

PRAISE FOR

## WORK Types

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# WORK Types

JEAN M. KUMMEROW,  
NANCY J. BARGER,  
LINDA K. KIRBY



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## CHAPTER 5

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# LEADING: BEING IN CHARGE

### Leaders We Have Known

**B**ill was reminiscing:  
*"When I first went to work for this company thirty years ago, I had a wonderful boss. Gary was one of the original founders of the company, along with his brother, and he took on responsibility for hiring people, getting us organized, and making us feel like a part of the family. He worked hard to build consensus so everyone was included, and he always asked each of us what we thought before he made even the smallest decisions. He knew everything about each of us—our birthdays, our families, everything.*

*"Now it's true, if you left him out of the loop, he would get upset and feel hurt. He wasn't great at making the tough decisions—we carried some dead weight that we should have gotten rid of. And every once in a while, he would get on his high horse, shake his finger at us, and say, 'That is just wrong!'*

"When Gary retired, we had a great party for him. Everyone felt sad; it was like losing a wise uncle. It took him a week to pack up all the personal mementos in his office.

"The next boss I had—what a difference! Rob was also very competent, but in a really different way. There wasn't a machine or technical system he couldn't figure out, and if you went to him with a technical problem, he was great—he'd get all involved and work until it was solved. He'd ask lots of questions, but then let you do your job however you wanted. The business was really growing, and he seemed to always be on top of everything—he could pull together and make sense of a ton of information. He was smart, and I learned a lot from him.

"I can think of a number of times, though, when we'd be in a staff meeting and he'd come up with something out of the blue—a totally new direction that he hadn't discussed with anyone. Things were changing quickly, and there were times when we really needed him to tell us what to do, but he'd always say, you guys figure it out. Yet if we went in a direction that didn't match his standards, we'd be in trouble! Sometimes we really had to push him to get a decision on important things.

"When he left the company, he did it suddenly. It seemed like he was here one day and gone the next. We missed him and his technical expertise, but most of us felt that we hadn't ever really known him well.

"Then Catherine came in. I felt pretty uncomfortable at first with a woman boss—remember that was the late nineteen-seventies. But pretty quickly, we forgot she was a woman. Tough? Boy, was she tough. And a straight shooter. You always knew where she stood and what she wanted. You went to ask her about something, and she gave you the answer before you'd finished describing the problem. We were really organized and efficient. She streamlined every system, and you could either

get on board or get out of the way. She helped us solidify and set up systems to deal with the growth we'd been experiencing.

"Of course, some did feel bulldozed by Catherine's style. She was so blunt that she made a lot of people mad, even if she was right. Sometimes she made decisions so quickly that she missed some important information.

"She got a big promotion when she moved on—we weren't surprised—we'd known she was a fast-tracker. She ran a tight ship, and, I must admit, we were ready to loosen up a little. On the other hand, some of us were worried that everything might fall apart.

"Our business really changed in the late eighties and we became much more customer and market focused. It seemed that Vic arrived just in time. The first thing he did was to meet with every person in the department. He spent a lot of time with us, asking questions and finding out about all of us. We started going out to lunch, going out after work together—he was so encouraging, really a good guy. Before we knew it, we had begun feeling like a team! He always said to us, "The only reason we're here is to satisfy our customers. If we don't do that, we might as well close up shop and go home." Our customer-satisfaction ratings really went up.

"I must admit, though, he could drive us crazy. It was hard for some of us to move from Catherine's structured work to Vic's freewheeling style. When tough decisions needed to be made, he kept putting them off, hoping something would happen to resolve them. Sometimes he thought he was being really clear, and we didn't have a clue what he was talking about. He could change his mind three times just walking down the hall to the watercooler—we learned that you wanted to be the last one he talked to! And some people thought he played favorites, and I guess there were some of us who he would talk with and listen to easier than others."

