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## **THE EFFECT OF HOME-BASED ENTREPRENEURS' MYERS-BRIGGS PREFERENCES ON THEIR STRATEGY PERSPECTIVES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Interest in entrepreneurship has grown significantly. Technology now enables more opportunities than ever, most particularly in the area of home-based entrepreneurship. An attempt to define the personality and behavior of entrepreneurs has proved inconclusive and now research is moving to the study of the entrepreneur in the context of the venture. One consistent finding from research searching for personality variables is that a large percentage of those entrepreneurs studied have been MBTI iNtuitors (Ns), a proportion more than double the population distribution. This exploratory mixed methods study looked at how entrepreneurs' MBTI related to their strategies and experiences. MBTI preference was found to be related to strategy and to be situational.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Years of research have not satisfactorily answered the question, "Who is the entrepreneur?" Significant time has been spent focusing on personality variables, behavior, skills, and attributes of entrepreneurs. Much of the research has been criticized for not using common definitions or assessments (Cooper, Markman, & Niss, 2000; Morris, 2002). The search for a common personality type or set of behaviors for the entrepreneur has produced some results, though, particularly with the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), the big five personality attributes, and opportunity recognition (Allinson, Chell, & Hayes, 2000; Ardichvili, Cordozo, & Ray, 2003; Bateman & Crant, 1993; Baum & Locke, 2004; Begley & Boyd, 1987; Bird, 1989; Bolton & Thompson, 2000; Boyd & Vozikis, 1994; Caird, 1993; Chen, Greene, & Crick, 1998; De Noble, Jung, & Ehrlich, 1999; Hanzel, 1995; Hull, Bosley, & Udell, 1980; Littunen, 2000; Llewellyn & Wilson, 2003; Lucas & Cooper, 2005; McCarthy, 2003; Miner, 2000; Monaghan, 2000; Morris, 2002; Pendergast, 2004; Pettifor, 2004; Reynierse, 1997a, 1997c; Reynierse, Ackerman, Fink, & Harker, 2000; Smith-Hunter, 2003).

Research with the MBTI has consistently shown entrepreneur participants tend to be iNtuitors (Ns) compared to the general population (Allinson et al., 2000; Caird, 1993; Carland, 1982; Reynierse, 1997b, 1997c; Reynierse et al., 2000). The MBTI measures personality preference at a point in time and, although test-retest validity is high (Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1998), it is a static measurement.

The MBTI was first developed by Carl Jung whose theory of personality underpins the assessment. Katherine Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers further developed the tool to what is used today. Jung believed that individuals used all dimensions rather than only the preferred one and as individuals mature over a lifetime a balance may be reached where all eight attitudes could be tapped into at any time for any purpose—a process of individuation (Wilmer, 1994). This theory implies that personality preferences, as measured by the MBTI, are situational and change due to circumstances.

Almost no research has been done that looks at entrepreneurial personality, behavior, or experiences over time. Measurements of personality, behavior, intention, strategies, and actions are all in the context of a frozen moment in time, or, the time the measurement is made. In this study, I evaluate the relationship of strategy perspectives and personality preferences over a timeline that is articulated in terms of peak and valley experiences.

## **THE LITERATURE**

Several important studies focus on home-based business (HBB) entrepreneurs. Joanne Pratt, in a special report for the United States Small Business Association, found that “working out of the home has become a significant and growing phenomenon in the United States (Pratt, 1993). Pratt quoted a 1990 survey that found there are “7.4 million home business owners and 7.2 million freelance workers, totaling 14.6 home-based business persons out of a workforce of 122.7 million” (Pratt, 1993). In a subsequent report, Pratt found that although business owners’ profiles were similar, marked differences were found when owners were separated into home-based versus non-home-based (Pratt, 1999). More of the home-based businesses were sole proprietorships; less startup capital was necessary; fewer employees are hired; only 5% gross 1 million or more; home-based businesses move to more traditional office space when gross receipts reach about \$50,000; and many home-based business owners just want to earn a secondary income, whereas non-home based businesses are earning the primary income for the owner (Pratt, 1999). Overall, trends indicate growth in home-based business formation and its critical place in the economy of the United States. These data are representative of what was happening in the 1990s. Research that segments and develops further understanding of home-based entrepreneurs will significantly contribute to the existing body of literature.

As mentioned, so much of the existing literature concentrates on “work-at-home-moms,” (called “homework”) and/or microentrepreneurship. Nancy Jurik described self-employed homework as a gendered phenomenon (Jurik, 1998, p. 8). She stated that research on small business and entrepreneurship portrays two views of those who work from home; one view is of liberated innovators “getting away” from many of the constraints of conventional employment (Beach, 1989; Carter & Cannon, 1992; Heck, Owen, & Roe, 1995, in Jurik, 1998). The other view is that of the marginalized, minority, or disadvantaged worker (Blackford, 1991; Else & Raheim, 1992, in Jurik, 1998). In other studies, home-based entrepreneurs were viewed as those who chose to work at home in order to care for children or because of factors in the external labor market, fewer jobs available, layoffs, and so on (Ammons & Markham, 2004; Berke, 2003; Carr, 1996). Some recent research on women-owned businesses deemphasized home-based ownership, even though it is on the rise. The research concluded that home-based ownership may be a good option only for women who do not have strong financial needs (Loscocco & Smith-Hunter, 2004). Other research has looked at home-based entrepreneurs who are crafts persons (Litrell,

Stout, & Reilly, 1991). Overall, there is still a lack of attention to home-based entrepreneurship as a viable, vibrant path to business success.

