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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Karin Alayne Waller for the Master of Science in Conflict Resolution were presented February 16, 2000, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Karin Alayne Waller for the Master of Science in Conflict Resolution presented February 16, 2000.

Title: Mediator Personality Type and Perceived Conflict Goals in Workplace Mediation: A Study of *Shared Neutrals*.

The focus of this thesis was around two questions: "Do mediators commonly share a personality typology?" and "Does personality type affect mediators' perceptions of disputants' goals?" The findings of this study have several implications for conflict management and its practitioners. For instance, consideration of one's own personality type can lead to deeper understanding of one's own biases and help develop mediator neutrality. Studies about mediation practitioners can also provide information about this under-represented group for use in career counseling, as well as in public education.

This research suggests that 71% of this group of mediators shared preferences in both the *intuition* and *feeling* dimensions, and 42% shared the three dimensions of *intuition*, *feeling* and *perceiving*. According to MBTI literature, individuals who favor *intuition* tend to focus on relationships and look at the big picture and the connection between the facts. Individuals who prefer to use *feeling* in decision-making tend to be sympathetic, compassionate, and people-focused. Individuals who prefer to use *perceiving* tend to be spontaneous and enjoy trusting their resourcefulness in adapting to the demands of a situation.

This study also investigated potential personality affects on mediators' perceptions of disputants' conflict goals. Personality dimensions, mediator experience, and scenario outcomes were assessed and a statistically significant relationship was found between the *intuition* dimension and relational goals in one of the four scenarios. Some significant relationships were also found in another of the four scenarios between mediator experience and preferred scenario outcome.

The study group was a small interagency group of workplace mediators called *Shared Neutrals*, who mediate disputes in Oregon and Washington. The design of the study was different from past studies in its use of contextual conflict scenarios, in the form of an author-developed questionnaire; similar to those used in the medical field to test clinician responses. The study was limited by the restriction of range of the group, by the subjectivity of the author-developed questionnaire, and by the statistical limitations of the MBTI.

Some suggestions are made for future studies, including consideration of factors such as type of training, gender, group dynamics and socialization.

MEDIATOR PERSONALITY TYPE AND PERCEIVED
CONFLICT GOALS IN WORKPLACE MEDIATION:
A STUDY OF SHARED NEUTRALS

by

KARIN ALAYNE WALLER

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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in
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

Alternative Dispute Resolution, and mediation in particular, is a new and rapidly evolving field in the United States. There has been a surge of interest since 1996, when the Congress and President Clinton enacted Executive Order 12988 (Civil Justice Reform). This Executive Order encouraged the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to settle private disputes, as well as "to resolve claims of or against the United States or its agencies" (p.90). The Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996 began to clarify the language and guidelines for use of ADR as a "voluntary and supplemental" alternative to litigation. This was a great start for affirming the validity of ADR, but more powerful and encouraging is the Alternative Dispute Resolution Act of 1998, which amends Public Law regarding use of ADR in United States district courts and for other purposes. The ADR Act of 1998 even suggests that ADR has the potential to provide benefits such as greater party satisfaction, more efficient settlements and innovative methods of resolving conflict (ADRA 1998, sec.2(1)).

These governmental declarations are, in part, a response to a rapidly growing grassroots effort to promote healthy resolution of conflict in a litigious society. Neighborhood associations across the nation have been using mediation to resolve neighbor disputes for over 20 years, and victim-offender mediation brings satisfactory resolution in many types of criminal cases, such as first-time juvenile offenses.

Like any effort of this proportion, there is constant debate within the mediation community over issues such as the difference in the practices of attorney and non-attorney mediators, and the role of counseling techniques in mediation. It has been suggested that attorneys tend to see mediation simply as alternative dispute resolution (ADR), whereas "psychologists are more likely to view mediation as a method of self-empowerment for the parties involved" (Helm, Odom & Wright, 1991, p. 87). These philosophical differences generate much debate in the field, helping both to define and to confuse the role of the mediator. Bush & Folger (1994) reflect upon this complexity in their book, The Promise of Mediation, suggesting that the "fate of the mediation movement is linked, in a larger sense, to an emerging relational vision of human nature and social interaction" (p. xviii).

Purpose of Study

The ongoing debates about the role of mediator in mediation are extremely important for the self-definition of the growing field. A particular interest in the present exploratory research was the greatly varying opinions about the types of conflict goals a mediator should be allowed (or required) to handle. For instance, is it appropriate for a small claims court mediator to address a relationship goal, or must one simply address the content goal? (Note: the *content* goal is usually money, and a *relationship* goal might be that the disputants are neighbors and have a long-term feud that needs to be aired). It is unrealistic to expect that every mediator would handle issues in the same way, since each mediator would likely approach it from her/his own background, training and comfort level.

How much do individual mediators' perspectives affect which conflict goals mediators feel comfortable addressing? This exploratory study examines how mediators' personality type and their level of experience affect their views of disputants' goals in workplace mediation. The term "personality type" discussed in this study is determined by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator ® (MBTI), which is described briefly at the end of this chapter (Definition of Terms), and extensively in Chapter II. Unlike other psychological tools, type theory was derived from normal rather than abnormal people, and this self-report instrument is designed not to unearth neuroses, but to help people understand their relation to themselves and others (Schultz, 1994). It is helpful in conflict work for this reason.

This research had several goals. One was to produce a thoughtful piece of writing attempting to bridge the communication divide between researchers and practitioners in the field of conflict resolution. Another goal was to explore how and why different mediators look at things differently, and how this idea relates to the current mediation literature.

There are many philosophies and strategies of mediation and all are affected by the experiences of individual practitioners. One problem in the field of conflict resolution is that the topic is so broad and covers so many arenas that any large-scale research would take tremendous effort and funding. To address that problem, the current study used a sample from a small, specific group of workplace mediators called *Shared Neutrals*. This inter-agency consortium of mediators was formed in 1996 as a program under the Portland Federal Executive Board. The group handles

workplace mediations for participating agencies in Oregon and Washington. This study examined these mediators' personality typology and experience, and the role these factors might play in their perceptions of disputant goals. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

- 1) Do mediators who score half or greater on the Intuition dimension of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator put more emphasis on relationship goals in disputants' conflicts (as opposed to content or identity goals)?
- 2) Does experience in intervention affect scores? (Do people who have mediated more disputes, or who have been mediators longer score differently than those with less experience?)
- 3) Is there an overall type preference (and/or subtype preference) for this group of mediators?

This study was potentially important for a few reasons. First, it attempted to add knowledge about mediators and the field of mediation in general. Bringing the practice of mediation into academic consideration could lead to further understanding of mediation and add to the ongoing, intra-field discourse. In the first issue of *The Journal of Alternative Dispute Resolution in Employment*, McAdoo (1999) bemoaned the difficulty of finding and sharing basic information within the field. She suggested that the field would be healthier if the divide between researchers and practitioners was bridged. This study could be a small step toward that goal.

Second, this study helped shape an understanding of *Shared Neutrals* as a group, rather than strictly as individuals, providing definition to a group of people

5
doing a lot of good work without recognition. Current thought in progressive conflict work indicates that the more one understands one's self, the more one can understand others (Bush, 1994; Edelman, 1993). It is reasonable to assume that giving these mediators an opportunity to think about their own perceptions would encourage a healthy awareness of their own possible biases, and add to their sense of cohesiveness.

Third, this research may help to fill a gap in Myers-Briggs research with a specific population not previously studied. If more data was available to career counselors about personality types of mediators, counselors might better assist persons who are considering conflict work as a career.

Theoretical Framework

Workplace mediation can be looked at from two central perspectives: cost analysis and systems theory. From a cost analysis standpoint, the Federal Government saves thousands of dollars on each Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint that is resolved in mediation. It has been suggested that a federal agency may save four to sixty thousand dollars per case if it is successfully settled prior to litigation (Bureau of National Affairs, 1998.) As appealing as cost savings may be, workplace mediation can also be viewed from a systems theory perspective. Systems theory is essentially a holistic view of the world that takes into account the fact that parts of a system affect each other and, by nature of this relationship, the actions or reactions of individuals affect the overall system. According to systems expert, Charles W. Churchman, systems theory is "based on the fundamental principle that all aspects of

the human world should be tied together in one grand rational scheme” (Churchman, 1979).

This broad theory can be looked at on a smaller scale, from the counseling perspective of family systems theory. In this approach to counseling, also known as relationship therapy, the client is viewed as part of a larger system, rather than solely as an individual. The family unit both influences the individual and is influenced by that individual. The person may even manifest behaviors in direct response to a problem at the system level (Corey, 1996).

For example, a client’s problematic behavior may be a function of the group’s inability to operate productively. Although the problematic behavior may become the focus, it is often reflecting a problem with the group. From a systems perspective, an individual may be defined by her role within the system (sister or mother in a family system, manager or janitor in a workplace system). It is also recognized that actions of the individual affect, and are affected by, the overall system in which she operates. In this relational view, each person is encouraged to take responsibility for his or her part in a conflict.

Similar to how it is used in counseling, systems theory can also be brought to bear upon the conflict resolution field. Traditional litigation has focused on proving an individual right or wrong and leaves little room for anything other than winning or losing the particular battle. Mediation provides more opportunity to address underlying issues, such as relationships and community. Exploring a conflict in this kind of depth can result in a deeper understanding of the conflict and more affective

resolution. Donohue, Drake and Roberto (1994) suggest that mediators will find it harder to reach an agreement the more they ignore disputants' relational concerns. Wilmot and Hocker (1998) take this idea even further, proposing that "relational goals are at the heart of all conflict interactions" (pp. 58-59). Traditional litigation rarely addresses those relational elements of a conflict, which may explain the growing interest in alternative means of resolving disputes.

There are eight elements of personality type used in the MBTI and considered in the present study. These eight elements appear in four dichotomous sets: Extroversion-Introversion, Sensing-Intuition, Thinking-Feeling and Judging-Perceiving. The *Intuition* aspect of personality type can be connected to systems theory. In fact, their definitions are almost interchangeable. According to the MBTI literature, people who prefer *Intuition* over *Sensing* prefer to take in information by examining the big picture, focusing on relationship and connections between the facts (Myers, 1993). This description is almost identical to the definition of systems theory, which focuses on the overall gestalt, or "whole" picture of things. Discovering the common theme of "wholeness" in both systems theory and personality typing led to the present research, and to questions about what role *Intuition* might play in various aspects of conflict resolution work.

