

# studio:stage

A LUCHSINGER ENSEMBLE APPROACH

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# director's note : how we got here

I'M ALWAYS DRAWN TO THE MISFITS,

I FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE FITTING IN WITH THE CROWD THAT DOESN'T.

"WHAT DO YOU BRING TO THE TABLE?" AN ENTHUSIASTIC, 13-YEAR OLD ABBY ASKED WHILE SITTING ATOP A PICNIC TABLE OUTSIDE OF THE ONE-FLOOR, OFFICE-TURNED-SECONDARY-SCHOOL WITH A BACKWARDS ROOF. HER WRISTS WERE WRAPPED IN FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS SHE'D BEEN TRYING TO SELL OUT OF HER LOCKER AND HER FOREHEAD HAD RED SHARPIE MARKER STAINS WHERE HER RED SHARPIE MARKER-ED HAIR DRAPED OVER ONE EYE. NEXT TO HER- A MOVIE SCRIPT NOTATED IN PREPARATION FOR THE AFTERNOON'S FILMING REHEARSAL, AND ONE OF HER BEST FRIENDS LAUGHING AT THE QUESTION WHILE HOLDING HER LUNCH BAG AND ANSWERING "I BRING THIS BANANA!"

THIS WAS A TYPICAL LUNCH PERIOD FOR THE 7TH GRADERS AT THE MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY, AT LEAST FOR ME AND MY FRIENDS WHO FILLED FREE PERIODS WITH SINGING AND DANCING AND TAKING PART IN SOME NEW EXCITING CREATIVE PROJECT. WHETHER IT BE THE NEWSPAPER, A SLICE OF PI, THE BAND THE GEEKY GECKOS, OR THE MOVIE THE LEGEND OF WORLIAS, EACH PROJECT WAS SUPPORTED BY A FACULTY MEMBER WHO GRACIOUSLY VOLUNTEERED TO OVERSEE THE CLASSROOM WHEREVER THE SHENANIGANS ENSUED.

IT WAS A SCHOOL OF PROUD MISFITS, WHERE ACADEMIC RIGOR IN STEM WAS BALANCED BY MURAL-COVERED WALLS AND MATCHING MISMATCHED DESKS. FROM ONE MISFIT SCHOOL TO THE NEXT, I TRANSFERED TO A PERFORMING ARTS CONSERVATORY HIGH SCHOOL WHERE HALF THE DAY WAS SPENT IN CLASSES LIKE "MOVEMENT" AND "AESTHETICS" AND "VOICE". ONE SEMESTER I TOOK A CLASS CALLED "THEATER FOR SOCIAL CHANGE" AND MY TEACHER GAVE US ADVICE I WILL NEVER FORGET.

IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE SOMETHING, ALWAYS BE LED BY YOUR JOYFUL RAGE. JOY SHOULD ALWAYS BE AT YOUR CORE- FIND THE JOY OF WHY YOU ARE DOING WHAT YOU ARE DOING. AND THEN LET RAGE BE YOUR SECONDARY DRIVING FORCE- RAGE FOR EVERYTHING THAT'S WRONG THAT YOU'RE TRYING TO FIX.

ALWAYS BE DRIVEN BY YOUR JOYFUL RAGE.

THIS IS NOT TO SAY THE PERFORMING ARTS OR CREATIVE EXPRESSION ARE EXCLUSIVE. I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I PARTICIPATED IN A D&D CAMPAIGN AND HAD THE EPIPHANY THAT AFTER ATTENDING A PERFORMING ARTS CONSERVATORY I HAD NO EXCLUSIVE OWNERSHIP OVER ENSEMBLE-BASED STORYTELLING. THAT'S ALSO NOT TO SAY THAT PEOPLE WHO DON'T PROUDLY EXCLAIM THEY ARE BRINGING A BANANA TO THE LUNCH TABLE OR COMFORTABLY SPEND AN HOUR "MOVING THROUGH THE SPACE LED BY THEIR LEFT ARM" SHOULD CHANGE WHO THEY ARE.

BUT YOU SEE, THE UNDERLYING THEME IN ALL OF THIS IS THAT THE SPACES WHERE PEOPLE FELT FREE OF JUDGMENT, FULL OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION, AND FOLLOWED THEIR JOYFUL RAGE WERE THE SPACES THAT PROVIDED BELONGING, A SHARED LANGUAGE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

# exposition

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“The strength of the team is each individual member.  
The strength of each member is the team.”  
- Phil Jackson

**WE MAY START COMPLAINING ABOUT THE PEOPLE WE WORK WITH AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER. MAYBE IN A GROUP PROJECT, MAYBE AT A JOB- MAYBE ALL OF THE ABOVE EVENTUALLY.**

**WORKING WITH OTHER PEOPLE CAN GET MESSY, AND AS OUR COMMUNICATION AND TRUST BREAK DOWN WE MAY NO LONGER FEEL THAT IT'S WORTH EVEN BRINGING ANYTHING TO THE TABLE IF WE FEEL LIKE NO ONE ELSE IS SHOWING UP OR IS SHOWING UP IN ALL THE WRONG WAYS FOR ALL THE WRONG REASONS.**

I would like to improve the experiences we have working with people on our design teams, starting with the very first communication touchpoint.

In his book “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team,” Patrick Lencioni [2008] defines five “levels” of dysfunctional teams in a pyramid: Absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability, and inattention to results. The base of this pyramid is the absence of trust, because **trust is the foundation required for all others.**

Trust requires a truster(s), a trustee(s), behavior, and a circumstance. Lencioni

proposes two types of trust: predictive and vulnerable.

**Predictive** trust would say “I know what to expect from you”. **Vulnerability**-based trust would say “I am ready for the unexpected with you”. Without seeming like too broad of a term, vulnerability-based trust can also be measured using the **four levels of Psychological Safety** as defined by Timothy Clark [2020] :

## INCLUSION SAFETY

acceptance, shared identity

## LEARNER SAFETY

asking questions, feedback, mistakes

## CONTRIBUTOR SAFETY

value-creation, autonomy

## CHALLENGER SAFETY

challenging the status quo, innovation

So, how does one **build psychological safety** and consequently **vulnerable trust** to avoid a **dysfunctional team**? These are both variables of and parallel to Social Capital Theory.