A growing class of successful, professional-managerial, home-based entrepreneurs is not being studied in any significant way. This study looked at professional-level, home-based entrepreneurs who chose to leave managerial positions to start their own businesses and who ran them from home. This will be a significant contribution to the literature on home-based business.

The MBTI was developed in response to Carl Jung's theory of personality (Myers & Briggs, 1943). Jung's types—Extrovert versus Introvert; Sensor versus Intuitor; and Thinker versus Feeler—were further developed by Isabel Briggs Myers and her mother, Katherine Cook Briggs. After years of research and testing, the resulting instrument—the MBTI—differentiates 16 different types or preferences (Kroeger, 1992). The MBTI is the most commonly used personality assessment today. It is considered a valid and reliable instrument and has been used extensively in research, including research with entrepreneurs (Myers et al., 1998).

The MBTI sorts preferences into 16 different types, constructed from 8 functions: Extraversion versus Introversion; Sensing versus Intuiting; Thinking versus Feeling; and Judging versus Perceiving. These types represent dimensions that create unique areas of differentiation on a continuous scale (Myers et al., 1998).

#### **EXTRAVERSION VERSUS INTROVERSION (E VS. I)**

This dimension refers to the source of energy of the individual. An Extraverted person finds energy and vitalization from exterior sources, such as other people and social occasions. On the other hand, the Introverted individual finds energy from within.

#### **SENSING VERSUS INTUITION (S VS. N)**

The S–N dimension is the process by which an individual utilizes their senses and perceives information. The S preference tends to deal with what may be perceived with the senses—the concrete, realistic, and practical. The N, however, although starting with the concrete, quickly moves to the abstract and dwells on possibilities, patterns, and symbols.

#### **THINKING VERSUS FEELING (T VS. F)**

The Thinking preference is associated with the analytical, logical, and skeptical approach rather than the Feeler's subjective assessments. The Feeler will associate with concerns for people issues.

#### **JUDGING VERSUS PERCEIVING (J VS. P)**

Judgers arrive at conclusions and make decisions quickly. Perceivers are more inclined to keep their options open to the very last minute. Perceivers tend to be more comfortable in the midst of a lot of change or rapid change.

## MBTI AND TEMPERAMENT

Broader categories of type are created when the 16 MBTI types are sorted into four functional pairs or types: SJ, SP, NF, and NT. These function types, or temperaments as described by David Keirsey, build on the MBTI 16 type definitions and are characterized as follows:

- SJ: The Epimethean temperament is characterized by a longing for duty, to be useful. SJ's are known to "make the trains run on time."
- SP: Often call the Dionysian temperament, the SP lives "in the moment," desires freedom, and does as he or she wishes, when that wish strikes.
- NF: This function pair is known as the Apollonian temperament and is a self in search of itself. Self-actualization is of great importance.
- NT: The NT is called the Promethean temperament, in search of knowledge, of knowing. Keirsey describes the NT, especially the Introverted NT, as one who lives in an entirely different social environment—with aliens—while SPs and SJs are surrounded by their own kind (Keirsey & Bates, 1984, p. 47).

A moderate number of research studies have used the MBTI to look at entrepreneurial characteristics. Randall Russ looked at home-based businesses in his doctoral research and found that almost half of the sample was either ESFJ or ISFJ types. In Russ' sample, the businesses surveyed had a low average gross income of \$5000–\$9,999. The participants in Russ' study would have not considered themselves financially self-sustaining. In addition, over 27% of the sample were in types of businesses considered to be skilled services such as computers, catering, lawn care, and child/adult care (Russ, 1996). These businesses differ significantly in financial scope and type from the home-based businesses included in this research study.

Hoy and Carland used the MBTI in a study in 1983 to differentiate entrepreneurs from managers. They found that "entrepreneurs were more intuitive, thinking, and perceptive than managers" (Caird, 1993). No significant difference was found on the extraversion–introversion measures. Hoy and Vaught found that 61% of the entrepreneurs in their study of problem-solving skills were intuitive types (Hoy & Vaught, 1981). And, other research on entrepreneurs that used the MBTI found that successful entrepreneurs were more intuitive than their non-entrepreneur counterparts and that the MBTI was an effective discriminator of entrepreneurs who were more likely to be intuitive-thinking-perceptive types dominating (Allinson et al., 2000; Carland, 1982; Roberts, 1988). Carland et al. posed the question, "Can intuition be the key to understanding entrepreneurial vision?" (Carland, Carland, & Busbin, 1997). In their view, the intuitive entrepreneur was more able to carry an abstract vision for something not yet there or not yet created. I believe that intuition plays a critical role in entrepreneurship and even more so in the realm of home-based business due to the isolated physical structure of the business that operates solo, as opposed in an office surrounded by other workers.

Reynierse used the MBTI a number of times and found that Ns dominated; NTPs were the most likely entrepreneurial type; P was associated with entrepreneurship; J with bureaucratic types; and there were more EP, NP, and TP types than Js. His research found no differences on the S-N preference scales (Reynierse, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c; Reynierse et al., 2000).

