



Personality
at Work

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Private and Confidential

Interviewing using Personality Type

The first principle is that you would never make a recruitment decision based on personality type. The personality profile is a jumping off point for discussion where you can explore the individual in more detail, focusing on the personality traits and how they deal with specific issues and situations. Each type would have a different approach to the role and different strengths and weaknesses. The interview is an opportunity to understand how the person works 'in real life' and how that fits with the role, the business and the team.

Henry Ford's version of recruitment was: *"Why is it I get the whole person, when all I wanted was a pair of hands?"* And this is the issue. When we recruit we get the whole person with all their idiosyncrasies and foibles, so it important to fully understand each individual and assess their fit for the role, and for the culture of the organisation.

Firstly, whatever their personality type, ask what they thought of the profile. It's worth hearing, in their own words, how they see themselves and the profile is an excellent jumping off point for that.

Then you can explore specific areas that are relevant to the way the person answered the personality questionnaire and their personality type. Below is a short summary of each personality type and some questions:

INFJ - Questions

The INFJ is extremely complex being deep and private yet needing to know and (more importantly to them) feel they belong. This sense of belonging brings out all their best qualities and they will offer long-term commitment and loyalty way beyond what we could reasonably expect. However, they do not like work for work's sake nor feeling undervalued or just one of the masses. The INFJ is special and s/he will need to feel connected up to the inner core of the organisation and feel certain that what they do (however mundane) has real meaning and value to them. So where should you focus at interview to explore their personality and approach to the role?

How well do you deal with conflict?

Give us an example of when you had to deal with a difficult person or situation.

How do you make sure your own voice is heard?

How do you deal with work that is mundane?

On what occasions do you ask for help? Give us an example.

How well do you deal with office politics? Give us an example.

How do you deal with people who are different from you?

Give us an example of when you had to work with people who are not like you.

What is your contribution to a team?

How well do you work in a noisy environment?

Exploring 'Borderline' results

Sometimes in measuring people's personalities they do not show a clear preference on a particular scale and this will be shown on the person's Questionnaire Results. A borderline result is often the reason why someone might disagree with aspects of their personality profile, so it's helpful to bring them out in the conversation. A borderline result doesn't mean the person is only a tiny bit extraverted, for example, what it means is in some situations they will be more extraverted and in others they will be more introverted. This could depend on the people around them, work vs social setting, work vs home setting, topic of interest v topic that isn't relevant to them, their value system etc etc. This applies across all four scales. Here are some examples of questions to help you explore Borderline results:

Borderline Extraversion/Introversion

In what kinds of situations do you find you're more outgoing or interested in what's going on around you? Are there times when you find you need space away from people?

Borderline Sensing/Intuiting

Are there circumstances where you are more detailed or more big picture? What are the times where you prefer to drill into the detail vs take a helicopter view?

Borderline Thinking/ Feeling

When do you tend to make more logical/values-based decisions? Are there times or topics where you make more emotional decisions? Are there situations or topics where you make more logical, fact-based decisions?

Borderline Judging/Perceiving

Are there times when you prefer a more structured/flexible approach? In what situations do you prefer to plan and are there times when you'd prefer to go with the flow or be more spontaneous? Understanding how borderline results play out in real life is an incredibly helpful way of getting to know that person and what makes them tick, and it can resolve any questions about the personality profile.