Bill has described four different styles of leading (we use the words *leading* and *leader* in their broadest sense, to include activities of leading, managing, supervising, and team leadership). Each was effective in certain areas; each had its drawbacks for followers. We'll look at the four leaders Bill has described in more depth below. Bill obviously had figured out how to work with each one well, but to give you a head start, we'll also suggest tips to help you deal more effectively with each of these types of leaders.

### Some Leadership Styles

Although there are many ways of looking at leadership style, we've chosen four here based on combinations of how leaders make decisions (Thinking or Feeling) and how they deal with their outside worlds (Judging or Perceiving). These two activities are highly important and visible in how we lead and are led.

#### FJ (ISFJ, ESFJ, INFJ, and ENFJ) Leaders

Gary, Bill's first boss, was an ISFJ, and the style Bill described illustrated many of the strengths and weaknesses we would expect to see in bosses with the combination of Feeling and Judging.

#### MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS

- personal vision is tied to their values and beliefs
- others included in decision-making: want to know what others want/need before making decisions and to draw out and involve others
- approachable, want to hear what you have to say

- loyal—very supportive of others and organizational values
- strive for consensus, build it well, and organize the work environment to be harmonious
- want all employees to get what they want and need

#### MAJOR COMPLAINTS FROM FOLLOWERS

- avoid tough decisions, especially those that will affect people negatively
- don't give the bad news—try to put a positive spin on everything
- may avoid confronting difficult people—will cover up problem people, carry them along
- can become moralistic about their personal values: "This is wrong—I wouldn't ever treat people that way, and you shouldn't either!"
- can focus on relationships to the extent that it interferes with task completion—people issues come first
- want to be included and feel hurt if they are excluded

#### TIPS FOR DEALING WITH FJ LEADERS

1. Build a relationship with them—find out who they are as people and what's important to them.
2. Give them personal information about yourself.
3. Ask for their advice, help, and support regularly.
4. Include and inform them—don't exclude them, even when it would seem appropriate.
5. To persuade them of your position, don't rely on logical arguments. Tell them why it's important to you as an individual and how this affects you personally as well as why it's helpful to the team.

6. If they have a sensitive area, do your best to avoid it.
7. Use gentle, kind humor (not "T" sarcasm).
8. If they are under stress, recognize that they may be unmovable and back off.

#### TP (ISTP, ESTP, INTP, and ENTP) Leaders

Bill's second boss, Rob, was an ISTP, and the style Bill described illustrated many of the strengths and weaknesses we would expect to see in bosses with a combination of Thinking and Perceiving.

#### MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS

- technical expertise—high standards of competence for themselves and others
- give followers lots of room—hands-off leadership style
- see all information as good and potentially useful
- analyze vast amounts of information, create a logical structure for it
- tolerant of diversity of styles, as long as people get results
- flexible—stay open to new information and directions

#### MAJOR COMPLAINTS FROM FOLLOWERS

- don't give much direction: "Do it any way you want that works"
- change direction quickly, leaving others confused and seeing them as inconsistent
- may not share their reasons for doing things or their decisions because "it's so obvious"
- oblivious to others' differing needs—can come across as insensitive

- intolerant of those who don't meet their standards and tough on what they see as incompetence
- may put off decisions too long, hoping something will happen to resolve the situation

#### TIPS FOR DEALING WITH TP LEADERS

1. Give them lots of space to do their own thing.
2. Don't push, especially for decisions they're not ready to make—they'll slide away from you or get angry and push back.
3. Give them the problem, rather than the solution. If they want your solution, they'll ask.
4. Respect their independence and competence and trust them to do their job. Don't look over their shoulder.
5. Be direct and clear in your communication.
6. When you need to give them information about interpersonal problems or conflicts, keep it simple and low-key—present it to them as a problem and ask them to think of a solution.
7. Ask them what you want to know—about their expectations of your work, their sense of the group's direction—rather than waiting for them to share that with you.
8. Accept that you may not get a direct response or step-by-step instructions; they will give more general direction and expect you to figure out how to do a job.

