

Personality Typing of Students Competing On Nationally Competitive Livestock and Horse Judging Teams

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Competitive judging events involving the evaluation of livestock and horses are held throughout the United States. Youth judging contests are sponsored by several organizations including 4-H and Future Farmers of America at the local, regional, and national levels. In colleges of agriculture, Animal and Dairy Science departments offer courses in livestock and horse selection and evaluation. Under the direction of the instructor, talented students from these classes may have the opportunity to form a team and represent the university at regional and national contests.

Judging competitions are enjoyable as well as educational. Competitors must learn the ideal physical make-up of animals and how various animals compare to the ideal. Verbal expression of this knowledge also is important as the students learn the ability to confidently explain their placings in a set of "reasons". Intensive training is necessary to become competitive in national judging events.

The instructor or coach of the team is responsible for developing several skills among team members. Since decision-making processes are of ultimate importance in the judging activity, coaches of the teams are directly involved in teaching students how to evaluate and weigh important points of animal conformation or performance. Students must learn to place the classes to closely agree with the official placings and to orally explain their placings of four animals. Many hours of practice are required to give a persuasive, truthful, organized set of reasons. Coaches across the country invest a large amount of time developing these skills among their judging team students each year. The ultimate long-term goals are to develop each student's general livestock knowledge and leadership potential with the extensive decision-making and speaking experiences. The short term goal is for students to strive to achieve their best performance in competition which would be an indication of the knowledge and skills gained.

Identifying and predicting the performance of students in competition is difficult, even for experienced and successful judging team coaches. Coaches have traditionally associated successful judging performance with experience, intelligence, and motivation, but all three factors do not necessarily produce a winning performance. Therefore, a study was conducted with students from four successful judging pro-

grams throughout the country to compare their decision-making processes relative to their contest success.

Methods

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI, Form F) was selected to type the personality attributes of the judging team students. The MBTI developed by Isabel Briggs-Myers is based upon the theories of Carl Jung. Jung stated that much apparent random variation in human behavior is actually quite orderly and consistent, being due to certain basic differences in the way people prefer to use perception and judgment (Myers, 1962). Based upon responses to 166 phrases and word pairs which were selected in situations on the standard form, the results of the MBTI characterize each respondent for one of two traits on four different bipolar pairs as described by Roberts (1987):

1. Extraversion (E) - Introversion (I): The direction of interest. Does the subject's interest flow mainly to the outer world of actions, objects and persons (E), or to the inner world of concepts and ideas (I)?
2. Sensing (S) - Intuition (N): How situations are perceived and experienced. Does the subject attach more importance to the immediate realities of direct experience (S) or to the inferred meanings, relationships, and possibilities of experience (N)?
3. Thinking (T) - Feeling (F): Judgement preferences. In making judgments, does the subject rely more on logical order and cause and effect (T) or on priorities based on personal importance and values (F)?
4. Judging (J) - Perception (P): Life style. Does the subject prefer to live in the judging attitude, systematically planning, ordering, and organizing his or her world, deciding what needs to be done and attempting to control events (J), or in the perceptive attitude, spontaneously, curiously awaiting events and adapting to them (P)?

Various combinations of the traits from each scale (total of 4) compose the individual type which indicates much about the total personality of the person. A total of 16 combinations exist in which people may be characterized, each of which represents different attitudes and preferences for perceiving and dealing with the world.

Results of the MBTI were scored at the Center for Applications of Psychological Type, Inc., Gainesville, Florida. The Center provides the results in a two part format: (1) a client's report with the results verbally interpreted and (2) a researcher's report with the raw scores of the respondent. The researcher's report was used to obtain actual scores for

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each trait so that numerical scores could be evaluated statistically. A score of >15 for any trait is considered "definitive," meaning the type designation is probably accurate and that the respondent tends to rely upon this trait more often than the trait at the opposite end of the scale.

Discrepancy scores derived from the report also were of interest in this study. Students responded to two sections on the MBTI: (1) a section where preferences for phrases were chosen, and (2) a separate section for word appeal. Based upon the agreement in responses between the two sections, a discrepancy score was calculated. A discrepancy score of 0 indicates there was no discrepancy in preferences between the two sections while a discrepancy score of >10 would indicate a considerable number of disagreements in the selections made between the two sections.

