

The SuccessTypes Learning Style Type Indicator

Introduction to Your Psychological Type

John W. Pelley, PhD

A type indicator tells you what kind of thinking is most comfortable for you.

Type indicators are questionnaires that help you identify and understand your own preferences for the way you process information, day-in and day-out. Thus, they describe an important part of your personality, but they don't describe all of your personality.

- Many aspects of personality are measured with tests and not indicators.
- A test measures how much of a given trait you have, such as motivation, or the need for achievement.
- Type indicators don't measure quantitatively. They just classify you into one or the other type. Thus, you aren't a little or a lot of a type. For example, you wouldn't be a strong or a weak extravert, you would just be an extravert.

If you have already taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator mentioned below, the score for each scale is only a measure of how certain you are of that preference. The sum total of all your preferences is your way of identifying the ways of thinking that are consistently most comfortable for you.

Most type indicators are not scientifically reliable.

The only instrument for determining your personality type (based on the observations of Carl Jung, 1921) is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI). All other questionnaires that are called type indicators, or type tests, are designed to illustrate type, but none are proven to determine

Jungian psychological type with greater reliability and validity than the MBTI.

- The SuccessTypes Learning Style Type Indicator (LSTI) has been shown to have statistical validity in the sensing-intuitive dimension (Cook and Smith, 2006).
- If you want an unambiguous type determination you should go to your school's counseling center and have someone who is qualified to interpret your results and administer the MBTI for you.

Your type is just an expression of consistent preferences in your thinking.

As a way of developing your interest in psychological type and also as a way of teaching you something about it, I've devised a brief questionnaire that is linked below to serve as a type indicator.

- The LSTI is different from other type indicators in that it relies solely on your preferences in learning to determine your type.

- If you consider that learning is just another form of thinking, just as shopping for a car or deciding on a career, then you can conclude that your type preferences in learning are similar to your type preferences in general.

If you aren't sure what your preferences are, you might bias your type.

Before you proceed with the type questionnaire it is important to know about bias in determining your type. You will notice that all of the questions are 'forced choice,' meaning you choose one of two opposites.

- By definition, if you prefer one you cannot simultaneously prefer the other.
- The mistake most first timers make in thinking about type is the assumption that being a type is saying you only think that one way.
- Remember that having a preference in your thinking does not prevent you from thinking the opposite way.
- A type preference only means that you trust one way of thinking over the other. For example, if you know you don't trust your feelings, you will much prefer to use logic in making decisions.

It is healthy and useful to incorporate the opposite in thinking with your preference.

- You can consider feelings as additional facts to incorporate into your logic.
- You can incorporate more facts into your intuition to make it more relevant.

The way you think at work (or school) isn't necessarily an indication of your type.

A second way you can bias your type determination is to confuse what you do at work with what you actually prefer to do. A pediatric resident came up to me after a workshop and pointed to his appointment book to show me how his day was structured and planned out. He told me that my description of the perceptive type, that is adaptive and flexible, describes him best, but since he is so structured at work he seems to be the opposite type. I asked him if he used the appointment book when he went home and he told me no, at home he could do as he wanted. You see, if he was the organized judging type, he would have wanted to use it at home too!

Type summaries can help you sort out uncertainties in determining your type.

Now you know that you can unwittingly bias your type. You always need to compare your results with a reliable description of your type to confirm that it sounds like you. I guarantee you, only one of the 16 types will sound uniquely like you. Type summaries are available in Appendix A of [SuccessTypes in Medical Education](#), a free download at this website. If the description doesn't sound like you, then change one of the letters for any of the dimensions that were nearly evenly divided. The description should sound right to you or you may be a different, but closely related, type.

- The type descriptions available on the internet may not be reliable unless the contributing individual is a member of the Association for Psychological Type International.
- You can get an inexpensive description of the types from CAPT (www.capt.org). The book "Looking at Type: The Fundamentals" by Charles Martin, Ph.D., (Product No. 60107) also will provide you with in depth descriptions of each of the types.

Now let's go to the [Learning Style Type Indicator \(LSTI\)](#).

If you still have some uncertainty, you can:

- Seek out a counselor at your school who is certified with the MBTI.
- Order a copy of Introduction to Type™ (5th Ed., Product No. 30042) from CAPT, Inc. [800/777-2278]. The type descriptions in this booklet are more thorough, and may help you find the 'real' you.

1. Reference: Cook, DA and AJ Smith, Medical Education 2006; 40: 900-7.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® and the MBTI® are registered trademarks of Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

© Copyright 1998, 2008

Last updated: 03/05/1