## social capital defined

“Social Capital Theory suggests that **interpersonal relations create value for individuals** as they provide resources which can be used for achieving desired outcomes” (Machalek, 2015).

One of the biggest issues with Social Capital is **the lack of one clearly defined and agreed upon definition**. There are hundreds of varying definitions. Definitions do generally include a combination of role-based (structural), trust-based (relational) and attitudinal-based (cognitive) dimensions:

### **Structural social capital**

social structure, roles, rules, and procedures

### **Relational social capital**

trust, expectations, and the nature and quality of relationships

### **Cognitive social capital**

shared understandings, narratives, and purpose

In his book “Community: The Structure of Belonging”, author Peter Block addresses each dimension of Social Capital and how they must all be established to fully benefit a community. **We will be using this proposed combination of dimensional work set in our own, smaller “community” context**. To better define this context, we must define the type of Social Capital we are establishing across the above dimensions.

**Social capital can be divided into three types: bridging, bonding, and linking**. Bonding social capital involves horizontal ties **between a social group**. Bridging social capital involves horizontal ties **across social groups**. Linking social capital involves **vertical ties across social groups**.

FOR OUR CONTEXT OF A DESIGN TEAM, WE WILL BE FOCUSING ON BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL (BETWEEN SOCIAL GROUPS), ACROSS EACH OF THE THREE DIMENSIONS IN THE ORDER OF (1) COGNITIVE, (2) BEHAVIORAL, AND (3) STRUCTURAL.

ENSEMBLES IN THE PERFORMING ARTS (A TEAM OF ACTORS PERFORMING A PIECE TOGETHER) BEGIN FOCUSING ON THE ABOVE IN THEIR FIRST COMMUNICATION TOUCHPOINT, WHICH IS WHY WE WILL BE FOCUSING THERE IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR DESIGN TEAMS.

## measurement

Social Capital theory is actualized through action. **As such, should we be measuring the determinants, structure, or consequences?**

While each of these are important, attempting to measure only these factors would over-simplify the situation.

For example, if a collaboration space were designed for a team to work together on their project, the increased socialization between the team without external distractions may increase collaboration within the team. But, if we were only to measure collaboration in regard to whether or not the space was used, or whether or not the team talked to each other, **we would be missing important motivations and external factors as both are dependent on additional factors besides each other.**

“Social capital cannot be treated as a single variable or goal. Social capital is an umbrella concept that includes multiple dimensions with complex relationships. **Therefore, there is no measure that can produce a meaningful number, or even a set of numbers.** This means that quantitative methods of measuring social capital are inherently unsuitable in most contexts.” (Claridge, 2018)

In the performing arts, it is equally difficult to measure the social capital of an ensemble. You can measure the success of the show by ticket sales, referrals, or in the case of Broadway the length of the run, but the actual success of the ensemble's social capital tends to be evident after the show ends- when the next show is about to have auditions. Social capital in ensembles brings actors back together after the first show, transforming them from a one-time ensemble to a “troupe.”

## the challenge

HOW MIGHT WE EXPLORE VULNERABLE TRUST ON DESIGN PROJECT TEAMS ACROSS ALL THREE DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY IN THE FIRST COMMUNICATION TOUCHPOINT WITH AN INTENTIONAL ENSEMBLE BUILDING WORKSHOP?

For this question, I draw inspiration from teams that have a high level of vulnerable trust: ensembles in the performing arts. But, is vulnerable trust in the nature of the topics being performed, or is it established in a way that could be explored in the context of a design team?

Often the ensemble is strengthened by the same ensemble building exercises from the beginning of the processes no matter what the subject matter of the piece is. So, there is potential for exploration.

## scope

My workshop prototypes have been delivered in the context of helping groups of individuals to form teams for design sprints at Iowa State University. These design sprints have a defined project timeline and a project brief or proposed challenge. The team context I am addressing is that of the design sprint or similar group projects. Specifically, the first communication touchpoint of this group project.

At this point in my professional practice, I have selected the Myers Briggs Type Indicator and the underlying Cognitive Function framework proposed by Carl Jung as my shared language tool. I will be keeping this in the context of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (which will also be referred to as “Myers-Briggs” or “MBTI”) of which I am certified to deliver.

I am not a psychology major. I am interested in approaching this topic from and for a design perspective, specifically the design team project. With each prototype, especially in virtual environments, I am interested in designing a workshop for the team’s first communication touchpoint.



## limitations

Topics I will not be addressing include:

- The “optimal” size of a team
- Any measurement of an “optimal” or “efficient” team
- Team building strategies outside of the performing arts and personality
- Whether it is better to designate or organically create teams
- Team leadership
- Team relationships beyond the initial stages of alignment

I will be using the terms “team” and “group” interchangeably. I understand that not all working groups are teams, in the context of this zine I will mainly refer to groups designated to work on a project together as “project teams” or “group projects”.

## team allocations

In the first and second prototypes, the teams were allocated at the end of the workshop by Luchsinger, with a balance of temperaments to each team.

In the third and fourth prototypes, the teams were allocated after the workshop ended and after discussion between participants on who they would like to work with based on their temperaments and goals for the sprint. The above comments were taken into account in the division of balanced temperaments which were allocated from both the third and fourth groups to combine graduate and undergraduate students on teams by Luchsinger.

In the fifth prototype, the teams were allocated after the workshop ended and after discussion between participants on who they would like to work with based on their temperaments and goals for the sprint. The teams were then allocated by the students participating.

## prototypes

I have delivered a workshop prototype each semester for a different group of interdisciplinary designers. Throughout the prototypes the number of students, delivery method, and method of team allocation have varied.

### FIRST PROTOTYPE - SPRING 2019, (D) INNOVATION (D) DARES

60+ Interdisciplinary students from the College of Design divided into design sprint teams for half-day or full-day design challenges. In person.

