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This is Eastern Michigan University's Career Corner. And welcome to season 2, Finding Your Fit.

Welcome back to the Career Corner podcast. And our series, From Class to Career Ready; Finding Your Fit. We're building off the great discussion of our colleagues, Logann and Barb, last week. When they talked about how meeting with a career coach can be such a critical first step to finding your fit at EMU, and what to expect from it. They talked about the importance of knowing yourself, and how we as career coaches can help you gain self-awareness to support your career decisions.

So today I'm joined by my fellow career coach, April Calkovsky. As we dive in deeper into the self-awareness piece, when we talk about the MBTI, and what this concept of personality type is really all about. April and I are both certified MBTI practitioners. But in her time at EMU, she has been teaching about this tool in classrooms all across EMU, and beyond, for really over a decade. So she's an expert to bring into this particular area. So April, can you explain a little bit more about what the MBTI is.

What's up Brad? So the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or MBTI for short, is a personality assessment that's been around for nearly 100 years. And it is the most frequently used assessment among Fortune 500 companies. It's based on the personality theory work done by Carl Jung, a famous Swiss psychiatrist. And then the team of Myers and Briggs, created the assessment tool in the 1940s in the United States. The tool itself assesses your natural preferences in four areas, by preferences we mean your natural or innate tendencies, while also recognizing the influence of our environment. For each of the four areas you are asked to decide which side of a dichotomy, say extrovert versus introvert, you're closest to. You want to go with your gut reaction. Which side feels a little bit more like writing with your dominant hand, effortless and easy.

Thank you so much. That was actually quite simplistic. And that makes so much sense. So you mentioned that preference pairs are like your right or left hand in certain areas. So can you help our listeners understand what those four preference pairs are that you mentioned, that make up the MBTI, and how the test actually determines your type?

Sure. So the MBTI assesses your preferences on four key areas. One, how you get your energy, so as an extrovert versus introvert, or E versus I. How you gather information and whatever information you like and trust, sensing versus intuition or S versus N. How you reach conclusions and make decisions, thinking versus feeling, or T versus F. And then how you organize or approach the world, judging

versus perceiving, or J versus P. The assessment tool we use is through TypeFocus. It's 60 questions, and it looks at how consistently you answer the items for each preference pair it's assessing. And it provides a reported type after all questions have been answered. This is called your test type. But it's really important to chat with a career coach to learn more, and to determine your best fit type.

Yeah, that part is so important. A lot of times people will take a test and get the answers, and just run with it, and say, "OK. Well, it said that I'm this type so, I have to take that literally, and just go with it." So that's very, very important to remember. And I think that that's so helpful for our listeners to know, really, what the MBTI is? And what it's used for. And I also really understand that this is a self-awareness tool and it is to help you learn about how these factors and the types of careers that could be potential complements. But it's also important to remember that everyone is unique, and the MBTI is not intended to be a predictive assessment. For example, April, we've talked about this before, pretty candidly, April's an ESTJ. And I'm pretty close to her opposite, I'm an INFJ. And coincidentally, we do the same job. But we work very differently, our approach is different, how we see things, how we analyze things, how we make decisions, how we communicate. It's all different. But it's still effective. And so it's important to remember that we can have very different personality types, do the same type of work, and still be effective. But we just have to know that ahead of time.

Yes, exactly Brad. That is an essential point. We each bring valuable differences to our work as career coaches. Even though we're performing the same essential function. It's also essential that we respect the differences each of us brings. And even lean on each other when we need help seeing things from a different perspective or doing things in a different way. Like when you're coming up with all your amazing ideas, and I am so in all of those ideas, but then I say, so Brad how are we specifically going to accomplish that? That's your N and my S, and those are both challenging us, and bringing us together as two sides of a really dynamic team.

Absolutely. And it's really great as career coaches, and the hosts of the Career Corner podcast. We actually have two N's with Logann and I. And we have the two S's with you and Barb. And I remember vividly watching the first presentation that you gave on the MBTI. And you gave this really great example that always resonates with me. And I always reference back to the individual that busts into a room and says, "Hey, guess what? I got this great idea to solve world hunger, " and that's the N, right? That's the intuitive big expensive type. And then the S types, you and Barb, in this instance would come back and say, "Yeah, but what do we need to do today?"

Yeah.

Let's bring it to a first step. Yeah. I absolutely love that and appreciate that. So with all that being said, I know that some of our listeners are out there maybe thinking, "Yeah, yeah. I get it. This makes sense." But where's the application? How do we actually use this information? So what do you say to those folks?

Essentially, what we want to understand about ourselves is how do we interact with others in the world, and in workplaces? So that we can build better relationships with others and be better teammates. By understanding your preferences, you're not only learning about yourself, you're also learning about people who are the opposite of you. And by doing that, you're learning how to better manage expectations between you and other people. And that can be really helpful in building teams.

Another thing that's important to understand is that two people who are the same type are not identical twins. That is why we don't want to make too many assumptions about a person based solely on their MBTI result. The reason for the difference is simply that we're all unique humans with various experiences, values, beliefs, different upbringing cultural backgrounds, and more. No two INFJ's, like you and Logan, or ESTJ's, like myself and our boss, are exactly alike. And they are not equally suited to the same career path based solely on their personality type. The MBTI does not put you in a box, and say, "Oh, you're an ESTJ, that means you can choose from these 50 careers, and these 50 careers only." Instead, it says, "Oh, you want to be a nurse? Awesome. How does being an ESTJ, help you become a great nurse?" What about being an ESTJ might make nursing a challenging career path for you? And these answers will be very different for every single person.

Our office has some great documents to help people understand the many nuances of their type. What others see in them, what others love and hate about them. Characteristics of their leadership style, problem solving, and change management techniques. And once again, the pros and cons of their teammates style. Incidentally, it is really helpful to know all of these things about yourself, when you go to an interview. This is the type of stuff employers really want to hear about, when determining how well you'll fit into their team. So be an expert in yourself. Learn about your type. And meet with a career coach for a deep dive into the MBTI.

Absolutely. I love that, be an expert in yourself. That makes so much sense. And I really like how you made it clear, that personality type does not predict the careers that one is actually going to be passionate about, but rather knowing yourself, how you energize. How you see the world. How you make decisions. How you like to structure your environment. These things help you make more informed career choices, and can allow you to communicate that value greater to future employers.

Well, I really, really, appreciate the clarity on that. I feel like every time I hear you talk about the MBTI, I always take away something new. And I learn more. And I think the major takeaway here for our listeners is that knowing your personality type can really help you understand how you work best, and see the opportunities that are going to allow you to swim with the current, rather than against it. Because you understand how your type can work well for you in certain situations, and maybe provide challenges in others. So we hope this was helpful for you today.

Remember that you can schedule to meet with one of our career coaches through [handshake@app.joinhandshake.com](mailto:handshake@app.joinhandshake.com). If you'd like to review your MBTI results with us, we would love the opportunity to do so. Don't forget to tune in next week, where Logann will be back, joining me as we discuss the transferable skills that employers want. Until then remember:

We support your goals.

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