

# M-B INDICATOR AND ADVERTISING CAREERS

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## ABSTRACT

*This empirical study examines whether personality types vary across different functional areas of an advertising agency. One of the tests available to assess whether one's personality is suitable for a particular job is the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). Since students might wonder about the types of jobs they would like to pursue; understanding personality differences resulting from MBTI could serve as a guide to students who are thinking about pursuing a career in advertising. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was administered in thirteen advertising agencies around the United States. Personnel from all agency departments participated in the study. Our findings (significant differences between ad agency employees and the U.S. population as well as differences between functional groups within the agencies) can help marketing and communication students (and faculty who advise them) identify which area of an advertising agency is more congruent with their personality. Selecting a congruent area of employment could potentially lead to a more fulfilling, productive, and long-lasting career.*

## INTRODUCTION

The years of global economic slowdown seem to be nearing an end, but the job market does not seem to be recovering quite as fast. Many experts believe the unemployment situation will indeed get worse before it gets better. John Challenger (CEO of global outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas) believes that "in the aftermath of recessions, there's always a period of jobless recovery," and is gloomy when he says "we are certainly not optimistic about seeing much improvement in the unemployment rate in 2010" (Steen 2010). Supporting these claims is a recent study conducted by Economic Policy Institute (Bivens et al. 2010) indicating 2010 as possibly one of the worst years to graduate high school or college since the end of World War II. Their study suggests it will take a number of years for the labor market to recover to pre-recession numbers and shows unemployment rates for college graduates to be twice as large as pre-recession levels.

The indicators for the marketing sector are a bit more promising. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS) (2010) presents a projection where the number of sales, marketing, public relations, and advertising managerial jobs will follow average growth. Specifically, USBLS predicts the overall employment in these four sectors will increase by 13 percent through 2018. With the U.S. unemployment rate around 9 percent (April 2011), many marketing graduates are embarking on a tough "job-searching" journey.

Today, the ability to easily switch jobs is more difficult than before, therefore graduates would benefit from systematically researching their job options and selecting jobs they will be content with for a longer period

of time. Unfortunately there is a lot of risk and anxiety associated with choosing a career path. Students might not only wonder about which area of marketing they would be the most comfortable in ("should I be in sales or market research?") but also what kind of jobs they would most enjoy within that area. There are several career-assessment (personality) tests to help young people identify jobs and work environments that would be suitable to them. Personality has been outlined as one of the potential barriers to employment (McTurk and Shakespeare-Finch 2006), and one of the tests available to assess whether one's personality is suitable for a particular career is the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

While still at university, students should expose themselves to innovative courses (Taylor 2003), experiential learning (Smith 2004), and marketing courses that include field site visits (Van Doren and Corrigan 2008) to help marketing students' efforts to prepare for today's competitive job market. Students should also be exposed to a number of professional and career development skills before they enter the job market (Kelley and Bridges 2005). In addition to these valuable resources, students should have an idea about what their desired work environment resembles, and whether such an environment suits their personality.

Marketing educators have a unique opportunity to provide students with career advice during their years at university. While not all students turn to faculty for career advice, professors and instructors are often knowledgeable and objective about job opportunities in the field. Faculty members who advise students regarding different career paths will benefit from an empirical understanding of how different departments and areas within an agency vary with respect to the dominant personality types work-

ing in that area. Such knowledge can be useful in guiding a student toward those areas within an agency that might fit the best with the student's personality. This paper presents results of MBTI taken by employees of advertising agencies around the United States, and analyzes the data by agency function, providing a portrait of each area's dominant personality types. This analysis should allow students to identify an area congruent with their personality and other areas where they might be less naturally comfortable. This is consistent with recent research suggesting MBTI is beneficial in career exploration, career planning, and career preparation for students (Hoffman 2008).

The purpose of this research is to examine how Myers-Briggs types vary across different functions and roles within ad agencies. Ultimately, understanding personality differences resulting from MBTI could serve as a guide to marketing and communication students who are considering careers in advertising.

