriented rather than people-related; and self-driven. However, I did encounter some exemplary managers in those contrasting work environments, and soon realized the verity of **Fiedler's** then-emerging **leadership contingency theory.** [Fiedler, F. E. (1967) *A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness*, New York: McGraw-Hill.] Subsequently -- after retirement from government service -- I developed and taught the 'Smith-Grid' described herein, as well as applying it on-the-job, world-wide, as an itinerant project management consultant.

<p><b>ISTJ</b></p> <p>"DOING WHAT SHOULD BE DONE"</p> <p>Organizer • Compulsive Private • Trustworthy Rules 'n Regs • Practical</p> <p><b>MOST RESPONSIBLE</b></p>	<p><b>ISFJ</b></p> <p>"A HIGH SENSE OF DUTY"</p> <p>Amiable • Works Behind the Scenes Ready to Sacrifice • Accountable Prefers "Doing"</p> <p><b>MOST LOYAL</b></p>	<p><b>INFJ</b></p> <p>"AN INSPIRATION TO OTHERS"</p> <p>Reflective/Introspective Quietly Caring • Creative Linguistically Gifted • Psychic</p> <p><b>MOST CONTEMPLATIVE</b></p>	<p><b>INTJ</b></p> <p>"EVERYTHING HAS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT"</p> <p>Theory Based • Skeptical • "My Way" High Need for Competency Sees World as Chessboard</p> <p><b>MOST INDEPENDENT</b></p>
<p><b>ISTP</b></p> <p>"READY TO TRY ANYTHING ONCE"</p> <p>Very Observant • Cool and Aloof Hands-on Practicality • Unpretentious Ready for what Happens</p> <p><b>MOST PRAGMATIC</b></p>	<p><b>ISFP</b></p> <p>"SEES MUCH BUT SHARES LITTLE"</p> <p>Warm and Sensitive • Unassuming Short Range Planner • Good Team Member In Touch with Self and Nature</p> <p><b>MOST ARTISTIC</b></p>	<p><b>INFP</b></p> <p>"PERFORMING NOBLE SERVICE TO AID SOCIETY"</p> <p>Strict Personal Values Seeks Inner Order/Peace Creative • Non-Directive • Reserved</p> <p><b>MOST IDEALISTIC</b></p>	<p><b>INTP</b></p> <p>"A LOVE OF PROBLEM SOLVING"</p> <p>Challenges others to Think Absent-minded Professor Competency Needs • Socially Cautious</p> <p><b>MOST CONCEPTUAL</b></p>
<p><b>ESTP</b></p> <p>"THE ULTIMATE REALIST"</p> <p>Unconventional Approach • Fun Gregarious • Lives for Here and Now Good at Problem Solving</p> <p><b>MOST SPONTANEOUS</b></p>	<p><b>ESFP</b></p> <p>"YOU ONLY GO AROUND ONCE IN LIFE"</p> <p>Sociable • Spontaneous Loves Surprises • Cuts Red Tape Juggles Multiple Projects/Events Quip Master</p> <p><b>MOST GENEROUS</b></p>	<p><b>ENFP</b></p> <p>"GIVING LIFE AN EXTRA SQUEEZE"</p> <p>People Oriented • Creative Seeks Harmony • Life of Party More Starts than Finishes</p> <p><b>MOST OPTIMISTIC</b></p>	<p><b>ENTP</b></p> <p>"ONE EXCITING CHALLENGE AFTER ANOTHER"</p> <p>Argues Both Sides of a Point to Learn Brinkmanship • Tests the Limits Enthusiastic • New Ideas</p> <p><b>MOST INVENTIVE</b></p>
<p><b>ESTJ</b></p> <p>"LIFE'S ADMINISTRATORS"</p> <p>Order and Structure • Sociable Opinionated • Results Driven Producer • Traditional</p> <p><b>MOST HARD CHARGING</b></p>	<p><b>ESFJ</b></p> <p>"HOST AND HOSTESSES OF THE WORLD"</p> <p>Gracious • Good Interpersonal Skills Thoughtful • Appropriate Eager to Please</p> <p><b>MOST HARMONIZING</b></p>	<p><b>ENFJ</b></p> <p>"SMOOTH TALKING PERSUADER"</p> <p>Charismatic • Compassionate Possibilities for People Ignores the Unpleasant • Idealistic</p> <p><b>MOST PERSUASIVE</b></p>	<p><b>ENTJ</b></p> <p>"LIFE'S NATURAL LEADERS"</p> <p>Visionary • Gregarious • Argumentative Systems Planners • Take Charge Low Tolerance for Incompetency</p> <p><b>MOST COMMANDING</b></p>

