

Being People Smart

Lesson 7-1: Introduction/Understanding Yourself

Discussion Guide – Confidentiality Reminder

One Word Check-in

Update – Personal, Business, Leadership

“Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don’t think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.” Romans 12:3 (NLT)

Before meeting: Take the [free personality assessment](#). This is the basis for your discussion.

Being “people smart” focuses on understanding yourself and others to improve and enrich your life and relationships. Our lives revolve around our relationships with people: our families, our coworkers, our friends and our church community. This series will focus on skills to make these relationships very rewarding. Our focus will be on being people smart in business relationships, but everything that pertains to our business relationships parallels all other relationships. We will discuss the following:

- Understanding Yourself
- Understanding Others
- Emotional Intelligence – Self-Awareness/
Self-Management
- Emotional Intelligence – Social Awareness/
Relationship Management
- Multi-Generational Leadership
- Empowerment
- Crucial Conversations

The first step in being people smart is for you to understand yourself. Your personality explains who you are, how you process information and how you interact with others. There are several personality assessment tools (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), DISC and Enneagram), but our focus for these lessons is the MBTI. Each assessment type has its own strengths and weakness. These are just tools to help you understand yourself and others. God made you unique and one of our goals is to help you understand your uniqueness.

The MBTI categorizes personality traits through the below letter designations:

Where you get your energy (E or I)	Extravert	Introvert
How you process information (S or N)	Sensing	iNtuition
How you make decisions (T or F)	Thinking	Feeling
Your approach to the world (J or P)	Judging	Perceiving

Your personality type is your preference, but it is not an absolute. For example, you may have Thinking (T) and Feeling (F) tendencies in certain situations, but you have a preference for how you make decisions using these two tendencies. You may like both chocolate and vanilla, but your preference is chocolate.

The value of your preference scores indicates the strength of your natural tendency. The higher you score in a category, the more this one item dictates your natural tendency to react to a situation. In short, this is the way you are wired (which is likely something God might need to help us with). Read page two for more information on how each individual letter “functions” and how the functions are tied together to give us a more complete understanding of ourselves.

Shared Experiences:

- Can everyone share their MBTI? Does this describe you? What did you learn about yourself?
- What did you learn about how people can best communicate with you? How do you react when people do or do not communicate with you in this manner?
- What are your weaknesses in communication?
- Can someone share how they have seen their personality payout in the workplace?

Bottom line: To foster relationships with others, the first thing we must understand is ourselves. Most people think that they have the perfect personality, but each personality type has its own set of unique strengths and weaknesses. No one is perfect, so we should not become arrogant thinking that we are. God made us for relationships, both with Him and with each other.

One Word Check-out

Dig Deeper

Want to learn more?

- *Article:* [MBTI Personality Types Fully Explained Including Strengths and Weakness](#) by 16Personalities.com. There is in-depth discussion of each personality type. This is a great resource if you want to understand yourself and others better.
- *Article:* [Personality Type Explained](#) by humanmetrics.com. This is an excellent website with a depth of information for each personality type. It also breaks down how the four different components relate to each other.
- *Video:* [What's Your Type?](#) presented by Jean Kummerow at TEDxGrinnellCollege. This is an excellent video!
- *Article:* [Using the Myers-Briggs® instrument with Lencioni's 5 Dysfunctions of a Team model](#)
- *Article:* [Cognitive Functions Explained In Simple Terms](#) by CareerPlanner.com. This article describes your eight cognitive functions, as well as what introversion and extraversion are. This takes a deeper look at how the four letters describe our personalities.
- *Article:* [Myers-Briggs Type Indicator History](#) presented by Wikipedia

The 16 MBTI personality types with links to each description (See Note 1) (Percent Frequency in Population – See Note 2)			
ESTJ (8.7%)	ISTJ (11.6%)	ENTJ (1.8%)	INTJ (2.1%)
ESTP (4.3%)	ISTP (5.4%)	ENTP (3.2%)	INTP (3.3%)
ESFJ (12.3%)	ISFJ (13.8%)	ENFJ (2.5%)	INFJ (1.5%)
ESFP (8.5%)	ISFP (8.8%)	ENFP (8.1%)	INFP (4.4%)

Note 1: MBTI personality types with links to each description given at [16personalities.com](https://www.16personalities.com)

Note 2: Data source: "MBTI Manual" published by CPP

The importance of understanding yourself

You have personality traits and tendencies that make you unique, that make you, you. You are uniquely wired. If you are extraverted, you get your energy from being around others. You think and process information verbally while an introverted person likes to sit and think privately. Both are likely to arrive at the same conclusion, but they use different processes to get there.

As you explore your personality, hopefully you feel affirmation in who you are. You are normal and there are others just like you. Each person has strengths and opportunities for growth (weaknesses). For example, if you are an ENTJ, you can be so driven, you can leave others behind, and you typically listen poorly. This person must understand how they need to function differently. They need to bring people with them, and they need to listen well. They need to understand how they can engage people that do not think and function like they do. Likewise, an ISFP (the opposite of an ENTJ) has a quiet sense of joyfulness; they are trusting, kind and considerate. They likely need to exercise and grow their decision-making process.

For you to understand others, you must first understand yourself! We will discuss the personality of others in the next lesson.