

Everything DiSC® vs Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

A practical comparison for L&D professionals evaluating behavioural assessment tools

MBTI is arguably the most widely recognised personality tool in the world. Many L&D professionals will have completed it themselves. Everything DiSC is increasingly chosen over MBTI in corporate learning and development settings. This guide explains why — and helps you make an informed decision for your organisation.

✓ Bottom line: Everything DiSC focuses on observable workplace behaviour (not fixed personality type), has stronger test-retest reliability, a lower cost per head, easier facilitation, and is more directly actionable for teams. MBTI remains better known by name but is losing ground to DiSC in organisational L&D for good reason.

1. At a Glance

Side-by-Side Comparison Table

Feature	Everything DiSC® (Wiley)	MBTI® (The Myers-Briggs Company)
What it measures	Observable behavioural tendencies in the workplace	Psychological preferences / personality type
Number of types/styles	12 styles on a continuous circumplex	16 types across 4 binary dichotomies
Output format	Continuous placement on circumplex (degrees of style)	Binary: assigned to one of 16 fixed types
Test-retest reliability	High — consistent results over time	Moderate — studies show ~50% change type within 5 weeks
Role-specific profiles	✓ Yes — 6 role-specific profiles available	✗ Single profile; role variants limited
Digital learner platform	✓ Catalyst™ — ongoing team development tool	✗ No equivalent ongoing platform
Facilitation complexity	Lower — intuitive model, strong facilitator materials	Higher — 4 dimensions require deeper explanation
Facilitator training cost	~£795 + VAT (one-time, no annual renewal)	Typically £1,500–£2,500+ with annual licensing
Profile cost	From ~£50–£70 per profile	Typically £100–£200+ per profile + debrief
Focus	Workplace behaviour and team effectiveness	Personality preferences; often broader personal insight
Actionability	Highly practical — teaches 'flexing'	More introspective; less direct action

	behaviour for better results	framework
Research basis	DISC theory; Wiley validation studies; adaptive testing	Jung / Briggs Myers; some peer-reviewed; contested
Supplier	Wiley (NYSE-listed global publisher)	The Myers-Briggs Company (CPP)

2. The Reliability Question — Why This Matters for L&D

This is the most important issue for L&D professionals to understand, particularly when recommending tools to senior stakeholders or occupational psychologists.

The MBTI reliability concern

- **Binary typing:** MBTI assigns people to one of 16 fixed types using binary dichotomies (e.g., Introvert OR Extravert). In reality, most people sit somewhere in the middle — forcing a binary choice distorts the output.
- **Test-retest reliability:** Multiple studies, including research published in occupational psychology literature, have found that a significant proportion of people (estimates range from 35–50%) receive a different MBTI type when retested as few as five weeks later. This raises questions about whether the tool is measuring stable traits.
- **The 'I always knew I was an INTJ' problem:** MBTI is widely perceived as validating a fixed identity ('I'm an ENTP'). While this can be engaging, it can also encourage fixed mindsets and reduce openness to behavioural change — the opposite of what L&D seeks to achieve.
- **Academic criticism:** The academic psychology community has raised longstanding questions about MBTI's construct validity, particularly compared to well-validated frameworks like the Big Five personality model.

How Everything DiSC addresses these concerns

- **Continuous, not binary:** DiSC places individuals on a circumplex — a continuous circle. There are 12 distinct styles, but individuals are placed with precision rather than forced into a binary category.
- **Adaptive testing:** Wiley's adaptive testing engine adjusts questions dynamically, producing more accurate and reliable results. This significantly reduces the impact of response bias.
- **Behaviour, not personality:** Everything DiSC is explicit that it measures behavioural tendencies — how you tend to show up at work — not fixed personality. This distinction makes it more acceptable to sceptical participants and more useful in change contexts.
- **Strong test-retest reliability:** Everything DiSC shows high consistency on retesting, supporting its use as a stable development tool rather than a snapshot that changes with mood or context.
- **Framed for growth:** The DiSC model actively teaches participants to 'flex' — to adapt their behaviour to be more effective with others. It is fundamentally a growth tool, not a labelling tool.

3. Practical Facilitation — What It's Like to Deliver

Everything DiSC

- The model can be introduced engagingly in 10–15 minutes; participants 'get it' quickly
- Six role-specific profiles mean you use the right tool for the right context — not a one-size-fits-all report
- Professional facilitation kits (PowerPoint, handouts, facilitator guides) are available for each profile

- Catalyst platform gives participants an ongoing resource after the session — dramatically increasing stickability
- One-time facilitator training (~£795) with no annual renewal; self-administered EPIC account
- Facilitators can run sessions independently without ongoing dependency on a third-party supplier

MBTI

- Requires qualified MBTI practitioner certification (typically 2–3 days; ~£1,500–£2,500+) with annual licensing
- Four dimensions (EI, SN, TF, JP) require more time to explain thoroughly — sessions typically require a full day or more
- Many participants are already familiar with their 'type', which can reduce engagement and fresh learning
- No equivalent to Catalyst — post-session resources are largely static (PDFs, books)
- Higher per-profile cost and practitioner renewal fees increase total cost of ownership significantly
- The binary 'type' model can generate debate ('I'm definitely not a J') that disrupts facilitated sessions

4. Cost Comparison

Cost Element	Everything DiSC®	MBTI®
Facilitator training	~£795 + VAT (one-time)	~£1,500–£2,500+ (certification required)
Annual licence/renewal	None	Annual practitioner licence required
Per-profile cost	From ~£50–£70	Typically £100–£200+ (often requires debrief)
Digital platform	Catalyst™ — included	No equivalent
Admin platform	EPIC — included in training fee	Separate online access required
Facilitation materials	Professional kits available per profile	Purchased separately; less comprehensive
Debrief requirement	Facilitator-led; flexible format	Formal 1:1 debrief often expected

5. When Might You Choose One Over the Other?

Choose Everything DiSC when:

- Your goal is improved workplace effectiveness — communication, management, teamwork, conflict
- You want a tool that teaches behavioural flexibility (not just self-awareness)
- Research validity and test-retest reliability are important to your procurement team
- You need role-specific profiles (Sales, Management, Leadership etc.)
- Budget and scalability matter — you want lower per-head costs and no ongoing licence fees
- You want a digital platform that sustains development beyond the training day
- You need facilitators to be autonomous — not dependent on an ongoing supplier relationship

MBTI may be appropriate if:

- Your organisation has a long-standing MBTI culture and significant switching costs
- Your audience is senior leaders who already value MBTI and find it a credible shared language
- The goal is broader personal insight and self-reflection rather than specific workplace behaviour change
- You have existing certified practitioners in-house with strong track records

6. About Academy of High Achievers

Academy of High Achievers (AHA) are Wiley Everything DiSC Authorized Partners based in the UK, working with organisations since 2008. We have been Diamond Award winners since 2015. We deliver Everything DiSC Facilitator Training, supply profiles at competitive rates, and provide ongoing support to L&D professionals, coaches, HR teams and internal trainers across the UK and beyond.

Ready to bring Everything DiSC into your organisation?

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