Scope and Limitations

This research examines a sample of workplace mediators, the typology of their personalities and how they view disputants' conflict goals. The group under study, called *Shared Neutrals*, exists as a consortium of trained individuals available to

mediate cases for the participating agencies, under the “wing” of the Portland Federal Executive Board. Its existence is the result of a cooperative effort between individuals in Federal, State, City, County and Labor Union agencies, as well as a few mediators unaffiliated with any agency. The range of mediation experience was from .5 to 12 years, and between 0-350 cases mediated. The mediator most recently added to the roster had just completed training at the time of this study, which is why experience range started at zero. The average experience level was five years.

The burgeoning field of alternative dispute resolution – whether mandatory divorce mediation, small claims court mediation, victim-offender mediation, or the processing of EEO complaints - is far too large to discuss in this thesis. Practitioners in different specialties tend to be quite different from each other. For this reason, it was important to select a specific subgroup to sample. Even with such a specific sample, there are limitations and potential biases. For instance, the voluntary nature of the study meant that people who returned the surveys might have differed significantly from those who did not. Due to the specialized nature of this population, the results may not be generalizable to non-workplace mediators or other groups besides *Shared Neutrals*. Also, the participants all worked in Oregon and Washington, and findings may not be generalizable to other geographic areas. It is possible that mediators on the West Coast may have different styles and expectations than mediators in other areas of the country, or in other countries.

It is also possible that culture, educational background or gender might play a role in mediator perception. Although gender was considered as a variable, these

elements are not a focus of this study. Personality typology can be a way of considering people on a psychological level that does not require variables such as culture, education, or gender. However, the questionnaires used in this study may have missed important information by ignoring variables such as educational or cultural background.

Another limitation is the validity and reliability of the MBTI as an assessment tool. A statistically “reliable” measure requires that the measurement remain stable over time. This is not the case for the MBTI. Differences in individuals’ MBTI scores have been documented in as little as five weeks, and over a number of years. (Cummins, 1999; Wiggins, 1995). Also, the MBTI is said to be less reliable without the subject’s own interpretations of the score. This study may be limited by the fact that it uses only the raw scores for data, rather than the subjects’ interpretation of the scores. This is discussed further in Chapter III.

The author-developed Conflict Scenario Questionnaire (CSQ) could also be seen as a limitation in this study. In its pre-test phase, it was discovered by one tester to be somewhat relationally focused. The current application was its first use. It is possible that this instrument failed to accurately reflect the conflict goals that were intended. Another instrument, perhaps from a less relationally laden theoretical position, may have captured this information more accurately. To date, the mediation literature has yet to produce an instrument of this type. However, problem scenarios of this sort have been developed and used for research in social behavior (Byrnes & Kiger, 1992; Hupka, Jung & Silverthorn, 1987; Vincent, Houlihan & Mitchell, 1994),

medical clinician research (Glassman, Kravita, Petersen & Rolph, 1997), and in other social research arenas.

Overview of the Study

As previously stated, the purpose of this study was to examine the ways in which mediator personality type and level of experience affect mediators' perceptions of disputants' goals. The second chapter deals with review and analysis of the supporting literature relevant to this topic. Methods and procedure are covered in Chapter 3 and the results of the statistical analysis of the data are presented in Chapter 4. The final chapter is concerned with summary of findings, discussion, implications, and suggestions for future research.

Definition of Terms

MBTI - The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, a self-report questionnaire developed in the 1950's by Katherine Cook Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, and based on the theories of Swiss Psychiatrist, Carl G. Jung.

Personality Type - based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator™, which was developed from the theories of Carl G. Jung. The 4 personality dimensions, making up a possible combination of 16 "Types", are: (1) how one focuses one's attention (Extroversion-Introversion scale), (2) how one takes information in and finds out about things (Sensing-Intuition scale), (3) how one makes decisions (Thinking-Feeling scale), and (4) how one orients oneself toward the outer world (Judging-Perceiving scale).

ADR - Alternative Dispute Resolution: any alternative means of resolving a conflict other than litigation. Mediation and Negotiation are two examples.

Mediator- a neutral, third-party trained to facilitate a meeting (mediation) between two or more disputants, and to help the disputants find a mutually agreeable resolution (or outcome) to their conflict.

Workplace mediation - mediations that take place in a workplace setting. These can range from interpersonal conflicts between two or more employees, to handling a formal EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) complaint, to labor union bargaining & negotiations.

Content goals - The goals in a dispute about what each of the parties wants, what to do, what decision needs to be made, where to go, how to allocate resources, and other things of this concrete nature.

Relational/Relationship goals - The goals in a dispute which address such things as who the parties are to each other, how one wants to be treated by the other, how much independence one wants, how much influence each has over the other, and so on.

Identity goals - The goals in a dispute having to do with how one's self-identity might be protected or repaired in that particular interaction (i.e., how one can "save face" in the interaction).

Process goals – The goals in a dispute which will determine what communication process will be used to deal with the conflict. Note: In each of the scenarios in the (CSQ) questionnaire, mediation had already been chosen as the process. Therefore, it was not listed as a goal in any of the scenarios, although it is certainly valid that one person may want to talk about it and one person may not want to talk about it – a classic case of conflicting goals.

Example of the Four Types of Conflict Goals in a Workplace Conflict Scenario

Below is a simple example of how the four conflict goals might look in a workplace **conflict scenario**. No assumptions, of course, can be made without much more understanding of the history of the situation.

Scenario: two employees (Joe and Jill) have argued publicly in their workplace, and aren't able to work together on a project they are expected to complete because they are not speaking to each other.

Possible **process** goals: One party might want to address the conflict by way of ignoring it in hopes it will go away, and one might want to meet with the supervisor, or try mediation. What communication process will be used?

Possible **content** goals: The parties might need to find a way to divide the work so the job can get done with little or no interaction. Or, they might need to decide how to deal with future disputes that might arise.

Possible **identity** goals: One party might need to resolve the conflict in such a way that the rest of the office knows they are not being “blamed” for the conflict. Or one might need to maintain the understanding that they are not “giving in.” This goal is about “saving face,” both with the other party and the rest of the office (since it was a public dispute).

Possible **relational** goal: One party might need acknowledgement from the other that their job (or opinion) is equally important, or that their friendship means a lot, or that they are not interested in a friendship at all.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Personality Type

Assuming people think like we do is one of the most fundamental roots of everyday conflict (Wilmot & Hocker 1998; Mayer 1995). Even in a long-term marriage, what is understood as "truth" by one partner may not be understood in the same way by the other partner. In fact, Psychological Type, from which the MBTI was developed, is a theory developed by Carl Jung to "explain some of the apparently random differences in people's behavior" (Myers, 1993, p.2). From a conflict resolution perspective, it seems that many conflicts are based on people's perceptions around those "randomly different behaviors." The MBTI is an inexact, but generally respected tool with which to consider the different ways that humans interact in the world. This self-report questionnaire was designed to provide information about preferences in how a person typically operates in four areas. These are:

- How one focuses one's attention (Extrovert-Introvert)
- How one gets information, and finds out about things (Sensing-Intuition)
- How one makes decisions (Thinking-Feeling), and
- How one orients to the outer world (Judging-Perceiving)

(Myers, 1993, pp. 4-5).

Although each characteristic is complex, the following general descriptions can be helpful for a working understanding of type differences.

- People who prefer Extroversion (E) tend to focus on the outer world of people and external events. They direct their attention outward and talking, working and playing with people gives them energy. People who prefer Extroversion are likely to have the following characteristics: sociable and expressive, attuned to their external environment, learn best through doing or discussing, tend to speak first and reflect later.
- People who prefer Introversion (I) tend to focus inward, getting energy from their internal thoughts and feelings. Characteristics commonly include: being private and contained, preferring to communicate by writing, tending to reflect before acting or speaking.
- People who prefer Sensing (S) tend to use their eyes, ears, and other senses to find out what is actually happening. They are especially good at recognizing the practical realities of a situation. Characteristics commonly include: focusing on what is real and actual, being factual and concrete, noticing details, observing and remembering sequentially.
- Those who prefer Intuition (N) to find out about things tend to focus on relationship, look at the big picture and see the connection between facts. They are especially good at seeing new possibilities and different ways of doing things. Characteristics commonly include: seeing patterns and meanings in facts, trusting inspiration, focusing on “big picture” possibilities and taking a non-linear approach to problems.

- People who prefer to use Thinking (T) in decision making tend to look objectively at the logical consequences of a choice or action. Typical characteristics include: being analytical, logical problem-solvers, reasonable, fair and “tough-minded.”
- Those who prefer to use Feeling (F) in decision-making tend to identify with the people involved in a situation, and use person-centered values. Their goal is harmony and respect of individuals. Common characteristics: sympathetic, compassionate, guided by personal values, “tender-hearted.”
- People who prefer to use their Judging (J) process in the outer world tend to live in a planned, orderly way, wanting to regulate and control life. They enjoy their ability to get things done. Common characteristics: scheduled, organized, systematic, like to have things decided (closure), avoid last-minute stresses.
- People who prefer to use their Perceiving (P) process in the outer world tend to live in a flexible, spontaneous way, seeking to experience and understand life rather than to control it. They enjoy and trust their resourcefulness in adapting to the demands of a situation. Common characteristics: spontaneous, casual, flexible, like plans loose and changeable, feels energized by last-minute pressures.

An individual's personality type is represented by the four letters of their preferences in the four characteristic sets listed above (e.g., ENTJ, ISFP). This is explained in the following statement by Myers & McCauley (1985):

According to theory, by definition, one pole of each of the four preferences is preferred over the other pole for each of the sixteen MBTI types.

The preferences for each index is independent of preferences for the other three indices, so that the four indices yield sixteen possible combinations called “types,” denoted by the four letters of the preferences”. (p. 2).

The following table shows all sixteen possible type combinations.

Table 1.1: MBTI Types (or Preference Combinations)

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ

Type Preference is used in career counseling, where an individual can find out what fields people who share their personality type generally pursue. According to Martin (1995), there are “patterns in the types of people who tend to choose or to avoid different occupations” (p. ix). For instance, ISTJs are likely to find satisfaction in careers that make use of their depth of concentration (I), their reliance on facts (S), their use of logical analysis (T), and their ability to organize (J). ISTJs often appreciate management, technical or production-oriented careers (Martin, p. 19).

On the other side of the continuum, ENFPs are attracted to careers that make use of their breadth of interest (E), their grasp of possibilities (N), their warmth and sympathy (F), and their adaptability (P). ENFPs are likely to be attracted to teaching, counseling, sales, or other people-oriented professions (Martin, p. 46). Type Tables have been compiled on a large number of specific careers, and are used in career counseling. By assessing one's type, and understanding what kinds of occupations are satisfying to other people who share that type, one might learn about career options not previously considered.