### SECOND PROTOTYPE- SPRING 2020, 47-- DESIGN STRATEGIES CLASS

16 Interdisciplinary students primarily from the Industrial Design undergraduate and graduate programs divided into design sprint teams for a group challenge. In person. \*This project was reworked during the COVID shut down.

### THIRD PROTOTYPE- FALL 2020, DESIGN THINKING CLASS

17 Interdisciplinary graduate students, divided into teams with the undergraduate students from the fourth prototype for a design sprint. Virtual.

### FOURTH PROTOTYPE- FALL 2020, INTERDISCIPLINARY DESIGN STUDIO

17 Interdisciplinary Design undergraduate students, divided into teams with the graduate students from the third prototype for a design sprint. Virtual.

### FIFTH PROTOTYPE- SPRING 2021, DESIGN THINKING CLASS

32 Design Thinking graduate students, divided into teams for a design sprint. Virtual.

Throughout these prototypes, I have made several adjustments (some intentionally, some reactionary to necessary changes in delivery method) to the guided experience, presentation design, and workshop activities.

These prototypes can be found in the appendices (Page 44).

# belonging

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“Sometimes I wish I could use a syringe to extract the good team culture that lives in many corners of The Arts, and inject it into industry.” - Hannah du Plessis

In a community, the word belonging has two meanings: firstly, belonging means to feel you are a part of something or if we take the word literally, “longing to be”. Belonging is also the feeling of ownership in the community. **It means you are invested in taking care of the community, and in return, the community will take care of you.** This requires a high level of trust between all of the members of the community, much like that required for an ensemble. This is also applicable to the small pockets of communities we’re a part of in our day-to-day lives- our group projects.

Improvisational theater is gaining popularity as a **tool for design thinking** (Granholt, Martensen 2021), but it also has potential as a **tool to develop belonging within a team.** To understand why, let’s break down the improvisational scene and three key principles of improv theory.

THE IMPROVISATIONAL SCENE HAS A DEFINED BEGINNING AND END, THE SCENE USUALLY STARTS WITH **“BEGIN”** AND ENDS WHEN ALL MEMBERS OF THE ENSEMBLE DECLARE IT **“SCENE.”**

## yes and

The first rule of improv is to always agree and **build off of what your partner adds** to the scene. For example, if your scene partner says “it sure is great we’re celebrating your birthday today”, you might respond **“Yes, and** I’m really glad we followed this exploding cake recipe. I bet they call it that because it’s explosive in flavor. Where’d you put the leftover dynamite?”

Now, let’s say when your scene partner said “it sure is great we’re celebrating your birthday today”, you responded “what are you talking about, it’s not my birthday?” The scene is now stuck, that suggestion by your scene partner has to be back-peddled or dropped, and now your scene partner might feel like they said the wrong thing.

## shared control

The next rule is that the scene must be shaped by all scene partners as **the scene belongs to everyone**. There is no “scene owner” or “scene leader” in improv. When you feel that you are directing a scene, it’s your responsibility as an actor to **take a step back** so another scene member can contribute.

Now, there are exceptions to this rule in the regard that in some improv scenes the audience and scene partners may determine roles for the scene. If this is the case, the shared control principal remains in the sense that each scene partner has input in and approved this designation of roles for the scene duration.

If you’ve seen an improv scene that does not follow this rule, you’ll notice that the scene partners who are being overshadowed **start to demonstrate a subtle resistance to the scene**, even if they’re playing along. They’ve lost their own buy-in, which makes sense on teams, too, if we’re looking at “inattention to results” in the dysfunctional team model.

## resilience

The rule of resilience can be especially tricky for new improv actors. The rule is that **failure and mistakes must be celebrated within the ensemble** so that you know whatever you try out, even if it fails, will be supported because the ensemble supports you. **You are encouraged to take bigger risks in your scene**, so long as you are following the above principals, taking bigger risks tends to bring out the most exciting prompts, characters, and scenes but **even if it doesn’t that’s okay**. It is not your responsibility to carry the scene.

A culture with **low resilience creates a culture where people are afraid to fail** and thus afraid to contribute or share their ideas.

# shared language

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“I think it’s time for us to recognize the differences we sometimes feared to show. I think it’s time for us to realize the spaces in between leave room for you and I to grow.”  
- Rush, Entre Nous

“Don’t box me in!!”

Personality psychology is a hot topic. Usually, when explaining how I’m using the Myers-Briggs framework in team workshops, people can be quite skeptical, thinking that I want to over-simplify and categorize them to determine their competency, when in actuality we are exploring a shared language relative to the cognitive dimension of social capital.

According to Block [2019], the first step in improving social capital in a community is to establish a shared language for the community. This language ensures that everyone is communicating in the same way, and can create a “third space” for communication that is for the sole purpose of building the community.

So, in terms of building a team,

does it make sense to make personality the shared language?

I do believe so, especially before the team begins working together. Each person on the team has their own work preferences, skills, and mindsets- but each person also has a very distinct personality and way of seeing the world that when left unsaid, can create barriers of misunderstanding. This can specifically lead to misunderstanding personality differences as incompetence in the team. “She never shares what she’s thinking out loud, so she must not have any ideas or input” is an example of a statement someone who is more extroverted might say after attending meetings with an introverted team member, when in reality the more introverted team member just needed more time to think through their ideas internally before sharing with the team.

What a barrier of misunderstanding builds over time is an “us vs. them mentality” where team members not only make observations and assumptions about competency based on the personality traits they are observing, but begin to project their own incompetencies onto the personalities of their team members. We’ll discuss another way this projection can manifest in the third act, but from the perspective of the cognitive dimension of social capital it’s essential we start the workshop with internal reflection that will then be communicated to the team.

## Why MBTI?

The Myers-Briggs type indicator is a framework based on the personality theories of Carl Jung. We will get into the layers of this framework and how they can be used in this first intentional team conversation, but first it’s important to note that this framework is based on a type theory which is not to be confused with a trait theory.

