The number of people in career transition has risen sharply in recent years, thanks largely to changes precipitated by a turbulent global economy. Many companies have been forced to downsize, if not shut down, laying off employees and often saddling survivors with a heavier workload. Lean and mean is the new standard in business, a reality that is understandably taking a toll on career and job satisfaction.

As harsh as the current business climate may be, it does present an opportunity for people in transition—an opportunity to reinvent themselves and create a truly satisfying professional life. Channeled appropriately, career stress can lead to a reemergence of meaning and purpose with a renewed energy to pursue one’s passions. This is where the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) and Strong Interest Inventory® assessments come in—ideal tools to help you start the process of working with your clients to make their lives better.

The MBTI personality instrument has been used for more than 60 years to help individuals better understand themselves and how they interact with others. It offers perspective on many aspects of people’s professional and personal lives, including decision making, project management, change management, approach to conflict, and stress management. The MBTI preferences indicate where people tend to focus their attention, how they take in information, how they make decisions, and how they deal with the external world.

The Strong Interest Inventory assessment is one of the world’s most widely respected and frequently used planning tools. For more than 85 years it has been used to match people’s interests to careers they might enjoy and find fulfilling. It explores individuals’ level of interest in six broad areas called General Occupational Themes (GOTs)—Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional—as well as in specific interest areas that often point to work activities, projects, course work, and leisure activities they may find motivating and rewarding. Using this information, individuals are able to extract occupations that may be of interest to them and/or areas to consider as potential new directions in their career.
When we combine the data from these two assessments, an exciting and powerful story emerges and we start to see clients embrace new possibilities. This guide explores how you can use the combined data to help your transition clients successfully navigate their search for a new, betterfitting career.

**STRONG GOTs AND MBTI® PREFERENCES**

Research suggests a number of relationships between the Strong GOTs and the MBTI preferences, most notably Realistic with Thinking and Perceiving (TP), Artistic with Intuition and Feeling (NF), Social with Feeling (F), Enterprising with Extraversion (E), and Conventional with Sensing and Judging (SJ). Let’s take a look at each of these combinations.

**Realistic/Thinking and Perceiving**

A number of correlations exist between the Realistic Theme and the Thinking and Perceiving preferences. The logic, analysis, and common sense required to operate machinery and tools successfully requires being present and in the moment (Perceiving). People who prefer Perceiving tend to enjoy process and will be consistent and tenacious in assessing a situation until it is understood or a problem is remedied. By paying attention to the here and now and what is happening right in front of them, people with a preference for Thinking can express in a practical way their penchant for logic.

**Artistic/Intuition and Feeling**

The intersection of the Artistic Theme and the Intuition and Feeling preferences might be described as capturing the “heart and soul” of the artist. The preference for Intuition gives rise to ideas, inventions, creative arguments, other possible realities, and physical forms we can only imagine. Artists use their intuition to tap into their creativity and explore what could be. Often they will describe a project as a work in progress, with no idea what the end product will look like. But they know in their gut that it will be something fantastic. The Feeling preference represents the artist’s sensitivity. Relationships, expressions, experiences, and desires all fuel an artist’s creativity and are related to Feeling. With a focus on internal values, external connections, and understanding the world by way of meaning and relationships, artists infuse their emotions and feelings into their work and bring their passions to life.

**Social/Feeling**

People with a high score on the Social Theme often enjoy spending their time taking care of people, teaching and training, and joining with others to work through difficult situations. They are motivated by their desire to give of themselves to help others. This parallels the Feeling preference and its inherent attention to values and morals. People with a high Social score often feel driven to provide service to others. They experience tremendous
satisfaction in influencing the life of another person, especially when they can see that their efforts are having a positive effect. Similarly, people with a clear preference for Feeling tend to make decisions based on how they feel about something and how others will be affected by their choices.

**Enterprising/Extraversion**

The Enterprising Theme speaks to influencing, managing, and persuading others. What better way to do that than by sharing one’s energy, enthusiasm, and excitement with others through conv conversation? People who score high on the Enterprising Theme tend to be competitive and enjoy winning others over to their way of thinking. One vehicle for persuading others is the quickthinking energy that an Extravert brings. People with a preference for Extraversion tend to “think on their feet”—they can formulate a thought or argument while they are talking. Sometimes Extraverts open their mouth and start speaking without knowing what they will say or how their argument will end. Somehow, though, they manage to share significant thoughts and are sufficiently believable to gain influence with others. Extraverts can motivate and inspire others simply by sharing their enthusiasm for a topic. Susan T. Fiske, Amy J. C. Cuddy, and Peter Glick conducted a study in which they examined first impressions and what was necessary to establish and make a good impression. Their research revealed that 80 percent of people extract their first impressions through two elements—warmth and competence, with warmth always trumping competence. If you can connect with another person, you have likely already won half the battle.