In a related study that used the MBTI, Heffner, Hunt, and Robinson looked at four possible

scales that, together or separately, might predict entrepreneurship: the Entrepreneurial Quotient (EQ), developed by an insurance company for agent hiring screening purposes; the Entrepreneurial Attitude Orientation (EAO), developed for entrepreneurial research; the MBTI, previously mentioned; and the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument, developed to categorize left brain/right brain dominance. Participants were obtained through a mix of university students, family, friends, and referrals. They found that the EQ was the best indicator; the EAO was second best; and the MBTI was third best. The combination of the three instruments was the “best overall indicator” (Huefner, Hunt, & Robinson, 1996). The use of MBTI to determine entrepreneurial personality types is supported by these prior studies.

## **THE RESEARCH STUDY**

This study was exploratory and, although primarily qualitative in approach, used mixed methods to examine the question, “What is the relationship of MBTI preferences to the strategies and experiences of home-based entrepreneurs?” The research was structured as a series of case studies (Yin, 2003) with 3 sources of data: scores from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & Myers, 1998), coded text from 2-hour semi-structured interviews, and drawings created by the participants of their peak and valley experiences during the life span of their business. The coded interview text and drawings were analyzed in tandem to explore most fully the emerging themes.

Participants were obtained by purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002). Criteria for inclusion were that the participant had to be home-based, offer a unique product or service, and be financially self-sufficient by their own definition. Franchisees and subcontractors were eliminated. All of the 20 participants in the study were former corporate executives and managers. Most of the participants brought corporate world experience to their enterprises but, for some, the entrepreneurial venture was an entree to a new profession.

The interviews were semi-structured and focused on the strategies and experiences over the life span of the venture. The Entrepreneurial Strategy Matrix (ESM) was used as the model for the interview questions. The ESM was developed specifically to determine strategy choices for entrepreneurial enterprises (Lussier, Sonfield, Corman, & McKinney, 2001; Lussier, Sonfield, Frazer, Greene, & Corman, 1998; Sonfield & Lussier, 1997; Sonfield, Lussier, Corman, & McKinney, 2001).

Research ethics were carefully observed through the review and approval of an Institutional Review Board, the use of the Informed Consent Form, and careful observation of the privacy of each individual participant.

The qualitative data was compiled from interview texts and drawings and analyzed with NVivo, a well-known qualitative data analysis, software program. The quantitative data were compiled and analyzed with SPSS. Some of the data analysis used the “quasi-statistical method,” which is the process of converting qualitative data into a quantitative format (Robson, 2002), to determine themes and relationships among the assessment tool scores and the coding of text and drawings.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The participants consisted of a diverse set of home-based entrepreneurs.

**TABLE 1. GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

( <i>N</i> = 20)	Male	Female	Total
Years in business:			
2–5	5	5	10
6–10	2	3	5
11–20	1	2	3
20+	0	2	2
Approximate age range:			
<30	0	0	0
30–40	4	3	7
41–50	3	4	7
51–60	1	5	6
>60	0	0	0
Marital status:			
Married	5	7	12
Unmarried	3	5	8
Geographical location:			
D.C. Metro	4	9	13
Western Maryland	3	1	4
CA, FL, & NM	1	2	3
Types of businesses:			
Management consulting	2	6	8
Marketing consulting	1	3	4
The arts	3	1	4
Computer systems	2	0	2
Gifts & novelties	0	1	1
CPA services	0	1	1
Business structure:			
Partnership	4	1	5
Solo	4	11	15
Prior entrepreneur:			
Never	6	10	16
Serial	2	2	4

The breakdown of gender was 8 males and 12 females. Years in business ranged from 2 to over 20. One half of the sample had been in business between 2 and 5 years. Ages ranged from the mid-30s to the early 50s. Geographically, 13 of the participants lived in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area; 4 lived in western Maryland; and 3 lived in California (CA), Florida (FL), and New Mexico (NM), respectively. The types of businesses included: management consulting, marketing consulting, the arts, computer systems, gifts and novelties, and CPA services. Of the 20 participants, 15 were solo enterprises. Five of the 13 were partnerships. The partnerships were set up so that both partners operated from their respective homes. Four of the 20 were serial

entrepreneurs who had prior entrepreneurial experiences and/or were already starting up new enterprises while operating the current one. The remaining 16, or 80% of the participants, had ventured into entrepreneurship for the first time.

Each participant considered himself financially self-sustaining. Each was actively marketing and providing his products or services. One hundred percent of the sample was Caucasian, born and raised in the United States. The MBTI types were compiled into temperament categories to allow for larger data sets for analysis.

**TABLE 2. TEMPERAMENT BY GENDER**

Gender ( <i>N</i> = 20)	SJs	SPs	NFs	NTs
Males	1	1	4	2
Females	0	2	4	6
Total	1	3	8	8
Percent to the total sample	5%	15%	40%	40%

Interestingly, the proportion of MBTI® Intuitive participants to total participants was 16 of 20, or 80%, with 75% of men and 83.3% of women scoring as Intuitives. This is far higher than the 25% for women and the 28% found for men in the general U.S. population and is consistent with prior research (Allinson et al., 2000; Caird, 1993; Carland, 1982; Hoy & Vaught, 1981; Reynierse, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c; Reynierse et al., 2000).

The ESM model places innovation and risk into a four-quadrant model: high innovation, high risk (IR); high innovation, low risk (Ir); low innovation, high risk (iR); and low innovation, low risk (lr). Participants were asked to review the four strategy approaches described in the ESM and identify the strategy group that most closely described their overall enterprise strategies.

