

Chatterbox #289 – What’s your MBTI?

Episode description

Do you really know yourself? Sometimes you think you know your own personality, but you might think differently after taking the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator! The MBTI is a test designed to evaluate what kind of personality you have, based on 8 sets of traits.

In this Chatterbox episode, Andrew and Anna explore the MBTI as they talk about their own test results! Give it a listen. The results may surprise you!

Fun fact

If you’ve taken the MBTI assessment and don’t like the results, don’t worry about it. On the organization’s official website, the Myer-Briggs company admits that the traits that they use in their assessment exist on a spectrum. Most people don’t fit perfectly into each of the personality types. And that’s okay! We’re all individuals after all.

Expressions included in the study guide

- To not picture [something]
- Self-fulfilling prophecy
- To wear different hats
- To be on the same wavelength
- A broad brush
- A double-edged sword



Transcript

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hello everyone, my name is Andrew.

Anna: And my name is Anna.

Andrew: And you're listening to the Culips English Podcast.

Welcome back to Culips everyone. Today, we have a Chatterbox episode for you. And if you're new to Culips, and you don't know what Chatterbox is, well, let me explain. It's our series for intermediate and advanced English language learners that features natural English conversations between two native speakers about a fascinating topic. I'll be joined by my cohost, Anna, in just a moment. And we're going to talk today about the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, or the MBTI personality test. But before we get started, I want to let you all know that there's a transcript and study guide available for this episode for all Culips members. And I highly recommend following along with the guide as you work your way through this episode, because we've created the guide to help boost your comprehension and fluency. So, to become a Culips member, and get unlimited access to the study guide for all Culips episodes, just visit our website, Culips.com, to sign up. That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

So, our topic for today is the MBTI. Have you ever heard of it before? Have you ever done an MBTI test before? The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or MBTI is a set of questions and by answering the questions you can learn about how you make choices and how you analyze the world. According to the results of the quiz, you get placed into one of 16 different groups. Now these groups are called types. And the types are based on theories that were created by the psychiatrist Carl Jung, in a book that he published in 1921, way back in 1921, called *Psychological Types*. The MBTI was developed by two women, Katharine Cook Briggs, and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers, during World War II. They initially developed the MBTI to help women—who are looking to enter the workforce—find jobs that would help them to have happy and productive careers. Eventually, the MBTI developed into its modern-day form around the early 1960s.

The MBTI measures four things—and these are also known as the four dichotomies—and places people into one of 16 different personality types, depending on the results. All of the personality types are considered to be equal, and there is no one best type.

So, what exactly are these four dichotomies that the MBTI measures? And how are personalities categorized? Let me walk you through it. The first thing that the MBTI measures is outlook, which is either Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I). Extroverts are

people who like to spend time with other people and get their energy from the outside world. Introverts are people who like to spend their time alone, thinking and reflecting. Introverts get their energy from their inside world. The second thing that the MBTI measures is information gathering, and this is divided into Sensing (S) and Intuition (N). People who are sensing trust facts and tend to accept things that they can see, hear, taste, touch, or smell. But on the other hand, people who trust their intuition are more likely to trust information that really isn't dependent on the senses and can't be easily tested. They are more likely to trust hunches and go with their gut. The third measure is about decision making and this is divided into thinking and feeling. People who make decisions alone and use their reasoning and logistics skills to make decisions are called Thinkers, (T), and on the other hand, people who seek harmony and consider all of the people involved in a situation and how decisions will affect everyone, well, these people are more likely to be a (F) or a Feeler. The final measure is Judging and Perceiving. And this is all about how we deal with others and perceive details and handle the outside world. Judgers use thinking and feeling when doing things but on the other hand, Perceivers tend to use sensing and intuition when doing things.

So, then when we put everything together and you finish doing your MBTI test, you get a four-letter code which corresponds to your personality type. For example, an ESTJ is a person who prefers Extraversion, Sensing, Thinking and Judging, or an INFP is a person who prefers Introversion, Intuition, Feeling and Perceiving. And there are 16 different letter combinations—different personality types—that can result from doing the Myers-Briggs.