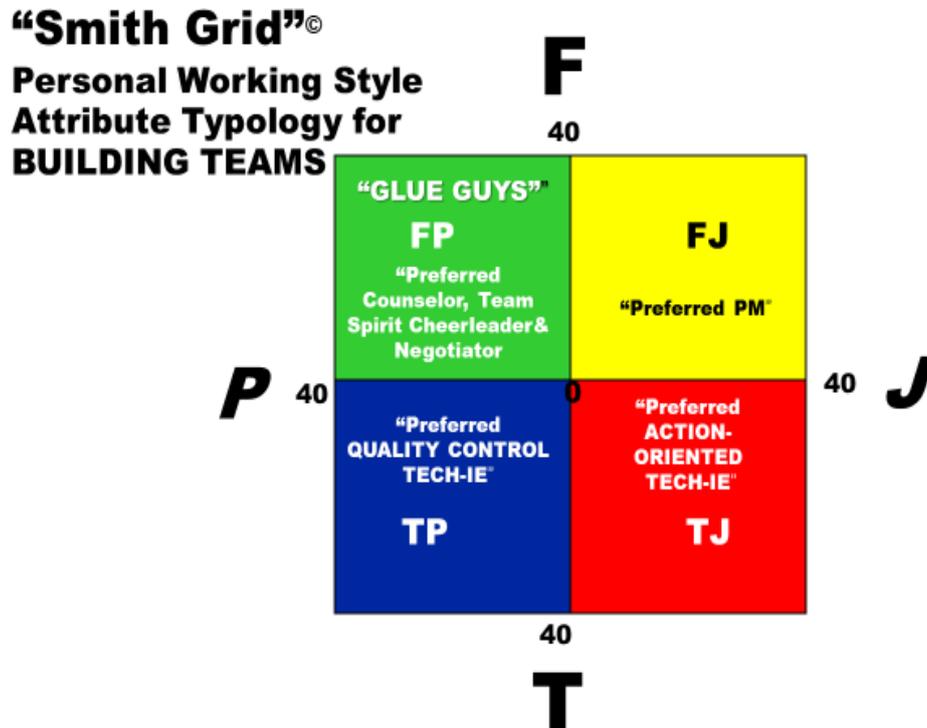
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Unfortunately, although detailed, the attributes supporting **MBTI's** sixteen variables are akin to adjectival variations of positive 'astrological sign' synopses, but with limited mutually-exclusive discriminator descriptions. Consequently, neither the categorizations nor structure are amenable to easy comparative analysis, administration, or applicable to a project team working environment.

So, during the mid-1980's -- while an adjunct faculty member of the **USDA<sup>4</sup> International Institute and Center for Applied Management** in Washington, D.C. -- I researched and developed a simplified 2 x 2 matrix emulating four Myers Briggs characteristics -- **T & F personality and J & P work orientation variables**. I juxtaposed these in conjoined **TJ TP FP & FJ quadrants** to focus on the personality types for working more effectively in various aspects of project management teams; rather than the typical approach of reviewing individuals technical

<sup>4</sup> US Department of Agriculture Graduate School (USDA/GS) was created in 1921 to provide federal, state and local governments with expert training and workforce development. The International Institute was its 'global arm' extension. [I taught -- intermittently -- at the USDA/GS for 10 years.] In February 2009, the School severed ties with the Department of Agriculture and became a private, nonprofit institution.

and other paper qualifications. My resultant “Smith Grid” is outlined below and elucidated on the following pages.



Slide 76

The basis for individual typing is the 16 aspect self-assessment “Quick & Easy” questionnaire<sup>5</sup> shown on the following page.

