

Personalities and Working Together

By Greig Cronauer – swimcoaching.com

On the pool deck we work as a TEAM with other coaches other humans and each has their own personality. Sometimes those personalities clash, or one coach doesn't understand why another coach acts or does something a different way.

It is important to know that different coaching “personae's” can be a very positive thing for a swim team and their swimmers. A head coach sets the goals, strategies, and tactics for their team, but the coaches add their own individual “flavor” to the implementation. There is **no** good or bad “flavor”, and this variety can be a good thing for the swimmers.

If a head coach could clone themselves to coach every group on the team it would be like giving every swimmer the **same** meal for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day for the rest of their lives. It may be a nutritious, well-balanced meal but it lacks diversity and **flavor**.

Swimmers like flavor! One day they might need a detailed critique of their stroke from a reserved, analytical coach. A different day they might need a big hug from a gregarious, outgoing coach or perhaps a little, verbal “kick in the butt” from another. This variety enhances their learning, growth, and social development.

Each coach desires to work withing their comfort zone.

We need to understand our fellow coaches and the way they do things, but how can you appreciate and work with someone else's methods?

Some coaches suggest taking an online “Personality Types” quiz (there are a few free ones like the one below) and sharing the results with their fellow coaches. It is amazing how well the coaches will work together when they realize that they each have unique skills to bring to the table.

For a quick example, look at the chart on the next page and see where you land. Then look at the other types and try to guess the types of the other coaches you work with. They are all more effective when they can each be in their “personality zone”. But this does not mean you should have wildly different ideas about the drills you use, or your training methods. Those should be consistent, so swimmers aren't confused, but each coach's implementation is the needed “flavor”.

If you find the chart below intriguing, try one of the following free online tests. The summary is **much** more detailed, and you may be surprised. Even if you don't share the results with your fellow coaches, finding out about yourself is enlightening.

<https://www.16personalities.com>

<https://www.truity.com/test/type-finder-personality-test-new>

What's Your Personality Type?

Use the questions on the outside of the chart to determine the four letters of your Myers-Briggs type.
For each pair of letters, choose the side that seems most natural to you, even if you don't agree with every description.

1. Are you outwardly or inwardly focused? If you:

- Could be described as talkative, outgoing
- Like to be in a fast-paced environment
- Tend to work out ideas with others, think out loud
- Enjoy being the center of attention

then you prefer
E
Extraversion

- Could be described as reserved, private
- Prefer a slower pace with time for contemplation
- Tend to think things through inside your head
- Would rather observe than be the center of attention

then you prefer
I
Introversion

2. How do you prefer to take in information? If you:

- Focus on the reality of how things are
- Pay attention to concrete facts and details
- Prefer ideas that have practical applications
- Like to describe things in a specific, literal way

then you prefer
S
Sensing

- Imagine the possibilities of how things could be
- Notice the big picture, see how everything connects
- Enjoy ideas and concepts for their own sake
- Like to describe things in a figurative, poetic way

then you prefer
N
Intuition

3. How do you prefer to make decisions? If you:

- Make decisions in an impersonal way, using logical reasoning
- Value justice, fairness
- Enjoy finding the flaws in an argument
- Could be described as reasonable, level-headed

then you prefer
T
Thinking

- Base your decisions on personal values and how your actions affect others
- Value harmony, forgiveness
- Like to please others and point out the best in people
- Could be described as warm, empathetic

then you prefer
F
Feeling

4. How do you prefer to live your outer life? If you:

- Prefer to have matters settled
- Think rules and deadlines should be respected
- Prefer to have detailed, step-by-step instructions
- Make plans, want to know what you're getting into

then you prefer
J
Judging

- Prefer to leave your options open
- See rules and deadlines as flexible
- Like to improvise and make things up as you go
- Are spontaneous, enjoy surprises and new situations

then you prefer
P
Perceiving

ISTJ
Responsible, sincere, analytical, reserved, realistic, systematic. Hardworking and trustworthy with sound practical judgment.

ISFJ
Warm, considerate, gentle, responsible, pragmatic, thorough. Devoted caretakers who enjoy being helpful to others.

INFJ
Idealistic, organized, insightful, dependable, compassionate, gentle. Seek harmony and cooperation, enjoy intellectual stimulation.

INTJ
Innovative, independent, strategic, logical, reserved, insightful. Driven by their own original ideas to achieve improvements.

ISTP
Action-oriented, logical, analytical, spontaneous, reserved, independent. Enjoy adventure, skilled at understanding how mechanical things work.

ISFP
Gentle, sensitive, nurturing, helpful, flexible, realistic. Seek to create a personal environment that is both beautiful and practical.

INFP
Sensitive, creative, idealistic, perceptive, caring, loyal. Value inner harmony and personal growth, focus on dreams and possibilities.

INTP
Intellectual, logical, precise, reserved, flexible, imaginative. Original thinkers who enjoy speculation and creative problem solving.

ESTP
Outgoing, realistic, action-oriented, curious, versatile, spontaneous. Pragmatic problem solvers and skillful negotiators.

ESFP
Playful, enthusiastic, friendly, spontaneous, tactful, flexible. Have strong common sense, enjoy helping people in tangible ways.

ENFP
Enthusiastic, creative, spontaneous, optimistic, supportive, playful. Value inspiration, enjoy starting new projects, see potential in others.

ENTP
Inventive, enthusiastic, strategic, enterprising, inquisitive, versatile. Enjoy new ideas and challenges, value inspiration.

ESTJ
Efficient, outgoing, analytical, systematic, dependable, realistic. Like to run the show and get things done in an orderly fashion.

ESFJ
Friendly, outgoing, reliable, conscientious, organized, practical. Seek to be helpful and please others, enjoy being active and productive.

ENFJ
Caring, enthusiastic, idealistic, organized, diplomatic, responsible. Skilled communicators who value connection with people.

ENTJ
Strategic, logical, efficient, outgoing, ambitious, independent. Effective organizers of people and long-range planners.