So, in a nutshell, that's what the MBTI is all about. And now let's welcome Anna to this episode and get started with our conversation about this psychological test and what our opinions of the Myers-Briggs are. Here we go.

So, Anna, let's talk about our MBTI's.

Anna: Yeah, I'd love to. I absolutely love this topic today. And one thing I think is really interesting is that this personality test was developed by a mom and a daughter team. I don't know, I don't think I could ever imagine working with my mom closely like that when I was an adult, could you Andrew?

Andrew: I found that really interesting too, and I **can't picture it**. I can't ever imagine myself developing a personality test with my mom in this lifetime, at least. But it is a fun little fact about the MBTI that I think some people may not know about.

Anna: Right. I could not imagine working with my mom like this. So, I give credit to them for being able to produce something out of—out of that. But why don't we start with trying to guess what each other's profiles are or what each other's personalities are?

Andrew: Yeah, I think that is a fun way to do this, Anna, before we just share with everybody what kinds of results we got on the personality tests that we did, we will try to guess each other's. So, just before we started recording, Anna, I went over all of the 16

different kinds of personality types on the MBTI and I was trying to imagine what one matches your personality best. And it was difficult to be honest. There were several that I thought that you could fit into. But the one that I decided on is ENFJ. ENFJ. Am I right?

Anna: You're wrong by one. You're wrong with one of them, only with one though. And this is interesting because I tend to fool a lot of people because a lot of people think that I would be ENFJ. But I'm actually INFJ. I've got all of those. So, you've done really well in those last three, but I'm actually introverted and not extroverted. But it can be a bit of a trick because sometimes when I'm at work, for example, or with you or with—when I'm in a really comfortable situation, I think people perceive me as being extroverted. But actually, the reality is that I'm for sure 100% introverted. And also, it's interesting to note that introverted, I think, has a bad rep because I think when people say introverted, they're like, "Oh, it means somebody that never says anything, they're super shy." And it could mean that, but for me, it's more about you need time by yourself. And being really, really social is very draining sometimes, in some situations. So, for your type, I think that you are pretty similar to me. I think you're an introvert, from what you've told me and the way that we know each other. So, I think you might be more or less around my personality type. I'm definitely gonna say introverted.

Andrew: Yes, I am.

Anna: Do you know what, I'm gonna say INTJ.

Andrew: We got opposite scores, Anna. I got three out of four and you got one out of four.

Anna: Oh no. Disaster. All right. OK. So, what's yours?

Andrew: So, I am an ISFP. ISFP, which I thought was a little bit surprising to me. You know, S stands for Sensing, F is for Feeling and P is for Perceiving. And if I had to guess, just based on what those letters mean, I would say, no, I don't think I'm a very sensing or feeling person. But yeah, according to the test results, that's what I got. I actually did the test twice because I didn't believe it the first time. I thought, that can't be right. So, I waited a day and then did it again the next day when I kind of forgot all of my answers. And I got the same result both times. So, I think there's something to it.

Anna: Oh, I love it when people have different ones to me 'cause then we can dissect and have a look at the, you know, the different ones because I'm like, "Oh, you're an S and I'm an N." But we do have the same with feeling. So, this is about basing our decisions on personal values and how your actions affect each other. So, we've obviously got a little bit of crossover there. And also, we're both introverted, which I knew that, I think, from what you told me before. And would you agree that it's like, with introversion, it's not necessarily—I don't see it as, like, being a shy thing, but more that if I want to recharge my batteries, I need to be alone or have some time alone. Is that how you see that introverted or introversion thing?

Andrew: It's really hard to say, I do think there's that part of it. But I would say that I am an introvert, but I do like spending time with other people. It's not like a 100% of the time thing, right? There's some nuance there. So, maybe it's better to say I'm an extroverted introvert. I don't know if I could combine the two of them. I'm introverted in certain situations and extroverted in other situations. I think a lot of people would think it's kind of funny, Anna, that we are both introverted, but we have a podcast that is listened to by many people, and we go onto our Instagram pages and make videos and share them with people, that kind of thing traditionally, people wouldn't have seen as introverted behavior. So, I guess in that kind of way, we are extroverted. But yeah, maybe that's more of the traditional way of understanding it, and it's more about how you get your energy if you get energized by spending time with people or by spending time alone, and I definitely enjoy my alone time.

