

Executive Coaching & MBTI Type Dynamics

Learn how type dynamics affects the use of a ladder of inference--a manner of meaning making that moves the construction of meaning through: data, perception, judging and conclusion. Mike R Jay, Master Business Coach has after more than 10,000 coaching sessions, identified how to quickly identify type dynamics using the ladder of inference in designing conversations--on the fly--dynamic inquiry--to optimize your experience with others in counseling, psychology, coaching, mentoring and consulting.

Remember! Performance = f(person & situation)

Here is a simple procedure to help you understand how to identify the dominant function in MBTI Type theory.

1. Remember that E/I and J/P are called "attitudes." [The outside letters]
2. The interior letters represent the two cognitive functions that Jung described as universal to all of us:

Perceiving (P):	(S)ensing and I(N)tuition
Processing/judging (J)	(T)hinking and (F)eeling

Something to remember here:

- The functions always work in pairs: perceiving and judging.
- You will never have two perceiving or two judging functions pairing up as extraverted or introverted.
- If a perceiving function is introverted, then its companion function **MUST** be judging and it must be extraverted.
- In the same way, if a judging function is extraverted, then its companion—perceiving—is introverted. Logically, this is easy to understand as a system: perceiving and judging.

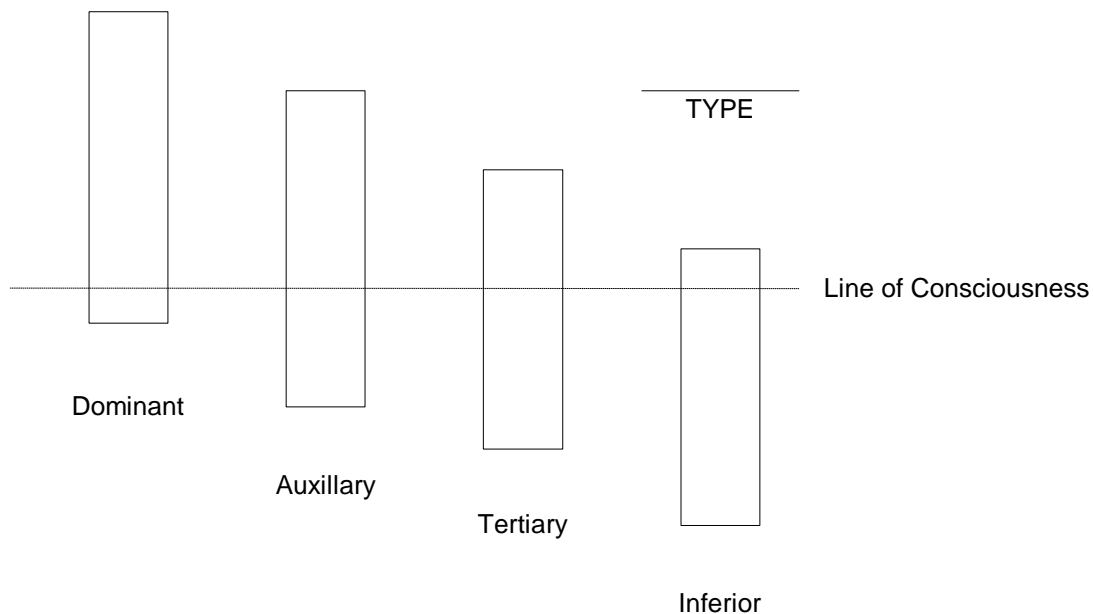
- You always need the two together to complete the “cognitive” system. This will be helpful as we move forward to understand type dynamics.

3. We use the attitudes to help us "identify" the hierarchy of function, beginning with dominant, auxiliary, tertiary and inferior. [A side bar: I'm noticing more and more people use 4th function instead of inferior, due to the pejorative nature of "inferior."]

In the chart that follows:

This helps you to understand what JUNG meant by the amount of energy that is required and conscious attention that is necessary to utilize a “less” conscious function.

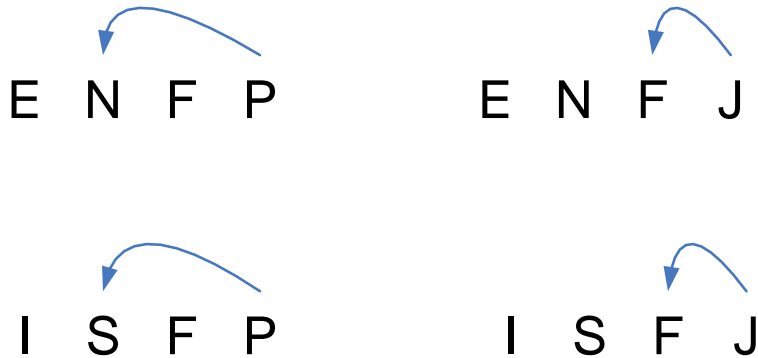
Notice that the dominant function is almost fully in awareness, so much so that we don't have to think about it to use it, it is natural. As the functions move from dominant to inferior, each is farther from awareness, deeper in our subconscious, requiring more energy and conscious attention to use.