Personality Psychology is a complex and developing field, but the scientific research community generally focuses on trait theories over type theories. Trait theory is always relative to the group of people you are studying, since “traits are generally viewed as broad dimensions of individual differences between people” (McAdams, Pals).

So, if you are in the 98th percentile of Extroversion, that simply means you are 98% more extroverted than the sample group you are being compared to.

So, then why use a type theory and not a trait theory for the purpose of shared language? Because our goal is to focus on applicable preferences of personality, which can be most quickly and easily explored through dichotomies. We’re not concerned with the specificity of how much of the “extroversion” trait you have, we are more concerned with how your preferences between using introversion and extroversion manifest in your approach to work, and how your team can best communicate with you knowing this.

Although we are using a type theory instead of a trait theory, our goal is also not necessarily to define a specific “type” for someone, because our focus is on communicating using this shared language of personality and not to simply say “I’m an introvert and you’re an extrovert” and move on. Our goal is to use “I’m an introvert and you’re an extrovert” as a conversation prompt to discuss different processes and ways of working on the team to balance strengths, processes, and areas of potential tension or conflict.

## Workshop Version of the MBTI

When comparing various personality tests and inventories, I wanted to find options that did not specify “creative” vs. “non-creative” types since I would be delivering the workshops to teams of designers who may feel incompetent when not receiving a “creative” type. I also wanted to find options that were readily accessible to present and could be completed and scored

Independently within the duration of a workshop (not needing to have “results” calculated at a later time). Because of this, I took the MBTI framework and created and tested several iterations of a shortened, four-slide version consisting of 16 questions. Over the past three years, I have made adjustments to these 16 questions based on feedback from workshop participants and my own continual study, and have addressed two different goals the MBTI framework can be used for in a team setting.

### Goal #1: Personality Preferences - MBTI

The framework of the MBTI is based around 16 combinations of 8 letters presented in 4 pairs of 2 opposite letters. That sounds like an indie song.

The theory behind this framework is that every person interacts with the world around them in two ways: how they take in information (perceiving) and how they process and make decisions (judging). When we think about introversion and extroversion we typically think of a person as either introverted or extroverted, leaving most people feeling like they fit somewhere in between or “depending on the situation”.

In reality, there is no pure introversion or extroversion “function”, only introverted or extroverted variations of functions (of which we all have a combination). So we all naturally fall somewhere on the spectrum of introversion/extroversion, depending on the order in which we use our extroverted and introverted functions.

Each of us most naturally tend to process the world around us internally or make decisions internally. If we process the world around us internally, then we make decisions externally. If we process the world around us externally, then we make decisions internally. If you feel that you are entirely introverted or entirely extroverted, you may be caught in a cognitive function loop, which is equally not good and not important to this overview!

One method of perceiving the world and one method of judging it will come most naturally to you in your childhood, these are your primary and auxiliary functions, and you will develop a second method of perception and a second method of judging throughout your lifetime. The following is a break down of each of the four dichotomies:

THE FIRST TWO LETTERS ARE "E" AND "I" FOR EXTROVERSION AND INTROVERSION: WHERE YOU GET YOUR ENERGY FROM.

Would you rather talk through things out loud or think through things by yourself first?

On a team, Extroverts may think introverts are uninterested when they're processing internally, and Introverts may think extroverts are uncertain when they're processing externally.

THE SECOND TWO LETTERS ARE "S" AND "N" FOR SENSING AND INTUITION: HOW YOU TAKE IN INFORMATION FROM THE WORLD AROUND YOU.

Would you rather establish the facts first, or focus on the bigger possibilities first?

\*This is a tricky one to distinguish, so when going through this one with designers I often ask how they presented their work or responded to another person's art in their last critique. If you look at an image, for example, are you more inclined to look at the shapes, lines, colors, and how they create the piece, or are you more drawn to the potential meaning behind it? Sensors are usually more focused on the tangible design elements while intuitives are more drawn to the "why" behind the piece.

On a team, sensors may think intuitives are avoiding the direct problem or topic when brainstorming connections, and Intuitives may think sensors are unimaginative when focusing on practical questions.



THE THIRD SET OF LETTERS ARE "T" AND "F" FOR THINKING AND FEELING:  
HOW YOU MAKE DECISIONS.

Are you drawn to problem-solve by keeping the problem objective,  
or are you drawn to focus on the people and values involved?

On a team, thinkers may think feelers are focusing too much on  
applying their own values to the situation, while feelers may think  
thinkers are inconsiderate when detaching from the problem.

THE FOURTH SET ARE "J" AND "P" FOR JUDGING AND  
PERCEIVING: HOW YOU ORGANIZE YOUR DAILY LIFE.

Do you seek closure and make decisions as soon as possible, or  
would you prefer to keep your options open?

On a team, Js may think Ps are procrastinating and unreliable by  
keeping things open ended, while Ps may think Js are too  
controlling when they're trying to structure everything quickly.

AS YOU CAN SEE, EXPLORING PERSONALITY PREFERENCES THROUGH THESE  
DICHOTOMIES CAN BRING TO LIGHT DIFFERENCES THAT MAY OTHERWISE GO  
U N D I S C U S S E D

## Goal #2: Personality Processes - Cognitive Functions

Last spring, I spent a great deal of time in quarantine studying the cognitive function framework and determining how each function might be applied to the Design Thinking process.

AS A BRIEF RECAP OVERVIEW OF JUNG'S FRAMEWORK FOR COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS:

Extroversion and Introversion are the attitudes of the perceiving and judging functions. There are eight different functions, four for how we take in information and four for how we make decisions:

Perceiving Functions (how we take in information):

- Extroverted Sensing (Se)
- Introverted Sensing (Si)
- Extroverted iNtuiting (Ne)
- Introverted iNtuiting (Ni)

Judging Functions (how we make decisions):

- Extroverted Thinking (Te)
- Introverted Thinking (Ti)
- Extroverted Feeling (Fe)
- Introverted Feeling (Fi)

Remember that Jung's framework is all about balance.

