

There Is No “I” in Team... But There Might Be an ESFJ

A human resources team learns how to meld its members’ personalities to achieve optimum communication and group performance.



The following story was told by Debbie Levine, a consultant with human performance improvement organization CPP, the publisher of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator personality assessment (MBTI).

CLIENT >>

A large United States-based food distribution company

PROBLEM >>

A 10-person human resources team sought assistance to improve its members’ connectivity and communication and to achieve higher performance as a unit.

CAUSE >>

Levine worked with Emily Riggs, senior manager of human resources, to implement a six-month training program to diagnose opportunities for improvement and to enhance team performance. Using ThinkBox, a

web-based, on-demand MBTI learning tool, the team took a survey to assess its performance along seven dimensions: alignment, communication, conflict management, innovation, process, team orientation, and trust. The team members discovered several performance deficits, including poor communication and team conflict, and chose to focus their efforts on developing communication.

METHODS/TOOLS >>

After completing the survey, the team created group objectives, and individuals formed goals based on their personality profiles. They met to identify and discuss their personalities and learned how each individual contributed to the overall group dynamic and communication. The training consisted of a blend of team and individual work via workshops, readings, and assignments. Each member customized the

training experience for her personality type and communication goals by choosing from a variety of resources within the curriculum.

The training also included videos, which members viewed on their own and as a group. For example, one coaching module taught participants how to better deliver and receive feedback; students could choose to watch videos about other personality types to learn how their colleagues communicated. The team then viewed the videos as a group to build overall awareness of their communication dynamic.

The training helped the individuals to become more self aware and to understand how their personalities interacted to shape group communication. The learning platform’s on-demand features allowed participants to access all of the resources quickly and easily, providing greater knowledge transfer throughout the program.



LESSON LEARNED:

Summarizing her team’s experience, Riggs learned that an online, interactive learning platform is an excellent tool for group performance improvement efforts: “Video training segments, for example, reinforce the authority of information presented in facilitated discussions and greatly aid in accurate recall.”