4. Steps in identifying the hierarchy of function--by finding the dominant, etc.

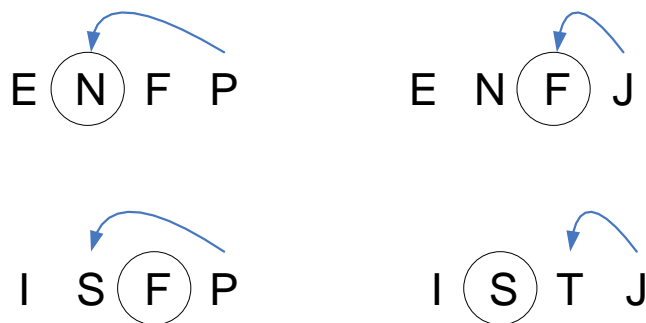
To identify the dominant function using the MBTI:

1. Identify the function used in the outer world, it is ALWAYS extraverted.
(Denoted by J or P)



2. Identify the inner attitude.

- If it is E, then the function used in the outer world is dominant due to its extraversion.
- If it is I, then the function used in the outer world is auxiliary and the function paired opposite it is dominant and introverted.*
- Remember, the dominant function for an introvert is always introverted!



- go to the exterior attitude to locate what function is being extraverted

- once you know whether the "J" or "P" function is being extraverted, you have to go to the second test. Note the difference between P & J extraverted functions. The P always points to the "perceiving" function and the "J" always points to the "judging" function.


E N F P



E N F J



I S F P




I S F J




- What is the interior attitude? "E" or "I"


E (N) F P




E N (F) J



I S (F) P



I (S) T J

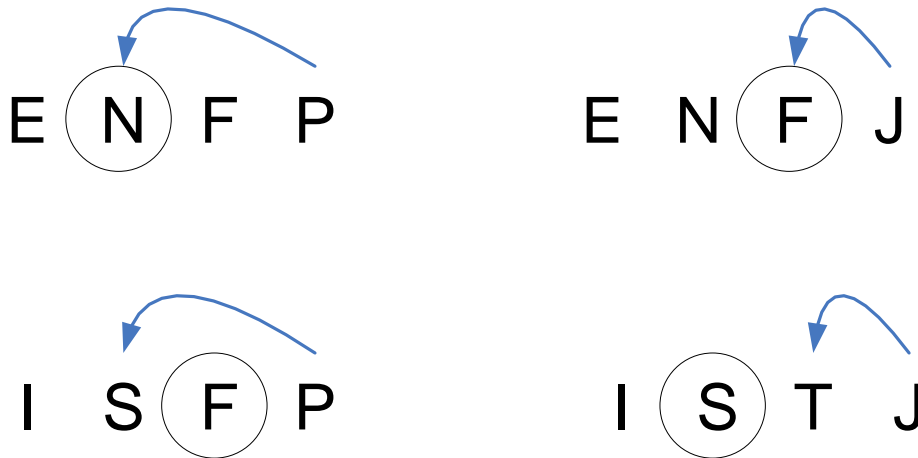


[For the sake of logic, it could be presumed that an introvert could not have an "extraverted" function as dominant, or for that matter an extravert could not have an "introverted" function as dominant!]

- Once we know the internal attitude [E/I], we can determine the dominant function by this formula:

Rule 1: If a person is an "E" then whatever they are extraverting (defined by the J/P attitude) is dominant.

Rule 2: If a person is an "I" then whatever is extraverted can NOT be the dominant function and since we can't have the dominant and auxiliary in the "same" function, we move to the other function type--whether it be perceiving or judging--and find the introverted function as dominant.

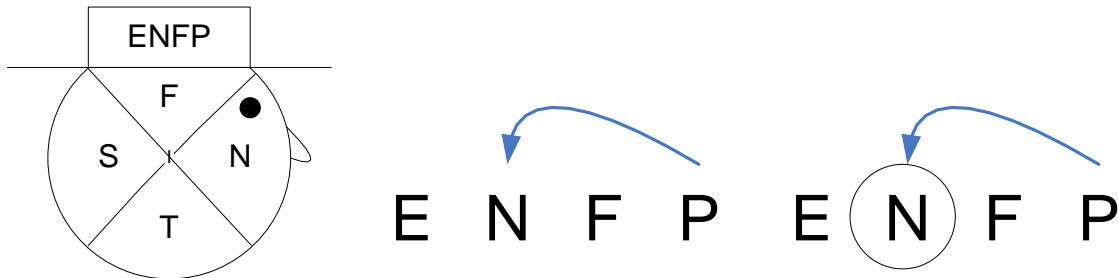


Type theory indicates that we always use perceiving and judging in unison, or in pairs, but one or the other is going to be extraverted and the one that is not extraverted...is introverted.