If your primary function is extroverted,  
your secondary function must be introverted.

If your primary function is perceiving,  
your secondary must be judging.

The third function is the opposite of your secondary function,

and the fourth function is the opposite of your first function.

The arrangement of these functions is sometimes referred to as the "Car Model," where your first and second functions are the driver and passenger, with your third and fourth functions in the "backseat".

## Perceiving Functions: Observation and Brainstorming

### EXTROVERTED SENSING (Se)

#### EXPLORING PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Extroverted Sensors live in the moment and pay attention to the physical environment around them. **Trusting your observational instincts** and taking action **with all five senses** comes easily to you. Your desire to experience the world around you by **fully** experiencing it will be a great asset in making sure your team is **creating tangible prototypes** instead of just talking about them.

**Inspiration:** Gather concrete, current information about the problem, the environment, and the stakeholders involved.

**Ideation:** Drive the “doing”- start creating physical prototypes and interactions to keep your group focused on tangible prototypes.

**Implementation:** Observe your users’ interactions with your prototype to find possible improvements for the experience.

### EXTROVERTED INTUITING (Ne)

#### SEEING THE BIG PICTURE AND THE DEEPER MEANING.

Extroverted Intuitors **generate endless ideas and possibilities**. Your ability to consider so many **potential connections** while staying focused on the big picture is **essential for the brainstorming phases**, especially once the sensors have gathered and shared their observations.

**Inspiration:** Brainstorm all problems your users are facing within the greater problem, and the big-picture mission for the team.

**Ideation:** Connect the information gathered on the problem however you can (I recommend post-its) and brainstorm solutions for the newly connected problems.

**Implementation:** Explore how the prototype could be used on a larger scale in the future and presented to stakeholders.

### INTROVERTED SENSING (Si)

#### USING PAST EXPERIENCES TO INFORM THE PRESENT.

Introverted Sensors experience the world around them by recalling their past sensory experiences. Your ability to pinpoint a memory in intense detail while maintaining a routine for your team will ensure that your team is solving the right problems and quickly learning from past prototypes.

**Inspiration:** Gather concrete information on the past experiences, struggles, and attempted solutions for this problem.

**Ideation:** Create a step-by-step process for making prototypes quickly.

**Implementation:** Compare user reactions for every prototype tested, and make note of what's really changing.

### INTROVERTED INTUITING (Ni)

#### PREDICTING FUTURE OUTCOMES.

Introverted intuitors have a very unique way of processing the world around them that can be hard to articulate. While you're a big picture person, your insights and ability to connect-the-dots through signs, trends, and patterns leads to moments of internally "connecting the dots" that transform the direction of the project.

**Inspiration:** Look through the sensory observations and ideas generated in the problem definition phase and share your connections, observations, and insights to ensure the team is headed on the right path and solving the right problem (perhaps it is something deeper?).

**Ideation:** Compare the prototypes and find potential combinations and variations the team may be missing.

**Implementation:** Create plans for future market predictions and users, thinking ahead to future implementations.

## Judging Functions: Making Decisions

### EXTROVERTED THINKING (Te)

Extroverted thinkers are excellent at cutting through chaos with objective reason, separating out what is necessary to make a decision and move forward. Your driven, decisive leadership will be essential in determining which solutions are most feasible and viable.

**Spotlight:** Convergence

**Blindspot:** Be sure you don't disregard the personal values (both on your team and for the user) while narrowing down solutions.

### EXTROVERTED FEELING (Fe)

Extroverted feelers are aware of every person involved and strive for team harmony. Your ability to share and describe your feelings and encourage others to do the same will ensure that your team's decisions will benefit each stakeholder and user, bringing to light new possible implications.

**Spotlight:** Divergence

**Blindspot:** Don't forget to think through the scope restraints and technical consequences of your decisions (what's realistically doable?).

### INTROVERTED THINKING (Ti)

Introverted thinkers will learn and assess as much as they can about a situation creating complex, internal problem-solving frameworks. Your concise and objective method of evaluating the pros and cons of a situation will be effective for generating new solutions and analyzing systems.

**Spotlight:** Divergence

**Blindspot:** Don't forget to listen to the emotional decision factors of your users that may not fit into the logic of the decision process you've discovered your users have.

## INTROVERTED FEELING (Fi)

Introverted feelers are quietly empathetic and sensitive, **striving for each person on the team to feel proud of their individual contributions** and the outcome as a whole. Your natural focus on the **impact and significance** a decision will have is important for the team to remember throughout the process.

**Spotlight:** Convergence

**Blindspot:** Don't forget that compromise and conflict may be essential in determining the best solution, even if it means having difficult discussions with your team.

## Myers-Briggs Critique and Certification

It is in my nature to question the tools I'm presenting. As mentioned previously, personality tests are a hot topic right now with **a very polarizing divide between those who love the MBTI and those who despise it**. I think it's important we address both the current cultural critiques and my own critiques of the framework and my experience becoming certified.

**The MBTI is just another corporate money-making "self help" scheme.**

So, there are multiple organizations with buy-in on the MBTI. In terms of the Myers Briggs company, this is a fairly accurate critique, I get it. It's a company that charges a lot of money for personality reports and even more money to get certified in purchasing said reports. There is, however, also a research foundation for the MBTI that is focused on preserving and continuing research related to the MBTI, so it's not **\*all\*** corporate. Just mostly.

**And there is a benefit to being accepted by the corporate world.** Design Thinking, for example, has made design a sought-after input in companies that previously didn't value this kind of input. That being said, **at some point the inclusion becomes disingenuous**, as we begin accepting something at face-value without question, and I understand how that is something that is happening with the MBTI being used in corporations.

