Manage conflict, elevate performance, and help your team *be better.*

Using the MBTI® and TKI Tools in Team and Leadership Development

Appreciating and managing differences go hand-in-hand with many aspects of team and leadership development. The MBTI assessment reveals fundamental differences among people, and the TKI tool offers ways of dealing with those differences effectively and productively. By using these tools together, you can help teams identify the dynamics that may be holding them back and provide them with strategies for improving their performance. Here are some tips for designing a team workshop that combines the insights from both assessments.

1. Create a training agenda that will enable you to explore the powerful insights from both tools. Incorporate interactive activities that put the concepts into action.

Plan a full-day workshop. You can break the agenda into two days, if needed. To ensure that you will have ample time for discussion and experiential activities, administer the assessments ahead of time (both can be administered online or in print format). If you will not be conducting MBTI interpretations prior to the workshop, be sure to provide concrete examples and/or activities that illustrate the differences between the preferences so that you can help guide team members to their best-fit type. To reinforce TKI concepts, try a competitive activity and debrief on the behaviors that resulted.

2. Prepare for group discussion by creating a "team grid" that identifies members' personality types and preferred conflict modes.

Plot team members' dominant TKI conflict-handling modes by placing check marks in the appropriate boxes in the TKI model. Next, indicate team members' personality types on an MBTI team type table. Notice the similarities between MBTI and TKI preferences and consider how these might enhance team effectiveness. Then, consider the differences. This will prepare you to lead the team in a discussion about how these differences might detract from team effectiveness.

3. Overlay team members' MBTI preferences and TKI modes to get a richer view of the team's conflict management style.

Research studies by TKI coauthors Ken Thomas and Ralph Kilmann suggest that certain MBTI preferences may be significant influences on conflict-handling behavior. Specifically, team members with a Feeling preference tend to have an Accommodating conflict style. Team members with an Extraversion preference tend to have a Collaborating style. You can read the coauthors' research article at http://kilmanndiagnostics.com/interpersonal-conflict-handling-behavior-reflections-jungian-personality-dimensions.

4. Help the team break out of unproductive behaviors by establishing "operating agreements" outlining how team members will work together going forward.

Norms are the generally accepted—and often unwritten—rules of behavior that govern the members of a group (e.g., "It is not okay to say no in this department"). In order to change norms that are getting in the way of its performance, the team must first identify them. Then it can redesign the norms as "operating agreements" (e.g., "We use 'active listening' in our team discussions"; "We deal directly with team members when we have disagreements with them") spelling out how the members will work together to meet the team's needs and goals. This will give the team a clear understanding of the expected behaviors and will help members feel more comfortable pointing out unacceptable behaviors when they arise in the future.