I look at it like this, they both can't have the spotlight at the same time, therefore one is on stage and the other is in the supporting cast, or as in a military analogy: lieutenant and general. The lieutenant being the auxiliary and the general being the dominant function.

Let's take an example:

ENFP



We know that the extraverted function is N, because of the "P" attitude. Since the person is an "E" we know this function is dominant and is supported by the auxiliary function (judging) "F". These two--perceiving and judging functions--work together to create balance in taking in information and processing it.

Coaching point:

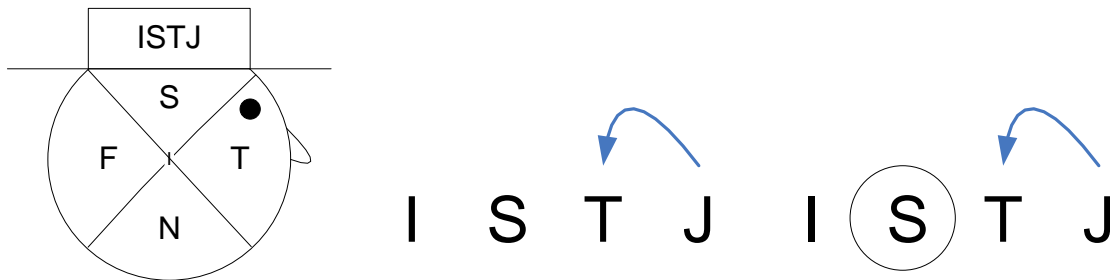
What happens when the dominant function is used almost exclusively?

We have a tendency to become out of balance in terms of perception and judging.

Often coaches using the MBTI can help us discover how to gain balance between these two functions even though one is most often preferred. This process is centered around moving from unconscious competence to conscious competence--being led by our preferences versus leading with our preferences.

Here's another example:

ISTJ [The opposite of ENFP]



Rule 1: We know that the "T" is being extraverted because of "J"
[The outer attitude is always identified by the last letter in the 4 letter sequence.]

In this example, the "J" letter points to either T or F and the P letter points to either N or S. This function—the one that is identified by the outer attitude (J or P), is ALWAYS extraverted, that is why it is called an "outer" attitude!

Rule 2: Since the person is an "I", we know that "T" can't be the dominant function as it is extraverted, therefore we move to the other function category and identify "S" as the dominant function, even though it is introverted!

Coaching point:

Introverts are very often misunderstood for several reasons.

1. E/I has nothing to do with expressivity, even though a preference for expressivity often helps identify extraverts. Lots of introverts have the same "need" to express, but it costs them energy in return. E's gather energy through expression.
2. Because the dominant function is introverted, WYGIWYS--*what you get is what you see!* In other words, you are not dealing with the dominant function in introverts, it is hidden from observation and only can be identified through indirect means--especially if the dominant function is a perceiving function.

Another KEY issue is to understand that because the internal or introverted process is dominant, that most of the time you will NOT be able to participate in the person's thinking process, either in terms of whether they are taking-in: perceiving, or processing (judging) information.

3. It is often very freeing for introverts to learn these two points. Instead of being pigeon-holed we come to realize that they have tremendous gifts, just like the rest of us that are complex in nature. These gifts, when appreciated can lead to higher levels of function and enhanced levels of emotional competence.

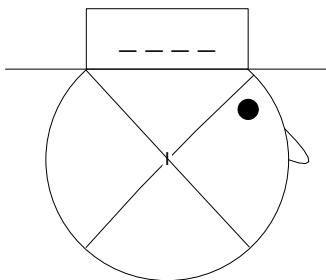
So, just to recap.

To identify the dominant function using the MBTI:

1. Identify the function used in the outer world, it is ALWAYS extraverted. (Denoted by J or P)
2. Identify the inner attitude.
 - If it is E, then the function used in the outer world is dominant due to its extraversion.
 - If it is I, then the function used in the outer world is auxiliary and the function paired opposite it is dominant and introverted.*
 - Remember, the dominant function for an introvert is always introverted!