**TABLE 3. ESM STRATEGY TYPE BY GENDER**

Gender ( <i>N</i> = 20)	High I, high R	High I, low R	Low I, high R	Low I, low R	Total
Males	4	2	0	2	8
% Males	50	25	0	25	
Females	7	3	2	0	12
% Females	58	25	16.7	0	
Total	11	5	2	2	20
% Total	55	25	10	10	100

Fifty-five percent of the participants classified their strategy type as High Innovation, High Risk. The balance of the participants classified their strategy type as 25% High Innovation, Low Risk and 20% evenly split between Low Innovation, High Risk and Low Innovation, Low Risk. In Lussier et al.'s research (2001), 35% of the sample considered their strategies to be High Innovation, High Risk as opposed to 55% of this research's sample. Thirteen percent of Lussier's sample classified themselves as High Innovation, Low Risk versus 25% of this research sample. Low Innovation, High Risk strategies resulted in 37% for the Lussier study; 10% for this study, and lastly, Low Innovation, Low Risk was 15% in Lussier's research; 10% for this sample.

Lussier et al. (2001) surveyed small businesses as classified in a Dun & Bradstreet database, most likely businesses located at business addresses rather than home-based businesses. The average business employed 20 people, significantly different than this research sample (Lussier et al., 2001).

Then, during the interview and while executing the drawings of peak and valley experiences, the participants were asked to show how those strategies might have changed at certain points. The result was a timeline that spanned the venture lifecycle that detailed the strategy choices made during that time. These findings will be discussed in depth shortly. The statistical analysis of overall strategy choice to temperament is presented in the following table.

**TABLE 4. RELATIONSHIP OF TEMPERAMENT TO ESM STRATEGY**

ESM type ( <i>N</i> = 20)	NT	%	NF	%	SJ	%	SP	%	Total	Percent of sample
High I, high R	5	63	5	63	0	0	1	33.3	11	55
High I, low R	2	25	1	13	1	100	1	33.3	5	25
Low I, high R	0	0	1	13	0	0	1	33.3	2	10
Low I, low R	1	13	1	13	0	0	0	0	2	10
Total by temperament	8	100	8	100	1	100	3	100	20	100

Note: There are no significant differences.

The straight run of data shows no significant differences in this comparison. However, A test of the differences of attitude scores (E–I, S–N, T–F, J–P) that follows in the Table 5 indicates a statistical relationship of the S–N preference and the ESM IR strategy type.

**TABLE 5. MBTI ATTITUDE SCORES BY STRATEGY TYPES**

ESM strategy type ( <i>N</i> = 20)	E–I	S–N	T–F	J–P	Total
High I, high R	3.64	-16.4*	-.36	-.55	11
All others:	2.0	-8.0*	-1.0	-4.0	
High I, low R	-3.8	-8.0	3.6	2.8	5
Low I, high R	9.0	-5.0	-17.0	-17.0	2
Low I, low R	11.0	-11.0	3.5	-8.0	2
Total	3.05	-12.6	-.7	-2.2	20

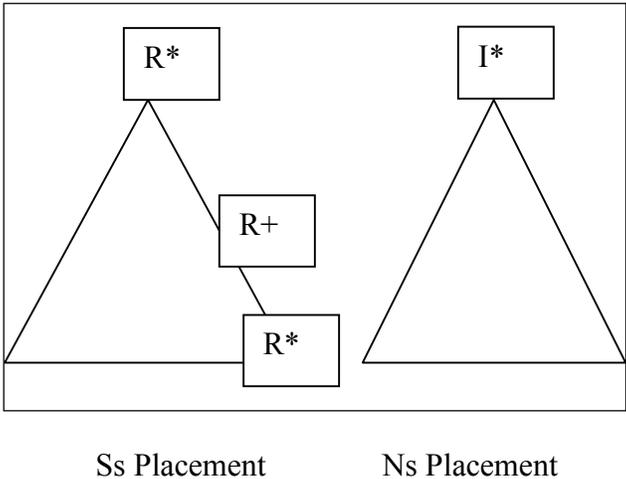
Note: Innovation is represented as I; risk is represented as R. \* The *p* value = .16 for a two-tailed test.

The Intuitive attitude, or *N*, had a high mean score for High Innovation, High Risk strategies. The mean of the *S* attitude score was the lowest for this group. The difference of *S* minus *N* mean points for those participants who chose ESM strategy types other than High Innovation and High Risk was -8 versus that of -16.36 of those 11 participants who chose High Innovation and High Risk as their primary strategy type. There was no statistical significance with a  $p > .05$ .

The most interesting relationships, however, appeared during the analysis of the coded text and drawings of peak and valley experiences. Strategies were not static and changed over the timeline and during the experiences drawn and described. Strategy orientation differed between MBTI *N*s and *S*s in that each saw risk and innovation at different points in their peak

experiences. Ss drew more peaks and valleys than Ns when they described their new venture experiences. Ss also placed risk-oriented strategies at the peak, the downswing side, and the valley of the drawings. Ns drew far less peaks and valleys and tended to draw one or two continuing upward lines. Ns placed innovation-oriented strategies at the peak.