The personality types of 65 judging team students from four universities were estimated. Texas Tech University (TTU, livestock and horse coaches Drs. F. Craddock, M. McCann, and J. Heird, n=28), Colorado State University (CSU, livestock coach Dr. J. Edwards, n=10), Kansas State University (KSU, livestock coaches Dr. B. Able and Chris Skaggs, n=10) and South Dakota State University (SDSU, livestock coach Dr. D. Gee, n=17) participated in the project. All students were on the fall senior judging teams and competed nationally. Included in this study are TTU horse teams that placed second at the Ohio Quarter Horse Congress (Columbus, OH) and American Quarter Horse Association World Show (Oklahoma City, OK). Livestock teams placed first, third, sixth, and tenth) at the North American Livestock Contest (Louisville, KY) in 1985.

To characterize the most competitively successful Myers-Briggs personality types, coaches were asked to assign one of the following performance scores to each student. Performance scores ranged from one to four with these criteria:

1. Students must have placed in the top 10 individuals in at least two national contests. These individuals are always outstanding and could be depended upon to contribute significantly to the team score (n=18).
2. Students may have placed in the top 10 individuals only once, but they always put forth a solid performance and never hurt the team score (n=15).
3. Students may periodically contribute to the team score but remain unpredictable in practice and in a contest (n=15).
4. Students are consistently low on the team scores and do not place classes very well (n=17).

Preference scores for the psychological traits within performance levels of the students were analyzed in a randomized design. The discrepancy scores within each performance level for all traits also were analyzed in a randomized design. Non-orthogonal contrasts of the performance levels for preference and discrepancy scores included (a) 1 vs 2, 3, 4, (b) 1, 2 vs 3, 4 and (c) 1 vs 2 (Keppel, 1982).

Results and Discussion

The MBTI trait percentages and average scores on each scale are summarized for all schools and presented in Table 1. The even distribution of students on the E/I and J/P is

similar to an earlier publication on students enrolled in livestock and horse evaluation classes at Texas Tech University (McCann et al., 1989). But a higher percentage of the judging team students from this study preferred sensing and thinking relative to TTU students and the animal science majors at the University of Nebraska (Barrett et al., 1987). The average preference scores for both sensing and thinking are highly definitive (mean = 23.4) and indicate students' rely upon sensing and thinking methods of information gathering and processing. The high percentage of ST judging team students may reflect the type of student attracted to the activity, the type of student recruited by the coaches, the most successful personality type for this competition, or a combination of these factors. Regardless of the reasons, ST personalities dominated the judging teams studied.

Numeric Analysis of Preference Scores.

Factors that affect student performance have always been of interest to coaches. To gain a greater understanding of the most successful MBTI type judging team student, Table 2 presents the mean preference score for each scale relative to the performance level of the students. Non-orthogonal contrasts indicated the students with the highest performance level were extroverts and preferred to deal with people, animals, and things rather than with concepts and ideas indicated by the students in performance levels 2, 3, and 4. Yet the average introvert scores were not definitive, indicating students within all performance levels were somewhat adaptive to working with people and things. Definitive introverts often do not enjoy oral reason competition, have difficulty projecting themselves effectively in the reasons competition, or both. Consequently, these students usually do not try out for the team or quit after spring competitions.

Average scores for sensing on the S/T scale were the same ($P>.10$) between all performance levels. Students within all performance levels were highly dependent upon their senses to gather information. The nine students typed as N were distributed throughout the performance levels with an average score of 15. Three were classified as performance level 1 while performance levels 2, 3, and 4 contained two students each.

While students in all performance levels were thinking (T/F scale) in their approach to decision making, the performance level 1 score for T was greater than performance level 2 score or the average score of performance levels 2, 3, and 4, based on non-orthogonal contrasts. Yet the equally high preference score for T by performance level 3 precludes the sole conclusion that excellent judges are highly definitive for T.

The scale for J/P was not different ($P>.10$) among any of the performance levels. Although it is interesting to note

Table 1. MBTI Type Percentages and Average Scores of Judging Team Students From All Performance Levels (n=65).