## ADVERTISING INDUSTRY

The development of advertising is a group process. While there have been a number of individual luminaries such as David Ogilvy, Leo Burnett, Jay Chiat, Lee Clow, and Albert Lasker, who often leave their names on an agency, advertising fundamentally involves teamwork and collaboration among a number of talented individuals. These individuals collectively represent various functions and skill sets such as the copywriter/art director team, media planners, account planners, production specialists, researchers, and marketing managers. As a group process, the development of advertising is vulnerable to a myriad of human dynamics like miscommunication, misunderstanding, conflicting objectives, personality conflicts, and working style differences, all of which can affect a group's dynamic and ultimately the creative product (Sullivan 2008). Some sources indicate that advertising spending in the U.S. was around \$133 billion in 2010 (Bush 2009), while global advertising spending increased between 2.2% (Ives 2010) and 6% (Bush 2009) during the same time period. Due to the continuous growth in advertising spending, advertising agencies remain an attractive and interesting employment prospect for many marketing graduates.

## THE ADVERTISING AGENCY

Advertising agencies are businesses that have to coordinate several different functions that impact their success. Academic research on agencies has focused on such issues as how to advertise an advertising agency (Butkys and Herpel 1992), how to recruit and retain personnel around an increasingly globalized world (Shao and Hill 1992), agency and client relationships (Murphy and Maynard 1996; Crutchfield et al. 2003; Devinney

et al. 2005) and agency effectiveness (Flandin et al. 1992; Osler 2003). Hilpert (1996) uses MBTI to help identify characteristics of employees with the potential for advancement within the agency. This study fills a gap in the literature and describes personality types of employees who work in different functional areas of the advertising agency.

MBTI has been used for uncovering and understanding differences between individuals and recognizing how those differences can impact working relationships within the team oriented environment. An advertising agency is a team-oriented environment with individuals divided into groups such as copywriter/art director team, media planners, account planners, production specialists, researchers, and marketing managers. While previous research has explored the differences between copywriters and art directors (Young 2000) and the differences between creative directors according to their nationality (West 1993); there have been no studies using MBTI to clearly examine and distinguish the diverse personality traits within the agency's different functional areas.

While nomenclature can vary, Table 1 presents the basic functions (departments) of an advertising agency.

## Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

The MBTI was originally developed in the early 1940's by Isabel Myers and Katharine Briggs and is based on the theory of psychological types developed by Carl Jung (1921/1971). It is the most widespread instrument used in analyzing group dynamics with more than two million individuals taking the MBTI each year (CAPT 2010). The test-retest reliability of MBTI meets and exceeds the standards for psychological instruments. During re-test, people come out 75–90% of the time with the same three to four type preferences. The reliability of MBTI is also good across different age and ethnic groups (Myers and McCaulley 1985; CAPT 2010). Finally, there have been a variety of studies demonstrating the validity of the MBTI (e.g., Myers et al. 1998; Zeisset 2000; Lawrence and Martin 2001).

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) consists of four dichotomies/dimensions: Extraversion/Introversion, Sensing/Intuition, Thinking/Feeling, and Judging/Perceiving (for a full guide to the development and use of the MBTI see Myers and McCaulley 1985). Each person has tendencies on both ends of these dimensions; however there is an expressed preference (as revealed by the MBTI) for one end of each of the four dimensions. This would correspond to people doing various activities with either hand, but typically being either "right" or "left" handed. In other words, although we all have components of both introversion and extraversion, each of us has a general preference for, or leaning toward, one or the other. Preferences on each of the four dimensions combine to yield 16 different Myers-Briggs personality types, each

**TABLE 1**  
**FUNCTIONS OF ADVERTISING AGENCY'S DEPARTMENTS**

Department	Functions
Account management (service)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central point of advertising operation</li> <li>• Supervises everyday operations</li> <li>• Primary contact with the client</li> <li>• Develops the campaign strategy for the client</li> <li>• Ensures that the agency is aligned with the client's business objectives</li> <li>• Works directly with clients and potential clients on soliciting business</li> </ul>
Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conceptualizes, plans, and develops actual advertising and other marketing communications</li> <li>• Specializes in either copywriting or art direction</li> </ul>
Research (account planning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collects and analyzes information that helps the account executive and others in the agency develop an effective strategy</li> <li>• Helps creative service with testing the ads</li> <li>• Provide copywriters with details about the ad's target audience</li> </ul>
Media planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decides which media tools are the most effective and efficient given budget constraints</li> <li>• Decides the best way of delivering the advertising message (where the ad will appear)</li> </ul>
Production and traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on the logistics of producing advertising</li> <li>• Oversees the scheduling</li> <li>• Ensures smooth flow of the work processes</li> <li>• Responsible for increasing agency efficiency</li> </ul>

designated by a four letter label (i.e., ESFP, INFJ, ENTP and so on). Main points regarding each dimension of the MBTI framework are illustrated in Table 2.

