

How is the OneSmartWorld 4D-i[®] Different from Personality Tests?

We get asked this question a lot. The short answer: it's very different.

OneSmartWorld uses a scientifically validated psychometric instrument, the Four Dimensions Inventory, or 4D-i[®] to identify types of thinking that you like and rely on most. Then we give you tools to develop and apply the skills to work collaboratively with others - whether they think like you or not.

We don't look at fixed personality types or traits. We focus on thinking styles which change over our lifetime and skills that can be developed. With coaching and practice, thinking skills can be trained for greater academic, professional and personal success.

Personality tools rely on an outdated understanding of the brain. The MBTI personality-type test and its derivatives like Insights, Personality Dimensions, True Colors and many others are based on Carl Jung's 1921 Personality Types theory. The tests were developed in the 1950's in a time when the prevailing belief was that people's brains, I.Q's and personalities didn't change.

The assumption behind these tests was that knowing our own fixed personality type, and the types of others, would make us better at getting along by giving us context for other people's actions, and perhaps a bit more empathy toward them.

These assessments not only incorrectly assumed that people's brains stayed the same over time, but failed to offer a pathway for how people of different types might overcome their differences.

These tests were also designed in a time when hierarchical organizations made top down decisions and people typically worked with colleagues from our own culture, sex, race, ethnicity, and demographic. There was less need for cross cultural collaboration with people. Diverse, global teams collaborating on increasingly complex issues, was not the norm.

A lot has changed since Jung's theory debuted. Over the last 100 years, neuroscientists have learned that our brains are highly adaptable, constantly changing, and not fixed. During the same time period organizations have flattened. Cross-functional project teams are responsible for the work of solving complex problems. Over the last 100 years the skills for success have evolved from specific technical capabilities, to higher order interpersonal and cognitive skills like adaptability, creativity, collaborative problem solving, critical thinking, interpersonal relationships, and self-leadership.

This is where OSW comes in!

The language of the 4D-i[®] tells you about how you and others on your team like to think. This knowledge can be used to train and develop underused thinking skills, like a muscle. This language can also be applied to groups to synchronize thinking in diverse teams. Colour-coded thinking processes align everyone's thinking to the task at hand, while providing time for each type of thinking.

Once teams learn the colour-coded language, they can communicate, collaborate and work more effectively together. This saves time, money and frustration by going beyond personality, to getting work done. Focus is taken off the individual's preferences to the kind of thinking that best addresses the problem of the moment. All members of the team agree to offer their best thinking by asking themselves and each other: 'Where do we all need to be to solve this?'

At OneSmartWorld, we believe that everyone is smart, and that we are smarter together. We are dedicated to offering 21st century teams the tools they need to accelerate collaboration, solve problems, and find solutions to the most pressing issues of our time.