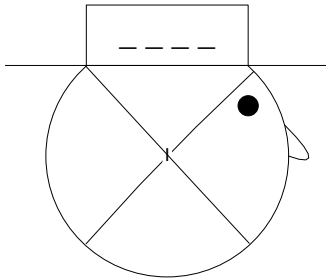
Remember! Performance = f(person & situation)

Try your own this time:

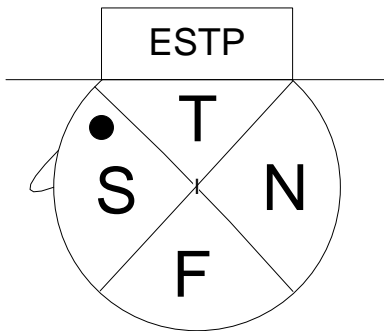


Try your significant other:

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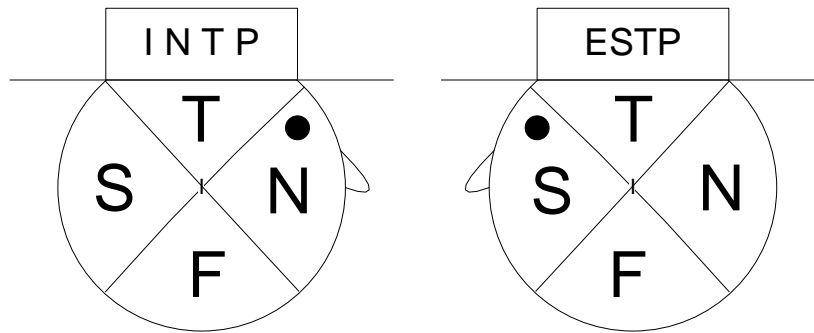


Try your best friend:





Here is an example of how type dynamics relate between two different people.



PERSONALITY ISSUES

Jung (1971) argued that all individuals incorporate basic mental functions or processes into any daily activity. His theory assumes individuals are born with a predisposition to prefer a type of mental functioning over another. Based on these predispositions, individuals exercise certain dominant mental functions to the relative neglect of less dominant ones.

From among these basic functions, Jung determined “types of perception” (i.e., ways of becoming aware of people, events, things, or ideas) and “types of judgment” (i.e., ways of coming to conclusions about what has been perceived) (Myers & McCaulley, 1989).

Jung (1971) divided all perceptive activities into two categories, sensing (S) and intuition (N), and labeled these the “irrational functions,” meaning these perceptive activities focus upon the general flow of events and operate most widely when not restricted by reason. Sensing refers to perceptions observable by way of the senses; persons oriented toward the sensing perception tend to focus on the immediate experience, often developing characteristics such as enjoying the moment, realism, and practicality. Intuition refers to perception of possibilities and meaning by way of the unconscious, that is, ideas coming to the individual as a “hunch.” Intuition permits perception beyond what is visible to the senses, including future events. Thus, individuals oriented toward the intuitive perception may become so intent on pursuing possibilities that they overlook actualities (Myers & McCaulley, 1989).

Jung (1971) also identified two types of judgment, thinking (T) and feeling (F), which he labeled as “rational functions.” These functions represent the individual’s way of coming toward a conclusion (i.e., bringing life events into harmony with the laws of reason). Thinking links ideas together by making logical connections, relies upon principles of cause and effect, and tends to be impersonal. Persons oriented toward thinking may develop characteristics, such as objectivity, concern with principles of justice and fairness, and criticality. By contrast, feeling is the function through which one comes to decisions by weighing relative values and merits of the issue involved. Feeling relies on an understanding of personal and group values is, therefore, more subjective than thinking. As values are subjective and personal, individuals utilizing the feeling function are more likely to be attuned to values of others as well as their own. Individuals oriented toward feeling make decisions by attending to what matters to others; they have an understanding of people, a concern for human aspects of problems, a need for affiliation, and a capacity for warmth (Myers & McCaulley, 1989).

Jung (1971) also identified attitudes of extraversion (E) and introversion (I). In the extraverted attitude, attention seems to flow out to objects and people in the environment. There is a desire to act on the environment and to increase its effect. Characteristics associated with extraversion include sociability, ease of communication, and reliance on the environment for stimulation and guidance. In the introverted attitude, by contrast, energy is drawn from the environment and consolidated within one's position. The main interests of the introvert are in the inner world of concepts and ideas. Characteristics associated with introversion include enjoyment of solitude, thoughtful detachment, and a reliance on enduring concepts more than external events (Myers & McCaulley, 1989).

Although the continuums of extraversion-introversion, sensing-intuition, and thinking-feeling were made explicit in Jung's (1971) work, the continuum of judging-perceiving was more implicit. Myers and Briggs (Myers & McCaulley, 1989) have elaborated on this continuum and described a judging (J) attitude wherein the individual is concerned with making decisions, seeking closure, planning operations, and/or organizing activities. However, in the perceptive (P) attitude, the individual is attuned to incoming information, seeming to be spontaneous, curious, and adaptable.