The MBTI has been used in a variety of contexts over the years. Managers are frequent subjects of MBTI research (DiMarco 1992; see Gardner and Martinko (1996) for a review) since they are seen as individuals who are coordinating and utilizing the different traits of their employees. Managers are seen as team leaders and MBTI is used to “teach teams to be teams” (Clinebell and Stecher 2003). MBTI has also been used in research with students, touching on topics such as career counseling (Kennedy and Kennedy 2004), student preferences (Kovar, Ott, and Fisher 2003), enhancing student team effectiveness (Amato and Amato 2005), personality preferences, and career expectations of business students (Jarlstrom 2000). On a more strategic level, MBTI is a useful tool in exploring functions of organizational development. Some of these functions are the communication processes, roles of group members, decision making, problem solving, and understanding team dynamics (Sample 2004).

Several different industries have used MBTI to assess

personnel's information-processing types and problem solving capabilities. Some industries that utilize MBTI are mining (Davey, Schell, and Morrison 1993), telemarketing (Morris-Lee 1994), information systems (Weldon 1995; Lesiuk, Pons, and Polak 2009), research and development (Debackere, Buyens, and Vandebossche 1997), and accounting (Schloemer and Schloemer 1997). More recently, industries like banking (Bennett, Pietri, and Moak 1998), finance (Pompian and Longo 2004), and concurrent engineering (Chen and Lin 2004) used Myers-Briggs for personality profiling in order to assess each team member's ability to work with others. Finally, Jackson, Hollmann, and Gallan (2006) used MBTI to examine career development programs for the sales force (also see Reagan, Capella, and Miles 1995), while Stilwell and colleagues (2000) examined the association between Myers-Briggs types and career choices of medical professionals.

Although MBTI has been used in a variety of work contexts before, no study has focused on personalities within advertising agency. This study fills the gap by providing the description of specific personality types

**TABLE 2**  
**MBTI CLASSIFICATION**

	<b>Dimensions</b>	
Person <i>focuses</i> attention on...	<b>Extraversion (E)</b> ...outer world of people and things.	<b>Introversion (I)</b> ...inner world of ideas and concepts.
Person <i>gathers</i> information...	<b>Sensing (S)</b> ...that is detailed and observed by their senses. These individuals are focused on the present events.	<b>Intuition (N)</b> ...that is conceptual and abstract. These individuals are creative and focused on the future.
Person <i>bases</i> decisions...	<b>Thinking (T)</b> ...on impersonal factors and objective analysis of cause and effect (logic).	<b>Feeling (F)</b> ...on their own internal value system and the impact those decisions will have on people around them.
Person <i>deals</i> with the outer world...	<b>Judgment (J)</b> ...in a planned and organized fashion.	<b>Perception (P)</b> ...in a flexible and spontaneous fashion.

within different departments of an advertising agency. The fundamental goal of the MBTI is to assist in understanding style differences among individuals and groups. Achieving such a goal can be helpful to management, employees, and potential employees since understanding style differences can assist people in making career choices, operate effectively in personal relationships, and better manage teams and groups. Such an understanding will also assist students in matching their personality and preferences with agency departments/areas.

