

INTEGRATIVE LEADERSHIP INTERNATIONAL

“Helping individuals and organizations become integrated.”

Lessons on the Path:

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“The Art of Thinking”

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OBSERVATION:

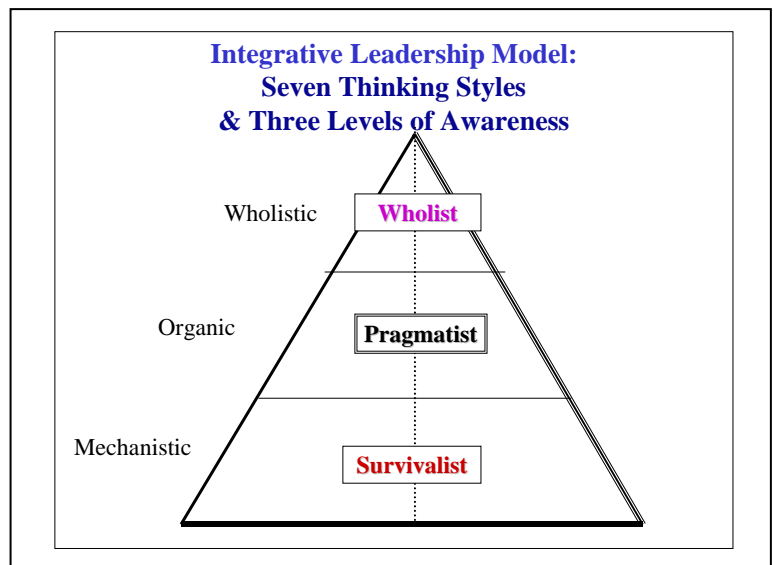
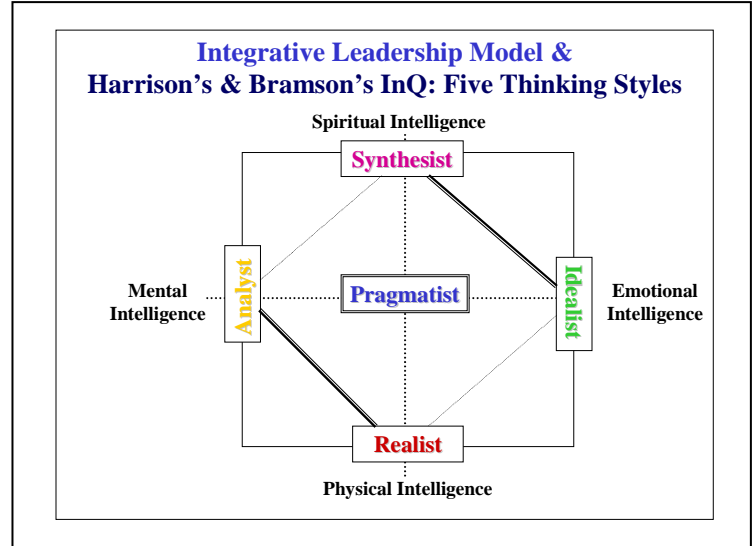
Last week we encountered an interesting situation. Over a dozen members of a senior management team —most with their PhD’s in charge of a research facility—did not complete the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) as they had been requested to do. Since MBTI was a key part of their upcoming leadership development program, their lack of completion caused some last minute program rethinking and redesign and gave us cause to pause to examine this situation from two perspectives.

The first was to wonder why 50% of the senior management group had not filled out their MBTI? Was it a misunderstanding? Were they too busy? Since they were from diverse cultural backgrounds (Russia, Sweden, Finland, China, US) was English a barrier? Were they afraid of being real or just forgetful? From this first level we made up several stories as to why they had not complied with our request.

The second perspective was to ask ourselves: “What do we use as a backup instrument if participants refuse to fill out our primary MBTI recommendation that would help them cultivate self awareness?” What was our backup tool?

In investigating this situation, about the same time as Edward De Bono was developing his “Six thinking hats” program in the mid 1980’s, Allen Harrison and Robert Bramson were developing an instrument that was not a personality type profile, but a thinking styles profile they called: “InQ: Five Thinking Styles”. What was intriguing about this instrument is it was personality type neutral, and yet still could be related to the integrative life and leadership model (see figure above).

The five thinking styles are: Synthesist who put the pieces of a puzzle together (10% of the population), Idealist who used value systems to colour their thinking (30% of the population), Analyst who interpreted the facts through a mental model (35% of the population), Realist who only concerned themselves with their own experience (10% of the population) and Pragmatist who did whatever worked, whether theory or fact in solving problems (15% of the population). In addition, 50% of the population had one thinking style, 35% had two thinking styles (usually Realist-Analyst or Synthesist-Idealist), and 3% had three thinking styles. The pragmatist was one who seemed to have the ability to use any thinking style that worked for the situation.



We then related the five thinking styles to the core of the MBTI model as Synthesist to Intuiting (N), Analyst to Thinking (T), Idealist to Feeling (F) and Realist to Sensing (S). The Pragmatic thinking style we related to Carl Jung's concept of individuality versus personality.

However, the three levels of awareness within our integrative model of life and leadership suggested that Harrison and Bramson had not considered two other thinking styles: Wholist thinking which incorporated spiritual intelligence (spirituality) and Survivalist thinking which was associated with physical intelligence (materiality). This would move the five thinking styles proposed 25 years ago to seven thinking styles today.

In their senior management leadership program, we found that the answer to the dilemma of not filling out the MBTI as requested was simply that participants were too busy. Once in the program, they willingly filled out their personality type profiles. However, as a result of the trigger event, we were now prepared to utilize alternative methods, tools and assessments that would serve as mirrors for the participants to assist them on their self reflective journey towards integration.

When have you been able to use a surprising trigger event to help deepen and broaden your own mental models of life and leadership, which is the essence, and application of the art of thinking?

APPLICATION: Reflect this week when you had a surprising situation that caused you to more fully understand and deepen your own model of life, learning and leadership? In this way you can practice for yourself the art of thinking.

INSPIRATION: 'We cannot solve today's problems from the same level of consciousness that created them.' Albert Einstein.

INFORMATION: Harrison and Bramson. (1984). *The Art of Thinking*. HarperCollins: New York: NY.

UPCOMING PUBLIC PROGRAMS:

June 14-16 2005: Integrative Leadership: [Taking Leadership to the Next Level](#): Sponsor: University of Saskatchewan, Business and Leadership Programs. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Tuition: \$958.00 per person (includes GST). Topic: Experiencing the path of integrative life and leadership. To download a brochure and registration form, [Click this link](#); For more information, call: (306) 966-5492 or visit the U of S website at www.learntolead.usask.ca under upcoming events.

Integrative Leadership: [Taking Leadership to the Next Level](#): Sponsor: University of Saskatchewan: Tuition: \$958.00 per person. Visit: www.learntolead.usask.ca for details: In Saskatoon: November 8-10 2005; February 8-10 2006; June 14-16 2005. In Calgary: November 30-December 2, 2005; April 5-7 2006.

Executive Integrative Leadership: [From Good to Great and Great to Grace](#): Sponsor: University of Saskatchewan, Business & Leadership Programs. Tuition: \$5,000 (+ GST, Meals, Accommodation). Topic: This retreat is an invitation to Senior Leaders, Executives and Managers desiring to experience the path of integrative leadership in depth and in action. Locations: Canmore, AB, Canada: March 20-25 2006 AND Toronto, Ontario, Canada: November 6-10 2006. For more information and qualifying registration, call (306) 966-5492.

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