<sup>5</sup> The matrix displays the values of **four (4) nominal variables -- Thinking, Feeling, Processing & Job Orientation (T F P & J)** – derived from a questionnaire comprised of 16 subjective aspects; with 8 leading questions for each of the four variables, rated on a dichotomous ordinal forced-choice 5-point scale. **NOTES:** 1) **The ‘Zero-Sum’ forced-choice scoring accentuates positive ratings to the detriment of opposing variable options.** 2) The resultant ordinal values for each individual’s four variables are therefore **only relative to one another, and merely proxies for subjective sentiments, rather than absolute levels.** 3) As such, **Variable ratings should never be compared or equated with ratings of other individuals,** as, in absolute terms, one individual’s ‘Weakness’ could be equivalent to another’s ‘Strength.’ 4) **The principal purpose of the variable ratings is to prioritize and highlight an individual’s personality predilections and working style preferences.**

The questionnaire is formatted in an Excel template for rapid automatic scoring and assessment, as depicted below, with an illustrative response:

<b>PERSONAL WORKING/MANAGEMENT STYLE</b>		
The following series of Management Style questions are arranged in pairs: a & b. Indicate the strength of your preference for each item in the pair by allocating a total of 5 points to each pair of options. I.e. 5-0, 4-1, 3-2, 2-3, 1-4, 0-5 where "5" points = highest preference, and "0" points = lowest preference		
<b>1. SELF-IMAGE:</b> To what extent do you consider yourself a		
a	4	"Thinking" person? - I.e. logical, quantitative & analytical
b	1	"Feeling" person? - I.e. intuitive, non-numerate
<b>2. ORGANIZATIONAL LOYALTY/PERSONAL MORALITY:</b> To what extent do you function on		
a	3	What you are doing is legally/organizationally required?
b	2	Your conviction that what you are doing is morally/ethically right?
<b>3. TRUST:</b> To what extent do you believe and accept other PEOPLE based on:		
a	4	Just the facts, and systematic analysis (beyond Reasonable Doubt)?
b	1	Their body language, your feelings and understanding of their needs?
<b>4. TEAMWORK:</b> To what extent do you prefer working with		
a	4	"Logical" people?
b	1	"Feeling" people?
<b>5. COACHING:</b> To what extent do you help others by		
a	4	Presenting the facts and reviewing the logic of the situation with them?
b	1	Listening to them, and exploring their feelings with them?
<b>6. INDIVIDUAL WORKING STYLE:</b> To what extent do you prefer to		
a	4	Use your ability to analyze, write-up and present various situations?
b	1	Work with and persuade others in emotionally-charged discussions?
<b>7. ANALYSIS:</b> To what extent do you prefer to assess situations based primarily on		
a	4	Facts, logic, and careful step-by-step analysis?
b	1	Intuition about the situation, or people involved?
<b>8. RECOMMENDATIONS:</b> To what extent do you prefer solutions/recommendations based on		
a	4	Quantitative data, systematic analysis, and logic?
b	1	Subjective "Intuition" and/or "common sense"?
<b>9. PUNCTUALITY &amp; TIME MANAGEMENT:</b> To what extent are you		
a	0	Habitually late, and/or tolerant of lateness by others?
b	5	Almost always early (or on-time), and irritable at lateness of others?
<b>10. WORK PLANNING PROCESS:</b> To what extent do you prefer to		
a	1	"Play by Ear" - and react to what is needed as a situation evolves?
b	4	Plan ahead, based on estimates, projections and targets?
<b>11. CREATIVITY/INNOVATION:</b> To what extent do you prefer working in situations where the		
a	3	Situation is new, precedents few, and opportunities are open-ended?
b	2	Task is familiar and predictable, and you are well prepared?
<b>12. ASSERTIVENESS:</b> To what extent do you		
a	2	Quietly accept commitments/decisions by the "boss", or the "Team"?
b	3	Fight to get your position accepted, if you think others are unrealistic?
<b>13. SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES:</b> To what extent do you prefer to		
a	1	"Hang loose" and do things on the spur of the moment?
b	4	Know in advance what you are going to do?
<b>14. IMPLEMENTATION FLEXIBILITY:</b> To what extent do you prefer to		
a	2	Change course/direction if the plan doesn't seem to be working out?
b	3	Do "whatever it takes" to try to get back on course and on schedule?
<b>15. IN RECORDING/PRESENTING INFORMATION:</b> To what extent do you rely on		
a	1	Memory and verbal skills?
b	4	Visual aids (notes, charts/graphs) and written reports?
<b>16. DECISION MAKING:</b> To what extent do you make a decision		
a	2	Slowly - mulling over the issues; but still worrying about it afterwards?
b	3	Quickly - with the information available; then "moving on"?
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These responses are then immediately scored automatically, and assessed follows:

**ASSESSMENT OF YOUR PERSONAL  
MANAGEMENT STYLE**

ASPECT	SCORE	ASSESSMENT
THINKING	<b>T = 29</b>	Definite Strength
FEELING	<b>F = 11</b>	LACKING in 'Feeling'
PROCESS	<b>P = 12</b>	LACKING in 'Process'
Job orient'n	<b>J = 28</b>	Definite Strength

