

## The State of Our Unions

By Kim Dannies

Ask any seasoned professional what the backbone of a successful business practice is and they will invariably reply: RELATIONSHIPS. And what fuels relationships? Good communication. The basic mechanisms of discovering how we—and others—receive, process, and relay information is critical to creating solid relationships.

### How to build rock solid relationships:

- Learn about yourself: identify your strengths, work style, and areas for growth.
- Let people in: share what you are thinking— people are not mind readers.
- Speak up! Ask for what you want.
- Find out what others around you need and provide it.
- Invest in vital relationships: devotion pays huge long-term dividends.
- Give feedback & gratitude: people thrive on positive vibes, be the source.
- Lead by example: live the love you hunger for, set the standard for friendship.
- Work as a team player: be clear about your objectives and then give 100%.

One of the most widely used assessment tools for understanding others and ourselves both at home and at work, is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). You have probably heard of it, or even taken the inventory. The MBTI has been used for over 65 years to help us understand where we get our mental energy, how we observe our world, how we make decisions, and how we orient ourselves to the outer world. Do you immerse yourself in details, or detest owners' manuals? Are you frank and decisive, or tactful and warm-hearted? Do you prefer to quietly observe at meetings or stand up and lead the discussion? The Myers-Briggs Type indicator is designed to give people a fresh understanding of how they interact with others in their personal and work lives and then have them use that knowledge to build high-performing teams based on an effective combination of styles.

Randy Rowland, founder of TeamsWork, LLC [www.teamswork.biz](http://www.teamswork.biz) is President of the Vermont Chapter of the Association for Psychological Type International, the governing body for MBTI practitioners. Randy combines his professional experience and the MBTI to help businesses and individuals reach new heights in productivity through improved communication and team building. Additionally, he integrates the latest developments in Emotional Intelligence and brain research so his clients understand the hard science that supports the need for greater social and emotional competency as a precursor to a rewarding personal and professional life.

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While Randy's consulting focuses on teams in the workplace, his spouse, Virginia Rowland, tackles the spaces in which we live and work as a residential and commercial Space Planning Consultant [www.virginiarowland.com](http://www.virginiarowland.com). She helps people feel more "at home in their homes" and be more productive in their places of work. Ms. Rowland also uses the MBTI with her clients, most notably when lifestyle preferences differ vastly between family members or co-workers. Are you highly organized but your spouse is not? Does their disorganization impact your energy, productivity or sense of calm?

Through understanding her clients' individual types, she can make design recommendations that will truly fit the client's needs. "To accomplish this, I work with individuals, couples and professional teams to identify what currently works or doesn't work about their home or work spaces. Together we identify strategies for enhancing those spaces which can include: reviewing architectural plans, strategizing renovation concepts, integrating principles of Feng Shui and the MBTI, and addressing clutter and organization through the understanding of time management principles. Facilitating effective communication between the parties is an essential component to my work, which is where my Myers-Briggs training is so valuable," Ms. Rowland explains.

"Interesting you should mention Ginny, me, and our businesses in the same breath" Randy said to me via email recently. "As the MBTI underlies much of the work we each do, we often collaborate about how to present solutions in our different realms. Most recently, we teamed up to do a workshop for the local branch of a national financial services company. As Ginny and I are quite different personality types, we could use ourselves to demonstrate to the participants how to diffuse conflicts that often arise between different types, and how to use these differences in a complimentary fashion. We demonstrate how understanding and appreciating differences in work styles leads to greater productivity and more harmony in the workplace and in the home."

Randy continued, "This information is equally valuable in the home as it is in the workplace. Our children, (at least our 15 and 18 year-old sons, if not our 8 year-old daughter), are well versed in the MBTI, and it has helped us survive the inevitable rough spots that every family encounters. In the same fashion, my most rewarding workshop to date has been the one I presented in Portsmouth, NH to working couples. The information they learned about

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themselves, and their spouses, has been invaluable to the participants in their personal and professional relationships.”

Are you an ISTJ or and ENTP? INTP or an ESTJ? Learn more about the MBTI and how it can illuminate the fascinating world of personality type and become a tool for building solid relationships at the office and at home—it’s personal understanding reinforced 24 X 7!

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