#### TJ (ISTJ, ESTJ, INTJ, and ENTJ) Leaders

Bill's third boss, Catherine, was an ENTJ, and the style Bill described illustrated many of the strengths and weaknesses we would expect to see in bosses with the combination of Thinking and Judging.

## MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS

- cut to the chase—they get to the point and stay focused
- you know where they stand—they take clear positions
- appear calm, confident, and self-assured
- take quick action to implement decisions
- are fair and consistent—they will have systematic principles and will stick to them
- organize and structure the work to achieve goals

## MAJOR COMPLAINTS FROM FOLLOWERS

- leave others out of the decision-making process unless their views are directly relevant
- speak bluntly—can feel to others like a personal attack
- leave others in the dust—may move to action before others are ready (especially the ETJs)
- decide too quickly—may not gather enough information, including the impacts on people
- don't bend the rules for anyone
- so focused on task completion that they won't let go—picture a steamroller!

## TIPS FOR DEALING WITH TJ LEADERS

1. Approach them directly with what you want and need, and be ready to provide a logical rationale for it.
2. Organize what you want to say into major points (use bullets if written)—don't ramble!
3. If you need to go to them with a problem, be sure you've

- thought it through and tell them what you've tried or want to try.
4. Show them that you are competent and effective—demonstrate timely results.
  5. Tell them the consequences you see of their decisions, both positive and negative: "If we do this, this may happen."
  6. Stand up to them; they like their ideas but want to be criticized and don't respect "yes" people.
  7. Don't expect a lot of praise or appreciation; recognize that their critiques show they are interested and involved.
  8. Recognize that they show their concern for others by problem-solving and that they like to receive acknowledgment from others for how well they solved problems.

Hundreds of studies of the MBTI types of leaders and managers indicate that 60 to 85 percent prefer the combination of Thinking and Judging.<sup>1</sup> This means that there is a good chance you have or will have a TJ boss through much of your work life. Learning to deal more effectively with TJ leaders will make your work life more successful—and more enjoyable!

## FP (ISFP, INFP, ESFP, and ENFP) Leaders

Bill's last boss, Vic, was an ESFP and the style Bill described illustrated many of the strengths and weaknesses we would expect to see in bosses with the combination of Feeling and Perceiving.

**MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

- seek lots of information about everyone's positions, everything going on
- encourage rather than direct
- support individual differences and styles
- stay flexible, respond to whatever comes up
- involve and energize others
- are resourceful—know whom to contact for help and freely ask for information

**MAJOR COMPLAINTS FROM FOLLOWERS**

- change directions quickly as new information comes in—may appear inconsistent
- others may not really realize what's important to them because they may not make their central values clear to others
- put off decisions—hope “it will work out”
- avoid tough decisions because they hate disappointing or hurting people
- appear to play favorites—give special treatment to those they like and who like them
- go off in a number of directions that seem like tangents—resist structure

**TIPS FOR DEALING WITH FP LEADERS**

1. Trust their insights and instincts about people and express this trust to them.
2. Respect their values and what's important to them (you may have to ask to know what this is).
3. Build and maintain a personal connection with them.

4. When you need to present negative feedback, remember that direct criticism doesn't work well. Instead, tell them the personal impact the behavior has on you or others.
5. Trust that their indirect path will eventually lead to the goal.
6. Use light, gentle humor (watch the misuse of “T humor”).
7. When they've done something you like, tell them about it.
8. You can't give them too much sincere appreciation.

No matter what types of bosses you have, keep in mind that they have a particular style of leadership and your work life will go much better and be more pleasant if you understand this style and learn to deal with it effectively.

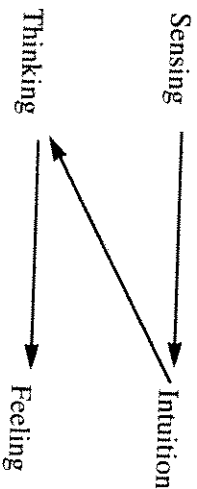
**Effective Decision-Making**

In addition to assisting you in learning to follow others more effectively, using the theory of type can help when you find yourself in a leadership position, formal or informal. Current changes in organizations and in the nature of work make it likely that each of us will be in situations where we need to use and develop our skills as leaders.