The resulting model demonstrates the relationship of the iNtuitior-Sensor preference to strategy orientation:

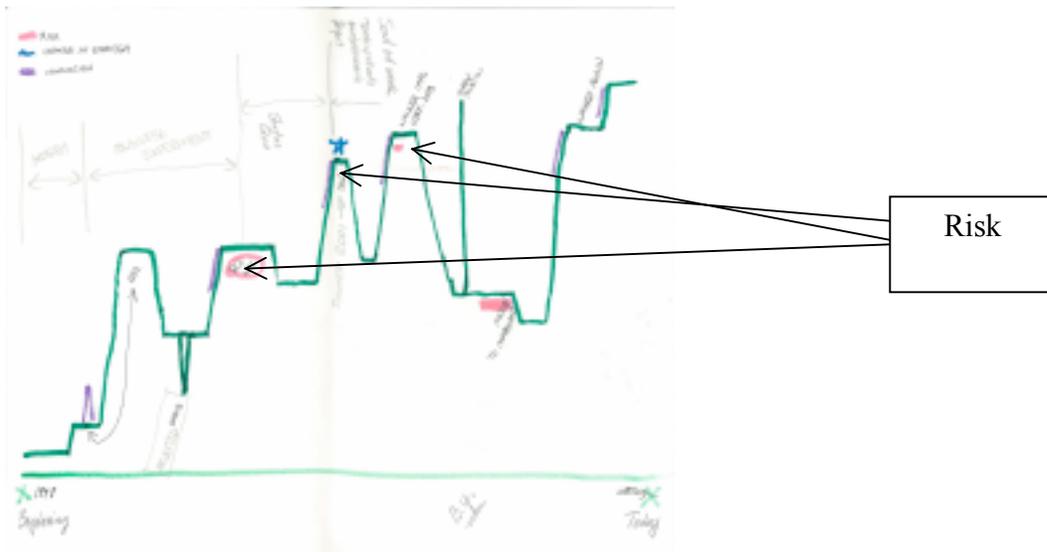


Note: \*=statistically significant with  $p < .05$ . +=slight trend.

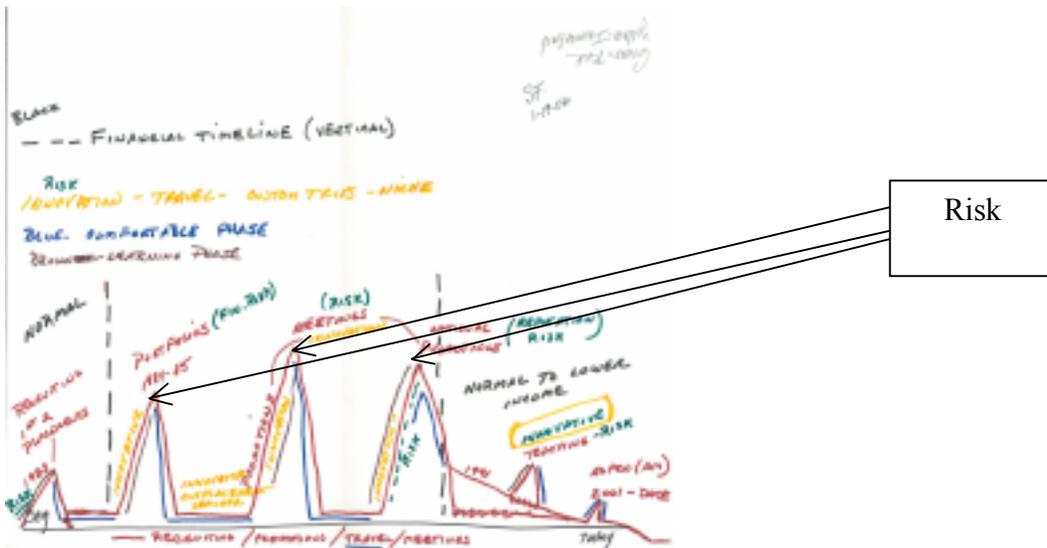
**FIGURE 1. S AND N PLACEMENT OF RISK STRATEGIES AND INNOVATION STRATEGIES ON PEAK AND VALLEY EXPERIENCES (N = 20)**

Ss perception of their strategies as risk-oriented was statistically significant at the peak of experiences and the valley of experiences. Ss show a slight trend toward perceiving more risk than Ns on the downswing side of the peak experiences. Ns, on the other hand, significantly perceived their strategies to be innovation-oriented at the peak of the experiences. Generally, where Ss saw strategies as risk-oriented, Ns saw them as innovation-oriented.