The literature on personality in conflict work began at least forty years ago, although the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) did not show up in the discussion, specifically, until much later. In 1970, Terhune explored the connection between personality, cooperation and conflict. He reviewed the results of thirty (30) studies done in the 1960's that used a number of different personality measures to predict conflict behavior. Although he found the research to be "plagued by ambiguous results," he also noted that "if we are to develop a comprehensive theory of cooperation and conflict, it is necessary that personality variables be included" (p.194).

Some of the personality variables that were identified in the thirty studies Terhune (1970) reviewed are the MMPI dominance scale, the Alport ascendance-submission scale, the Kogan-Wallach risk-taking propensity, and the Gough ACL needs for aggression, autonomy, abasement, and deference. A few personality themes emerged from the review, and were suggested for further study. These themes were:

motives, and especially how they related to power, affiliation and achievement; cognitive structures, especially abstractness-concreteness; and trust, especially trust vs. suspicion. Terhune also suggested a closer look at risk-taking as a personality variable in whether one would voluntarily enter a more cooperative or competitive situation. He also indicated that future studies could be improved by having greater diversity, more complex situations, attention to incentives, and improved measures of personality variables (and multi-dimensional measures) (Terhune, 1970).

Around the same time, or slightly prior to Terhune's research, Blake and Mouton (1964) proposed a way of looking at interpersonal conflict that included five conflict-handling modes: problem-solving, smoothing, forcing, withdrawing and sharing. Kilmann & Thomas later adapted these in 1977. Table 2 shows their adapted instrument. The five modes are charted on a graph, with "concern for self" on one dimension and "concern for the other" on the other dimension. They renamed the five modes as accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, competing and compromising. These names, and the MODE instrument, are commonly used today in the study of conflict behavior.

Table 2.1: The Thomas-Kilmann MODE Instrument, 1977: Relationships of the five conflict-handling modes to Assertiveness and Cooperativeness dimensions.

		Cooperativeness	
		LOW	HIGH
Assertiveness	HIGH	COMPETITION	COLLABORATION
		COMPROMISE	
LOW		AVOIDANCE	ACCOMMODATION

In this model, “avoidance” is represented as low concern for one’s self and low concern for the other; “competition” represents high concern for self and low concern for the other, and “collaboration” represents both high concern for self and high concern for the other. Although persons may generally favor one mode, they are not limited to one in all interpersonal conflicts. This is still a useful tool for thinking about conflict, because it provides a constructive way of conceptualizing different approaches. Rahim (1983) studied the empirical validity of the five styles, which were also tested against measures of role status and gender. His factor analysis found them to be valid constructs and the MODE a useful tool for studying conflict.

Several research studies in the late 1960s and early 1970s explored the five conflict-handling modes, and how they related to social and organizational situations.

However, Kilmann and Thomas observed that most prior research studies had generally ignored “the deeper psychological basis of these conflict-handling modes” (Kilmann & Thomas, 1975). Their study was one of the first that specifically linked Jungian personality type (on which the MBTI is based), to conflict. They justify this connection in this way:

In essence the Jungian dimensions describe the different ways that individuals observe (perceive), assess (judge), and enact (introversion, extroversion) some behavioral choice. This conceptualization is consistent with the “process” models of conflict behavior (Pondy, 1967; Thomas, in press; Walton, 1969) which describes the sequencing of an individual’s perception and assessment of a conflict situation and his subsequent implementation of a conflict strategy or tactic (p. 973).

The results of their exploratory study suggested that the “Jungian functions related to judging (thinking vs. feeling) and the type of enactment (introverted vs. extroverted) are significantly related to an individual’s conflict-handling behavior” (p. 971). They also noted that “collaborating has been identified with confronting disagreements and problem-solving to find solutions” (p. 971). Since confronting disagreements and problem solving are behaviors that mediators are trained in, it would seem that personality elements associated with collaboration might correlate with specific mediator personality type. Their study did not link any particular

personality type to collaboration. They did, however, encourage further research in the area, and hoped that their own study would encourage development of a methodology to test the relationship between conflict mode and personality type more objectively.

Since its introduction fifty years ago, and especially the last twenty years, there has been abundant research using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The preponderance of the research has been in the areas of Management, Education, Counseling (career and psychological), and Team Building (Hammer, 1996). The MBTI has been an effective and reliable tool to understand personality types in these fields, and proves to be a significant aid to career counselors in advising their clients with career choices. The Journal of Psychological Type is filled with over ten years of exploring applications of the MBTI, and there is a growing body of correlational evidence to support its validity and reliability. Strong associations have been observed between career-interest instruments used in career counseling and the MBTI, as well as “dozens of other personality instruments and measures” (Hammer, p.16).

Some personality type research has focused on various elements of dispute resolution, such as *communication style* (Yeakley, 1983), *assertiveness* (Williams, 1992), and *ability to identify others' overt and covert feelings* (Spiegel, 1988). Although these individual elements of handling conflict are explored, a comprehensive look at interpersonal conflict is not evident until the mid-late 1980's. Studies at this time emerged in *conflict-handling intentions* (Chanin & Shneer, 1984) and also in *managerial conflict-handling skills* (McIntyre, 1991; Mills, 1985).

More recent research suggests specific relationships between conflict-handling behavior and the MBTI. Percival, Smitheram & Kelly (1992) examined three studies which explored the correlation between the four scales of the MBTI and the MODE instrument of conflict behavior (Chanin & Schneer, 1984; Kilmann & Thomas, 1975; Mills, Robey & Smith, 1985). Each of these studies had varying results. Percival et al. noted that the personality characteristics measured by the MODE instrument were not behavioral traits so much as "an ordering of strategic intentions," and suggested the MBTI to be both empirically and theoretically useful in prediction of strategic intentions for conflict resolution. Still, these studies were limited to persons in conflict, and did not include discussion of third party interveners (e.g., mediators).

The results of Percival et al. (1992) regarding the relationship to specific personality modes and specific conflict behaviors were as follows:

- disputants who prefer *Thinking* mode ("T's") are more likely than those who prefer *Feeling* mode ("F's") to compete or compromise
- disputants who prefer *Feeling* mode ("F's") are more likely than those who prefer *Thinking* ("T's") to collaborate or accommodate
- disputants who prefer *Introversion* mode ("I's") are more likely than those who prefer *Extroversion* ("E's") to avoid dealing with conflict altogether.

There were no reported significant correlations in this study between the Sensing-Intuition personality dimension (of interest to the present study) and conflict-handling behavior. However, Percival et al. (1992) provided an excellent discussion

of personality type and conflict-handling, acknowledging the importance of elements such as context in determining conflict-handling intentions, which neither the MBTI nor the MODE take into account. They suggested the need for further studies to include more specific contextual elements of conflict.

Finally, in the early 1990's, researchers began to consider mediator behavior as an independent factor of conflict. Pruitt (1993), in Negotiation in Social Conflict discussed elements such as mediator bias, strategies and tactics of mediators, determinants of mediator behavior, and how these factors affect conflict situations. He stated that mediator behavior is contingent on characteristics of the conflict, on mediator goals, and mediator perceptions. However, although one hundred mediator "tactics" had been identified, Pruitt noted that:

Much of the work on typologies of mediator behavior provides descriptions of mediator behavior but offers little in the way of why mediators do different things in different situations (p. 172).

By asking "why?," Pruitt began to dig deeper into mediator personality and motivations, which are of interest to the current study. He suggested that as mediators expand their use of number of 'mediation tactics,' they "perceive their efforts are more effective" (p. 177). In other words, as they expand their repertoire of tactics, they feel that they actually become more effective. This was an intriguing statement. He attempted neither to answer why this might occur, nor to discuss the accuracy of those perceptions or how to test them further. This apparent gap in information, along

with his statement that “research on mediation is in its infancy” (p. 181), invited further investigation in the “why” kinds of questions of interest to the present study.

The most exciting addition to this literature review was a one-page article titled “The meeting of two worlds: Type and negotiating,” by David Scott (1992). In this article, Scott presented some interesting connections between psychological type and persons negotiating disputes. The article refers to “negotiation” rather than “mediation”. Mediation is a form of negotiation, and the terms can be interchanged for the purposes of understanding this article. His work as a consultant to a group called Effective Negotiating Services (ENS) lead him to speculate about the role personality plays in the way a negotiator diagnoses the needs of the disputants and the style one chooses in facilitating the negotiation. He stated:

ENS has, as one of its unique features, a conceptual framework for the process of negotiating that has interesting implications for those who work with Psychological Type.... It may also be true that those of us who work in the area of Type could enrich our understanding of our interactions with others by becoming more aware of the process of negotiation (p.9).

In his discussion of diagnosing needs of the negotiating parties, Scott (1992) suggested that those needs should be addressed on two levels – the organizational and the personal. He asked the question, “Would it be fair to assume that STs (Sensing Thinkers) would have little difficulty in recognizing the organizational needs while the

NFs (Intuitive Feelers) are more likely to be aware of the personal needs” (p.9)? It seems like a healthy sign for the field that these questions are presented for practical consideration. Scott’s discussion continued with the idea that certain personality styles tend toward using either a competitive or cooperative style in negotiations. It is important for negotiators to stretch their “comfort zone” in these styles, and develop the flexibility to operate in both arenas at different times in the negotiation process. Taking both organizational and personal needs into account is an important element of effective negotiations, and the negotiator must address both.

Several of Scott’s (1992) questions regarding psychological type connect with the current study.

- Will Ns (Intuition) find it easier to identify the common ground and Ss (Sensing) the uncommon ground?
- Will Ps (Perceiving) find it easier to identify and explore the options for a solution and Js (Judging) to lock into agreements?
- Will Ns (Intuition) be more comfortable with Process power (mainly a matter of perceptions) and Ss (Sensing) with Content power (matters of money, information, etc.)?
- Will Ts (Thinking) recognize and use Tactics more readily than Fs (Feeling)?

While Scott presented these questions as speculative reflections, he also suggested they might “offer the potential for a fascinating research project for someone who is that way inclined” (p. 9). This would seem to add some relevance to the current study.