**Conventional/Sensing and Judging**

The Conventional Theme is about organizing, understanding, and managing data, systems, and information. It is no surprise, then, that the Sensing and Judging preferences are a good fit with the Conventional Theme. Sensing has to do with the kinds of information people prefer—and the more information, the better. People with a preference for Sensing like specific, concrete, practical information that enables them to make sound and effective decisions when implementing systems or best practices. People with a preference for Judging like planning and closure. Making lists, checking them off, and tracking progress keeps systems tight and helps ensure that deadlines are met. The combination of Sensing and Judging offers the sensibility and reliability required in the kinds of roles that involve meticulous, conscientious attention to detailed information.

**EXTRAVERSION—INTROVERSION AND GOTs**

The Extraversion–Introversion preference pair explores where people focus their attention and how they energize themselves during any given day. Why does this matter in the context of career transition? The answer has to do with engagement, an important element of job satisfaction. Understanding how our clients “recharge their battery” lets us know
how we can help them achieve flow, a term coined by Mihaly Csikszentmihaly to mean the optimal experience in which people tune into their passions and become so engaged that time stands still and they get lost in the flow of the activity. People with a preference for Extraversion often talk about feeling “wound up” after a presentation or performance because the energy flow is still going. People with a preference for Introversion might achieve flow by diving into research and reading or thinking about the content in a new way. Writers often talk about being “in the zone” or, by contrast, having writer’s block, both experiences driven by the way they metabolize their energy.

Extraversion and Introversion are also significant because in each of the GOTs, we can imagine that the way our clients connect with the world will affect their visibility in the professional roles they choose. According to research, the Enterprising and Social Themes seem to be associated more with people who prefer Extraversion and tend to like working with others, while the Realistic and Investigative Themes tend to be associated more with people who prefer Introversion and tend to like working independently. Conventional and Artistic are evenly split between Extraversion and Introversion. Of course, these correlations in no way limit where or how people can start thinking about their career search, but they do provide some useful ideas about how the tasks involved in certain professions or roles may influence people’s requirements for and use of energy.

**FUNCTION PAIRS AND GOTs**

Next, we can examine the function pairs—the drivers of type. The two middle letters of each MBTI type represent the dominant function, the preference that is most used by, and thus comes most naturally to, people of that type; and the auxiliary function, the second-most-used preference, which supports the dominant function and sometimes is the first preference others see. Extraverted people generally show their dominant function first, while Introverted people often show their auxiliary function first. That might be part of the reason why Introverts are sometimes misunderstood. Function pairs provide further insight into the intersection of type and interests. The following chart shows how the function pairs and GOTs interact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong GOT</th>
<th>MBTI FUNCTION PAIR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ST</strong></td>
<td><strong>SF</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>Analyzing data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using information to protect others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building or repairing machinery</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Analyzing computer networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizing data in spreadsheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigative</td>
<td>Devising a formula for a medication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading a dental X-ray</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analyzing a rock’s composition</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observing animal behaviors</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Applying technology to science</td>
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## MBTI® Function Pair