**EXAMPLES OF S DRAWINGS.**

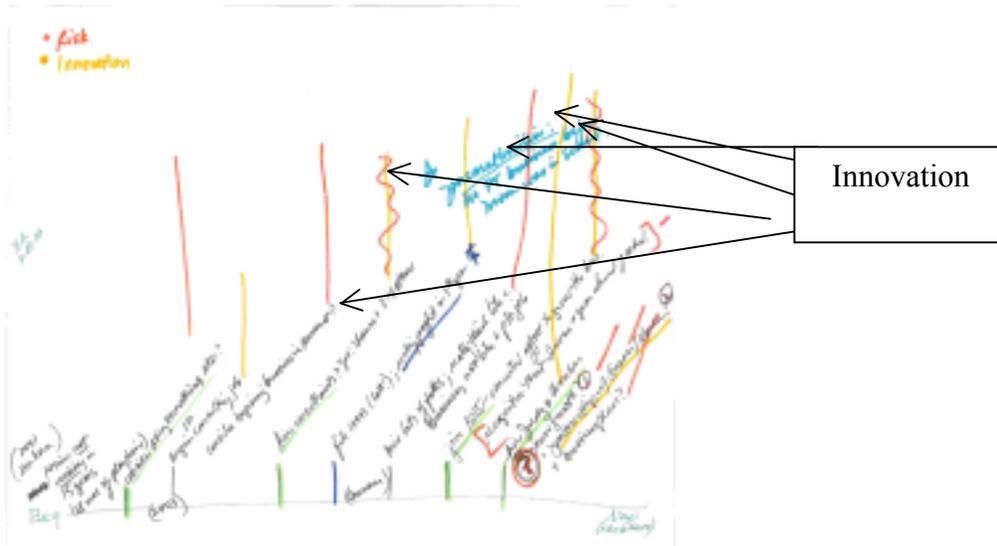


**FIGURE 2. BRANT'S DRAWING OF PEAK AND VALLEY EXPERIENCES WITH RISK- AND INNOVATION-ORIENTED STRATEGIES**

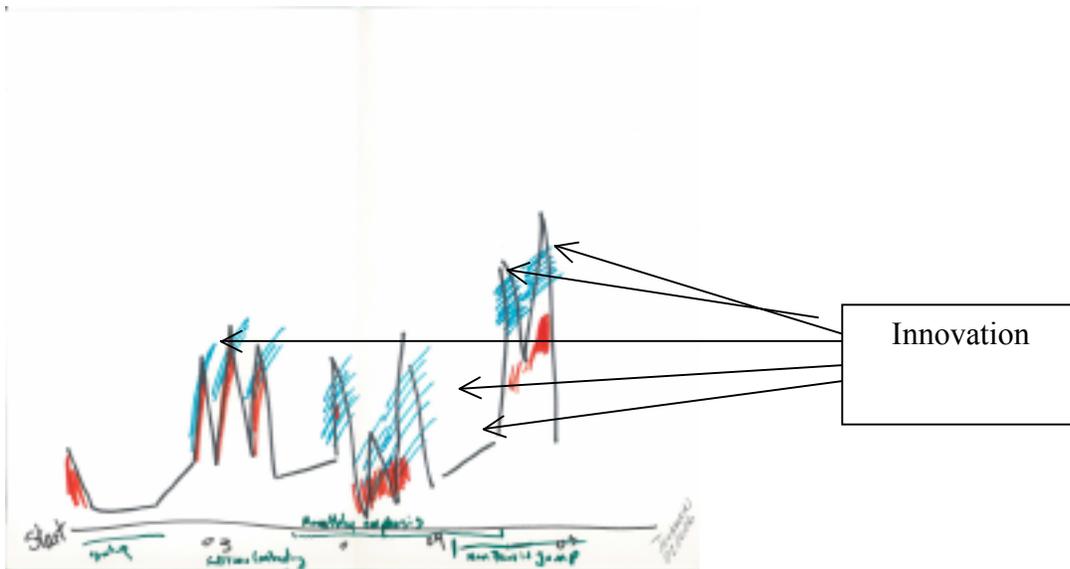


**FIGURE 3. SARA'S DRAWING OF PEAK AND VALLEY EXPERIENCES WITH RISK- AND INNOVATION-ORIENTED STRATEGIES**

**EXAMPLES OF N DRAWINGS.**

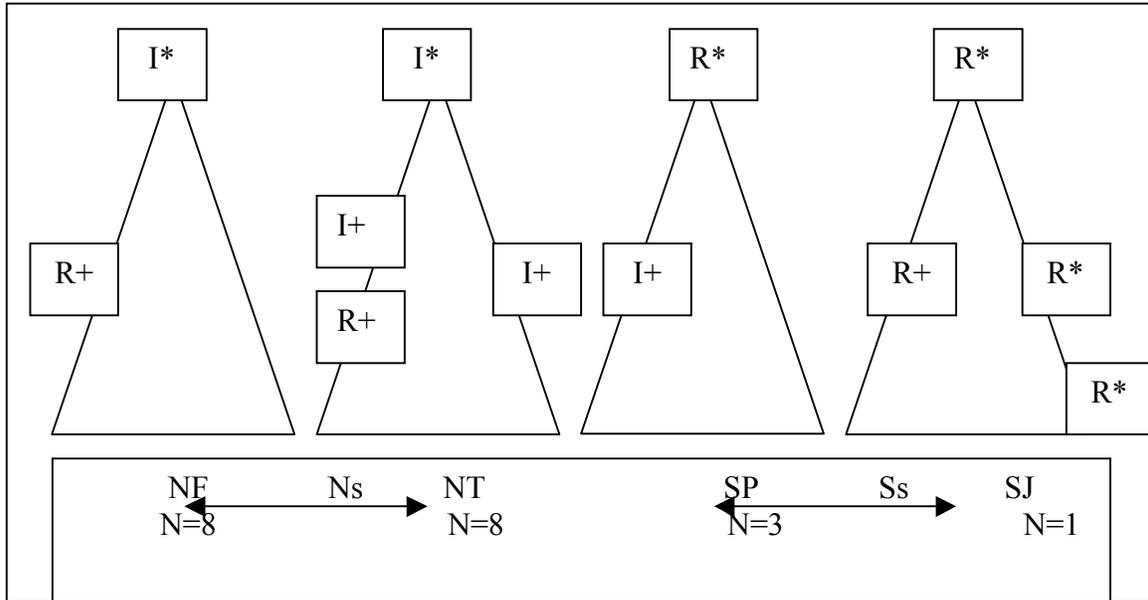


**FIGURE 4. ARLENE'S DRAWING OF PEAK AND VALLEY EXPERIENCES WITH RISK- AND INNOVATION-ORIENTED STRATEGIES**



**FIGURE 5. JON'S DRAWING OF PEAK AND VALLEY EXPERIENCES WITH RISK- AND INNOVATION-ORIENTED STRATEGIES.**

Mean counts were compiled for each temperament for a more expanded look at the placement of risk- and innovation-oriented strategies on the drawing peaks and valleys. The resulting model details how each temperament perceives firm strategy when put in the context of a timeline.