Scoring:

T = Sum of "a's" -- 1.a through 8.a  
 F = Sum of "b's" -- 1.b through 8.b  
 P = Sum of "a's" -- 9.a through 16.a  
 J = Sum of "b's" -- 9.b through 16.b

Additional Guidelines to Interpret Scores:

If Attribute "LACKING"	SCORE RANGE	INTERPRETATION
LACKING =	0 - 10	Considerable Weakness
LACKING =	11 - 15	Definite Weakness
LACKING =	16 - 18	Some Weakness
	19 - 21	<b>BALANCE</b>
	22 - 24	Some Strength
	25 - 29	Definite Strength
	30 - 40	Considerable Strength

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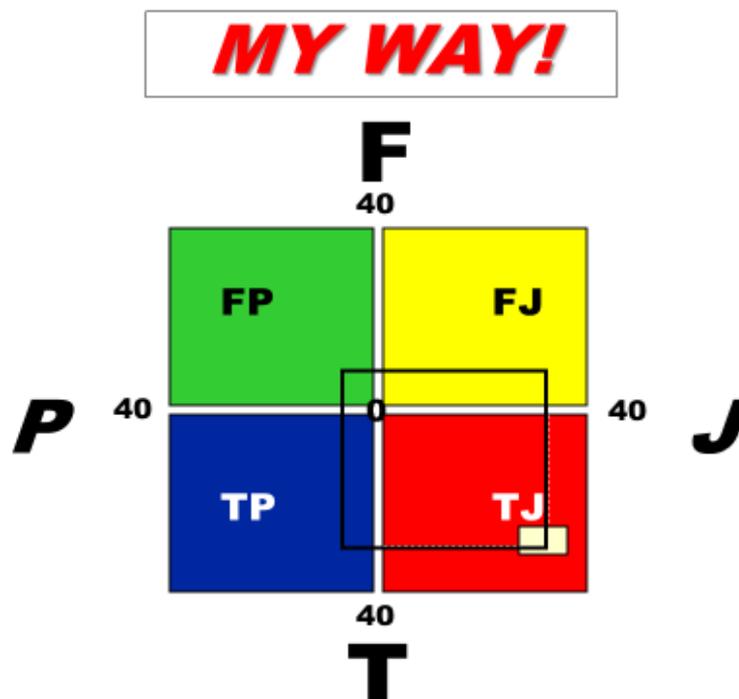
**NOTE: "Weakness" and "Strength" are relative to other variables — Not absolutes.**

**Your Predominant Working Style is  
 the two Letter combination with the  
 highest numerical scores. i.e.  
**FJ TJ TP or FP****

**NOTE: If you have a '20-20' combination in either T F or P J**

**You have greater flexibility,  
as you are able to work comfortably  
in Two of the Four Modes**

**TP & TJ    FP & FJ    TP & FP    or    TJ & FJ**



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Slide 52

Each combination has natural personality proclivities, strengths, weaknesses with related work suitability, as outlined on the following pages:

## THE TJ PROFILE

**Natural Proclivities: Workaholic:** Competent technical professional, self-actuated, responsible, hard-working individual performer. Also a willing follower. Accepts direction and responsibility, but **prefers working alone. Prioritizes Timeliness.** Can be relied upon to meet deadlines imposed by others. *“Does not play well with others!”* Little or no Sensitivity to, Empathy with, or Sympathy for, Others. **As a Leader, “Hard Driver.”** No tolerance for Others shortcomings. Values Facts over Feelings. **Wants Results, Not Excuses! Lives to Work!**

### “T” Characteristic Strengths & Weaknesses:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Objective	Emotional, Expresses Feelings,
Logical	Unaware of Other’s Feelings
Factual, Analytical Decisions based on Data	Misunderstands &/or fails to accept Other’s Values
Thorough	Does not show Compassion
Firm	Not interested in Compromise
Loyal. Willing follower	Accepts ‘authority’
‘Talks Truth to Power’ Difficult to intimidate	Argumentative, Can be openly insubordinate
Low Tolerance for Incompetence	Openly criticizes and berates others
Determined	Prefers to Work Alone

