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The CEO was a visionary, a thinker.

He was hired for these capabilities, and for his abilities to build profitable relationships and grow the business. He was not unlike many of his colleagues in similar positions. Not a dreaded micro-manager, he gave clear goals to his leadership team and then looked hopefully at the quarterly numbers for proof of successful achievement.

Yet, for the fourth quarter in a row, the numbers were not there. And like always, the response he fell back on was an immediate meeting with his team where he, in no uncertain terms, let them know the importance of meeting the numbers, and that the Board was breathing down his neck. Maybe this time they would understand and figure out how to get there.

This story is not unlike many we have all heard as coaches and consultants. Instead of the CEO, maybe it's the department manager or a director or the COO. The problem lay with two main issues:

- ❖ At least two of the people in key roles were not the right people for the job or for the company, and
- ❖ The CEO had confused lack of execution skills with empowering macro-management, and he was not open to developmental coaching.

While more than one solution was viable, what was ultimately employed was a multi-pronged approach:

- ◉ Team development work with the leadership group
- ◉ One-on-one coaching with leadership
- ◉ Cross-company, like-position peer groups
- ◉ Partnership with HR to introduce psychometric testing as a supportive component to the hiring process
- ◉ Introduction of a multi-rater tool as a consistent support for leadership development

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The best solution would have included an authentic, uncomfortable set of discussions between the CEO and the leadership team. But since that avenue was not available, the second best option was *the team's development of their own personality and behavioral consciousness* so that they could work more systemically and supportively together. No more finger-pointing, competition, or victimizing.

The MBTI® and FIRO-B® instruments were used in the team work as well as the coaching work. The coaching element trained the team in how to work with their CEO more proactively and using language that he found more easy to engage. For example, the team's aggregate assessment scores (see charts below) helped the group to understand why their desire for more consistent and vocal involvement (Extraverted score of 15 and high total Inclusion) on the part of the CEO was not being met. We then worked on communication tactics to help the group and each member individually get their needs met with the CEO by connecting with him in ways better aligned with the CEO's mental processing style – reflected in his MBTI® instrument and FIRO-B® tool results.

Another useful intervention designed to deepen the learning and facilitate the group's independence from outside coaching made its way into the leadership team meetings. Twenty minutes was allocated at the beginning of every other weekly meeting for a brief team-building exercise using the group's aggregate and individual MBTI® and FIRO-B® data. These interactive learnings were led at first by me, then by a member of the group with after-action support provided by me to the facilitator.

After about two months, even the CEO became curious about the type language and the observable shift in the group's goal attainment. His shift was not dramatic, but the seeds were planted – which is so often our best outcome as consultants to leadership and teams.

Figure 1

Acme, Inc.			Leadership Team					
MBTI®					**FIRO-B®**			
Preferences				**Out-of-Preference Facets**		**Inclusion**	**Control**	**Affection**
E	S	T	J	Generally towards N	expressed	7	6	3
15	9	22	16		wanted	5	2	8
					Totals:	12	8	11

Acme, Inc.			CEO's profile					
MBTI®					**FIRO-B®**			
Preferences				**Out-of-Preference Facets**		**Inclusion**	**Control**	**Affection**
I	N	T	P	Active (E)	expressed	4	8	5
16	27	10	9	Early-Starting (J)	wanted	2	5	8
					Totals:	6	13	13