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The MBTI® Step II™ Approach to Personality Type

Our goal in writing this guide is for you to become as excited and enthusiastic about the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*® (MBTI®) Step II™ approach to type as we are. We provide you with useful facts, new perspectives on personality type in general and the Step II approach in particular, and a good deal of practical advice that will enhance your work with clients. With a solid foundation to build on and your own experience administering and interpreting the Step II assessment, you will likely find new meaning in and additional ways to use this level of type productively.

TYPE TERMINOLOGY

The term *preference pair* used in this guide is equivalent to the term *dichotomy*. The term *orientation* used here (referring to the Extraversion and Introversion orientations and the Judging and Perceiving orientations) is equivalent to the term *attitude*. The terms *function* and *mental function* (referring to Sensing, Intuition, Thinking, and Feeling) are being replaced by the terms *process* and *mental process*. You will find all these versions used in many type publications. Since the terms *preference pair*, *orientation*,

and *process* are easier for end users to grasp than *dichotomy*, *attitude*, and *function*, we recommend their use. However, because this publication is for practitioners, we will use the terms interchangeably.

The two chapters in part I provide the historical, theoretical, and practical context that underlies the MBTI Step II assessment. The objective of these chapters is to provide the essential grounding practitioners need.

Chapter 1, "Introduction," describes the unique features of the Step II level of type. In one of our lighter moments we considered calling this chapter "Step II Profiles: Piling on the Possibilities." It includes examples that illustrate the nature and style of Step II information, the scoring and interpretation categories used, and a brief overview of basic Step II contents. This overview reveals the ways that a Step II interpretation adds value to what is available from Step I™ information. We have also included the early history that led to development of the Step II level of type and the way this advanced approach fits into the Jung-Myers personality theory.

Chapter 2, “Understanding the Step II™ Facets,” goes right to the heart of the Step II assessment by defining and describing the 20 facets that are its essence. We might have titled it “Figuring Out the Fun Facets.” You will need to be familiar with the facets and their interpretation to understand and apply

the information in the rest of the guide. You will likely refer to this chapter often as you read later chapters, and doing so will expand your knowledge and understanding. The chapter will also be invaluable when you are interpreting the facets to clients and helping them verify their results.

Exploring Individuality with the Step II™ Assessment

Part II of the guide focuses on three unique features of the Step II assessment: *out-of-preference results*, *midzone results*, and *decision-making styles*. These three features magnify the explanatory power of the 20 Step II facets. It is interesting that the first feature, arguably the most powerful, is inextricably dependent on MBTI Step I results.

Out-of-preference results, discussed in chapter 3, connect the five Step II facets of a preference pair (E–I, S–N, T–F, or J–P) to the client’s underlying preference on that pair. Users of the Step II assessment must therefore adequately understand each Step I preference. We might have titled this chapter “Out-of-the-Ordinary Outcomes.”

Midzone results, the second unique feature and the subject of chapter 4, are found only in the Step II assessment. There is no similar feature in Step I reports because, unlike the 20 facet scales, the four Step I scales have more than enough items to allow identification of a statistical midpoint for each preference pair.

The playful title for this chapter could have been “The Multiple Meanings of Midzones.”

Similarly, the subject of chapter 5, decision-making styles, provides information not tapped by the Step I Thinking–Feeling preference pair. All five T–F facets considered separately have a role in making and carrying out decisions. But they don’t provide the distinct perspective on decision making yielded by combining the results on the first two T–F facets: Logical–Empathetic and Reasonable–Compassionate. You could imagine this chapter’s title as “Deciphering Decision Making.”

How to Use the Step II™ Assessment with Clients

Parts I and II of this guide were designed to give you a solid understanding of what the Step II assessment is—its contents and features. The three chapters in Part III will explain how to use the Step II assessment with clients.

Chapter 6, “Understanding the Step II™ Report Options,” provides a detailed, page-by-page description of the MBTI® Step II™ Interpretive Report and a shorter description of the MBTI® Step II™ Profile report. The focus is on the individualized contents of the Interpretive Report, which will equip you to understand and explain each of the elements that appear. This chapter might have been titled “Portraying Profound Profiles.”

Chapter 7, “How to Administer the Step II™ Assessment,” covers standard administration procedures, such as appropriate ages of potential Step II clients, administration and scoring options, issues to consider when asking clients to take the assessment,

and suggestions for obtaining the most candid responses from clients. We almost considered calling this chapter “Admirable Administrations.”

With your understanding of the Step II™ Interpretive Report and your knowledge of administration issues that may influence your clients’ results, you will find your expertise as a professional user of the Step II assessment further enriched by chapter 8, “How to Conduct an Interpretation Session.” The detailed basic approach assumes you will be using the Step II™ Interpretive Report, although the same principles will apply should you opt for the brief Step II™ Profile. The chapter includes several sections covering advanced interpretation techniques, such as facet patterns that appear contradictory but make sense after discussion and the influence of a client’s background characteristics on the distinctive way facets emerge. Imagine the title of this chapter as “Interesting, Even Idiosyncratic Interpretation Issues.”

Enhancing Your Expertise in Using the Step II™ Assessment

The last part of this guide brings to bear everything you have learned in the preceding chapters so you can confidently and expertly apply what you know to individuals and groups.

Chapter 9, “Enhancing Your Type Applications,” focuses on using the assessment for team building, coaching, career counseling, relationship counseling, and individual counseling/therapy. Many examples enliven the text, providing readers with a broad range of tactics for applying the Step II assessment. We could have titled this chapter “Skillful Skirmishes with Step II” or “Potentially Problematical Profiles” or even “Rollicking with Results.”

Chapter 10, “Enhancing Your Technical Knowledge,” lives up to its title by covering a wealth of information that will help you satisfy your own curiosity, as well as answer in plain English the inevitable questions you will hear from your clients. The contents of the chapter range alphabetically from age-related questions to validity. In between those two entries you will find various aspects of the construction of the assessment, such as the source of the items, how the facets were named and ordered, and why there are 20 facets. Other entries cover cultural factors and education and gender influences. Of course, this chapter really presents “Fantastic Facts About Facets.”