

Lesson 2: The Foundations of MAST Methodology

Part B

Examining Personality Theories

Identifying and understanding the personalities of participants in a MAST project helps you to work with different types of people. Additionally, the MAST methodology has been influenced by research into the field of personality, as you will discover to a greater extent in the next lesson.

Three theories of personality have been particularly influential in MAST, including:

- Multiple Intelligences theory
- Shapes theory
- Left/Right Brain theory

These are described in the next several slides.

First you learn about the Multiple Intelligences Theory.

What Is Intelligence?

When Albert Einstein was a child, he was so slow in learning to speak that his parents consulted a doctor, fearing that he was developmentally disabled. Later in life, recognizing that there are many types of intelligence, Einstein expressed the sentiment, “Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it is stupid.”

Psychologists and behaviorists used to believe that intelligence consisted only of logical and linguistic ability and that people had a fixed amount of intelligence that did not change. Then in 1983 Dr. Howard Gardner, a Harvard professor of education, formulated his Multiple Intelligences Theory. This theory postulated that there are different intelligences, that everyone possesses all intelligences, but that people learn differently based on the dominant intelligences with which they have been most gifted.

Gardner at first identified eight intelligences and in later work added one more. They are:

Naturalist (nature smart): Ability to categorize animals, plants, and so on, in nature

Intrapersonal (self smart): Understanding oneself, self-awareness, personal objectivity, knowing your fears, motivations, feelings, and beliefs

Verbal-Linguistic (word smart): Verbal skills; written and spoken language; rhythm, sounds, and meanings of words; ability to learn languages; remembering information

Visual-Spatial (picture smart): Creation and interpretation of visual images, thinking in images and pictures, visualizing accurately and abstractly

Bodily-Kinesthetic (body smart): Mental capacity to coordinate movement, physical agility and balance, eye/body coordination, dexterity, handling objects skillfully, using the body to express emotion or play a sport

Mathematical-Logical (logic smart): Detecting and analyzing problems, scientific reasoning and deduction, mathematical operations

Musical (music smart): Recognizing, composing, and appreciating music; differentiating pitches, tones, rhythms, timbers, and sounds; understanding relationship of sound and feeling; appreciating musical patterns and performance.

Interpersonal (people smart): Interpreting behaviors and communications, responding appropriately to others, understanding moods or feelings of others

Existential: Capability of tackling deep questions

Multiple Intelligences Examples

These are some examples of people or occupations exhibiting each of the intelligences:

Naturalist: Farmers, gardeners, florists, geologists, archaeologists

Intrapersonal: Psychiatrists, spiritual counselors

Verbal/Linguistic: Mark Twain, Robert Frost, poets, writers, newscasters

Visual/Spatial: Martin Luther King (dreamer), artists, architects, advertising

Bodily/Kinesthetic: Fred Astaire, dancers, dramatic actors, mimes, physical educators

Logical/mathematical: Einstein, accountants, bankers, medicine, scientific research

Musical/Rhythmic: Michael Jackson, Taylor Swift, music composers, music teachers, musical theatre

Interpersonal: Billy Graham, counselors, politicians, sociologists, therapists, pastors

Existential: Aristotle, theologians, philosophers

Implications of Multiple Intelligences Theory

Think about:

Which intelligence type describes you or someone you know, such as a friend, spouse, or child?

What implications would this theory have for teaching? For working?

Much education and communication focuses on using logical and linguistic methods. However, when teaching or working with multiple intelligences, it is helpful to use diverse teaching methods and various ways to communicate to enable people to learn and work in ways that are most comfortable for their predominant intelligences.

Utilizing Multiple Intelligences Theory

These different types of intelligences tend to learn differently and therefore benefit most from different types of teaching.

Click each of the intelligences in turn to see how each best learns. Click Continue when you are finished.

Naturalist: Studying outside, being around pets and plants, using senses other than hearing, observing nature

Intrapersonal: Avoiding distractions, working toward personal goals, playing solitary games, working independently, relating personal experiences

Verbal-Linguistic: Reading, memorizing, word games, rhymes, using the internet

Visual-Spatial: Pictures, videos, visual aids/props, mazes/puzzles, using the internet

Bodily-Kinesthetic: Role plays, physical examples, exercising while reviewing, field trips, asking logical questions, using the internet

Mathematical-Logical: Experiments, strategy games, analyzing data, asking logical questions, using the internet

Musical: Listening to recordings, talking to yourself, making up songs, reading aloud, changing tempo

Interpersonal: Group studies, comparing information with others, interviewing experts, relating personal experiences, team projects

Existential: Asking questions requiring deep thought, presenting the big picture; looking at a topic from different points of view; providing overviews and summaries, teaching concepts to others

To continue learning about theories, please proceed to

Part C of Lesson 2.