Note: \*=statistically significant with  $p < .05$ . +=slight trend.

**FIGURE 6. MBTI TEMPERAMENTS: PERCEPTION OF RISK AND INNOVATION**

The above figures portray both statistically significant perceptions and trends of perceptions of the four different temperaments in terms of how risk- and innovation-oriented strategies fit into their peak and valley experiences. In these representations of temperament and perceptions of risk- and innovation-oriented strategies in terms of peak and valley experiences, NFs tend to see the build toward the peak experience as one where risk strategies came into play with innovation strategies in play when the peak is reached. NTs on the other hand, not only perceive innovation-oriented strategies coming into play at the peak, but also innovative strategies are at play on the build up toward the peak and the swing down from the peak. NTs also do see risk-oriented strategies on the build toward the peak of an experience. SPs are quite different in that risk-oriented strategies are in play at the peak of the experience and innovation-oriented strategies are at work on the upswing of the peak. Although there is only one SJ in the sample, I prepared a model of the peak experience for him to provide at least, one SJs perception. In his case, risk-oriented strategies are in play on all sides of the peak: upswing, top, downswing, and valley.

### SITUATIONAL MBTI

MBTI type and strategies have been discussed to this point in terms of a static score. This, however, is a simplistic analysis and more is required. Jung believed that individuals used all dimensions rather than only the preferred one and as individuals mature over a lifetime a balance may be reached where all eight attitudes could be tapped into at any time for any purpose—a process of individuation (Wilmer, 1994). Miles and Snow held that strategy is a “*pattern or stream* of major and minor decisions about an organization’s possible future domains (Miles & Snow, 2003). From the interviews and drawings, it is evident to me that participants used multiple MBTI attitudes depending on the situation and context. I call this “MBTI-in-action.”

In this study, it has been established that strategies, defined as either risk-oriented or innovation-oriented, change over time and circumstance since when the drawings are examined what has been established as one strategy approach (risk or innovation) actually changes depending on the situation and the context. In the drawings, there are 10 potential domains where risk-oriented or innovation-oriented strategies could be placed.

**TABLE 6. COUNTS OF RISK- AND INNOVATION-ORIENTED STRATEGIES CHANGING ON THE TIMELINE**

	R at	I at	R at	I at	R on	I on	R on	I on	R	I	Total	Mean	
MBTI	N	Peak	Peak	Valley	Valley	Up	Up	Down	Down	Between	Between		
N	16	12	27	9	2	24	23	11	9	7	4	128	8
S	4	13	3	8	1	8	9	6	0	3	1	52	13
Total	20	25	30	17	3	32	32	17	9	10	5	180	9

Ss have a higher change rate over the timeline drawing of peak and valley experiences than Ns. As previously discussed, Ss draw more peaks and valleys than Ns. They also place risk-oriented strategies at the peak while Ns place innovation-oriented strategies at the peak.

I selected 4 participants, who based on the coding of their stories, experiences, and the timeline discussion, demonstrated the most range in their MBTI preferences. I added the top scoring Ns and the balance of the Ss to this group for a total of 9 participants; 5 Ns and 4 Ss. This group's drawings were then further analyzed for where and how participants tapped into their less preferred attitude and how that related to the risk- and innovation-oriented strategies in play at the time.

**TABLE 7. MBTI PREFERENCES-IN-ACTION AT THE POINTS WHERE RISK- AND INNOVATION-ORIENTED STRATEGIES ARE PLACED: THE N'S**

Non-preferred MBTI dimensions (N = 5)	Kirk (ENFP)	Danielle (ENFP)	Kathryn (ENFP)	Lorraine (ENFP)	Arlene (ENTJ)	Total
Thinking						
R	4	1	1	2	0	8
I	4	0	0	0	0	4
Feeling						
R	0	0	0	0	2	2
I	0	0	0	0	2	2
Judging						
R	0	1	1	0	0	1
I	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Note:* Only those non-preferred attitudes that were coded are in the table.