### It wasn't made by a psychologist or scientist.

No, it was not. "The Personality Brokers" explains the history of the MBTI in great detail, and as a brief summary it was started by a mother who deeply admired Carl Jung's work and studied her daughter and other kids to see if she could use his framework to "type" them and understand why she was so different from her daughter, who then grew up and married a man very different from herself and wanted to learn more about how she could best communicate with him. **The motivation has always been understanding those different from yourself.**

### My results change every time I take it, so therefore it can't be valid.

The Myers Briggs Company claims their test retest validity is very high and that your results and personality will not change throughout your lifetime. They are very adamant on this, and from an outside perspective I can see how that would be off-putting (especially if your results change every time you take it). That being said, the framework does account for room for growth which I learned more about while becoming Myers-Briggs certified.

**Could that fact that your results change each time be a reflection of your personality in it of itself?** Despite my issues with the 16 Personalities assessment which takes inspiration from the Myers-Briggs framework, I will say that 16 Personalities added one additional dichotomy to the results that makes a lot of sense. They pulled **an adaption of "neuroticism" from the Big 5 Traits** that will give you the result of turbulent or assertive with your 16 personality type. What this is actually telling you is your own test-retest probability of receiving the same four letters, or your ipsative (within person rank) change.

I enjoy discussing personality results one-on-one when someone keeps getting different results, because there is often a reason for this change or an actual aspect of the person's personality that is creating this variance. In trait focused personality psychology, this is called "trait stability". Although, remember trait stability and rank-order is always relative.

**I'm not saying that I don't believe personality changes throughout someone's lifetime.** But I do also believe that understanding "the cognitive function stack" shows the fluidity within the personality types for this theory and demonstrates a growth mindset that many critics of the MBTI miss.

# accountability

ABIGAIL LUCHSINGER  
MID 2021

“It is the “Why?” and “What for?” that matter and the acknowledgment that with every new play and every new role the process begins again.” — Jean Benedetti

Accountability is essential to building the structural dimension of social capital, in which the team must establish its set of norms and goals for how the team will leverage their personality preferences to divide the work required to achieve their goals and drive results.

Just as we have looked to the performing arts for ensemble building techniques in the relational dimension of social capital, the performing arts can also provide techniques for exploring the structural dimension. **An ensemble in the performing arts participating in a defined production will have an expected outcome for their “project”**, which is the performance of the piece they are working on together. As with a group project, **the vertical structure of relationships within the ensemble can vary**, in devised theater the director plays a much lesser role in the direction of the piece and the ensemble works together to create the work together. In a traditional play or musical, the director typically has a vision for the piece that is communicated with the actors throughout the rehearsal process (although each director has their own varied style and level of engagement). For a successful production, the entire ensemble has to be dedicated to the scene regardless.

We must set ourselves firmly in the “scene” or “project”, determine what our individual goals/buy-in is for the project and, most importantly, what our **relationship** is and our overall **goals** are for the team working together on this project. After all, **the scene is everyone’s responsibility**, and when it comes to performing the scene there are no unimportant roles.

Konstantin Stanislavsky and Michael Shurtleff may have developed their character acting methods for actors on the stage, but **their work can also be applied to both of the above goals for project teams.**



## Where is the Love?

According to Block [2019], **Accountability combats projection**, an internal obstacle when working on a team. When frustrated with our team we can easily start to believe the problems are the fault of the others on the team and that it's the others that need to change for the team's success. We focus on certain faults we see in them, turning our "Teammates" into "us" vs. "them". And this us vs. them mentality is comfortable. Avoidance of accountability is the **most common of the five levels** of dysfunctional teams according to Lencioni [2008].

Accountability challenges us to **view those on our team as extensions of ourselves**—both the positive traits and negative traits. When we see others as extensions of ourselves we start to realize two things: that we have the means and tools, the ownership, to be better, and that each of us, with our complexities, belong to the team.

According to Michael Shurtleff [1980], when starting a new scene **the actor must ask themselves "where is the love?"** and it's no different for team members beginning a project.

BUT WAIT.

"LOVE" DOESN'T SOUND LIKE AN APPROPRIATE TERM WE SHOULD BE USING  
IN A PROFESSIONAL PROJECT CONTEXT... RIGHT?

As Hannah Du Plessis [2015] recounts, "[when] I used the word "love." They moved away like a wave pulling back into the sea and said, "No, **we can't use the word 'love' in the business environment.**"

That being said, with the trend toward **empathetic and human centered design** approaches in the world of design, I believe **now is the time** to start asking "where is the love" on our teams, too. What we're really asking when we ask this question is actually what our relationship is to every other person in the scene. "Where is the love" becomes "what is my relationship to each person" and consequently **"how is this relationship an extension of myself?"**

## The Stanislavsky Method Applied

An obstacle teams may face is a **lack of direction and application**, as so far we've focused on personality preferences as language and improv for belonging. That's where accountability becomes essential.

## Given Circumstances

**Given Circumstances are key** to determine at the beginning of a scene or at the beginning of a group project once project briefs or proposals have been distributed. In the context of a scene, actors may ask themselves the following questions to better set themselves into the scene as their character:

### WHERE AM I?

What is the exact location of this scene and how does my character feel about this?  
 What is the exact location of this project and how do I feel about that?

### WHEN IS IT?

What is the exact time- time of day, season, century...?  
 What is our timeline for the project and what times will we work on it?

### OBJECTIVE: WHAT DO I WANT?

This is a question an actor may ask to determine their goal for the scene.  
 This is a question a team member may ask to determine their own goals and the goals of the team for the project.

### MOTIVATION: WHY DO I WANT IT?

The follow up question the actor may use to determine their intrinsic and/or extrinsic motivations for their goals.  
 The follow up question a team member may use to determine their motivations, intrinsic and/or extrinsic for their and the team's goals.

### INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC MOTIVATIONS

It's recommended to find both internal and external motivations when working as a character or on a team as we typically are balancing both at the same time. These motivations also typically clarify the **Super Objective** -- what is the overarching character goal (or the big "so what" in terms of design project application)?

### TACTICS- HOW WILL I GET IT?

Specific action verbs for how you are delivering each line ("to convince" vs "to beg")  
 Specific strategies for how you will achieve the project's goal.