Anna: Yeah, I'm a big fan of alone time. And I know like I sometimes, with my personality—I know when I need to just have like a me day, we say. But I do think that my profile, because there's many different things that you can read about your profile, and I do think my profile is quite accurate. And there's definitely some things that I think, wow, that does describe me down to a tee. But there is the thing, and I mentioned this to you before Andrew, that it becomes like **a self-fulfilling prophecy**. So, you do the test, and you get your profile, and then you think, "Oh, that's me and I always have to be that way." And like you said, it's not always the case. And I kind of think of it as more of a spectrum, you know? You're kind of—some days, you might feel a little bit more on the extroverted end and sometimes you might feel a little bit more carefree. Like, I think in my profile, I'm very risk averse. You know, if I want to take a decision, I have to think about it a lot—rational, logical—but maybe there's some times that I'm not like that as well. So, I don't know, it can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. But I do think there is obviously some truth in, you know, everybody has different types of personalities and different tendencies. But I think also that you can have a different result at different times in your life. I've always done it when I was at work as a way to, like, get to know the team and find out the other profiles in your team and how to work best together. You know, because if you have somebody who's, I don't know, a thinker, and then you have somebody who's the opposite, you're like, OK, well, it's about understanding maybe how they're working and how you can work with them better. But I do know some people that have got different test results at different times in their life. So. But I think I've been pretty steady.

Andrew: Well, we were talking a little bit off-air before we started recording about this topic, Anna. And I was saying how I kind of feel like I have different personalities in different situations, right? My Culips personality. Maybe your Anna with 2Ns English personality is a little bit different than your personal personality, if I can say it that way, when you're spending time with maybe your friends, or your family. And my work personality is different than my personal-life personality. So, I think we sort of **wear different hats** in different situations. Now, there may be some core elements that are always the same. But I do think there is some room for fluctuation. For change from one situation to the next.

Anna: Yeah, and it's whether those are actually different personalities, or whether they are all just aspects of your personality, you just use them at different points, you know? Because I'm the same. I feel like my, you know, Anna with 2Ns hat I wear. And my teacher hat and my coach hat. I wear that one as well. But it doesn't mean that I'm not that person. It's just that I feel like it's an aspect of my personality that I use in that situation because it fits best. And I think when you do things like podcasts and Instagram, and it's more public, you do have this kind of hat that you wear and it's kind of like performing, you know? It's like you're having to put on—I wouldn't say a show—but I still think it's part of your personality, but it's just a different part that you use for that thing, whatever—whatever it may be. But, Andrew, I wanted to ask you what part of your personality do you like the best? I know you said you didn't, like, agree with the profile, you're like, "That's not me. I don't do that." But after reading it, what part do you like best about that profile you have with a personality that you have?

Andrew: Well, I got some interesting results that came up with the personality test. It gave me an overall analysis of my personality. Now, of course, this wasn't a scientific test, I didn't meet with trained psychologists or anything. This was just, like, one of those things that you do on the internet in 10 minutes, just answering some basic questions. So, I'm not going to say that my test results are in any way scientific, but I do think that they describe me to an extent. And some things that I liked about it was that I got 0% on the psychopathy result, which was reassuring. You know, sometimes, I feel like maybe I have my emotions, buried too deep inside. And sometimes maybe I'm not as caring as I could be, and not as empathetic as I could be. However, I guess, as I get older, I'm getting a little softer, to be honest. But to see 0% there, that was just nice. One thing that I didn't like about my results was it said that I am statistically prone to stress 87% higher than the general population. So, that is not great. Also, more prone to mental illness and neuroticism. So, that's not great.

Anna: Not the best, no. I can think of better things.