The MBTI can be useful within advertising agency settings in a variety of ways. Young (2001) notes the MBTI is useful in achieving successful communication with others, understanding a range of favored leadership styles, and understanding the makeup of the team with whom one is working. Young adds that by understanding the 16 MBTI types, one is able to rapidly read people and understand why they say or do things the way they do (2001). Coe's (1992) work shows the MBTI is a "useful instrument for team building, strengthening communications, decision making, and for diagnosing organizational dysfunctions" (p.511). Coe (1992) further shows that when team members are aware of the various psychological types of their counterparts, they learn to appreciate the differences and utilize those differences as resources instead of sources of conflict. The MBTI can identify individuals who would prefer conflict mediation and it enhances the communication efficiency, which could lead to team cohesion and positive organizational change (Coe 1992). As such, MBTI is a well-suited tool for use within an organization. Rideout and Richardson (1989) recog-

nize the importance of the MBTI during team building and Nutt (1993) points out the importance of understanding and recognizing the significance of one's scores and whether or not the dominant preference is *very* or *slightly* dominant. The application of interest in this paper is to provide insight into how personality types vary across agency functions and to provide some initial direction to students exploring careers in advertising.

## METHODOLOGY

Advertising agency participation for this study was secured through personal contacts of the authors. Because of the expense of the study materials and the time-consuming nature of the data collection, random sampling and speculative mailing of questionnaires to agency personnel was not practical. Fourteen advertising agencies were solicited for participation. One of the agencies contacted was not able to participate leaving a total of thirteen agencies participating in the research. The participating agencies represented a range of east-coast, west-coast, and mid-west agencies. Agencies ranged in size from six to four hundred employees. Individual response rates at the agencies ranged from 67% to 100%, with an average of 81%. A total of 383 completed MBTI forms were received.

Agency participation in this research was sanctioned by each agency's president. Typically, a lower-level contact was designated to manage the agency's participation. Each agency contact (coordinator) was mailed the necessary number of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator question-

naire booklets and response sheets. Each agency employee received the questionnaire booklet, response sheet, and an instruction sheet introducing them to the research project, and, importantly, serving as the form for identifying what department/area the employee worked in. Participating employees completed the MBTI at their convenience and returned the completed forms back to the agency coordinator, who then returned the forms to the first author.

## RESULTS

### Overall Sample

Table 3 presents the MBTI results for the entire sample (N = 383). Indicated in each cell are the total numbers and percentages for each Myers-Briggs type. The three most common Myers-Briggs types found in this sample of advertising agency employees were ENFP (Extravert, Intuitive, Feeling, and Perceptive), ESTJ (Extravert, Sensing, Thinking, and Judgment), and INFP (Introvert, Intuitive, Feeling, and Perceptive). The three least common Myers-Briggs types were ISFP (Introvert, Sensing, Feeling, and Perceptive), ESTP (Extravert, Sensing, Thinking, and Perceptive), and ESFP (Extravert, Sensing, Feeling, and Perceptive).

Table 4 presents the comparison between personality types within an advertising agency and those of the U.S. population. Source for all the U.S. population MBTI figures is CAPT (2010). The biggest difference between agency employees and the general population was on the Sensing/Intuition dimension. Based on these findings,

agency employees prefer using Intuition over Sensing. As far as the other three dimensions, employees were reasonably similar to the U.S. population.

### Personality Types by Functional Areas

The goal of this study was not only to report overall personality types within the agency but to systematically distinguish personality types based on an employee's functional area to give marketing graduates a clear indication which functional area is congruent with their own personality type. Table 5 presents 2 to 3 most frequent personality types in each functional area.

**Account Service** professionals are more *Extravert* (61%) than *Introvert*, which reflects the extensive client/agency interactions that account service provides. This category of employees is typically more comfortable with the outer world and people than with thoughts and ideas. Account service professionals typically lean toward *Intuition* (63%) over *Sensing*. As a result, account service individuals typically prefer exploring relationships for themselves rather than working with already established facts. When making a decision, account service employees were split evenly with the decision being based on personal experiences rather than impersonal analysis (preference for *Feeling* (53%) than *Thinking*). There was a preference for account managers to prefer *Judging* (59%) rather than *Perceiving*, reflecting a stronger need for completion and closure. Based on findings of this research, account service professionals tend to be ENFP, ESTJ, and ENTP personality types.