### “J” Characteristic Strengths & Weaknesses:

Strengths	Weaknesses
“Workaholic” Hardworking	Tense, Unable to Relax, On or Off the Job
Tenacious “Stick-to-it”- ivenesss	Not a Multi-tasker: Will not interrupt on-going work for other or new ‘priority’ activities
<b>As Planner,</b> Prefers to make Detailed Plans	Would like to be a Perfectionist but prioritizes timeliness. Often works Slowly, Expends Excessive Effort on Trivial Aspects, so often works Overtime to meet Deadlines
<b>In Leadership role,</b> ‘Thinks on feet’ and tends to Make Decisions Quickly	Impulsive, often Uninformed Snap Judgements, [ <i>Fails to seek help or read instructions, even when available</i> ]
Unambiguously Directs / Orders Others	Stubborn, Uncompromising, Controlling, Judgmental

Action-Oriented, Pragmatic, Results-Driven, Decries & Cuts through bureaucratic 'red tape'	Will violate rules & regulations with "End Justifies Means" Philosophy
Prioritizes Deadlines	Work may be Incomplete, Requiring 'Do Overs'
Can be Relied Upon to Honor Commitments and Meet Deadlines – self-imposed or imposed by others	

**Most Suited to:** Staff or Technical support role as an individual performer, technical expert, teacher, or Type "A" Disciplinarian in legitimate power supervisory – rather than Referent Leadership -- positions.

## THE TP PROFILE

**Natural Proclivities: Perfectionist:** [Similar to TJ in many respects but cannot be relied upon to meet deadlines imposed by others because Quality is prioritized over timeliness.] Competent technical professional, self-actuated, responsible, responsible, hard-working. Accepts direction from others and assumes responsibility for results, but is a stubborn independent thinker. Low empathy. Often perceived as undisciplined and insubordinate. Prefers working alone. Sets own priorities and schedules. Has another life 'outside of work!' **Works to Live!**

### "T" Characteristic Strengths & Weaknesses:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Objective	Emotional, Expresses Feelings,
Logical	Unaware of Other's Feelings
Factual, Analytical Decisions based on Data	Misunderstands &/or fails to accept Other's Values
Thorough	Does not show Compassion
Firm	Not interested in Compromise
Loyal. Willing follower	Accepts 'authority'
'Talks Truth to Power' Difficult to intimidate	Argumentative, Can be openly insubordinate
Low Tolerance for Incompetence	Openly criticizes and berates others
Determined	Prefers to Work Alone

**“P” Characteristic Strengths & Weaknesses:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Reliable; Follows orders of Superiors	Hesitates to make Independent Judgments
Imposes rules & regulations ‘by the book’	Overly Bureaucratic, Inflexible
Short Range Planner	Fails to see the ‘Big Picture’ – “Not my Responsibility” “Above my Pay Grade”
Well-organized	Resists Change
Prefers Routine work schedule	Doesn’t finish Tasks by Deadlines, No sense of urgency

**Most Suited to: Staff or Technical support role** as an individual performer, technical expert, teacher, quality control, inspector, researcher, auditor, accountant, computer programmer, teacher – rather than Leadership positions.

**THE FJ PROFILE**

**Natural Proclivities: Extrovert:** People-oriented, assumes a “Take Charge” role in unstructured group situations. Gets along easily with strangers at all levels, in groups, or one-on-one. Very Perceptive, Empathetic and Persuasive. Thinks “on his/her feet” but doesn’t usually dwell on detail. Usually seeks, and has, many friends and acquaintances.

**“F” Characteristic Strengths & Weaknesses:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Thinks “Outside the Box.”	Not constrained by Rules or Precedence
Prioritizes Quality over Timeliness	Ignores Externally Imposed Deadlines
Considerate of Others Feelings, Not Judgmental	Not guided by Logic
Demonstrates Empathy	Uncritical, Gullible
Understands Others’ needs, and Accepts Others’ Values	Not Objective
Very Persuasive, Intense	Often perceived by others as an unreliable, untrustworthy ‘BS’ artist
Remembers Names, Dates, and Detailed Events	Often fails to meet deadlines and commitments

Sees “All Sides” of any issue Flexible, Adaptable, willing to Compromise	Vacillates, Inconsistent, Indecisive, Easily Distracted
Remains open for change	Does not Direct / Control Situations
Multi-Tasker	Not well organized