Andrew: Not the best. 87% higher chance than the general population. But it did say that I'm 89% more organized than most people who do this. I don't know if that is true or not, but I guess I like organization. And I like routine. And I like habits. And I like schedules. So, whether I actually live by them or not, I'm not sure, but I do enjoy that and that came out in my results as well. It also said that I'm very competitive, which I agree with, maybe not competitive in a very direct sense. Like, in life, I guess, or in my career, I'm not super competitive. But if I'm playing a game with somebody, or I'm playing sports with somebody, or I'm watching sports, I feel very competitive in that kind of situation. So, I totally agree with that as well.

Anna: Interesting. So, I wonder where the stress and the thing comes from. So, I'm looking at the profile here. I'm like why are you so prone to stress? Maybe it's paying attention to details. And maybe, are you a perfectionist for example?

Andrew: I'm not exactly sure. Now, the test that I did, Anna, was one that I can share with our audience, I'll put the link in the episode description. It was an MBTI finder to find what type you are. But it also had some other questions related to different types of psychological tests built in as well. So, I think maybe that was part of some questions that were outside of the MBTI, which gave me that result, I'm thinking.

Anna: OK, it's a good profile, Andrew. Don't worry, it's a good profile. I mean, all of them are good. They're all very different. And it's nice to hear about different people's, I don't know, how they are and their different personalities. But I liked the one about schedules, being organized and planning because I am so like that. I love a plan, whether I stick to the plan that can be—that's up for debate, but I love a plan. I love a schedule. One big thing for me is regarding planning is, like, travelling or going anywhere, I need to know the plan. I need to know where I'm going. I need to know what time to train is. I need to know where the train's dropping me off or going into. I just those type of things, I'm kind of obsessive about that. So, we're **on the same wavelength** with the planning stuff.

Andrew: That's so interesting because when it comes to travelling, I'm with you on the I want to know where my train is leaving at what train platform at what time. All of those things, I'm with you on the same page. But that example of travelling is interesting because I kind of like travelling with no plans, having a kind of chaotic travel where I don't know exactly what's going on. I don't do too much planning when I travel. Of course, when I'm going from point A to point B I like to make sure that's organized, but I'd never make, like, a daily itinerary or something, like, in the morning, we're going to the museum and then in the evening, we're going to this restaurant. I'd rather just kind of walk around and find some interesting things and let life happen to me rather than plan things out. Which has caused some arguments with past travel companions, to be honest, but it's my travel style.

Anna: It's your travel style. It's your travel style. I mean, I don't have, like, an itinerary of each day, but I have to say that when I'm, like, travelling, I mean the transport, like the idea of—I know some people are like, "Yeah, I'll just get to the airport like half an hour before." And I'm sort of like, shaking like—

Andrew: Oh yeah. That stresses me out.

Anna: That just stresses me out. So yeah. I'm definitely a—definitely a planner. I like scheduling and things like that. I agree with my profile, more or less, as I said before. One thing I really liked about the profile is the inner world. So, this is one thing that it comes out a lot that I have a very rich inner world. Maybe some of the listeners are like this as well, but I feel like there's a part of me that nobody will know—not even a partner, my family, my best friend—there's like always a little part of me, that is like, just for me. It's really hard to describe. I'm always thinking about things in my head, like, whenever I'm doing anything, I'm always thinking about X, Y, Z, I don't know, whatever. So, I have a very rich inner world that is kind of just for—it's like a secret world. It's really hard to describe, but that's one of

the things that stands out for me in that profile that really rings true when I think about my personality and what I'm like.

Andrew: Yeah, that's interesting. I remember those kinds of questions coming up on the personality test, asking me about imagination and inner world and that kind of thing. And it was a little bit difficult for me to answer them just because I don't have a standard, like, it's hard to answer the question, like, "Are you a very imaginative person?" It's like, do I imagine? Yeah. But am I more imaginative than you? I have no idea, right? I don't know where that standard is, how to compare. So, those questions were really difficult for me to answer. But I guess maybe that indicates something, right? If you know, very innately, like, "Yeah, I'm a really imaginative person, I have this world to myself that I feel like is my own." Then you could really easily answer that question and because I guess I don't, then maybe that tells me something about my level of imagination.