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong GOT</th>
<th>MBTI® Function Pair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ST</strong></td>
<td><strong>SF</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Artistic** | Designing a city’s downtown area  
Creating a corporate logo  
Grading an English essay  
Writing a finance column  
Photographing bonsai trees  
Finding a specific library book  
Reporting a human interest story  
Editing a public service announcement  
Translating instructions for passports  
Researching and constructing a legal argument  |
| **Social**  | Administering IV medication  
Writing a high school budget  
Teaching an accounting class  
Observing and recording symptoms in an ICU  
Diagnosing a speech disorder  
Teaching someone to walk again  
Providing speech therapy  
Organizing a community potluck dinner  
Implementing a case management plan  
Coaching a birthing patient in labor  |
| **Enterprising**  | Researching employee health benefits  
Comparing potential fabrics for a chair  
Forecasting sales for the quarter  
Leading an operations department  
Writing questions for a focus group  
Working as a personal shopper  
Talking about constructing a retirement fund  
Helping a person choose the right computer  
Managing janitors at a children’s hospital  
Assisting people with rebooking a flight  |
| **Conventional** | Gathering research for a case/argument  
Analyzing software and computer compatibility  
Constructing an IRA portfolio  
Doing a person’s taxes  
Reconciling a company’s profits and losses  
Serving as a medic in the Marines  
Organizing an executive’s schedule  
Producing an independent film  
Preparing a meal at a hospital  
Helping people understand their investments  |
| **NF**  | **NT**              |
| **Realistic** | Maintaining a natural landscape  
Designing a fitness plan  
Responding to a 911 call  
Planting beautiful flowers  
Designing network systems  
Directing a boot camp for new recruits  
Designing green space in a city  
Making a diagnosis based on an X-ray  
Building a modern piece of furniture  
Envisioning a future car design  |
| **Investigative**  | Writing about treatment for anxiety  
Counseling a person for addiction  
Managing a research project  
Realigning a person’s spine  
Teaching astronomy and the constellations  
Understanding the root of social problems  
Creating a mathematics college course  
Developing an iPad app  
Experimenting with liquid formulas  
Researching brain behavior  |
| **Artistic**  | Teaching painting to high schoolers  
Delivering a leadership workshop  
Writing an ad campaign for coffee  
Photographing a family holiday portrait  
Managing a company’s public image  
Illustrating an anatomy textbook  
Writing a marketing pitch  
Debating the impact of ESL programs  
Designing a modern, green school building  
Creating a conflict management model  |
| **Social**  | Writing a special-needs curriculum  
Counseling a problem student  
Arranging flowers at a wedding  
Waiting with a patient for surgery  
Performing a holiday show with students  
Teaching a foreign language  
Prioritizing an educational budget  
Instructing college students in architecture  
Delivering a sermon about patience  
Facilitating an addiction recovery group  |
### Whole Types and GOTs

Finally, we can also look at the relationship between whole types and GOTs. Each MBTI type represents people with individual results, preferences, clarity of those preferences, and dynamics. Every ISTJ is going to look similar to and different from every other ISTJ in terms of interests. However, we can hypothesize about shared areas of interest based on drivers of type and a holistic understanding of what type dynamics means.

**ISTJ**
ISTJs approach the world by wanting to understand it—how it works, what makes sense, and the difference between right and wrong. They want to be your “go-to” person for many things and are motivated by a desire to fix things. They tend to be deliberate, reliable, and consistent. Interactions with the GOTs predominantly reside in Investigative, Conventional, and Realistic but, of course, are present in all Themes.

**ISFJ**
ISFJs approach the world by wanting to understand it so they can contribute to it. They have a passion for service to others, whether through organizing, providing structure, or contributing information. They are interested in pleasing others and being accommodating in relationships. Once ISFJs understand their role in a relationship, others can count on them to do their part. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Social, Investigative, and Conventional but, of course, are present in all Themes.

**INFJ**
INFJs cherish their internal world and rely on their intuition when making decisions about people. They are reliable and often work hard behind the scenes to organize things and make sure people have what they need. They show care and concern for others through quiet support and encourage people to live up to their potential. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Investigative, Social, and Artistic, but, of course, are present in all Themes.
INTJ
INTJs have a rich internal world in which they construct and focus on what is most important to them: a vision for the future. They like to feel in control of the world in which they live and tend to concentrate on intellectual concepts, demonstrating drive and vision. They like structures and routines that make it possible for them to plan and take action to improve the world around them. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Investigative, Enterprising, and Realistic but, of course, are present in all Themes.

ISTP
ISTPs need to understand how things work. They observe and analyze situations in order to see how the pieces fit together. ISTPs are flexible and can adapt well to any situation. Their desire to simplify things and understand them in an efficient way makes them valuable problem solvers and analysts. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Investigative, Realistic, and Conventional, but, of course, are present in all Themes.

ISFP
ISFPs like to help others. Their contribution comes in the form of information that is based on their experiences of the people, places, and things in their lives. They enjoy tasting all that life has to offer and having the independence and freedom to do so. ISFPs are driven by their desire to make a difference and tend to be helpful, kind, and observant. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Investigative, Social, and Artistic, but, of course, are present in all Themes.