**“J” Characteristic Strengths & Weaknesses:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
“Workaholic” Hardworking	Tense, Unable to Relax, On or Off the Job
Tenacious “ <i>Stick-to-it</i> ”-ivenesss	Not a Multi-tasker: Will not interrupt on-going work for other or new ‘priority’ activities
<b>As a Planner</b> , Prefers to make Detailed Plans	Would like to be a Perfectionist but prioritizes timeliness. Often works Slowly, Expends Excessive Effort on Trivial Aspects, so often works Overtime to meet Deadlines
<b>In a Leadership role</b> , ‘ <i>Thinks on feet</i> ’ and tends to Make Decisions Quickly	Impulsive, often Uninformed Snap Judgements, [ <i>Fails to seek help or read instructions, even when available</i> ]
Unambiguously Directs / Orders Others	Stubborn, Uncompromising, Controlling, Judgmental
Action-Oriented, Pragmatic, Results-Driven, Decries & Cuts through bureaucratic ‘red tape’	Will violate rules & regulations with “ <i>End Justifies Means</i> ” Philosophy
Prioritizes Deadlines	Work may be Incomplete, Requiring ‘ <i>Do Overs</i> ”
Can be Relied Upon to Honor Commitments and Meet Deadlines – self-imposed or imposed by others	

**Most Suited to: Management leadership roles.** People communications. Typically, politician, diplomats, marketers, salespeople, customer service reps, communicators TV & radio broadcasters / briefers.

## **THE FP PROFILE**

**Natural Proclivities: Introvert:** People-oriented, but preferably “One-on-One,” or in small groups, *unless placed in a position of authority*. Very Perceptive, Intuitive and Empathetic. **Outstanding Negotiator.**

### **“F” Characteristic Strengths & Weaknesses:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Thinks “Outside the Box.”	Not constrained by Rules or Precedence
Prioritizes Quality over Timeliness	Ignores Externally Imposed Deadlines
Considerate of Others Feelings, Not Judgmental	Not guided by Logic
Demonstrates Empathy	Uncritical, Gullible
Understands Others’ needs, and Accepts Others’ Values	Not Objective
Very Persuasive, Intense	Often perceived by others as an unreliable, untrustworthy ‘BS’ artist
Remembers Names, Dates, and Detailed Events	Often fails to meet deadlines and commitments
Sees “All Sides” of any issue Flexible, Adaptable, willing to Compromise	Vacillates, Inconsistent, Indecisive, Easily Distracted
Remains open for change	Does not Direct / Control Situations
Multi-Tasker	Not well organized

### **“P” Characteristic Strengths & Weaknesses:**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Reliable; Follows orders of Superiors	Hesitates to make Independent Judgments
Imposes rules & regulations ‘by the book’	Overly Bureaucratic, Inflexible
Short Range Planner	Fails to see the ‘Big Picture’ – “Not my Responsibility” “Above my Pay Grade”
Well-organized	Resists Change
Prefers Routine work schedule	Doesn’t finish Tasks by Deadlines, No sense of urgency

**Most Suited to: People Communications.** Teaching, guidance counseling, medicine & nursing, social work, public customer service assistance, **Excellent Negotiator and Arbitrator.** Can also function effectively – *albeit reluctantly* – in legitimate power supervisory positions.

Over the years I have also observed that these types exhibit different modes in the thinking process.

**TPs** think linearly, going from **A** to **B** to **C** to **D = Solution**

**TJs** also tend to think linearly, going from **A** to **B** to **C** to **D = Solution** but in their hurry, sometimes jump to conclusions and skip **B** or **C**

**FPs** and **FJs** on the other hand skip **B** & **C** entirely, and intuitively go **directly** from **A** to **D = Solution** -- often to **E** (i.e. a New Solution “*Outside the Box*”) – and sometimes to **F = Failure**, but usually cannot explain *why* or *how* they arrived at their conclusions.

## **LIMITATIONS**

**Nevertheless**, despite these **generic** typologies, different individuals do not all possess all of the attribute characteristics, or to the same level of intensity. **Furthermore**, individuals often possess **some contradictory traits** subsumed in quadrants other than their predominant **TJ TP FP** or **FJ** profiles. **Moreover**, the focus of this analysis was on individual temperament for administration, management and implementation of project-related work *vis a vis* others. As such, physical, technical qualifications or cognitive capabilities for other areas of endeavor, or possible non-work pursuits are not addressed.