Anna: Maybe, maybe I don't know, it's—yeah, it's just one thing that stood out for me a lot. And they ask you lots of different—different questions. We were talking about this that, you know, I mean, there are obviously criticisms about these types of tests. But I think they're good at getting a kind of **broad brush**, you know, what are you like in some certain situations. And they can be actually really useful for figuring out—especially with people that you work with on teams, you know, where they are, and maybe the best way to interact with them. Or maybe why they might be reacting in a certain way that you don't understand, because you might be like, "I don't know why they always do this?" Or "I don't know why they find that offensive?" Or "Why they're so sensitive about this". So, doing these types of tests, I think can be, can be—can be really useful. But also, I wouldn't read too much into it, you have to be careful. Like I said before, **self-fulfilling prophecy**. You are not just your profile on this test. You know, there's much more to you as a person than that. But I do think I do love doing these types of things, though. Any opportunity to do, like, a personality test at work, on a team building day, I was like, "Yeah, I'll do it." I love it, I think it's fun.

Andrew: Have you ever done one with a professional that was administered by a psychologist or a doctor or somebody who had a deep understanding of these kinds of tests?

Anna: Yeah, I have, actually and I got the same result. So, I've done a very light version. And I've done the really, really in-depth ones as well. And I've done other types of—there's different ones available that give you, you know, different things. But they're all more or less the same. It's just kind of how they package it. But yeah, I have done it with somebody quite thoroughly, and it was the INFJ every time. So yeah, I'm definitely, definitely in that box.

Andrew: So, stepping back just a little bit, instead of talking about our individual personalities, I want to get your perspective, Anna, on the MBTI itself, because the reason that we're talking about it here today is one of our listeners named Chae Yeong. She wrote to us on Instagram, actually, and asked us to talk about this topic. And she is from Korea.

And I know that it is huge in Korea. It's a very popular topic of conversation. Recently, I met a couple of friends, and they were asking me about my MBTI. I've had my students asked me about it. Sometimes even in the English classes that I teach, my students will introduce themselves with their MBTI as part of their self-introduction. So, it's extremely popular here in Korea. I know that in Canada, it's also popular, but more for what like you were saying about team building or in the corporate world. But I'm wondering, as someone who's living in Spain, and as someone who's from the UK, in these two countries, is the MBTI very popular?

Anna: So, based on my knowledge of the UK because actually in Spain, I haven't worked in a company, a Spanish company, so my knowledge would be about the UK. But yeah, in the UK, it's super popular. And it's interesting that you mentioned that people use it as part of their introduction. And it kind of becomes like a talking point, a discussion point, like, "Oh, which one are you? Which profile are you?" You know, and you're like, "Oh, I'm an INFJ. What are you?" I have heard that, that people, some people really like to use it as a form of telling people who they are. But again, I think that can be—it's like a **double-edged sword** because you can say, "Oh, I'm this." And then people will react to you based on that, rather than actually getting to know you, and forming an opinion about you. Do you know what I mean? So, if I say to you, "I'm an INFJ." You're like, "Oh, Anna's introverted." So, you know, I don't know, maybe because people always think introverted—boring—and I'm sick of it! I'm sick of it! It doesn't mean that you're boring just because you're introverted. I think it has such a bad rep. So, it's like, good, but also, I can see how people might change their reaction based on you saying that.

Andrew: Yeah, that classic definition of the quiet introvert is not really accurate, because we are two chatterboxes here on Chatterbox talking a lot and we both said that we are introverted. Anna, I liked the expression that you used just a moment ago, *a double-edged sword*. Could you break that down and just explain what that idiom means to everyone? If something is *a double-edged sword*?

Anna: Yeah, it's a great expression. And we use it a lot when we're debating topics. And basically, what it means is that there's a good side and a bad side, essentially. There's a good thing and a bad thing. And it's a good one to know. And you'll notice people using it a lot when we're talking about different topics, because normally things have something good and something bad. So, it's a really nice way—when you're debating with people—to express what you want to say.

