



# Personality Types



**Farm  
Advisory  
Service**

National Advice Hub  
T: 0300 323 0161  
E: [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot)  
W: [www.fas.scot](http://www.fas.scot)

As we come across people in every day life whether socially or in a professional capacity we are all aware of different personalities. Larger than life characters, shy and retiring types or no nonsense straight to the point people.

If you think about examples of these people you can understand how working with different types of people within a team can be challenging and can often lead to misunderstandings or “clashes of personality”.

A leading Psychologist Carl Jung first described the theory of personality types splitting people into two fundamental life attitudes: Introverts and Extroverts.

Since Jung first described this others have developed this theory and personality profiling is now a common tool to help businesses understand their staff and colleagues in order to get the most from them.

There are a number of different versions of personality tests but the most common either work to Myers Briggs 16 personalities, colours or animals.

## How does personality affect management?

Explaining how these can affect every day work and life is best described using the animal categories. It is easy to imagine the personality of a Lion, Owl, Monkey or Horse. Example strengths and weaknesses of these personality types would be described as follows:



### Lion

**Extroverted,  
dominant character.  
Independent, decisive**

**Aggressive,  
impatient,  
intolerant**



### Owl

**Intorverted, analytical,  
Intellectual.  
Driven by detail**

**Withdrawn,  
may lack creativity,  
perfectionist**



### Monkey

**Creative,  
Innovative,  
stimulating**

**Impatient,  
inconsistent,  
lack of attention  
to detail**



### Horse

**Supportive,  
patient,  
loyal**

**Submissive,  
reserved,  
passive**

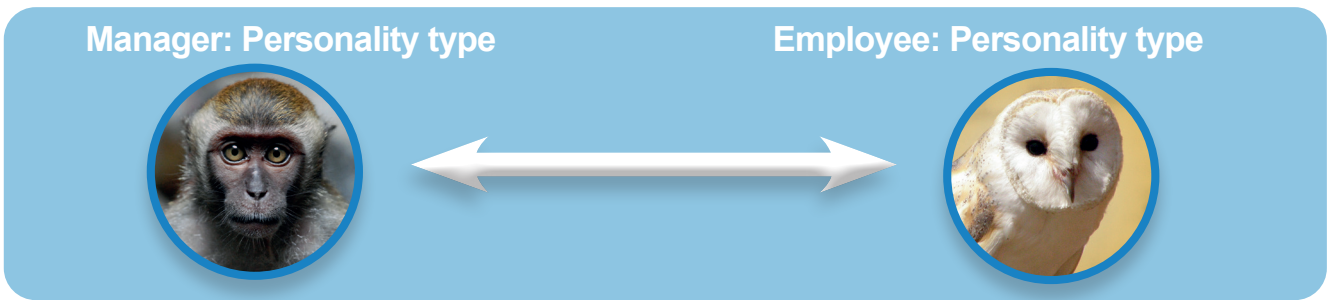


The European Agricultural Fund  
for Rural Development  
**Europe investing in rural areas**



**Scottish Government**  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
[gov.scot](http://gov.scot)

Now lets imagine a scenario with:



These are very different personality types and are described as opposites by some personality models.

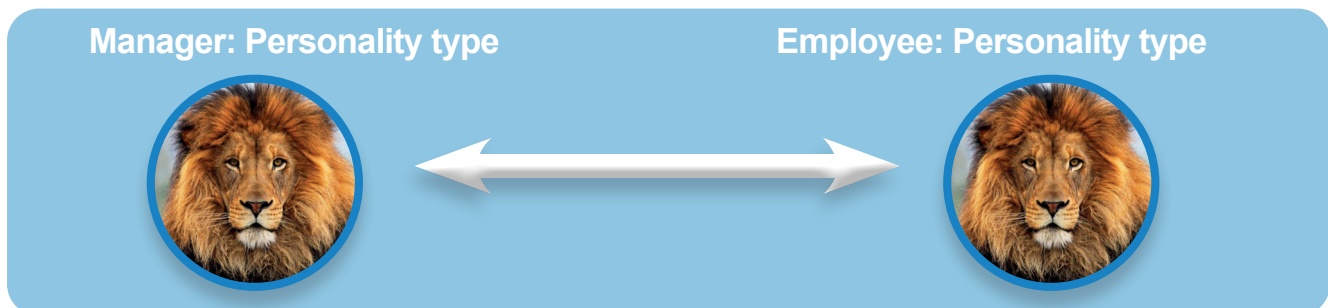
#### How this can work well

- Opposites can balance each other
- Manager can be creative and innovative but lacks the detail to follow through on plans
- Employee "owl" personality can analyse the idea, crunch the numbers and test to see if the plan will work
- Owl employee can help to ground manager who may like to jump from one project to the next.

#### How this may cause problems

- Communication problems
- Owl employee needs a lot of detail to carry out a job well
- Vague instructions from "Monkey" manager may not be sufficient
- Employee is a perfectionist and may get annoyed at managers lack of attention to detail, Manager may get irritated by employee "taking too long" to get the job done to his perfecting standards.

Its not just opposite personality types that may cause issues within the workplace.  
People of similar personality types may be more likely to clash.



#### How this can work well

- Both on the "same page"
- Both decisive and like action- things will get done.

#### How this may cause problems

- Both like to be in control
- Decisive employee might make decisions without consulting manager
- Discussions may turn aggressive quickly as neither is likely to "back down".

There are pro's and con's of every personality type and there is no "good" or "bad type" however understanding your own personality type as well as those you work with can be a great tool in helping to improve communications and prevent friction in the workplace. It will also help staff feel more valued and understood helping you get more from your workforce.

It is, however, important to never fully "box" someone into one of these types. Personality types can alter with roles, responsibilities and age. People can also be a mix of more than one type sometimes behaving differently at home to they do at work.

There are a number of different personality type profiles, many of which can be freely accessed online.

These include:

- **Myers Briggs Personality Type**
- **Speakfirst**
- **Insights**

Taking some time to get your staff to complete these and then sit round the table to discuss the results is a worthwhile exercise though all team members need to be willing to share their results with the rest of the team to ensure everyone gains something from the exercise.

Where you have a large number of staff or specific issues within your team it may be worth paying for a facilitated course. This gives an increased depth of understanding and will help draw some action points from the personality profiles to improve communication and leadership skills of your team.