Conflict Goals

As Scott (1992) suggested, it is important to consider both organizational goals and personal goals in resolving conflict. Where the organizational goals are often apparent, objective and factual, the personal goals are often covert, emotional and subjective. Both are important and, although it is often perceived differences that drive the conflict, focusing attention on commonalities can be a powerful beginning to resolution. One thing people in dispute have in common is that they have *similar types of goals* in conflict. Where Scott suggested two kinds of goals (organizational and personal,) Wilmot and Hocker (1998) proposed that all people in conflict pursue four general types of goals: (1) content, (2) relational, (3) identity (facework), and (4) process (p. 58). People are often unaware on a cognitive level of what goals they might want to achieve, and every conflict need not include all four goals. However, some attention to these four goals generally allows the most movement toward satisfactory resolution of the conflict.

There is a progressive movement in the field of mediation referred to as Transformational Mediation. Also known as the “transformational element” of mediation, this philosophical approach supports the idea that a mediator can (and even should) address any and all of these conflict goals whenever the parties indicate a need to address them (Bush & Folger, 1994). The central goals of transformative mediation are to foster empowerment and recognition of the parties in dispute. The “success” of the mediation is not gauged strictly on whether a settlement is reached, but also by what sort of transition, or “shift” takes place in the parties’ understanding of the

situation. Obviously, this kind of evaluation is exceedingly difficult, as this kind of “shift of understanding” would be a largely subjective occurrence.

Most of the literature discussed thus far has been about the behaviors and personalities of disputants in conflict. Although literature on the behaviors and personalities of mediators and other third parties in conflict work began to emerge in the early 1990’s, it continues to be very sparse and difficult to find. This gap in the literature regarding third party practitioners in conflicts was a significant motivation for the current study. It would seem that the gap is largely due to the fact that, as previously mentioned, mediation is a rather new field, struggling to define itself. Mediation research does seem to be in its infancy. Indeed, the role of the mediator, training requirements, ethical obligations, and the criteria by which mediation outcomes are assessed are all still hotly debated by practitioners in Oregon and around the nation (Imperati, 1996; Menkel-Meadow, 1993a; Oregon Dispute Resolution Commission, 1996; Riskin, 1994). The final draft of the Joint Code of Ethics for Mediators, which attempted to answer some of those questions, was not produced until as recently as 1994. It’s content, however, as well as general legal and ethical considerations for mediators, is still the topic of much debate by the mediation community.

Currently, there does not yet appear to be an efficient forum for discourse between practitioners and researchers. The first issue of The Journal of Alternative Dispute Resolution in Employment (June 1999) was a call to change that discontinuity. McAdoo (1999), in her article titled, “Transformative mediation and its

role in changing corporate culture,” offered a forum by which to “highlight projects or practices that contribute to our knowledge about the use of mediation in the employment field” (p.12). Her goal was to bridge the divide between practitioners and researchers, making the field of conflict resolution more informed and healthy.

Different mediators have different styles, approaches and levels of comfort in uncovering the goals of the disputant. Although this seems an obvious statement, it is a pertinent consideration to the present study. Are mediators less likely to explore goals that they are uncomfortable or less familiar with? Wilmot & Hocker (1998) suggested that disputants, themselves, are often initially unaware of their own goals, and especially so in emotionally charged situations. With this in mind, it is unrealistic to assume that all mediators (who are also human) would be able to recognize and address all types of goals if the disputants themselves cannot. According to personality type theory, the mediator's personality type would have an impact on how she or he views the disputants' conflict and, therefore, what goals they are more likely to be comfortably addressed. For instance, recall Scott's question; “do ST types focus more comfortably on content goals, and NF types on relational goals?” If the answer to this question is “yes,” what factors determine the level to which a mediator will challenge him/herself into uncomfortable territory? Also, is the mediator driven by any goals? Although it is very dangerous territory to even suggest that mediators have goals, it is a question that begs to be asked. Although they are trained – and expected to be – inhumanly neutral, they are still human. What factors (if any) shape

mediators' goals? Do they pursue settlement? Fairness? Rationality? Equality?

How do those elements play out in the disputants' process?

The reader is reminded here that although the mediator guides the process, s/he does not "control" the mediation. It is currently considered common practice that the disputants are the ones who decide what is important and what is not. According to the Joint Code of Ethics for Mediators, self-determination of the parties is the fundamental principle of mediation, and mediators should advance this principle in their conduct (SPIDR/AAA/ABA Standards of Mediation Practice, Standard 1). Putnam (1994) suggested that "the individual is the driving force of the negotiation." Although the disputants are to decide what goals are to be addressed, and the mediator is expected to remain "neutral," the question of mediators' goals is certainly a complicated question, but one worth considering.

In his book, The Mediation Process, Moore (1996) outlined a strategy to help define disputants' issues and interests. He defined two aspects of mediation: problem-solving and relationship-defining. These are similar to Scott's organizational and personal needs, or Wilmot & Hocker (1998) content and relational goals. Moore also suggested that the issues and interests discussed in a dispute might be "substantive, procedural, or psychological in nature" (p. 213). This model is similar to the content, process and relational goals in Wilmot & Hocker's scheme, but is a slightly different way of looking at the origin of the issues.

Each of these models provides a different way of viewing conflict and strategies. Each suggests the necessity for the mediator to be capable of some subtlety

in bringing the different types of issues and interests to the surface. In order to develop this subtlety, a mediator might seek further to expand her/his repertoire of “mediator tactics” as discussed by Percival (1992). They might also choose to explore their own personality type to expand awareness of how they, themselves operate in the world. Exploration of Jung’s “shadow” theory could be a way to explore these kinds of questions. In his article, “Jung’s Shadow Concept and the MBTI,” Price (1994) discussed the need for self-exploration of one’s “inferior function,” which is under-emphasized in MBTI research (which concentrates on the dominant functions). The inferior function is the part of a person’s personality that is least developed or most hidden, and it plays an important role in Jung’s theory of personality. Seeking to understand and develop the inferior function can lead to personal growth and “bringing the personality into balance” (p.12). According to theory,

We can often find pieces of our shadow in the bad qualities and motivations that we attribute to others. They can be, and often are, qualities and impulses repressed within ourselves because we would rather not have them. (p. 10)

Exploring the qualities of our own shadow can lead to understanding of our selves and others, as well as how we allow others to “trigger” responses in us. This could certainly have implications for mediators as they seek to embody “neutrality” in their work.

Literature Summary

As previously noted, there is a growing interest, but very little research regarding perceptions of conflict by third-party facilitators. Studies in personality type touch vaguely on the subject of conflict-handling behaviors and very little on conflict workers (e.g., mediators). Studies in conflict consider personality type of disputants, but the personality type of mediators continues to be largely unexplored.

Conflict Literature indicates that it is important to consider both organizational and personal needs when resolving conflict. Wilmot & Hocker (1998) suggested that people pursue four general types of goals when in conflict: content, relational, identity and process. Scott (1992) suggested that mediator personality type may affect the way they recognize disputants' needs, and Pruitt (1993) found that mediators who had a larger repertoire of mediator tactics felt they were more effective in resolving conflicts.

A very recent publication (Journal of Alternative Dispute Resolution in Employment, 1999) implied that a forum does not yet exist for discourse between conflict resolution practitioners and researchers. By joining in study with this specific group of workplace practitioners, the present study attempts to broaden the understanding of the mediation experience, and to help bridge the gap between practitioners and researchers by making a contribution to the growing body of literature.

CHAPTER III: METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to examine mediator perceptions of disputants' conflicts, and how personality type and experience influence those perceptions. The research had a qualitative approach to data collection, with a mixed quantitative-qualitative data analysis.

Subjects

The subjects were thirty-six (36) adults who were part of an inter-agency consortium of workplace mediators (*Shared Neutrals*) in Oregon and Washington in the autumn of 1999. This group was a sample of convenience, known to the author from her practicum work with them in 1998. There were 25 females and 11 males in the sample. Subjects' experience ranged from .5 – 12 years (mean = 5.1 years), and 0 – 350 (mean = 59.5) mediations performed. Total number of mediations was reported, as opposed to only workplace, or only mediations performed for *Shared Neutrals*. Each subject had previously received at least the required 40+ hours of mediation training, although not necessarily from the same trainer. Geographically, the subjects were employed in Baker City, Blue River, Corvallis, Eugene, Gresham, Gold Beach, LaGrande, Medford, Portland, Sandy and Wilsonville, Oregon, and Bremerton, Camas, Okanogan, Seattle, Spokane and Vancouver, Washington. They were moderately representative of mediators who mediate workplace conflicts in Oregon and Washington.

Portland State University's Human Subjects Committee authorized the study in August 1999. The *Shared Neutrals* Board of Directors approved the study and encouraged participation prior to study's onset. However, involvement was confidential and voluntary. The subjects were eliminated if they failed to return the survey. The completion rate was 86%, which meant that 31 subjects out of the group of 36 chose to participate. Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 show means and standard deviation for each of the variables in the 31 observations.

Table 3.1: Myers-Briggs Score Means

	Introvert	Extrovert	Sensing	Intuition	Thinking	Feeling	Judging	Perceiving
Number	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31
Mean	11.2	9.8	5.5	20.5	8.5	15.41	10.5	11.5
Standard Deviation	5.8	5.8	5.1	5.1	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.3
Standard Error	1.0	1.0	.9	.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Table 3.2: Conflict Scenario Questionnaire (CSQ) Score Means

	C1	R1	I1	C2	R2	I2	I3	C3	R3	C4	R4	I4
Number	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31
Mean	36.9	38.1	25.0	25.1	41.8	32.6	23.9	21.3	54.5	20.7	52.4	26.6
Std.Dev	13.8	15.0	8.6	17.4	20.1	17.5	17.5	15.8	21.6	10.1	17.9	12.9
Std.Err.	2.5	2.7	1.5	3.1	3.6	3.1	3.1	2.8	3.9	1.8	3.2	2.3

Table 3.3: Mediator Experience in Years and Number of Mediations, and Gender Means

	Year	Mediations	Gender (M=1, F=2)
Number	31	31	31
Mean	5.1	59.5	1.6
Std. Deviation	3.4	88.7	.5
Std. Error	.6	15.6	8.7 E-02

Questionnaires/Scoring

Two questionnaires were used in this study: the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (form M)®, and an author-developed questionnaire describing four workplace conflict scenarios, called Conflict Scenario Questionnaire (CSQ). Both are described in detail below.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

The subjects were given a 93-item, self-scorable MBTI, form M. They were asked not to score it for accuracy purposes, and to reduce possible influence of their answers on the Conflict Scenario Questionnaire (CSQ). The instrument is designed to provide information about preferences in how a person typically focuses one's attention (Extrovert-Introvert), how one takes in information and finds out about things (Sensing-Intuition), how one makes decisions (Thinking-Feeling), and how one orients to the outer world (Judging-Perceiving.) Out of the 93 total items, the breakdown for each set of characteristics is:

Extrovert-Introvert (E-I) = 21

Sensing-Intuition (S-N) = 26

Thinking-Feeling (T-F) = 24

Judging-Perceiving (J-P) = 22

Total = 93

Scores were tabulated by counting the total answers in each of the eight type columns (4 dichotomous sets). A score of half or greater for one mode in each set of characteristics indicated the subject's preference for that mode, and rules established

by the producers of the MBTI determined how to score a “tie”. An additional, self-evaluative element was available to the subject with this instrument. Its purpose is to determine the weight of the preference: slight, moderate, clear or very clear preference. This element was not used for the purposes of the current study because it is intended for self-evaluation and does not affect the raw score.

