



TYPE AND CONFLICT



Remember that we all use each of the pairs of opposites and that type is an indication of preference, not ability. Over the course of our lives, we also learn skills and behaviors that can impact how we act in different situations.

Learning how to communicate with people who have different preferences can significantly impact conflict and is one of the easiest ways to prevent conflict.




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E AND I

Conflicts between these preferences often fall into two areas:

- Quick versus slower pacing, and
- changeability of topics versus focus.



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E AND I



Conflicts can easily arise as a result:

- Extraverts may see Introverts as withholding
- Introverts may see Extraverts as invasive
- Introverts may see Extraverts as scattered or unfocused
- Extraverts may see Introverts as disengaged
- They both may think the other is avoiding the topic.



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S AND N

The two conflicts that frequently relate to differences in this area are:

- agreeing on what the problem is, and
- a focus on experience versus a focus on theories.



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S AND N




Sensing types define problems by what actually happened, usually concrete events. Intuitive types are more likely to see the concrete event as part of a pattern that they think is the real problem.

So while Sensing types are trying to get someone to attend meetings on time, Intuitive types look at what is behind the individual coming late to meetings, such as a difficulty with authority figures. For Intuitive types, taking action to get the person to meetings on time does not deal with the real problem. For Sensing types, "difficulty with authority figures" has little meaning and no solution.




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T AND F




Thinking types tend to believe that if a problem is accurately defined, there will be a correct solution, and that's what people should do. Feeling types are more likely to think that "truth" is not cut and dried: What's right for one may be wrong for another. As a result, Thinking types may experience the decision making process of Feeling types as inconsistent. Feeling types may experience the decision making of Thinking types as cold and uncaring.




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T AND F STRATEGIES



A willingness to focus on both practicalities and relationships will support those with different preferences to find mutually beneficial solutions. As someone with a T preference, knowing that solutions can only work if they work for the people involved may be a way to logically include values and relationships in practical problem solving. For those with an F preference, understanding that an examination of logical consequences will result in solutions more likely to work for the people involved may help communication with someone with a preference for T.



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J AND P

Two of the common conflicts related to this dichotomy are:



- the need for structure versus the need for flexibility and
- the desire for closure versus the desire for openness.

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J AND P

Judging types often have trouble trusting that Perceiving types will come through in a timely way, that decisions will be made and action will be taken.

Perceiving types often feel hemmed in, limited, and restricted by Judging types.



 

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J AND P STRATEGIES

When planning or problem solving with someone who has a different preference, agree on your goals and a deadline and discuss your preferred method of moving toward that deadline. Then, identify a structure, with timelines, that allows for freedom within it. Discuss how you might divide up tasks in a way that enables each to move at their own pace toward deadlines.

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PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS

In any decision-making situation, we are likely to put most of our energy into – and spend most of our time – using our dominant function. When that function is different from those with whom we are problem solving, it can create conflict.

A simple problem solving process developed by Isabel Myers and referred to as the zig zag method, takes each of the function (S, N, T, F) preferences into account. Using this process is one way to find solutions that satisfy all of the parties when there are type differences.

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ZIG ZAG METHOD

The diagram shows four colored boxes arranged in a 2x2 grid: a green box with 'S' at the top-left, a yellow box with 'N' at the top-right, a blue box with 'T' at the bottom-left, and a red box with 'F' at the bottom-right. A path of arrows starts at 'S', goes right to 'N', then diagonally down-left to 'T', then right to 'F', and finally diagonally up-left back to 'S'. This path forms a zigzag shape. The background is blue with a white diamond pattern.

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ZIG ZAG METHOD

- 1 Sensing: clarify what happened and the impacts

- 2 iNtuition: intuit probable causes, seek patterns, generate possible solutions

- 3 Thinking: weigh the practicality of alternatives, examine consequences

- 4 Feeling: weigh impact of potential solutions on people, relationships and organizational values

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