One of the things we most rely upon leaders to do is to make good decisions. Their decisions affect personal as well as organizational well-being, both immediately and in the long term. For many leaders, decision-making is almost automatic—they continue to use their familiar, comfortable approaches. We believe that being knowledgeable about psychological type can help leaders learn to make better decisions. Experienced and effective leaders have usually learned

some of the approaches we will recommend, though they may not use the same terminology. Others can find new perspectives to improve their decision-making. From a psychological-type perspective, good decision-making requires the use of all eight preferences. The two middle letters of any type are of particular importance when we begin to analyze decision-making styles because they refer to two basic stages involved in every decision: gathering information and arriving at a conclusion.

Isabel Myers developed a way of incorporating these type perspectives into decision-making, a tool commonly known as the “zigzag” model. Following such a model can insure that you cover all the bases (S, N, T, and F) in gathering information and evaluating alternatives:



Though you need not follow the model in a linear way, the best decisions will include spending time in each of the perspectives shown in the model: Sensing, Intuition, Thinking, and Feeling.

### Questions to Aid Decision-Making

The following gives some suggested ways to include each perspective.

### Questions you may want to consider while in the “S” mode:

1. What are the actual concrete facts of the situation?
2. What would common sense suggest about this?
3. What are the costs? What are the benefits?
4. What are we doing now that's working?
5. What has already been tried? How did it work? Can we modify that?
6. What have others done in similar circumstances?

### Questions you may want to consider while in the “N” mode:

1. Try reading between the lines—ask, What's really going on beneath the surface?
2. What other ways could we see this?
3. What are some of the new ideas in the field?
4. What patterns are in the data?
5. Are there theoretical models that would help?
6. What unique and different perspective could we use to view this situation?

### Questions you may want to consider while in the “T” mode:

1. What's wrong with everything we've considered?
2. What would be the right way to do this?
3. Why would this be the right way?
4. What are the consequences of each alternative?
5. If we step back, what's most logical?
6. Is this a reasonable thing to do?

### Questions you may want to consider while in the “F” mode:

1. Have we heard from everyone?
2. What's good about each idea?

3. What's most important to each person?
4. Can we find a way to include what's important for everyone in the decision?
5. What will fit best with the values of the organization?
6. What will best serve the people to be affected?

### Decision-Making Styles

As you can readily see, the optimum way to make decisions is to include all of these perspectives. However, if we look at the two middle letters of each type, we can see that each type has a tendency to focus on just two of the perspectives and to slight the other two. Research indicates that this can lead to flawed decision-making.<sup>2</sup>

To understand better what different types emphasize and overlook in decision-making, we will look at each of the four combinations of middle letters (ST, SF, NF, and NT). We will also give an example of how each combination might deal with this particular decision-making situation:

A department manager has been told by upper management that his or her department must cut its expenditures by 20 percent. How would each combination approach deciding how to respond?

#### SENSING AND THINKING (ST) LEADERS

**They pay most attention to**      **To make decisions, they will typically**

- specific, realistic, "hard" data
- past experience
- apply current standard operating procedures
- use tried and accepted methods

**This results in decisions that**      **Their decision-making style can be slanted toward**      **be problematic**

- established practices
- the status quo
- when the situation is ambiguous
- when qualitative data is important
- when novel and innovative approaches are needed
- when major transformation is needed

**As a result of this natural style, ST managers might approach budget cutting by**

1. looking at last year's budget figures to identify any "extras" that could be cut or
2. making across-the-board 20 percent cuts in every category.