At the time of printing this study, copyright approval had not been granted, so examples of MBTI questions could not be provided. However, the MBTI asks two general types of questions: “Do you prefer...A or B?” and “Which word in each pair appeals to you more?” The answers to these questions fall into one of the four sets of characteristics on the scoring sheet. The subjects marked their answers, and their total scores were tabulated for each mode (or characteristic).

The questions on the MBTI are dichotomous (either/or), and each answer falls into one of the four (2-dimension) sets of personality characteristics. Statistically, this can appear problematic, as each set of characteristics is treated as two sides of a continuum, but do not have a “proven” dichotomous relationship between characteristics in the set (as a black/white dichotomous relationship would). If the relationship was truly dichotomous, Thinking would be the “opposite” of Feeling, and they would be exclusive of each other. In reality, this kind of relationship does not exist, as an individual can have both characteristics at the same time, but to varying degrees. In actuality, the element being measured as dichotomous is preference for a particular characteristic. The subject’s score can only show a preference for one

characteristic in each set (with a pre-determined rule for scoring a tie). Therefore, the elements that appear to be statistically problematic are not functionally problematic.

Another potentially problematic element of the MBTI is that, as discussed in Chapter I, the MBTI might not be considered a statistically "reliable" measure because its measurements do not always remain stable over time. Changes in individuals' scores have been observed in as little as five weeks and over a number of years. In fact, some psychometrists suggest that the MBTI classifies, rather than measures, typology. Running a quantitative analysis of these scores implies incorrectly that they are quantifiable measures. However, the validity of the MBTI in other areas shows it to be one of the more accurate personality instruments available, and useful as such.

Studies of reliability and validity of the MBTI show significant correlation between scores on the MBTI and other assessment tools measuring similar traits. Research also documents split-half reliabilities consistent with those of other personality instruments, many of which have longer scales than the MBTI (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, pp. 164-223). Based on this research, the MBTI is considered to be accurate enough in reflecting personality type preferences for the requirements of the present research.

Another consideration in using this questionnaire as a research tool is that the distributors of the MBTI (Consulting Psychologists Press) indicate that a subject's own interpretation is much more accurate than just the raw scores. Due to logistical concerns, however, this research considered only the raw scores as data. In a typical

(workshop) situation, the individual taking the MBTI would be provided with information about each type and, through self-reflection and discussion, gauge the accuracy of each indicated character preference. This element of the MBTI was not used for the purposes of this study for three reasons: 1) it would have required further training on the researcher's part; 2) it might have reduced objectivity of both participants and researcher; and 3) it would have posed logistical difficulties given the widespread geographical distribution of the subjects. However, materials were provided to the subjects for further self-analysis, should they desire it.

Conflict Scenario Questionnaire

A second survey instrument was developed to obtain data about the subjects' perspectives of disputant goals in workplace mediation. This four-page, author developed instrument describes four workplace scenarios (See Appendix C). After each scenario, three disputant goals are described (one *relational*, one *identity* and one *content* goal per scenario). The fourth goal proposed by Wilmot & Hocker is *process*. This is purposefully left out of the instrument because the answer to "what communication process will be used?" is already answered. The disputants chose third-party intervention (mediation) as the process by which to handle the conflict.

The subjects were asked to distribute 100 points among the three goals in each scenario, and then to choose one goal they thought was primary to resolution. A space was provided for the subjects to answer why they thought it was primary. The open-ended question was intended to assist the researcher in understanding the answer more

clearly, and to catch potential misunderstandings about the wording of the instrument or subtleties that might arise for further discussion.

The Conflict Scenario Questionnaire was pre-tested on five persons: two workplace mediators, one a victim-offender and family mediator and two trainers in workplace conflict resolution. Corrections were made based on their recommendations, such as making the identity and relational goals much more distinct and separate. The pre-testers agreed that the scenarios were valid (likely to happen in real life), that the end questions reflected the three different goals, and the instructions to the research subjects were clear.

One pre-tester suggested that the scenarios were somewhat slanted toward the relational, but did not suggest correcting for it. While this relational "slant" could be seen as a flaw, it could also be considered a theoretical orientation. As discussed in Chapter I, Wilmot & Hocker (1998) suggested that relational goals are at the heart of all conflict interactions. The conflict scenarios were created with this in mind, and the relational orientation accepted as a realistic theoretical orientation.

In creating this questionnaire, consideration was given to how many scenarios to use. A larger number would have been more likely to produce statistically significant results, where scores could be totaled and averaged across scenarios, providing a stronger evaluative base. However, increased number of scenarios would also increase the research subjects' completion time, which might reduce the return rate. In the end, four scenarios were used in order to provide a range of specific contextual situations. Although a smaller number of scenarios might have been more

convenient for the research subjects, it was decided that more information across multiple contexts would provide a richer data set.

Demographic data specific to the subjects' experience were also requested on the front page of the Conflict Scenario Questionnaire. The subjects were asked how long they had been mediating (total experience, not just with *Shared Neutrals*), and estimated number of mediations they had solo- or co-mediated.

Data Collection

The questionnaire packets contained a cover letter with instructions (Appendix A), study consent form (Appendix B), the Conflict Scenario Questionnaire (Appendix C), MBTI form M (Appendix D) and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. These were sent out to each of the 36 subjects. Follow-up completion reminders were sent via e-mail 5 days and 2 weeks later. A few subjects had questions, which were addressed. (For example, one subject wanted to know if they should report total number of mediations they had performed, or just workplace mediations for *Shared Neutrals*). In total, four packets were re-sent because they had not been received, or had been lost.

As the questionnaires were returned, the MBTI's were scored and the data from both instruments entered into a data set for statistical analysis. Scores and reference materials for further (MBTI) self-study were then returned to the subjects.

Statistical Analysis

The statistical design of the study was ordinal-level comparison of Conflict Scenario Questionnaire (CSQ) scores with other variables such as characteristic preferences from the MBTI, level of experience, and gender. In ordinal level measurement, each category under consideration may be ranked according to some criterion. "The characteristic of ordering is the sole mathematical property of this level, and the use of numeric values as symbols for category names does not imply that any other properties of the real number system can be used to summarize relationships of an ordinal-level variable" (Nie, 1975, p. 5). The CSQ was specifically designed in order to compare Intuition scores from the MBTI with the Relational scores from the CSQ. All the scores (or categories) from both of these instruments have a unique position relative to the other categories and, therefore, can be considered as ordinal-level variables. Within this format multiple comparisons are possible with no judgement being made about worth or value of each variable.

Another part of the study design was narrative analysis, a qualitative approach based on Grounded Theory. In Grounded Theory, a theory is developed from observing certain phenomenon. Hypothesis-based theory, by contrast, tests a tentatively-made hypothesis which is formed prior to actual observation. The secondary portion of the Conflict Scenario Questionnaire was designed for the purpose of capturing observations from the research subjects regarding their perceptions of disputant goals. It was thought that this analysis would provide more information and insight about the subtlety of thought behind the answers. The questions of interest in

this study were about how decisions are made, what the research subjects perceive as important in each scenario and why. The questionnaire allowed data more pertinent to the “why” aspect of these questions.

Treatment of the Data/Statistical Analysis

The independent variables used in the study were MBTI (type) characteristic preferences, as measured by four dichotomous sets of characteristics and level of mediation experience, as measured both by number of years of practice and number of mediations performed. Gender was later added as a potentially interesting demographic variable. The dependent variables were the twelve scores from the Conflict Scenario Questionnaire. The sum of the four relational scores was also used as a dependent variable in the analysis of research question one.

The initial design for statistical analysis of Research Questions 1 and 2 was a Pearson’s Correlation (chi-square analysis). Again, the dependent variables of the CSQ scores were compared individually with each of the independent variables to determine any significant correlations. The alpha level, the probability level needed for verification of the hypothesis, was set at a standard .05. Along with this chi-square analysis, the subjects’ answers from the CSQ were analyzed qualitatively for observations that could add to the discussion about their perceptions of disputants’ conflict goals.

The initial design for Research Question 3 was a contingency table that identified the type preference of each subject, and whether the distribution was statistically significant. This design did not seem to allow for characteristic

combinations that became evident. Observing the data in a simple distribution table provided different information. This analysis is justified by a discussion on validity previously referenced (Myers & McCauley, 1985), where “type tables themselves provide evidence for construct validity” (p.176). Both analyses are provided in chapter 4.

Limitations

A study of this nature does have some limitations. Because the sample was small and not random, some results may not attain statistical significance because larger or more diverse sample size would be needed. As with any questionnaire, the data collected by both of the research instruments reflects self-report data and, as such, runs the risk of misinterpretation. It is possible that the typology of the author’s personality affected the accuracy or usefulness of the CSQ. The author, whose MBTI type is currently ENTJ, strongly favors Intuition. According to type theory, this would support a relational orientation. The CSQ, therefore, might have been biased toward relational elements of the conflict scenarios presented. However, despite these limitations, the analysis provided some interesting results. These will be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between mediators' perspectives of conflict goals and their personality type and level of experience. This chapter presents the results of the data analysis. The findings will be presented for each of the three research questions and associated variables discussed in the previous chapter. A portion of the raw data collected is reproduced in this chapter to facilitate discussion of the data analysis.

Research Question 1 Results

The first question analyzed was, "Do mediators who score half or greater on the Intuition dimension of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator put more emphasis on relationship goals in disputants' conflicts?" For analysis purposes, the value of "Intuition" was represented as "proportion n ($n/n+s$)," where $n+s$ was the total score possible for the Sensing-Intuition character set, and preference for Intuition was represented numerically from 0-1. Using a Pearson's chi-square, this value was correlated with each of the Relational "r" scores from the CSQ. Of the four correlational analyses, only one statistically significant relationship resulted when using an alpha level of .05 or smaller. A higher Intuition score (n) correlated to a higher Relational score (r) in scenario three only, with a Pearson Correlation of .438, and significance level of .014. In other words, the higher the Intuition score, the higher the Relational score was in scenario three. Table 4.1 shows the results of this

comparison, where “N” is Intuition score, and r1-4 are the relational scores in each of the four scenarios.