ENFPs tend to be adventurous and open to exploring

**TABLE 3**  
**PERSONALITY TYPES FOR THE ADVERTISING AGENCY EMPLOYEES**

Total	%	ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
E = 208 I = 175	54 46	N=30 7.8%	18 4.7%	26 6.8%	21 5.5%
S = 137 N = 246	36 64	<b>ISTP</b> 10 2.6%	<b>ISFP</b> 5 1.3%	<b>INFP</b> 37 9.7%	<b>INTP</b> 28 7.3%
T = 195 F = 188	51 49	<b>ESTP</b> 8 2.1%	<b>ESFP</b> 8 2.1%	<b>ENFP</b> 46 12.0%	<b>ENTP</b> 36 9.4%
J = 205 P = 178	54 46	<b>ESTJ</b> 38 9.9%	<b>ESFJ</b> 20 5.2%	<b>ENFJ</b> 28 7.3%	<b>ENTJ</b> 24 6.3%

**TABLE 4  
COMPARISON OF ADVERTISING AGENCY PERSONALITIES AND PERSONALITIES  
OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

	Dimensions	
	Extraversion (E)	Introversion (I)
AGENCY	54%	46%
U.S. PUBLIC	45-53%	47-55%
	Sensing (S)	Intuition (N)
AGENCY	36%	64%
U.S. PUBLIC	66-74%	26-34%
	Thinking (T)	Feeling (F)
AGENCY	51%	49%
U.S. PUBLIC	40-50%	50-60%
	Judgment (J)	Perception (P)
AGENCY	54%	46%
U.S. PUBLIC	54% - 60%	40% - 46%

**TABLE 5  
MOST COMMON MYERS-BRIGGS TYPES - BY FUNCTIONAL AREA**

<b>ISTJ</b> - Production and Traffic	<b>ISFJ</b>	<b>INFJ</b>	<b>INTJ</b> - Research /Account Planning
<b>ISTP</b>	<b>ISFP</b>	<b>INFP</b> - Creative	<b>INTP</b> - Creative
<b>ESTP</b>	<b>ESFP</b>	<b>ENFP</b> - Account Service - Creative - Media - Research /Account Planning	<b>ENTP</b> - Account Service - Media - Research /Account Planning
<b>ESTJ</b> - Account Service - Production and Traffic	<b>ESFJ</b> - Media	<b>ENFJ</b>	<b>ENTJ</b>

possibilities while experiencing a wide range of feelings and emotions. They tend to have a need for affirmation from others and are more than willing to give appreciations and support to others, most likely because they value harmony and dislike conflict. They are innovators and love to direct projects while possessing the insights and energy to lead people through tasks and assignments. This group of people is often creative, imaginative, spontaneous, and vibrant while also being warm, caring, and sensitive to others' needs and situations. Sociable, fun loving, gregarious, perceptive, and enthusiastic, ENFPs

value close relationships and will go to great lengths to ensure open communications and a healthy, happy relationship. With an aversion to routine and schedule, ENFPs prefer spontaneity and the ability to go with the flow.

Individuals whose scores indicate ESTJ like to organize people and projects, making them natural leaders. They have clear standards and hold themselves and others to a high standard of competency and efficiency. ESTJs are logical and analytical, as well as practical and realistic. Their ability to understand systems, structures, and operations aids this group in being strong managers. While

clear, concise, and detailed, ESTJs have little ambiguity or tolerance for ineptness. Because of their strong, decisive manner, others may see ESTJ's as self-confident, take-charge, and sometimes overbearing.

ENTPs are experts at seeing patterns and connections. Masters of understanding systems and their implications, this group has the ability to generate conceptual possibilities and appropriately evaluate their merits. ENTPs are innovators and enjoy exploring situations and challenges. Members of this group are proficient at dealing with change and are also clever, resourceful, and logical. Others typically see members of this group as insightful, enthusiastic, independent, and outspoken.

**Creatives** exhibited *Introverted* (59%) rather than *Extraverted* behavior, thereby showing a preference for concepts and ideas rather than the outer world and people. In this group, *Intuition* (85%) is preferred over *Sensing*. As a result, creatives typically explore relationships and come to their own conclusions instead of relying on predetermined concepts and theories. Creatives were split 50/50 when it comes to what type of judgment they trust when making a decision. About half of creatives preferred *Thinking*, basing judgment on impersonal analysis instead of personal values. The other half prefers to use *Feeling*, basing judgment on personal values rather than impersonal logic. The orientation of creatives toward *Perceiving* (56%) rather than *Judging* was evident in the sample. As a result, it is more likely that a creative is flexible and spontaneous, rather than planned and structured. Relative to the overall agency sample, creatives tended to be more thoughtful, reflective, conceptual, abstract, and flexible. Based on these findings, creatives are typically INFPs, INTPs, or ENFPs.