Andrew: Yeah, when we're comparing things, you know, sometimes it can be a little awkward to compare things in that kind of situation. You could say there's pros and cons, or there's pluses and minuses. But personally, I've never liked that expression pluses and minuses, it sounds a little awkward. But *a double-edged sword* is a nice expression to use when something has some good points and some bad points about it, or when it can be helpful or hurtful, that kind of situation.

Anna: So, to finish up, Andrew, I thought it'd be interesting, we talked about what we like, but if you could change any aspect of your personality, what would you change?

Andrew: Well, now that I know that I walk around feeling more stressed out than most people, I think I would have to say that I want to change that. If I could not worry or stress out about so many things and take life maybe a little bit easier, that sounds pretty good to me. So, that result was a little bit surprising. And now that I know that, if I could reduce the amount of stress or the impact of stress in my life, I think that would be very, very beneficial. How about you, Anna, what would you change?

Anna: I wouldn't really want to change anything too much because if I change something, then I wouldn't quite be me. But I'd love to just see what it's like to be extroverted. I'd love to try it and see what it's like, on you know, on a day-to-day basis. Yeah, I would change it for a day or a couple of days, maybe?

Andrew: Yeah, well, if we could do that, I think I would like to try on every personality type for a day and see what they're like. That would be really, really fascinating.

Anna: Sure.

Andrew: Well, everyone, I think that brings us to the end. So, we hope that you enjoyed this episode and were able to learn a lot with us here today. And nice job on getting in your daily dose of English listening practice as well. You guys are doing exactly what you need to do to improve your fluency. So, keep up that good work, and also thanks again to Chae Yeong on for suggesting this topic.

Anna: So, Andrew and I talked about our MBTI but we're curious about you. We'd love to know your thoughts about the MBTI and personality tests so visit our website, Culips.com. And you can leave a comment on the page for this episode, and you can share your opinion with us and the rest of the Culips community.

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Andrew: Goodbye.

Detailed Explanations

To not picture [something]

Verb

At the beginning of this episode, Andrew says that he **can't picture himself** working on a large project like the mother and daughter team who developed the MBTI. **To not picture [something]** is to believe that something is not very likely. It is too difficult, or even impossible, to see a picture of it in your head when thinking about the situation. **To not picture [something]** is often said in a humorous way. Sometimes, a situation is so ridiculous that you can't even imagine it or see it in your head. In this kind of context, this expression is perfect to use.

On the other hand, a related expression is **to picture [something]**. As you can probably guess, it has the opposite meaning. If you can picture something, it means you can imagine something or create a picture of it in your mind. For example, if you daydream about an upcoming tropical vacation, you might be able to picture yourself relaxing on the beach.

Here are a couple more examples with **to not picture [something]**:

Pete: How is your wife doing in her new career?

Vern: She's doing great. I'm glad we all finally pushed her to quit her job and try a singing career.

Pete: I'm happy for her. You know, I **couldn't picture her** as such a dynamic performer on stage until I finally saw her sing. She's amazing!

Vern: She's full of surprises, I know.

Lucy: How was your son's birthday party yesterday? I'm sorry I couldn't be there.

Beth: It was so much fun. My father showed up in a clown costume.

Lucy: Do you mean to say that your father, the serious banker, showed up in a clown costume? I just **can't picture that** at all!

Beth: I know. Well, he's a grandfather now, so he's doing a lot of things that he never would have years ago.

Self-fulfilling prophecy

Idiom

In this episode, Anna talks about the results of her MBTI test. She says that because she knows she's an INFJ, she will continue to act like an INFJ. She adds that this is a kind of **self-fulfilling prophecy**. A **self-fulfilling prophecy** is when you think something is true, and as a result, you make it become true.

A **self-fulfilling prophecy** is a psychological term, but many people use it in everyday speech. You can use this expression when your perception of something—whether it is true or not—influences how you act. For example, if you think you can, you can. Or, if you think you can't, you can't.