Table 4.1: Correlation of Intuition score with CSQ Relational scores in each scenario

Intuition	r1	r2	r3	r4
Pearson Correlation	.058	.021	.438	-.018
Significance(2-tailed)	.757	.910	.014	.923
Number	31	31	31	31

Figure 1 represents the distribution of these scores, with Intuition score on the Y axis and Relational score of CSQ scenario 3 (r3) on the X axis.

Figure 1: Correlation of MBTI “Intuition” score and CSQ Relational score in Scenario 3

Next, Intuition score (PPN) was compared with the average Relational score across all four CSQ scenarios (SUMR). This analysis would potentially capture a more meaningful and less random result than looking at single scores. (Recall, this was the purpose behind using four scenarios instead of a smaller number.) However, no statistically significant relationships emerged from this analysis. Table 4.2 shows the results of this comparison, and Figure 2 is the resulting graph, with Intuition score on the Y axis and the average Relational score across all four scenarios on the X axis.

Table 4.2: Comparison of 8 Personality Characteristics with CSQ Total Relational Score

Personality Characteristic		Correlation with SUMR
Intuition	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.204 .271
Sensing	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.204 .271
Extroversion	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.036 .848
Introversion	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.036 .848
Thinking	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.174 .350
Feeling	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.174 .350
Judging	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.046 .805
Perceiving	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.406 .805

Figure 2 – Comparison of Intuition score with CSQ Total Relational Score

Other than the relationship between Intuition score and Relational score in scenario three, no other statistically significant results emerged from a comparison of any of the eight personality variables with any of the dependent variables (CSQ scores). Table 4.3 represents the correlational analysis of these variables.

Table 4.3: Correlation of all dependent variables (CSQ scores) with the independent variables of each of the 8 MBTI dimensions.

	r1	r2	r3	r4	i1	i2	i3	i4	c1	c2	c3	c4
N	.058 .757	.021 .910	.438 .014	-.018 .923	-.142 .447	.165 .374	-.218 .239	.067 .721	.025 .894	-.173 .353	-.325 .075	-.017 .928
S	-.058 .757	-.021 .910	-.438 .014	.018 .923	.142 .447	-.165 .374	.218 .239	-.067 .721	-.025 .894	.173 .353	.325 .075	.017 .928
E	.330 .070	.160 .391	-.268 .145	-.031 .869	-.160 .389	-.204 .272	.111 .552	.189 .309	-.260 .157	-.027 .885	.250 .176	-.187 .315
I	-.330 .070	-.160 .391	.268 .145	.031 .869	.160 .389	.204 .272	-.111 .552	-.189 .309	.260 .157	.027 .885	-.250 .176	.187 .315
T	-.082 .659	.011 .954	-.223 .228	-.171 .358	.090 .630	.204 .270	.184 .321	.186 .315	.034 .856	-.231 .212	.099 .598	.038 .838
F	.082 .659	-.011 .954	.223 .228	.171 .358	-.090 .630	-.204 .270	-.184 .321	-.186 .315	-.034 .856	.231 .212	-.099 .598	-.038 .838
J	-.093 .618	.073 .695	.134 .472	-.034 .857	.196 .291	-.125 .504	-.165 .375	.121 .518	-.020 .915	.022 .908	.013 .943	-.097 .603
P	.093 .618	-.073 .695	-.134 .472	.034 .857	-.196 .291	.125 .504	.165 .375	-.121 .518	.020 .915	-.022 .908	-.013 .943	.097 .603

The above statistical analyses of Research Question One proved to be inconclusive, with only one statistically significant relationship. The apparent relationship between CSQ r3 and Intuition could be considered in another way. That is, by taking another look at scenario three, how it might differ from the other scenarios, and what reasoning the subjects' gave for their scoring.

Scenario three depicts a dispute between two female division managers of equal status with differing opinions over a photograph in one of their offices. The photograph is of the manager's son in his football uniform, showing the team mascot: a cartoon character American Indian in war paint, with crazed features and a huge tomahawk. This is the only scenario with a clear cross-cultural content. The design of the CSQ allowed subjects to provide information about why they chose their answers. A few subjects made a comment on scenario three that cross-cultural issues are often difficult conflicts to handle. One subject, who scored 60 on "identity" in scenario

three (i3=60) suggested, "this is a cross-cultural problem and may not lend itself to a full airing of feelings, but does need more discussion of why each person feels so strongly." The comment reflects the idea that when coming from different backgrounds, it may be necessary to explore the issues more deeply in order to find an understanding of differing perspectives. The cross-cultural component in this question could be the reason for the correlation between Intuition and Relational scores in this particular scenario, and not on others. Someone who naturally looks at the "big picture" might tend to look beyond the photograph/content part of the dispute, and focus more on the relational aspect.

Interestingly enough, the subject who suggested the importance of discussing why each person feels strongly showed only a slight preference for Intuition on the MBTI (N=15). One subject who strongly favored Intuition (N=26, and r3=50) stated, "Perception is reality. Each needs to understand the other's reality." This statement implies that the content issue is almost without meaning, compared to the personal understanding of the other. In contrast, another subject who only showed a slight preference for Intuition (N=15), but who scored the Content goal high (c3=80) suggested that the picture may constitute a hostile work environment, and that "other issues are somewhat extraneous." As one can see, the subjects' answers varied greatly. Where both statistical and qualitative analyses provide minimal correlations between Intuition and Relational scores, the latter explores the subtleties of mediator perspective in assessing conflict goals.

A few themes emerged from the answers to scenario three. The first theme, and the one most commonly named, was that dealing with *relational* goals was a good first step, and would likely lead to more understanding of other issues. The second theme was that the *relationship* choice on the questionnaire was considered the most inclusive of the other issues and was chosen because of its “encompassing” nature. The third theme was that focus on *identity* goals would likely lead to solution of the other goals (that it was the “key” to moving forward”). In a true grounded theory model, these different themes could be coded, and a new study formulated to explore what other variables might influence the differences.

Research Question 2 Results

The next question analyzed was: “Do people who have mediated more disputes, or who have been mediators longer score differently than those with less experience?” In this analysis, the variables NUM (number of mediations), YR (years of experience) and G (gender) were compared with all of the CSQ scores (r1-4, i1-4 and c1-4).

Table 4.4: Correlation of Mediator Experience and Gender with CSQ Scores

	R1	R2	R3	R4	I1	I2	I3	I4	C1	C2	C3	C4
NUM	-.016 .932	-.282 .125	.171 .357	-.175 .347	.003 .988	.438 .014	-.250 .176	.002 .993	.016 .933	-.175 .347	.052 .781	.322 .077
YR	.211 .255	.079 .673	.123 .508	.092 .622	-.263 .152	.234 .205	-.122 .514	-.245 .184	-.067 .722	-.375 .038	-.033 .859	.101 .589
G	.336 .065	.015 .935	-.033 .861	.005 .979	-.120 .520	-.104 .577	.167 .370	-.040 .829	-.292 .111	.106 .572	-.112 .549	.019 .919

Analysis by Pearson Correlation resulted in two relationships of statistical significance, when using an alpha level of .05 or smaller. There was a positive and significant correlation between the variable NUM (number of mediations) and the Identity score in scenario two (i2). In other words, The higher the number of mediations, the higher the identity score was in scenario two. Secondly, there was a negative and significant correlation between the variable YR (experience level in years) and the Content score in scenario two (c2). In other words, the more experience a mediator had, the less weight they put on the content goal in scenario two.

The fact that the variables NUM and YR had different signs (column R2 in Table 4.4) lead to exploration of a scatter plot of those two variables. The scatter plot (Figure 3) showed that number of mediations and number of years as a mediator did not have a clear correlation, as one might assume.

Figure 3: Comparison of Years of Experience with Total Mediations

A number of mediators with a lot of years in the business did not have a proportionately large number of mediations. This could be explained in part by the fact that people are only recently becoming educated about mediation as a forum for resolving disputes. Someone who has been in the business for fifteen years has very likely spent a large part of that time educating people, and a potentially smaller amount of time actually mediating cases. Also, for this particular sub-group of mediators, there is great variation in the number of times one is called to mediate. For instance, those in metropolitan areas are somewhat more likely to be called than those

in remote areas. The non-correlation of these two experience variables could explain why the results of Table 4.4 did not have a clear tendency.

The near-significant result of the variable Gender (column R1 in Table 4.4) indicated that gender may be a factor when there is a gender-based conflict, as in scenario one, where a female employee and male manager have differing perspectives.

The results of this analysis appear to affirm the research question that, in CSQ scenario two only, mediator experience does influence their perspective of the disputants' goals. Specifically, number of mediations has a positive correlation to Identity score in scenario two, and number of years as mediator has a negative correlation to Content score in scenario two. Again, it seemed appropriate to explore why scenario two may have been scored differently by the research subjects. To explore this, the subjects' written responses were reviewed.

Scenario two depicts a workplace conflict between two people of undetermined status who have differing personal views of a weekly social event that they had both been attending, and that one of them has stopped coming to. It is somewhat different than the other scenarios in that one of the disputants has a psychiatric condition affecting their actions. The sensitive nature of the psychiatric condition (depression) may have been influential in the way subjects scored this scenario differently than they scored other scenarios.

The subjects' written responses to the CSQ question were examined. Their answers revealed interesting differences. One of the two subjects who had a high Content score ($c2=80$) for this scenario suggested that, "the only condition here is

mutual respect to do the job they're hired to do...the core focus of relationship is the work project." Another subject who rated Content high ($c2=70$) suggested the work project to be a starting place, and that in developing a plan for accomplishing that task, they might be able to "address the more personal aspects of the relationship." Both of these answers show respect for the disputants' privacy and are very focused on finding a way to get the job done.

In contrast, one subject with a high Identity score ($i2=70$) indicated that "if Robbi understands Pat feels rejected and Pat understands Robbi needs a certain amount of privacy, the other issues should be easier to resolve." This statement, though still respectful of the disputants, shows a marked philosophical difference to the subject who suggested that the only condition is respect to do the job they're hired to do. The subject who put emphasis on the identity goal suggested that the parties were unlikely to begin work on the content goal until the emotional/identity goals had been addressed. This is reflected by another subjects' comments that, "emotions are at the root of this".