Thus -- depending on the immediate task at hand, the extent of the need to interact with others, and the stress in the particular situation – less-dominant latent &/or suppressed traits may occasionally be triggered as “*Mixed Feelings*” dilemmas or “*Gut Feelings*” which result in seemingly ‘*out-of-character*’ behavior and/or “*actions against their better judgment!*”

Furthermore, regardless of what we are or inherited, with increased awareness and willingness to change, we can still **aspire to**, and -- *with effort* -- **acquire knowledge, capabilities & enhancements** enabling us to function more effectively in areas other than our predominant type.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

1. People with similar strengths in the same dimensions usually get along well together and tend to reach job-oriented decisions quickly – particularly if they agree with each other. However, **TJs** particularly experience major difficulties with others if they disagree because they always think they are right. Therefore, anyone who disagrees must be wrong! Decisions also suffer if most team members have similar strengths because of similar blind spots.

2. At the outset, people with strengths in different dimensions often have difficulty accepting the views, opinions and actions of others, and often openly disagree on many issues. However, decisions resulting from such interactions are usually stronger due to considering the diverse perspectives.
3. People are usually over-sensitive to criticism in their weak areas, and often prefer to avoid them – particularly **FPs**. Conflicts often occur when they are forced to do so, or when others point out their deficiencies.
4. Rather than being right or wrong, many conflicts arise because of differences in personal styles. Before rejecting inputs which conflict with your own, try to view the situation from the other person’s perspective. Job/Task-oriented groups and individuals (of all types) should consult with people of opposite types before finalizing decisions.
- 5. Project teams should have some people in all four quadrants.**
6. When people must interact frequently, those with greater ‘*power*’ in the situation should make an extra effort to become aware of and accommodate the styles of the others.
7. For continuous learning, people should try to strengthen their weaker dimensions and be more receptive to others of the opposite persuasion.

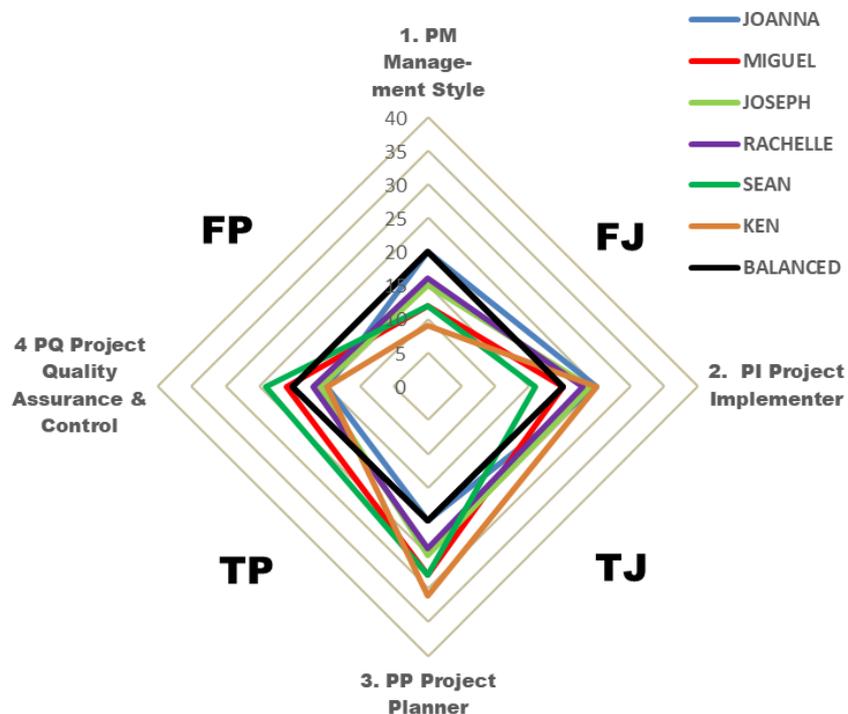
To supplement the Smith Grid, as a visual working-aid during the team selection process, I also developed a **Teambuilder** template for trial & error (T&E) member selection as follows:

<b>KEN'S TEAMBUILDER*</b>				
<b>TEAMS SHOULD BE DIVERSIFIED SO AS TO MAXIMIZE COVERAGE IN THE FOUR ASPECTS OF PERSONALITY &amp; WORKING STYLE PREFERENCES.</b>				
<b>Select individuals from the Personnel Pool way below, then Enter Selected Data in the table below to see the Results at the right.</b>				
Compare any Six (6) Individuals by selecting from those listed in the larger table below	1. PM Management Style	2. PI Project Implementer	3. PP Project Planner	4 PQ Project Quality Assurance & Control
JOANNA	20	25	20	15
MIGUEL	12	20	28	21
JOSEPH	15	24	25	16
RACHELLE	16	23	24	17
SEAN	12	16	28	24
KEN	9	25	31	15