# the finale

ABIGAIL LUCHSINGER  
MID 2021

“If you don’t care, why the hell are we watching the scene? If you don’t care, neither do we.” - Michael Shurtleff

## WHAT ARE YOU FIGHTING FOR? WHAT IS YOUR “JOYFUL RAGE?”

If this all sounds too “fluffy,” remember that it’s our relationships that are the very fabric of our experiences, and at the core of human-centered design. If a human-centered design approach has been beneficial in our design projects, would it not be beneficial for our design teams as well?

Pine and Gilmore’s 1998 article “The Experience Economy,” predicted how businesses would need to start focusing on providing transformative experiences rather than transactional experiences to stay competitive and be memorable. Likewise, the first communication touchpoint of a team has potential to become a transformative experience on design teams rather than a transactional one.. This transformation is one of vulnerable trust through the three dimensions of social capital, and can already be found in performing arts ensembles.

## SO, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

I would like to continue to facilitate workshops, evaluate and assess potential improvements and expansions that can be made, and eventually define and formalize this Luchsinger Ensemble Approach for the forming stages of design teams.

As I said before, I have no exclusive ownership of ensembles, the performing arts, personality inventories, or any concepts explored. It’s all much bigger than myself and I am excited to continue to explore the possibilities with my fellow misfits.

And so, dear reader, I’m now asking you.

## WHAT DO YOU BRING TO THE TABLE?

# appendix

ABIGAIL LUCHSINGER  
MID 2021

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## Undergraduate Design Manifesto

ABIGAIL LUCHSINGER, APRIL 2018

Sometimes I feel like I'm living life in double time. Just last semester, I was learning how to draw a basic ellipse with charcoal and now here I am composing a grand manifesto on how I feel about design.

...?

Well, to start with, I'm not entirely sure how I feel about a lot of things at this point in my life. College in itself feels like a different reality and I've already changed more than I ever imagined I would in the short time I've been at Iowa State. So, I'm thankful to be studying Interdisciplinary Design which has given me not only a great challenge every day but also an artistic outlet to process everything going on. Design to me is a way of processing the world and my place in it.

So, while my manifesto is very much in progress, here are my thoughts so far:

Design projects usually take more time than you think they will.

Somehow, no matter how much extra time I give myself, I end up staying up way later than originally intended. I've learned to just make myself another cup of coffee and enjoy it. I mean, I get to stay up late doing what I love.

You don't have to be the most talented artist to make art.

Stop putting yourself under so much pressure, geez. Just make some damn art if you want to.

The design thinking process that works for one person might not work for you- and that's okay.

I always loved a good hard-to-explain design process where I suddenly look at my work and it's in a much different place than it was previously and I can't really pinpoint how it happened.

Take as many non-design classes as you can. Learn as much as you can right now while that's your job.

So, \*Revelation,\* now's the time to learn as much as you can in as many different subjects as you can. You never know what you'll be able to pull out of different classes and apply to your design work. So what if it means taking 21 credits every semester?!

...okay also make time for other things like friends and clubs and ya know, sanity. Know your limits, pal.

Don't be afraid to break the rules.

I was known in school to be given an assignment, read through the options, say "actually, I'd rather do this" and then do that. I sincerely apologize to every teacher I've had who's received musicals, 60-page novels, and giant cross-stitch pieces as a result of this. Still, I think that my best work has been the result of me thinking "why the hell not??"

It's all in the presentation.

Biggest lesson learned in DSN S 102. If you are confident while presenting your design work, you'll give off the impression that you care about the work you've done. And that makes it a whole lot more credible and engaging.

Don't get caught up in design labels.

Ah, labels. Whenever I tell people I'm majoring in Interdisciplinary Design and Technical Communications, their next question is always "sooo... what IS that?" And that's an absolutely fair question. People recognize that there are graphic designers, architects, interior designers.... but interdisciplinary designers? What does that mean?

I usually just say web design.

In actuality, I absolutely love the idea that I can be a graphic designer one day and an information architect the next. Who needs labels when you've got the drive to jump into whatever opportunity awaits next?

Don't get caught up in what it is or what it means. Just do something.

I've found that people love to debate over the difference between design, art, and trash. I've had so many classes based on the question "what is art?" and honestly-

I don't care right now. I really don't.

As a designer and an artist, I think that my energy can be better spent thinking about the work I'm doing rather than what the work I'm doing is categorized as or if it's "good enough" or "significant enough" to be considered "art". ("Are" "these" "quotations" "getting" "my" "point" "across"?)

But seriously, I absolutely respect designers and artists who DO question these things. I've just found it to be more hindering than helpful at this point.

Always be driven by your joyful rage.

In high school, I took a class called “Theater for Social Change” and my teacher gave us advice I will never forget. If you want to change something, always be led by your joyful rage. Joy should always be at your core– find the joy of why you are doing what you are doing. And then let rage be your secondary driving force- rage for everything that’s wrong that you’re trying to fix.

Take inspiration from all of your experiences and emotions and everything going on in the world- don’t leave it at the door.

I know that a lot of my theater teachers and design professors have a “leave all the baggage at the front door” philosophy, but I personally like to use everything going on outside of my classes to fuel my work.

The experiences that drive my work aren’t necessarily compelling from an outside perspective. Maybe it’s waiting for a bus in downtown Ames when the first snowfall is gently falling and the Grateful Dead music is playing. Maybe it’s tap dancing in an art gallery with a new friend. Or eating french fries at Perkins at an unreasonable hour with old ones. Maybe it’s piling up as many pillows as possible on the floor of my sister’s room so we can stay up all night talking about life. Maybe it’s hanging blankets from the ceiling of our little dorm with my roommate to make a giant fort where we can watch That 70s Show. Or maybe its just running around with design friends when you should all be working on projects... Point being, you never know how those little moments will influence your work, so each and every one is valuable.

I believe that all of the experiences I have and the people I meet and learn from are going to teach me the most.

At this point in my life, I still have a hell of a lot to learn. And I’m willing and ready to learn it.