Interestingly, the latter also said, "and they're both women." For this research subject, the gender of the individuals may have made a difference in how the mediator handled the case. The question arises; was it the mediator's perception that the issue was emotion-based because the disputants were women, or because they were women they were more likely to be comfortable talking about emotions than men? Although there is not enough data to answer this question in the current study, it might be interesting to explore in future studies. The present study did not find mediators'

gender to be a significant influence in their perceptions of disputant goals. Is the gender of the disputant an influence?

One subject with a high Relational score in scenario two ($r^2=75$) brought up an excellent point. If the disputants were coming to mediation voluntarily, the relational aspect would be critical, whereas if they were being forced by their employer to mediate, focus should stay on the content aspect. This is important to note, because it reflects the importance of considering *context* when looking at conflict situations. Percival (1992), discussed in Chapter II, noted the need for future studies to include more specific contextual elements of conflict. In workplace mediation, some contextual elements to consider might be: history, length of relationship or work environment. Mediators' awareness of these kinds of subtleties can often have significant effect on the outcome of a mediation.

Although no conclusions can be drawn from this comparison, a qualitative comparative analysis based on the subjects' "why" answers is interesting and thought-provoking. It provides another way to consider the question of mediators' individual differences, and what they might bring to the table as a third party. A future study might include an additional analysis of categorizing and coding the subjects' written responses and comparing them with other variables. This analysis could provide interesting results

Research Question 3 Results

The next analysis was on Research Question 3: "Does the data indicate an overall type preference (and/or subtype preference) for this group of mediators?" A

chi-square analysis was run initially to observe any relationship between the four sets of MBTI dimensions (I-E, S-N, T-F, J-P). No significant relationship emerged from this analysis, which showed that each of the dimensions is independent of each of the other. This could provide a tiny piece of validity to the MBTI, because each dimension stands clearly separate. In other words, the independent variables (or personality characteristics) are independent of each other. If a significant relationship had emerged among any of the four sets, validity would have been in question. The clarity of each dimension would be “muddied” by a relationship with any other dimension.

A simple frequency count of this data reveals an interesting distribution pattern. As indicated in Table 4.5, 87.1% of the subjects indicated a preference for Intuition (N). Also, 77.4% indicated a preference for Feeling (F), and 70.9% of the subjects fell to the NF column, meaning that they all share half-or-greater scores in both the Intuition dimension and the Feeling dimension. Forty-two percent (42.0%) of the subjects shared three dimensions (Intuition, Feeling and Perceiving.) Resulting percentages are shown in Table 4.5 for dichotomous preferences as well as pairs of temperments.

Table 4.5: Frequency Count of Subjects' personality type

ISTJ n=1 (3.2%) ■	ISFJ n=1 (3.2%) ■	INFJ N=6 (19.4%) ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	INTJ n=1 (3.2%) ■
ISTP n=0 (0.0%) 0.8	ISFP n=0 (0.0%)	INFP N=6 (19.4%) ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	INTP n=3 (9.7%) ■ ■ ■
ESTP n=0 (0.0%)	ESFP n=1 (3.2%) ■	ENFP N=7 (22.6%) ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■	ENTP n=1 (3.2%) ■
ESTJ n=1 (3.2%) ■	ESFJ n=0 (0.0%)	ENFJ N=3 (9.7%) ■ ■ ■	ENTJ n=0 (0.0%)

Total number of subjects = 31

Dichotymous Preferences

E	n=13	(41.9%)
I	n=18	(58.1%)
S	n=4	(12.9%)
N	n=27	(87.1%)
T	n=7	(22.6%)
F	n=24	(77.4%)
J	n=13	(41.9%)
P	n=18	(58.1%)

Pairs of Temperments

IJ	n=9	(29.0%)
IP	n=9	(29.0%)
EP	n=9	(29.0%)
EJ	n=4	(12.9%)
ST	n=2	(6.5%)
SF	n=2	(6.5%)
NF	n=22	(70.9%)
NT	n=5	(16.1%)
SJ	n=3	(9.7%)
SP	n=1	(3.2%)
NP	n=17	(54.8%)
NJ	n=10	(32.3%)
TJ	n=3	(9.7%)
TP	n=4	(12.9%)
FP	n=14	(45.2%)
FJ	n=10	(32.3%)
IN	n=16	(51.6%)
EN	n=11	(35.5%)
IS	n=2	(6.5%)
ES	n=2	(6.5%)
ET	n=2	(6.5%)
EF	n=11	(35.5%)
IF	n=13	(41.9%)
IT	n=5	(16.1%)

It appears the data would support the significance of this strong Intuition-Feeling distribution, but statistical analysis did not. This non-significance is most likely due to restriction of range of the sample. If one of the independent variables is similar for a majority of the subjects (i.e., favoring Intuition) not enough variation will occur in the responses to provide the possibility of significant results. The samples in this study may be too similar to make a comparison of statistical significance. And yet, the fact remains that almost 71% of the subjects fell into the Intuition-Feeling column.

One way to explore this phenomenon is through the distribution table itself, as discussed by Myers & McCauley (1985) in Chapter III. They suggested that type tables themselves could provide construct validity for the MBTI. For instance, if the type table for a given occupation shows significantly different distribution than was expected by theory, it would indicate some validity for viewing the data in this way. Alternatively, if the distribution for a given occupation showed a similar distribution to that of another occupation, that relationship could be explored. In the present study, the distribution for this group of subjects showed a very similar distribution to that of a group of clinical psychologists, where intuition and feeling predominated (Myers & McCauley, 1985, p. 85).

Another way MBTI practitioners explore type, and which may have some implications for the results in Table 4.5, is through Preference Combinations. According to Myers (1993), exploring combinations and interactions of preferences can lead to a richer understanding of personality than does viewing each preference as

separate. She mentions as an example that, "Intuition combined with Feeling is apt to focus on insights about people problems, whereas Intuition with Thinking is more likely to focus on insights about problems in organizational structure" (p. 26).

Implications of this will be discussed in Chapter V.

Summary

Analysis of data for Research Question 1 revealed only one relationship of statistical significance. Namely, (MBTI) Intuition score was positively correlated to (CSQ) Relational score in scenario three only. A qualitative consideration of the subjects' answers provided some exploration of why they answered differently (the thinking behind the answers,) although no conclusions could be drawn from either analysis. Reasons scenario three might have been viewed differently than the other scenarios was discussed.

Analysis of Research Question Two resulted in two statistically significant relationships. Number of mediations was positively correlated to (CSQ) Identity score in scenario two only, and experience level in years negatively correlated to (CSQ) Content score in scenario two only. Mediator experience appears to be a significant relationship in the scoring of scenario two. Possible reasons for this were examined through subjects' answers, exploring why this scenario might have been viewed differently than the other scenarios. Gender did not have a significant relationship to any of the other variables.

Chi-square analysis of Research Question 3 resulted in no significant relationships among the four sets of MBTI dimensions. A frequency table revealed an

interesting distribution pattern. Eighty-seven point one percent (87.1%) of the subjects preferred Intuition, 71% preferred both Intuition and Feeling, and 42% of the subjects shared three dimensions of Intuition, Feeling and Perceiving. The literature suggests that exploring these “preference combinations” could lead to a richer understanding of personality. Implications of these results are discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V – DISCUSSION & SUMMARY

This chapter presents an evaluation of the research questions, discussion of the strengths and limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, and implications for conflict workers.

Overall Shift of Interest

The original purpose of this study was to determine whether there was a link between mediator Intuition and perception of relational goals in workplace conflict. During the course of the study, however, that particular issue became less important. What emerged was the larger picture of what mediators do and how/why they do it. More particularly, I became fascinated in how Jung's theories, both on their own and as represented by the MBTI, might assist mediators in self-understanding, as well as understanding the nature of conflict. I intend to pursue this area as a result of this research.

Discussion of Research Questions

The first research question asked was, "Do mediators who score half or greater on the Intuition dimension of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator put more emphasis on relationship goals in disputants' conflicts?" Review of the literature suggested that people who prefer Intuition tend to focus on relationship, and the "big picture". The Conflict Scenario Questionnaire was developed to assess mediators' perspectives of different types of disputant goals. It did so with a contextual element, as suggested by Percival, et al. (1992). The results of this study showed a statistically significant

relationship between the variables of Intuition and Relationship goals in only one of four scenarios. Given that the sample was small and the range restricted, achieving even one relationship of statistical significance supports the hypothesis. Possible explanations for the significant result in scenario three were discussed in chapter IV.

The second research question was developed to explore mediator experience as an important variable unrelated to personality type. It asked, "Do people who have been mediators longer, or ones who have mediated more disputes score differently than those who have less experience?" The literature suggested that as mediators expand their use of different "mediator tactics," they perceive themselves to be more effective mediators (Pruitt, 1993.) It seemed likely that the more experience (both in years and number of mediations) that a mediator had, the more one would expand one's use of tactics. Analysis of the data indicated a significant result for two of these experience variables, but in only one scenario out of four. Number of mediations showed a positive correlation to the Identity score in scenario two, and experience level in years negatively correlated to the Content score in scenario two. This result partially supports the hypothesis that mediator experience does play a role in perception, and reasons for this significance in scenario two were explored in chapter IV.

The third question in this study asked, "Does the data indicate an overall type preference (and/or subtype preference) for this group of mediators?" A review of the MBTI literature revealed that there were "patterns in the type of people who tend to choose or to avoid different occupations" (Martin, 1995, p. ix). Martin suggested that

ISTJ's were likely to find satisfying careers that made use of their depth of concentration (I), their reliance on facts (S), their use of logical analysis (T), and their ability to organize (J). Therefore, occupations in management, technical or production-oriented careers were more likely to appeal to ISTJ's (p. 19).

Alternatively, ENFP's were likely to find satisfaction in careers that used their breadth of interest (E), their grasp of possibilities (N), their warmth and sympathy (F), and their adaptability (P). Occupations in sales, teaching, counseling, or other people-oriented careers were more likely to appeal to ENFP's. (p. 46).

Findings of the present research (the frequency count) appeared to support the view that similar types might generally be drawn to similar kinds of work, although the results were not statistically significant. Overall, 87.1% of the subjects favored Intuition, 70.9% shared two characteristics (Intuition and Feeling), and 42% shared three characteristics (Intuition, Feeling and Perception.) Given the small sample size, this tight grouping in one column of the table (the Intuition-Feeling column) is noteworthy. It is an unlikely distribution for a general population, although falls into similar distribution patterns to clinical psychologists and psychological service professionals (Myers & McCauley, 1985, pp.74-85). One could draw a rudimentary conclusion from this comparison that persons with personality types that find psychological service professions rewarding might also be the types that would find workplace mediation rewarding.