Personality Traits	Student %	Average Score on Scale
E/I	51/49	.02(E)
S/N	86/14	23.40(S)
T/F	81/19	20.00(T)
J/P	51/49	1.30(J)

Table 2. Average Preference Scores for MBTI Types Within Four Levels of Performance.

Performance Levels	No. of Students	Average Preference Score for Traits			
		E/I	S/N	T/F	J/P
1	18	13.1(E) ^a	22.8(S)	28.9(T) ^a	5.6(P)
2	15	2.7(I) ^b	22.1(S)	12.6(T) ^{a,d}	2.6(P)
3	15	2.2(I) ^b	27.9(S)	29.0(T) ^b	3.2(J)
4	16	7.2(I) ^b	20.8(S)	9.4(T) ^b	10.4(J)

^{a,b} Means different (P<.05) by non-orthogonal contrast 1 vs 2+3+4.

^{a,d} Means different (P<.05) by non-orthogonal contrast 1 vs 2+4.

^{a,c} Means differ (P<.05) by non-orthogonal contrasts 1+2 vs 3+4.

students in the top 2 performance levels preferred P lifestyles, none of the average scores were definitive for either J or P and the non-orthogonal contrast was not different between 1 + 2 vs 3 + 4.

Discrepancy Scores Between Performance Levels.

Since discrepancy scores indicate the agreement in responses between two sections of the MBTI, these scores may tend to be indicative of the student's consistency in making decisions (i.e. placing classes). To get a simplistic overview of the occurrence of discrepancy scores relative to performance levels, Figure 1 presents the percentage of students with > 1 discrepancy score within each performance level. The 28% occurrence of discrepancy scores for performance level 1 is less than the percentages in performance levels 2, 3, and 4. Thus, one would expect those in performance level 1 to more consistently rely on their preferred MBTI types which could be conveyed as a "stronger personality" to those unfamiliar with the MBTI terminology. These students also may be more self-confident which would advantageously serve them in the judging event.

The mean discrepancy score for each performance level is presented in Table 3. Non-orthogonal contrast analysis produced differences between performance levels for only the E/I and S/N scales. The students in performance level 1 had smaller (P<.05) discrepancy scores than performance levels 2 or the average of 2, 3, and 4. Discrepancy scores for the S/N scale were also smaller for the top two performance levels relative to performance levels 3 and 4. In view of the results of Figure 1 and Table 3, larger discrepancy scores may be indicative of more placing indecisiveness and potentially lower performance level in judging competition.

Summary

Based upon the results of the MBTI, students from highly successful judging programs are very definitive for the sensing and thinking Jungian traits. The most successful students were extroverted, had a preference score of 20 or better on the S and T scale, and could be either J or P in their preferred lifestyle. Students with outstanding performances in national competition also had no or very small discrepancy scores, particularly for the E/I and S/N traits.

It is important to realize however, that the purpose of this study was not to cast the perfect guidelines from which to select students for judging teams. Readers should realize there are exceptions to every rule and ALL students, regardless of psychological type, deserve the opportunity to participate in this exceptionally beneficial activity. The actual goal

Table 3. Means Discrepancy Scores for Judging Team Students of Four Performance Levels.

Performance Level	No. of Students	Average Discrepancy Score			
		E/I	S/N	T/F	J/P
1	18	0.8 ^a	0.7 ^a	2.1	4.2
2	15	10.4 ^{b,c}	0.0 ^d	4.9	8.2
3	15	5.6 ^c	6.9 ^a	2.9	10.9
4	15	4.8 ^c	1.4 ^a	4.2	10.1


^{a,b} Means differ (P<.05) based upon non-orthogonal contrasts 1 vs 2.

^{a,c} Means differ (P<.05) based upon non-orthogonal contrasts 1 vs 2+3+4.

at hand was to stimulate thought and potentiate coaches' understanding of the type of students typically involved in the judging program. Knowing the types of individual students and how they prefer to learn and make decisions can enhance a coach's communication skills and ultimate progress with the team. Therefore, the MBTI can be a valuable tool to coaches of all judging teams who desire to communicate effectively with their students.

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