# Undergraduate Capstone

## ABIGAIL LUCHSINGER, SPRING 2019

### Where You Get Your Energy

**E**

- I feel most energized after breakfast.
- I prefer a fast-paced environment.
- I process information best by talking through it.
- As a party, you can usually find me in the center of the action.

**I**

- I feel most energized after time alone.
- I prefer a collaborative environment.
- I process information best internally.
- As a party, you can usually find me observing the action.

### How You Process Information

**S**

- I prefer ideas with practical applications.
- I prefer literal explanations.
- I want details and specifics.

**N**

- I prefer ideas with conceptual applications.
- I prefer metaphorical explanations.
- It's not so worry about details and specifics.

### How You Make Decisions

**T**

- My decisions are based on logic.
- I prefer to list.
- I am comfortable arguing or playing devil to my arguments.

**F**

- My decisions are based on my values.
- I prefer to listen.
- I prefer not to argue or to win - I want others comfortable.

### How You Process Your Environment

**J**

- I prefer to see plans made in time.
- I like step-by-step instructions.
- I like to have a schedule and stick to it.
- I can be a bit stubborn.

**P**

- I prefer spontaneity.
- I like flexible instructions.
- I like to have my own time.
- I can be a bit flexible.

### Your Resulting Type

E or I  
S or N  
T or F  
J or P  
- - -

### TRADING CARD PROTOTYPE

In preparation for (d)innovation, I created a simplified Myers-Briggs test and did a practice run of it during my Concept Development PK Presentation, feedback confirmed that it was an effective and usable translation of the MB test.

I then took the 16 personality type descriptions and redefined the dichotomies as innovation personality types: "ADVENTUROUS EXPLORER" "DEPENDABLE NAVIGATOR" "POETIC DIPLOMAT" and "INVENTIVE VISIONARY", in turn focusing the descriptions to fit the context of the (d)dares.

### Adventurous Explorer

1000 1000 1000 1000

Metabolic and adaptive reactions driven by new experiences.  
I prefer a relaxed environment, but will allow me to frequently take the project in new directions.

### Dependable Navigator

1000 1000 1000 1000

Order and practical solutions driven by consistency.  
I prefer following proven methods to lead the group and keep us focused on our goals.

### Poetic Diplomat

1000 1000 1000 1000

Empathetic and cooperative voluntary driven by greater good.  
I prefer authentic activities and harmony over calculable successes and want to understand everyone else's perspectives.

### Inventive Visionary

1000 1000 1000 1000

Examines strategic thinkers driven by practical solutions.  
I prefer to follow my own process and will provide critiques and new perspectives to consider.

# Project Process

### CHECK-IN PLAN

I printed the four type card prototypes as large posters to be attention-getting and readable for a large group of people. The colors of the prototype cards matched the four nametag sticker colors.

### EACH (D)DARES PARTICIPANT WOULD:

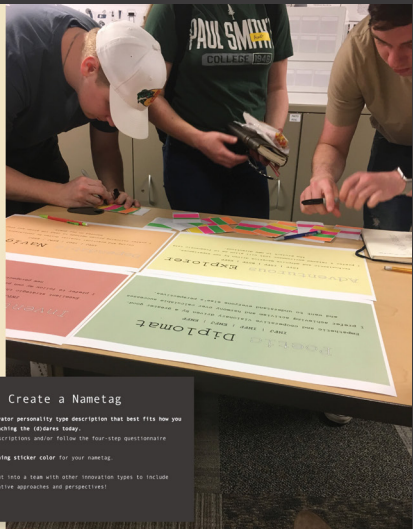
1. Read the four card descriptions
2. Choose the card they thought described how they were going to interact with their team today
3. Find a nametag sticker with the corresponding color
4. Write their name on the nametag
5. Record the color they chose in the check-in notebook

### EXECUTION

This check-in method went smoothly. After everyone checked in, I divided the group into their nametag color groups and had them count off into numbered groups, thus giving each group an equal distribution of types.

### RETROSPECT

I would have had everyone put their information directly into a google form instead of my notebook. That was a lot of e-mails to type.

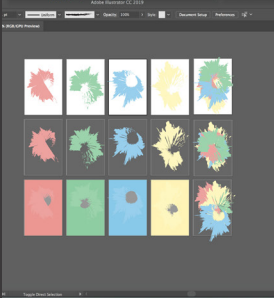


### Create a Nametag

1. Find the innovator personality type description that best fits how you plan on approaching the course today.
2. Read the descriptions and/or follow the four-step questionnaire.
3. Choose a matching sticker color for your nametag.
4. You will be put into a team with other innovation types to include different creative approaches and perspectives!

# (d)innovation





USING BODY LANGUAGE OBSERVATIONS TO DEVELOP CARD DESIGNS

**ADVENTUROUS EXPLORERS:** Quick, unfocused gestures directing energy away from the group

**DEPENDABLE NAVIGATORS:** Smooth, contained gestures directing energy onto the materials

**POETIC DIPLOMATS:** Inclusive, welcoming gestures directing energy around the group

**INVENTIVE VISIONARIES:** Direct, anchored gestures directing energy into the group

All four designs start from a central circle which I then manipulated to symbolize my observations, each symbol is simple to provide enough information to categorize the cards without distracting from the information on the cards.

# Project Process

POCKET PERSONALITIES

Each deck contains 32 cards, divided into 4 innovation profile categories (7 cards per category) and 4 assessment cards in an easy-to-transport envelope.

**PROFILE (4):** Each of the four innovator types has a profile card marked by a grey background ((d)dares prototypes)

**BRAINSTORM (3):** Questions for each type of innovator to consider during the collaboration process.

**REFRAME (2):** Action cards for each type of innovator.

**COLLABORATE (1):** Two suggestions for collaborators leading this type of innovator.

**ASSESS (4):** There are four MB assessment cards included (simplified MB Test)

This deck of cards uses components from my work during each of the semester's phases, combining them into a portable tool. You can take the short assessment or choose a stack based on the descriptions, select multiple cards from each, or shuffle them out to your team!



# Project Resolution

# curtain call: references

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MID 2021

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