Here are a couple more examples with **self-fulfilling prophecy**:

Nathan: I see you're working hard.

Indira: As usual. My boss places high expectations on us. She's a great boss, so we always try to work hard to meet those expectations.

Nathan: That's good management. She's creating a **self-fulfilling prophecy** in the workplace. People tend to achieve better results when they aim high.

Indira: I agree.

Kara: Are you reading another self-help book?

Benny: Yeah. I like them. I worry a lot about my health, so I like to read this kind of book. I'm learning about all the things that I'm doing wrong in life. I'm terrible!

Kara: I see. Do you find that reading those books actually stresses you out more?

Benny: Maybe.

Kara: That sounds like a **self-fulfilling prophecy**. You're reading those books because you're stressed out about your health, but reading those books also stresses you out.

Benny: What should I do?

Kara: I don't have a solution! I'm just trying to make you aware of what you're doing.

To wear different hats

Idiom

When talking about the MBTI, Andrew says it's possible that we have different personalities at different times and places. He says that we **wear different hats** in different situations. **To wear different hats** is to change your behaviour according to the environment or context you are in. For example, in personal settings, we act as a friend or family member, and in professional settings, such as being a lawyer, teacher, or office worker, we act and behave according to the job.

You can also say **to put on a [certain] hat**. For example, if you tell someone **to put on their teacher's hat**, you are asking that person to think and behave like a teacher would in the given situation.

Here are a couple more examples with **to wear different hats**:

Marty: You look tired. Are you OK?

Lyle: It's been a busy week at the restaurant.

Marty: How so?

Lyle: Well, one of our waiters quit and the person who usually does our finances has been sick. Now I'm in charge of their responsibilities.

Marty: Oh. So, I guess you had **to wear different hats** this week.

Lyle: For sure. When I'm not cooking, I'm serving. When I can find some free time, I'm counting our revenues and expenditures. I need a vacation!

Nancy: We had this terrible customer come to the store today.

Soo: What was the problem?

Nancy: He was complaining very loudly about our late deliveries. So, I got upset. Then he got even more upset. It wasn't pretty.

Soo: I see. How about you take off your **owner's hat** and put on your **customer's hat**? Does he have a point when he was talking about your late deliveries?

Nancy: I suppose so.

Soo: Then maybe you should focus on that.

To be on the same wavelength

Idiom

In this episode, Andrew and Anna both talk about how they like to plan ahead and be organized. So, Anna says that they **are on the same wavelength**. **To be on the same wavelength** means to share similar thoughts or opinions about a topic. Andrew and Anna agree that they both enjoy having a plan, and because of this, it means that **they are on the same wavelength**. They share the same opinion about the importance of having a plan. Similar idiomatic expressions include *to be of one mind (about somebody/something)* and *to see eye to eye*.

Wavelength is a scientific term. Both sound and light can be measured by wavelength. Musical notes, for example, are recognized by their wavelengths. If the sound you play has the same wavelength as someone else's, both of you are playing the same note, and are therefore on the same sound wavelength.

Here are a couple more examples with **to be on the same wavelength**:

Shelly: What do you want to do tonight?

Monica: I say we go watch that new French movie at the local theatre.

Shelly: Good idea. I was thinking the same thing. What about after the movie?

Monica: Umm. To keep us on the same theme, would you like to go to the French restaurant nearby the theatre.

Shelly: Chez Michel? I really wanted to go there this week. Wow, **we're totally on the same wavelength** today!

Lana: How is it working with George? I heard you've been having problems.

Theo: Yeah. It hasn't been great.

Lana: I don't understand. He's a really nice guy.

Theo: I know. He is a nice guy, but I have difficulty working on projects with him.

Lana: Why is that?

Theo: I'm not sure. It seems like **we're always on different wavelengths**. He's always going left when I'm going right, and so we rarely agree. It's tough to reconcile.