**Scroll & Select any SIX (6) Individuals FROM the PERSONNEL POOL below & COPY [DO NOT DELETE & MOVE] the DATA TO THE TABLE ABOVE**

NAME	F	J	T	P
JOANNA	20	25	20	15
MIGUEL	12	20	28	21
JOSEPH	15	24	25	16
RACHELLE	16	23	24	17
SEAN	12	16	28	24
KEN	9	25	31	15

Individual Working Style Scores



## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

This article has presented a practical 'quick & easy' personality typing methodology with tools to assist organizations assess the potential of individuals as prospective project team members, as well as enhance the ability of team leaders to manage their team members more effectively. It is important to recognize that this methodology is merely a *guide* to personality and work preference typing, rather than a definitive science; specific, absolute and unchanging. No one is completely defined by the typology labels herein. There is also an almost infinite variety of characteristic combinations that make each of us unique. No one fits exactly into one quadrant – i.e. 40/40. There is always some overlap with the other three quadrants, with some traits more or less dominant in us than in others, as – *like inherited genes* – there are numerous traits within each quadrant that may skip us.

**FJ's are the most effective Project Managers / Team Leaders** because interacting with groups of other people, quickly assessing their individual values, and empathizing with them comes naturally. However, any of the other types – particularly TJs, or TPs – can also be effective Project Managers / Team Leaders; *they just have to work harder at the people-orientation aspect of it!*

**Relying more on FP "Glue Guys"<sup>6</sup> on the team is the key to enhancing Team Manager performance; especially TJ's and TP's.** Unfortunately, the FP personality type is a '*rara avis*' in the typical project team working environment, so extra effort should be undertaken to find FPs and get them involved as Negotiators, general team motivators, and Team Leader confidants.

**Knowing who the "Go To" Guys are on the team in each Quadrant also enhances overall Team performance.**

Posting the Grid in a conspicuous place with team members photos in their respective quadrants for rapid recognition is highly recommended.<sup>7</sup>

So, for selecting the members of your next project team, or improving your current team, please consider utilizing my automated-scoring Personal Working / Management Style Questionnaire, Smith-Grid and Teambuilder templates.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> 'Glue Guys' who hold the team together, categorized by Glenn Hamamura, PMI Honolulu Chapter

<sup>7</sup> 'Go-To' guys categorized, and Grid 'Posting' with team member photos recommended by Peter Lewis, PMI Honolulu Chapter

<sup>8</sup> These templates are available for free from [kenfsmith@aol.com](mailto:kenfsmith@aol.com) – together with over 100 other Project Management templates – on proof of purchase of Project Management PRAXIS from Amazon.

## About the Author



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Initially a US Civil Service Management Intern, then a management analyst & systems specialist with the US Defense Department, Ken subsequently had a career as a senior foreign service officer -- management & evaluation specialist, project manager, and in-house facilitator/trainer -- with the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Ken assisted host country governments in many countries to plan, monitor and evaluate projects in various technical sectors; working 'hands-on' with their officers as well as other USAID personnel, contractors and NGOs. Intermittently, he was also a team leader &/or team member to conduct project, program & and country-level portfolio analyses and evaluations.

Concurrently, Ken had an active dual career as Air Force ready-reservist in Asia (Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines) as well as the Washington D.C. area; was Chairman of a Congressional Services Academy Advisory Board (SAAB); and had additional duties as an Air Force Academy Liaison Officer. He retired as a 'bird' colonel.

After retirement from USAID, Ken was a project management consultant for ADB, the World Bank, UNDP and USAID.

He earned his DPA (Doctor of Public Administration) from the George Mason University (GMU) in Virginia, his MS from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT Systems Analysis Fellow, Center for Advanced Engineering Study), and BA & MA degrees in Government & International Relations from the University of Connecticut (UCONN). A long-time member of the Project Management Institute (PMI) and IPMA-USA, Ken is a Certified Project Management Professional (PMP®) and a member of the PMI®-Honolulu and Philippines Chapters.

Ken's book -- **Project Management PRAXIS** (available from Amazon) -- includes many innovative project management tools & techniques; and describes a "**Toolkit**" of related templates available directly from him at [kenfsmith@aol.com](mailto:kenfsmith@aol.com) on proof of purchase of PRAXIS.