**TABLE 8. MBTI PREFERENCES-IN-ACTION AT THE POINTS WHERE RISK- AND INNOVATION-ORIENTED STRATEGIES ARE PLACED: THE S'S**

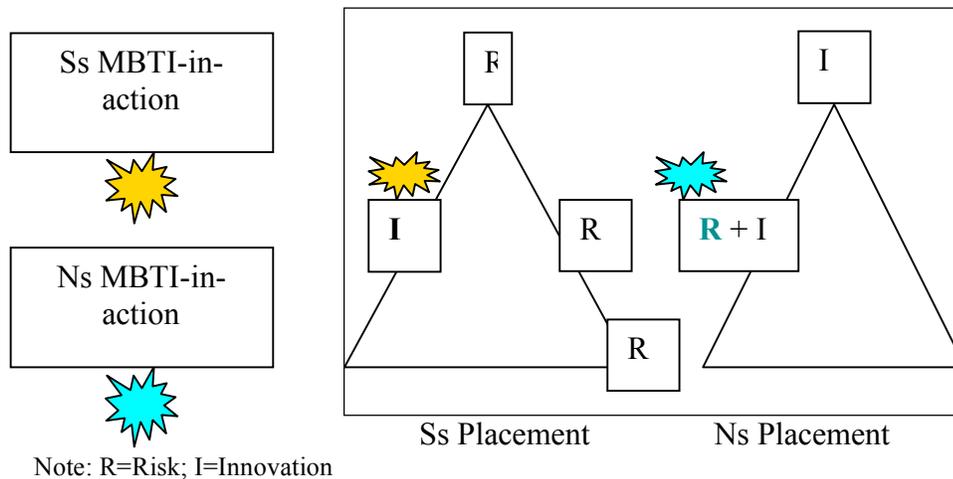
Non-preferred MBTI dimensions ( <i>N</i> = 4)	Kara (ISFP)	Sara (ISFP)	Brant (ISTP)	Bennett (ISTJ)	Total
Extraversion					
R	0	1	0	0	1
I	2	2	1	0	5
Intuitive					
R	0	0	0	1	1
I	0	0	0	0	0
Feeling					
R	0	0	1	0	1
I	0	0	3	0	3

*Note:* Only those non-preferred attitudes that were coded are in the table.

The 5 Ns tended to tap more often into a non-preferred MBTI attitude at points of risk-oriented strategies while the 4 Ss tapped into their non-preferred MBTI attitudes at points where innovation strategies were at play. This trend is the opposite of the trend that shows Ns generally perceive strategies as innovation-oriented and Ss generally perceive strategies as risk-oriented. This theme appears to be situational and it happens when the preferred attitude is challenged by the need for strategies that are less often used and, therefore, less comfortable to the participant.

For the NFs, the MBTI attitudes that were most often tapped as opposite to those preferred were Thinking for Feeling. For the NTs, the “opposite preferred” attitude was Feeling for Thinking. The SPs, all of whom were Intraverts, most often chose Extraversion. In addition, the one SJ used his Intuitive side and Feeler side.

The quantitative data from this research study shows no relationship between MBTI and strategies. However, there are statistically significant relationships between MBTI Ns and Ss and risk-oriented and innovation-oriented strategies shown in the qualitative data. Ns and Ss discuss their strategies from different perspectives: futuristic versus realistic. Ns and Ss portray, through drawings, different pictures of their experiences and how their strategies fit into them. Ns see risk- and innovation-oriented strategies at work as they climb toward a peak accomplishment; Ss see Risk at the peak and the downside of the peak. Ns see their strategies more innovative-oriented; Ss see their strategies more risk oriented. Both Ss and Ns see their strategies change over a timeline, rather than as static, permanent states. Lastly, both Ns and Ss tap into non-preferred MBTI attitudes over time and depending on the situation. However, Ns tap into the non-preferred attitudes at points where risk strategies come into play and Ss when innovation strategies come into play.



**FIGURE 7. NS AND SS MBTI-IN-ACTION: USE OF NON-PREFERRED ATTITUDES**

### CONCLUSION

The limitations of this study are that, first, that the small sample size of 20 put it at the smallest limit to perform statistical analyses. The small size also made it difficult to establish and validate strong themes. Secondly, the sample was purposeful and, therefore, did not represent a randomized sampling of home-based entrepreneurs. The sample was not diverse in terms of MBIT, ethnicity, type of business, geographic location, and other demographic variables. Due to these factors, the ability to generalize from the findings is limited.

There are few studies of professional-level, home-based entrepreneurs. Much of entrepreneurial research has used business students as participants rather than practicing entrepreneurs. This study builds on the small amount of current research about those people who choose to work at home and “do it their way,” finding self-fulfillment and financial success. It also used actively practicing, financially self-sustaining, home-based entrepreneurs as the sample.

The findings of this study support prior findings that entrepreneurs tend to be MBTI Intuitives. However, this study finds a very different participant choice of strategy type where over half of the participants choose High Innovation, High Risk as their dominant strategy type, far higher from the 7% and 14% levels that Puetz and Hunt (1998) and Sonfield and Lussier (1997) found.

This study contributes to the literature on entrepreneurship by finding a statistically significant correlation between the MBTI S–N dimension and situational risk- and innovation-oriented strategies that are related to peak and valley experiences. Additionally, this study finds a trend that participants tapped into non-preferred MBTI attitudes, or employed situational MBTI, during the peak and valley experiences. This trend shows that Ns, who view innovation-oriented strategies in play at the peak of peak experiences, tap into non-preferred attitudes where risk-oriented strategies are in play, perhaps a point of conflict or stress. Ss, who view risk-oriented strategies as being in play at the peak of peak experiences, tap into their non-preferred strategies when innovation-oriented strategies are in play.

This study supports the conclusion that, among home-based entrepreneurs, personality and strategies are related, and so lays the groundwork for more research on this topic. So much of the literature in entrepreneurship revolves around the discussion of “*Who* is the entrepreneur?” Recently, the idea that the entrepreneur has unique personality or behavioral attributes has been discounted. It seems too simplistic to believe that one or several variables are responsible for such a complex set of activities such as conceptualizing, starting, and running a small business. However, “who” the entrepreneur is plays a critical role in how he or she carves and maintains a strategic business niche for himself or herself.

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