A broad brush

Idiom

In this episode, Anna acknowledges criticisms of tests like the MBTI, but she insists that they can be good for getting **a broad brush** of someone's personality. The expression **a broad brush** means to give the general idea of a topic. Anna means that the MBTI is intended to give people a general idea of their personality traits, rather than a very specific idea.

Think of a paint brush. If you have a thin paint brush, you can paint in detail. But if you have a wide or broad brush, you will be painting with larger lines and less detail.

A common variation on this expression is *a broad stroke*. Additionally, both *broad brush* and *broad stroke* are used in the larger idiomatic expression **to paint [somebody/something] with a broad brush/stroke**. This means to describe a person or thing in a very general way, without giving details.

Here are a couple more examples with **a broad brush**:

Sophia: Why are you so upset?

Xavier: I just had a bad experience with my phone provider, Today Telecom. I don't want to paint the whole organization with **a broad brush**, but I don't think they have very good customer service.

Sophia: I totally agree! Their coverage, pricing, and data speeds are awesome, but their customer service needs some help.

Teemu: How was that novel you just finished?

Sylvain: It was long! Ha! Ha!

Teemu: How many pages was it?

Sylvain: Several hundred. I don't remember exactly how many. But it was great.

Teemu: Can you tell me about it?

Sylvain: It would take me days to explain the whole thing.

Teemu: OK. So maybe just paint me a picture with **a broad brush**.

Sylvain: All right. I'll try.

A double-edged sword

Phrase

Toward the end of this episode, Anna talks about the pros and cons of sharing your MBTI test results with others. Sharing your results can be good to know the personality type that you are dealing with. On the other hand, it can also be bad if someone has negative perceptions regarding the personality profile. Anna calls this **a double-edged sword**.

A double-edged sword is when something good can have negative effects. A sword usually has at least one sharp edge to cut things with, and that's good because that's the purpose of a sword. However, if both edges are sharp, one edge is facing you, and can cut you back!

Here are a couple more examples with **a double-edged sword**:

Darryl: I heard your son is a really good hockey goalie. You and your husband must be very proud.

Sunny: We are, but it's a bit of **a double-edged sword** the better he gets, to be honest.

Darryl: What do you mean?

Sunny: You see, the better the team he plays on, the more it costs our family, and we don't really have that kind of money.

Darryl: If he ever turns pro, he'll certainly pay you back!

Sunny: That's a big "if".

Sidd: It looks like the Canadian dollar is gaining in value. That's good.

Laurie: Maybe. It's more like **a double-edged sword**.

Sidd: How so?

Laurie: If the strength of the dollar is high, we can buy things from other countries at a lower price. However, our products cost more for people in other countries. So, we will export fewer products.

Quiz

1. What does *to not picture [something]* mean?

- a) you can't imagine it
- b) you don't have a picture of it
- c) you don't want a picture of it
- d) you can't draw it

2. True or false? *A double-edged sword* means something can be both good and bad.

- a) true
- b) false

3. If you are *on the same wavelength* as someone, you are _____.

- a) playing a game together
- b) agreeing
- c) the same height as the other
- d) disagreeing

4. True or false? *To paint something with a broad brush* means to give a lot of detail.

- a) true
- b) false

5. What does it mean *to wear different hats*?

- a) you like fashion
- b) you like hats
- c) you do several things at the same time
- d) you like to change clothes often

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Is there someone in your life who you're usually on the same wavelength with?
2. What is something you can't picture yourself ever doing?
3. Are you the type of person who likes to paint things with a broad brush or do you like being specific? Explain why.
4. When do you find yourself having to wear different hats, either at work or in your personal life?
5. What is something in your life that acts as a double-edged sword?

Quiz Answers

1. a 2. a 3. b 4. b 5. c

Episode credits

Hosts: Andrew Bates and Anna Connelly

Music: *Something Elated* by Broke for Free

Episode preparation/research: Andrew Bates

Audio editor: Kevin Moorehouse

Transcriptionist: Heather Bates

Study guide writer: Matty Warnock

English editor: Edden Yohanes

Business manager: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima

Image: Andrea Piacquadio (Pexels.com)