INFPs are loyal and curious. They are quick to see possibilities and exploit them in adaptable and flexible fashion. They pay little attention to possessions and surrounding. INTPs, similarly, are quiet and reserved. They are very interested in ideas, with little appreciation of small talk. They are the ones with sharply defined interests, which makes them ideal candidates for the creative area (Myers and McCaulley 1985). The traits of ENFPs have been explained in the previous section.

**Production and Traffic** professionals showed close to a 50/50 split on *Extraversion* vs. *Introversion*. Relative to the overall agency sample, production and traffic professionals showed a preference for *Sensing* (59%) over *Intuition*, *Thinking* (61%) over *Feeling*, and *Judging* (59%) over *Perceiving*. These individuals tend to be more practical, detail-oriented, analytical, systematic, and organized. Based on these findings, production and traffic employees tend to be either ISTJs or ESTJs.

ISTJs have a great sense of responsibility and loyalty to the organization. They are very committed to accomplishing their task but will retreat from projects if the task does not make sense to them. ISTJs rely on facts and are usually practical, realistic, and systematic workers who

adopt changes only when the facts show changes will bring better results (Myers and McCaulley 1985).

As explained earlier, ESTJs are the natural organizers who act to get projects done. They value competence, efficiency, and are decisive when making decisions and judgments. ESTJ have been shown to be good administrators since they understand systems and logistics, essential qualities for the production and traffic department (Myers and McCaulley 1985).

**Media.** Relative to the overall agency sample, media professionals tend to be much more *Extraverted* (62%) and slightly more oriented to *Sensing* (46% compared to 36%) and *Perceiving* (54% compared to 46%). Therefore, media professionals have a propensity to be more outgoing and enthusiastic. Based on these findings, media personnel tend to be ESFJ who focus on the present situation and base their decisions on experience and facts. Consequently, ESFJs do not prefer work that employs abstract ideas. They are usually sympathetic and helpful which is shown with the high level of cooperation they exhibit. Additional types that make the majority in media department, ENFPs and ENTPs, were described earlier in the text.

**Research/Account Planning.** Due to the smallest number of surveys received from this department (11), these results have to be taken with caution. Individuals in this area were balanced on attitude dimension (55% E/45% I). This was very similar to the overall sample of advertising professionals. They, however, showed higher *Intuitive* perception (73%) and judgment based on *Thinking* (64%). They also showed higher *Perceptual* orientation to the outer world than the sample as a whole.

ENFPs and ENTPs have already been explained as enthusiastic individuals who can present proposals and lead discussions with ease. They are resourceful in solving new problems and quick to turn to one new interest after another. INTJs are the ones with original minds and great drive for their own ideas. They have a long-run vision and find no difficulty in organizing and carrying through the job. INTJs are seen as independent and with high standards of competence and performance (Myers and McCaulley 1985). MBTI shows that a research department tends to host original minds with great vision that are quick to solve new problems, exactly what research is all about.

## CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

While the primary focus and intent of the research has been descriptive, the categorical data presented is amenable to Chi-Square analysis. Fundamentally, Chi-Square analysis allows us to see if the pattern of agency results is significantly different from the U.S. population and whether it differs across departments. Chi-Square analysis compares the pattern of results for each of the five functional areas and overall sample against each other as well as

against the distribution of personality types in the U.S. Such analysis (28 comparisons) is summarized in Table 6. While in some cases the non-significant results are likely due to lower sample sizes for some of the groups, this analysis generally shows that the agency personality profile does differ from the general population, and, significant differences are observed between agency departments.

### SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

MBTI has been used as a guide to help with career planning for the past several decades. Marketing, communication, and advertising students eventually need to decide what aspect of advertising to pursue professionally. As such, this research is in line with another similar recent study that examined personality traits of individuals in different specialties of librarianship (Williamson, Pemberson, and Lounsbury 2008). While no one should make a decision solely based on their MBTI type, information regarding type preferences of the people already working in various departments of an ad agency can provide some helpful work-environment indicators, particularly the nature and disposition of colleagues in each

department. While interest and ability should play a significant role in career choice, a student who is an ISTJ might find it useful to know that the ISTJ type is more prevalent in the *production and traffic* area than the *creative* area. An INTP would probably be more comfortable at home in *creative* than in *account service*.

Overall, advertising professionals showed a higher level of *Extraversion* (E) than the average member of the U.S. population. They were also stronger on *Intuition* (N) than other members of society. Functional areas in an agency differ from each other and individuals with certain personality traits are placed in areas that will most benefit agency. As such, account and media service personnel are more extraverted than creative personnel. At the same time, account and creative service use much higher levels of intuitive perception, while production and traffic mostly rely on sensing.

The results of this paper should be examined in light of some limitations related to MBTI.

While the MBTI offers many advantages as a tool for team building, communication enhancement, employee relations, or conflict mediation, it can also be a tool that is easily misused. Coe (1992) and Wruk and Hebert (2003) argue the greatest misuse of the MBTI instrument stems

**TABLE 6**  
**CHI SQUARE ( $\chi^2$ ) TEST OF INDEPENDENCE**

	GP	OS	AS	CR	PT	ME	RE
GP	1						
OS [ $\chi^2(15, N = 383)$ ]	97.4***	1					
AS [ $\chi^2(15, N = 115)$ ]	40.7***	13.6 ns	1				
CR [ $\chi^2(15, N = 111)$ ]	70.1***	25.7**	34.7***	1			
PT [ $\chi^2(15, N = 61)$ ]	9.9 ns	19.4 ns	23.1*	42.5***	1		
ME [ $\chi^2(15, N = 50)$ ]	8.8 ns	14.3 ns	18.5 ns	29.7**	13.2 ns	1	
RE [ $\chi^2(15, N = 11)$ ]	5.7 ns	12.6 ns	21.9 ns	17.9 ns	21.3 ns	12.2 ns	1

GP - General Population  
OS - Overall Sample  
AS - Account Service  
CR - Creative  
PT - Production and Traffic  
ME - Media  
RE - Research

\* - significant at  $p < .1$   
\*\* - significant at  $p < .05$   
\*\*\* - significant at  $p < .01$   
ns - not significant

from the potential to misunderstand the MBTI and rating others based on stereotyping due to those differing types. Other limitations include the fact that the MBTI does not account for individual's values or motivational sources and does not measure pathology, the effectiveness of the performance of each preference, and how well one can perform the auxiliary preference (Coe 1992).

Additionally, Coe (1992) suggests a great abuse of the MBTI is related to personnel selection. If companies do use MBTI as a means for personnel selection, it is possible that the organization is stereotyping the candidates based on their MBTI profiles (Wruk and Hebert 2003) and is not considering some of the limitations within the instrument. Additionally, MBTI is not a complicated instrument and those individuals taking the test may be able to easily assess what type of person is desired for the job, and then answer the questions accordingly (Coe 1992). This dishonest response is a concern when incorporating the MBTI as a means for personnel selection or promotion consideration.

Effective advertising depends on successful working relationships within an agency. One barrier to effective working relations can be style and personality differences.

As presented in this research, the MBTI preferences of *account service* personnel differ from those of *creative*. Additionally, *creative* differs from those of *media*, and so on. While it is not a surprise that *account service* folks differ from *creatives*, the research here presents a useful framework (MBTI) to explain these differences. It is an understanding of these differences that helps create empathy and the ability to see why people respond the way they do. Also, the MBTI emphasizes the importance of complementary styles for effective teams. For example, *Perceiving* individuals who value the on-going exploration of possibility also need the emphasis on closure and completion that people with a *Judging* focus bring to the team. This research provides a road map of opportunities in the advertising industry for marketing and communication graduates who are interested in this field of work. This research, perhaps confirming common wisdom or maybe stereotypes around different groups within an agency, provides an outlook on how to select a career path that would match one's personality, consequently limiting work tension and providing employees with a fulfilling work experience.

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