#### SENSING AND FEELING (SF) LEADERS

**They pay most attention to**      **To make decisions, they will typically**

- specific information about people in their environment
- the opinions and ideas of people who are important to them
- try to find an alternative agreeable to everyone
- emphasize the needs of the specific people they have identified as important

**This results in decisions that**      **Their decision-making style can be slanted toward**      **be problematic**

- socially desirable solutions
- when they fail to include quantitative data

- decisions that everyone feels at least reasonably good about
- when they emphasize immediate harmony rather than long-term survival

- when novel and innovative approaches are needed
- when major transformations are required

**As a result of this natural style, SF managers might approach budget cutting by**

1. asking trusted people what they think would be the best way to proceed or
2. having everyone come together and discuss the problem to reach agreement on what the cuts should be.

**INTUITION AND FEELING (NF) LEADERS**

**They pay most attention to**      **To make decisions, they will typically**

- relevant stories and anecdotes
- imagery, symbols, and metaphors
- generate interesting new ways to see the problem—use their insights
- use analogies: “This is like . . .”

**This results in decisions that may be slanted toward**      **Their decision-making style can be problematic**

- new, novel solutions
- inspirational programs that will create enthusiasm
- when quantitative data is important
- when adjustment, rather than transformation, is needed
- when standard operating procedures would solve the problem

- when analogies don’t explain the situation—it’s not comparable to their experience

**As a result of this natural style, NF managers might approach budget cutting by**

1. using an analogy to get people to think creatively, saying something like, “Think of what people had to do during World War II to survive—they had to melt down pots and pans to provide metal for airplanes. Maybe there’s a way we can completely rethink what we do, combine our current resources, and come up with a new design that requires twenty percent less!” or
2. coming up with an ingenious idea, like selling off old equipment, that would allow them to avoid the cuts.

**INTUITION AND THINKING (NT) LEADERS**

**They pay most attention to**      **To make decisions, they will typically**

- patterns and meaning they see in the data
- the long-range view
- generate and test hypothetical alternatives
- judge solutions by their own conceptual framework

**This results in decisions that may be slanted toward**      **Their decision-making style can be problematic**

- their own system of understanding
- overly rational, unifying models
- when the data don’t fit their model (pattern)
- when adjustment, rather than transformation, is needed

- when their model is flawed
- when they have based their belief patterns on incorrect assumptions

**As a result of this natural style, NT managers might approach budget cutting by**

1. developing a critique of the directive and writing a concise statement of it for upper management, saying something like, "If we cut every department by twenty percent, we're signing our own death warrant. We need to step back and take a broader view—combine functions, fundamentally reorganize what we do," or
2. suggesting new models for the organization: "What we need is to become a learning organization."

Anyone in a leadership position can benefit from understanding his or her own particular decision-making style, along with its potential blind spots and biases, and appropriate and inappropriate uses.

The other MBTI preferences also can give helpful pointers to those wishing to increase their skills in decision-making and leading. Here are some examples:

- Extraverted leaders may fail to reflect enough on the data and then act impulsively.
- Introverted leaders may fail to gather information from enough people and to communicate as much as their followers would like.
- Judging leaders may prematurely structure situations and push toward closure without considering enough information.
- Perceiving leaders may leave situations open too long, waiting for the answer to emerge, and fail to provide sufficient structure.

The goal in using the concept of type to understand your own leadership style is finding ways to use the natural strengths of all the preferences and insure that you've covered all the bases.

**Enhancing Ways of Leading and Following**

Leaders and followers have different styles and needs based in part on their personality preferences. Whether you are leading or following, keep these points in mind:

**When you are leading, remember:**

1. You likely have a preferred style.
2. Being aware of the strengths and limitations of that style may help you avoid mistakes.
3. You may need to take into account the needs of your followers so that they can work better with you.
4. You may need to actively include the use of all the preferences in your decision-making, whether that means making a conscious effort to ask the questions that preference would ask or seeking out people of those preferences.

**When you are following, remember:**

1. You also likely have a preferred style.
2. Being aware of your type may help you identify more of what you need from your leader.
3. Understanding your leader's style may help you approach your leader in a way that is easier for him/her to understand you.
4. Differences between your type and your leader's type are to be expected and, hopefully, can be managed to the advantage of both parties.