

Improving Leadership Performance Using MBTI® Step II™ Results

Based on your clients' development and leadership goals, you can choose to focus on one or all of the four topics explored here—**gaining influence within the organization, pathways to better problem solving, being objective in your judgment**, and **modeling agility**—though it's best to stick to one topic at a time. You can move through them in any order, depending on where clients need the most improvement. Encourage clients to think about their behaviors when they are in a familiar or comfortable situation rather than when they are in a stressful situation, or "in the grip."

1. Gaining Influence Within the Organization

Questions to ask your client:

- 1 How do you use personal disclosure effectively as a method of gaining trust and buy-in from your direct reports? Examine your score on the Expressive–Contained facet and reflect on how you naturally share personal information with other people. If Contained is in-preference for you, try sharing one personal fact about yourself, such as that you enjoy running or doing Pilates, that doesn't seem too intrusive. If you score toward the Expressive side, pay attention to your desire to share while another person is talking, and think about whether what you have to say will add value to the conversation or is merely a reflection of your desire to share information about yourself.
- 2 How are your team or network members affected by your comfort with visibility within the organization? Take a look at your Gregarious–Intimate score to think about how readily you share information with them. If you score toward the Intimate pole, is it possible that your style may have an impact on how many people within the organization notice the work of your team members and colleagues? Could this have a result on their potential to advance in the organization? If you score toward Gregarious, is it possible that some team members could get overwhelmed with social events or team meetings where their presence is not really required?
- 3 If you prefer Extraversion, read some of the descriptions of Introversion in the *Introduction to Myers-Briggs® Type* booklet or the descriptions of the Introversion facet poles in your Step II report. Do aspects of those poles look different on you when you are experiencing stress? If you prefer Introversion, how comfortable are you engaging with people as a means of working through a difficult situation, versus trying to work through it alone?

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2. Pathways to Better Problem Solving

Questions to ask your client:

- 1 What sources do you use to gain new information about developing trends and potential changes in your field? Take advantage of free online resources such as Ted, edX, Fast Company, or Coursera to learn about information that may not be directly in your field but that could be related and could help you expand your perspective.
- 2 When you are under extreme stress, when does your expression of the Concrete pole of the Concrete–Abstract facet start to seem rigid, or your expression of the Abstract pole start to feel out of control? During times of stress, the Concrete pole may take on a feeling of being “stuck,” and the Abstract pole may lead you to “catastrophize” and feel like the sky is falling and everything is going wrong.
- 3 Where (or to whom) do you go to recalibrate your sense of reality when you are under great stress? Make a list of five people you trust to be your “board of directors” that you can go to during stressful times to help you become more grounded and assess the situation realistically.

3. Being Objective in Your Judgment

Questions to ask your client:

- 1 How do you use empathy as a skill to connect with others? Look at your Logical–Empathetic facet result to assess your natural tendency to tune in to other people. If you score toward the Logical facet pole, try to imagine how others might be receiving your message and what might help them hear it as more understanding and supportive.
- 2 How do you know when others are engaged in your ideas and work? Look at your Thinking–Feeling facets and reflect on the mix of facets that foster genuine connections with others.
- 3 If you have a preference for Feeling, what does your attempt to flex toward Thinking when you are under stress look like? (likely harsh and critical). If you have a preference for Thinking, take some time to reflect on your personal values, connections with others, and need for harmony as a way to learn from the behaviors you exhibit when you are under stress.

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4. Modeling Agility

Questions to ask your client:

- 1 Does your pattern of facet results suggest agility? For example, are all your facets in-preference, or are there also out-of-preference results? Where could you flex more to create more flexibility and agility in your approach?
- 2 Examine your Early Starting–Pressure–Prompted facet result. How does your approach to getting things done affect your credibility as a leader? If you consistently miss deadlines, will people start to doubt the quality of your work and your level of engagement? If you focus only on the deadline and not the quality of the finished product, will people believe you have an integrity issue?
- 3 Look at your Methodical–Emergent facet result and think about a recent stressful task. If you found yourself feeling stressed out, how did that affect how quickly you accomplished the task? After you completed the task, did you feel confident about the quality of the work?