

How Lawyers Can Use Personality Assessments To Improve Their Rainmaking Skills

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KEY TAKEAWAY: Many attorneys feel that they don't have the right "type" of personality to be top rainmakers. We have coached hundreds of lawyers, of all personality types, and helped all types succeed. This article explains how you can use different personality assessments to improve your business development skills.

Who Makes the Best Rainmakers?

When it comes to business development in the legal industry, many attorneys feel that they don't have the right "type" of personality to be top rainmakers. They feel that they must try to match the stereotype of being outgoing and social – equally comfortable speaking before a crowd or "working" a room full of strangers.

Truth be told, there is no one personality type that predicts a successful law-firm business developer. There are many differences among normal, healthy people. The secret to success is to determine your own type – and then work on the business development activities that take advantage of your unique strengths.

Determining Your Personality Type

Personality type theory is based on people's innate tendencies to use their minds in many different ways. These tendencies, over time, turn into patterns of behavior that can either advance or hinder your career.

To determine your type you can take one or more of the many personality and/or behavioral assessments that have been designed for this purpose. In our experience, the best all-purpose personality assessment is the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), based on the theory of personality type developed by famed psychologist Carl Jung.

Benefits of Knowing Your MBTI Type

There are many benefits and applications of the MBTI assessment. For business development purposes, this instrument allows you to better understand yourself and your strengths as you interact with others and the world around you.

In addition, an understanding of the MBTI helps you “read” the personality types of your clients and prospects – how they prefer to receive and process information and make decisions. This knowledge helps you structure your communications for the best result.

Overview of MBTI Dichotomies

There are no “right” or “wrong” results; each of the 16 types identifies normal and valuable human behaviors. The questionnaire-based MBTI instrument measures the ways people naturally prefer to:

1. Direct and get energy (extraversion or introversion);
2. Take in information (sensing or intuiting);
3. Make decisions (thinking or feeling); and
4. Organize their external world (judging or perceiving).

This table displays the high level preferences for people with each dichotomy.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>EXTROVERSION Wants to talk it out</p> | <p>INTROVERSION Wants to think it through</p> |
| <p>SENSING Focuses on specifics</p> | <p>INTUITION Focuses on the big picture</p> |
| <p>THINKING Decides based on logic</p> | <p>FEELING Decides based on feelings and values</p> |
| <p>JUDGING Organized, wants closure</p> | <p>PERCEIVING Open-ended, likes options</p> |

In our experience, a successful business developer can be any “type.”

Lawyer MBTI Types, by Percentage

According to research by Larry Richard, of LawyerBrain, surveys of more than 3000 attorneys showed that just four types represent more than half of all lawyers:

1. ISTJ (17.8%)
2. ESTJ (10.3%)
3. INTJ (13.1%)
4. ENTP (9.7%)

These are the remaining types in ascending order:

5. INTP (9.4%)
6. ENTJ (9.0)
7. ENFP (5.2%)
8. ISFJ (4.2%)
9. INFP (3.9%)
10. ISTP (3.9%)
11. ESTP (3.3%)
12. ENFJ (2.9%)
13. ESFJ (2.7%)
14. INFJ (2.7%)
15. ISFP (1.4%)
16. ESFP (.5%)

Contrasting Two Common Lawyer Types

ISTJ Type: The characteristics of an ISTJ, for example, are: quiet, serious, earn success by thoroughness and dependability; practical, matter-of-fact, realistic and responsible; decide logically what should be done and work toward it steadily, regardless of distractions; take pleasure in making everything orderly and organized – work, home, life; and value traditions and loyalty.

Doesn't this sound like everyone's image of a hard-working lawyer?

ENTP Type: However, another of these common types among lawyers is ENTP. The characteristics of this type are: quick, ingenious, stimulating, alert and outspoken; resourceful in solving new and challenging problems; adept at generating conceptual possibilities and then analyzing them strategically; good at reading other people; bored by routine, will seldom do the same thing the same way, apt to turn to one new interest after another.

It is easy to see why there is no “one size fits all” business development plan and set of activities that would fit both of these personality types – much less all 16 MBTI types.

For the Whole Picture, Measure Values and Behavior Preferences

Measuring Values. Another useful tool is the Personal Interests, Attitudes and Values Assessment. The PIAV instrument measures the relative prominence of six basic categories of beliefs and values – theoretical, utilitarian, aesthetic, social, individualistic, and traditional. Each value is ranked as being strong, situational, or indifferent.

The beliefs and values measured by this instrument determine **why** you behave in a certain way. It is obvious that there is room for considerable variation among individuals who have been asked to accomplish the same task – develop business.

These are six values measured by the PIAV assessment:

| Value | Drive For |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Theoretical | Knowledge |
| Utilitarian/Economic | Money and ROI |
| Aesthetic | Form and Harmony |
| Social/Altruistic | Helpfulness |
| Individualistic/Political | Power/Control of One’s Destiny |
| Traditional/Regulatory | Order |

Measuring Behavior. To measure behavior, one of the best tools is called the DISC assessment. The DISC results display **how** a person behaves.

The DISC report measures four dimensions of normal behavior:

| | | | |
|----------|-------------------|------------------------|---|
| D | Dominance | Challenge/Problems | How you respond to problems and challenges |
| I | Influence | Contacts/People | How you persuade others |
| S | Steadiness | Consistency/Pace | How you respond to the pace of the environment |
| C | Compliance | Constraints/Procedures | How you respond to rules and procedures set by others |

Capitalizing On Your Strengths

Becoming a successful rainmaker requires many skills; chief among them is the ability to understand your own personality and communication preferences. With a clear understanding of yourself, you can better “read” others and communicate and interact with them in the way they prefer. This builds rapport and increases the chances of securing their business.

Lastly, as you can see now, there is no one “best” rainmaker type. Each personality type has its own strengths and challenges. Your goal is to develop a plan and set of activities that takes advantage your strengths and minimizes your challenges.

Overview of Revenue Wise Services and Contact Information

FIRM OVERVIEW

Revenue Wise is a full service firm that specializes in helping law firms grow revenue. We use a combination of coaching, training, and consulting to help lawyers, practice groups, and ultimately, law firms become more successful. We can also license our materials, so your in-house staff can deliver the programs.

Past clients have averaged an 800% return on their investment in our programs.

We have been serving law firms for over 20 years and count some of the nation's top firms as our clients, including Orrick, Littler Mendelson, Fenwick & West, Kecker & Van Nest, Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton, Holland & Hart, Lindquist & Vennun and many other firms.

Our services are grouped under these areas:

- **Lawyers Services.** We help your lawyers become better business developers.
- **LinkedIn and Social Media Services.** Many consider our LinkedIn for Lawyers program the best available.
- **Practice & Industry Group Services.** We help your team leaders and members increase revenue, deepen client loyalty, and improve overall team performance.
- **Client Development Services.** We help your firm systematically develop and deepen client loyalty.
- **Firm Services.** We help law firms develop strategies, structures, and plans that measurably grow revenue.
- **Marketing Department Services.** We work with marketing leaders and their teams to optimize the performance of their departments.

QUESTIONS

If you have questions about our services, please write or give us a call.

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