INFP
INFPs like to dream up ideas about improving something or trying something new. They enjoy flexibility and variety as they experiment with new ideas. Their main motivation is making the world a better place, which they do through their kind acts and consideration for others—as well as through their passion for their own growth and development and that of the people around them. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Artistic, Social, and Investigative, but, of course, are present in all Themes.

INTP
INTPs have a rich internal world in which they practice developing what is most important to them: becoming proficient in many areas and demonstrating their competence. Their main motivation is mastering the world in which they live. They enjoy playing with ideas and strategies to solve complicated challenges. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Investigative, Enterprising, and Artistic but, of course, are present in all Themes.

ESTP
ESTPs enjoy being present and active in the world around them and become excited by new and fun things. They are skilled at assessing what is needed in the moment and taking quick action to resolve a crisis. They are often the focus of fun and action and enjoy work that satisfies both of these criteria. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Investigative, Enterprising, and Realistic but, of course, are present in all Themes.
ESFP
ESFPs are connected to and aware of their external environment, especially the tangibles they can experience. They are motivated by offering practical service to others and by providing information to help people be successful and get what they need. ESFPs like living in the moment, having fun, and bringing their flexible, spontaneous style to the work they do. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Social, Enterprising, and Artistic but, of course, are present in all Themes.

ENFP
ENFPs are gifted at making people feel welcome and included in the fun. They are spontaneous and enjoy learning about people and things from different cultures. Their curiosity helps them connect people and networks so they can think about possibilities and a vision for empowering people toward growth and development. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Artistic, Enterprising, and Social, but, of course, are present in all Themes.

ENTP
ENTPs like to learn everything about everything. At the core of their personality are an ingenious perspective, an innovative approach, and, most important to them, a drive to share their vision and ideas with others. ENTPs want to be experts, and they work hard to integrate a wealth of logical facts into their everyday conversations. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Artistic, Social, and Investigative but, of course, are present in all Themes.

ESTJ
ESTJs are clear, concise, articulate, and directive in expressing what needs to get accomplished to reach a goal. They enjoy directing others with logic, precision, and efficiency in the service of getting things done. They have high standards for themselves and others, and are fair in assessing things based on realistic parameters. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Investigative, Enterprising, and Realistic but, of course, are present in all Themes.

ESFJ
ESFJs are very verbal and like to share their observations and feelings with others. They strive to make a difference, enjoy providing practical service to others, and need to feel appreciated. They work hard to make sure everyone is getting along, as harmony helps them do their best work. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Social, Conventional, and Realistic but, of course, are present in all Themes.

ENFJ
ENFJs enjoy being around others and want to make sure that everyone gets along and feels valued. They need to know they are appreciated and thrive on receiving verbal feedback and public affirmation that all the help they give to others is appreciated. ENFJs especially enjoy helping people deal with their relationships or feelings and finding creative ways for people to meet their goals. Interactions with GOTs predominantly reside in Artistic, Social, and Enterprising but, of course, are present in all Themes.
ENTJ
ENTJs are driven by the pursuit of knowledge and excellence. They strive to develop mastery and expertise in many things and expect competence from the people with whom they interact and work. Theories, systems, innovations, and an overall desire to make things better informs their creative tendency to improve upon and enhance current structures. Interactions with GOts predominantly reside in Investigative, Enterprising, and Artistic but, of course, are present in all Themes.

CONCLUSION
Professionals often find themselves entrenched in a career without ever having thought about whether it is a good fit or something for which they have a passion. When you work with clients to help them align their interests with their preferences, you enable them to see the bigger picture. Partnering with your transition clients to help them self-assess using the Strong and MBTI tools will influence the strategy they take in their search for a career that is both personally fulfilling and professionally rewarding.

NOTES

About CPP, Inc.
Since its founding in 1956, CPP, Inc., has been a leading publisher and provider of innovative products and services for individual and organizational development. CPP has been supplying reliable training solutions to businesses of all sizes, including the Fortune 500, for more than 50 years. The company’s hundreds of unique offerings have been used by millions of individuals in more than 100 countries, in more than 20 languages, to help people and organizations grow and develop by improving performance and increasing understanding. Among CPP’s world-renowned brands and services are CPP Professional Services and the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®)*, Strong Interest Inventory®, Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI), FIRO-B®, CPI 260®, and CPI 434® assessments.

For more information on CPP, Inc., and the MBTI and Strong Interest Inventory assessments, please visit www.cpp.com.