There was an unexpected result from this research. The restriction of range of the sample limited results of the data for all of the research questions. Only about

10% of the subjects did not favor Intuition, which statistically limited the significance of the results. If one of the independent variables is similar for a majority of the subjects (in this case, favoring Intuition) not enough variation will occur in the responses to provide the possibility of significant results. The samples in this study may have been too similar to make a comparison of statistical significance. Despite this, however, there were a few noteworthy relationships. Asking the same questions with a population of mediators who specialize in different areas, and who have different kinds of training might provide very different results than this sample did. This study's exploration of the relationships that did occur, as well as how the restriction of range defined *Shared Neutrals* as a group has added to the growing body of literature about mediators and the mediation experience.

Strengths and Limitations

This study has both strengths and weaknesses. The 86% completion rate by the research subjects was a definite strength. Because of this, some significant results even though the sample was small. Another strength is that all of the questionnaires were scored by the investigator. Doing so limited errors as well as reduced the probability that the subject would model his/her answer on expectations of investigator's desired outcome. The scenarios in the CSQ were well thought-out, and were pre-tested to confirm that they reflected circumstances that mediators were actually likely to encounter. This instrument provided a broader context than some other more generic instrument, such as the Thomas-Killmann MODE instrument, might have provided. Another strength of the CSQ is the comment section at the end

of each scenario. This section allowed a deeper understanding and analysis of the data than simple statistical analysis. However, collecting data through interviews and open-ended questions might have provided more insight about the personal values which influence decisions. For instance, responses to scenario 3 might have been affected more by subjects' personal values than by their mediation training or personality type. A qualitative interview approach could ask questions to better explore that variable. Examples of this type of open-ended interview question would be 1) How do you make decisions about what to focus on?; and 2) How do you think mediators differ in approach? Future studies might take this into consideration as they design their methodology.

A few limitations became apparent as this study progressed. The size of the sample was small, and limited to a certain kind of mediator (i.e., workplace mediators). If the research sample was larger and more varied, results might have achieved more statistical significance. For instance, including attorney mediators with non-attorney mediators would have provided a sub-population with a different kind of training and, therefore, potentially different results.

Another weakness was the use of a self-report instrument like the MBTI which forces an either/or response. Using a more open-ended questionnaire, or one that allows a variety of responses might have reflected what subjects wanted to say more accurately. This weakness was alleviated somewhat by the design of the CSQ, where subjects were given the opportunity for some individual response. The accuracy of responses on a self-report instrument can be problematic. It can be difficult to

determine whether the subjects' answers reflect how they really feel, or how they think the researcher wants them to respond. Despite this, self-report instruments such as the MBTI continue to be an effective tool in eliciting personal information from research subjects.

Recommendations for further research

There were a large variety of unresolved issues that could be explored as a result of this research. Future research could focus on several areas, particularly comparisons of mediators in differing areas of expertise. Comparing mediators with specialties in workplace, neighborhood, victim-offender and small claims court might provide more in-depth information about different practitioners and their styles. Comparing mediators to other professional practices might also be interesting, especially to provide better career counseling information to persons interested in conflict work. For future studies of this nature, a larger sample size is recommended, so that results generated from the data can be more stable and potentially generalizable.

Potential Study: Personality Type in Mediator Neutrality

The question and definition of mediator neutrality could be an interesting theme for future study. In his book, Gifts Differing, Martin (1995) suggests that people are more likely to connect with those who share their own (personality type) preferences, and especially preferences in perception and judgement. Those who do

not share perception or judgment are more likely to have conflict, particularly when they do not respect each other's differences. This idea warrants further investigation in the world of mediation, with implications for mediators. What does it mean for mediators of different types to be mediating people of different types? Are mediators more likely to 'connect' with disputants who share their personality type? If so, how can they reduce bias to maintain neutrality? Research which sheds light on these questions could prove to be useful to the mediation community.

Another element in the consideration of mediator neutrality is the concept of personal reactivity. One might explore the level to which mediators react or have control over their reactions which, in turn, affects their appearance of neutrality. This would require a different research tool that could measure reactivity effectively.

Potential Study: Perception-Judging Continuum

Another area of potential study would be around the Perception-Judging set of personality characteristics, and how it might pertain to different kinds of mediation. Myers & McCauley (1985) suggested that, "Perceptive types typically remain longer in the observing attitude; judging types move more quickly through perception in order to reach conclusions" (p.14). It might be interesting to develop a mediation study that tests if this happens with mediators. If so, does it make any difference in how quickly resolution is reached, or in the satisfaction of the disputants? Again, studying different kinds of mediators would be of most use. Might certain kinds of disputants (e.g., labor management) find it useful for a mediator to model decisive,

conclusion-oriented behavior? Might other kinds of relationally-laden disputants (e.g., divorcing couples) want someone who appeared to take more time to listen before decisions were made? Do mediators, while in their role as mediators, use their personality types differently than they do in their everyday lives? Does mediator typology shift toward the Perceiving function as experience is gained? Many questions arise from such conjectures and, although the risks of stereotyping individuals and groups are great, the possibility for study seems endless.

Potential Study: Controlling for Experience

Mediators who are trained differently, or trained at a different time in the development of the field, may have different styles of practice. This could influence their views about conflict, disputant behavior, and the role of the mediator. The nature of mediation training has changed significantly in the past decade. For example, the transformational approach in mediation is very new to the field. One could assume that only the more recently-trained practitioners are being exposed to this concept. Further research, however, might reveal that some of the practitioners with more years of experience might be the ones who are training the new cohort and, therefore, they are the ones responsible for teaching about this new transformational element. Research in this area is needed.

The experience of socialization also cannot be overlooked. Mediators may, over time, take steps to “act more like mediators.” This may actually begin to influence their personality typology and shift it somewhat over time as these

behavioral changes are internalized. Longitudinal studies of *Shared Neutrals* and other groups would indicate whether a shift occurred in personality type as experience was gained.

Potential Study: Experience and Reliance on Mediation Structure

Further exploration of mediator experience and “mediator tactics” may be of interest. Do mediators with more experience have more comfort in tapping into a variety of mediator tactics? If so, does this comfort move them away from strict adherence to a formal structure in mediation? For instance, a beginning mediator might adhere strictly to a format that included introduction, hearing the stories, exploring options, brainstorming and finding solutions, in that order. Would a more experienced mediator be more flexible with format? Or do experienced mediators find they rely on format exclusively? What factors would dictate this? (For instance, certain kinds of disputant might require a specific format as part of their negotiation). A study of this nature might bring about more understanding of different approaches to mediation and, eventually, more education to the public in selecting a mediator that fits their style and needs.

Potential Study: Possible Effects of Gender

Research could be done in the area of gender and its affect on the choices mediators make, as well as their personality type.

Potential Study: Controlling for Subjectivity

An entire study could be developed around the construction of unbiased scenarios. Writing, pre-testing with a diverse population, re-writing, re-testing and re-writing to more completely eliminate researcher bias would be a very useful endeavor, with potentially great benefits for the field.

Using Personality Type Theory in Development of Future Research

One could apply the theory of personality type to the very question of future studies. The present study suggested that workplace mediation practitioners generally favor certain personality type combinations. If researchers generally favor a different type than practitioners, it could be a factor in why practitioners and researchers don't share information. Another reason for this divide might be that practitioners with different styles disagree with each other and that there is no real forum in which to share ideas. If researchers and practitioners worked together to develop effective studies, and then used the outcome of the studies for more effective mediation, it could be another way to bridge the communication divide. Some new variables to consider in future studies, as mentioned in previous paragraphs, are type of training, gender, longitudinal observations, and affects of group dynamics and socialization.

Implications for Conflict Workers

Current thought in progressive conflict work is that the more one understands one's self, the more one can understand others (Bush, 1994; Edelman, 1993). It is

reasonable to assume that giving a group of mediators an opportunity to think deeply about their own perceptions would encourage a healthy awareness of their own possible biases, and add depth and thoughtfulness to their practice.

The importance of mediators' self-understanding cannot be underestimated. In their article about using self-awareness to enhance professionalism in social work education, Moore et al. (1996) suggested, "experience with the MBTI can enhance understanding of personal strengths and limitations as well as knowledge about clients and co-workers" (p. 5). Mediators, being in a helping profession similar to social work, might benefit from the same kind of thoughtful research. It is generally understood that self-knowledge can lead to greater mediator neutrality and a greater understanding of conflict. A general understanding of personality type might provide mediators with precise language to describe differences in peoples' perceptions. Disputants, in turn, might benefit from understanding how conflicts commonly arise over these differences, and how they might consider changing their responses based on this understanding.

Exploration of Jung's "shadow" theory, as mentioned in Chapter II, could be another useful way to pursue this self-understanding. Exploration of one's "shadow" - the part of a one's personality that is least developed or most hidden - can lead to personal growth and, according to Jung's theory, allows one to tap in to much of one's creative energy (Price, 1994). We can often find pieces of our shadow in the bad qualities and motivations that we attribute to others, which we would rather not

recognize in ourselves. Exploring the qualities of our own shadow can lead to understanding of, and compassion for, our selves and others. It can also help us recognize how we allow others to “trigger” responses in us. This kind of personal exploration could certainly have implications for mediators as they seek to embody “neutrality” in their work.

As discussed in Chapter IV, another way that MBTI may have some implications for mediators is through consideration of Preference Combinations. According to Myers (1993), exploring combinations and interactions of preferences can lead to a richer understanding of personality than does viewing each preference as separate. If she is correct in suggesting that people who favor Intuition with Feeling tend to focus on insights about people problems, and people who favor Intuition with Thinking tend to focus on insights about problems in organizational structure, mediators might consider ways they can broaden their understanding of these problems. In a workplace environment, one can see the potential importance of knowing how to focus on both people problems and organizational problems. If a mediator has an awareness that they have limited abilities to do one or the other, they might choose to pair up with another mediator whose skills compliment their limitations. Although this is just a suggestion, it provides a launching point for further exploration, especially in team mediations.

There is one last topic that may be of interest to mediators, and particularly for those who are considering which area to specialize in. That is, certain types might be more comfortable with mediating different kinds of disputes. Does it make a

difference to career satisfaction whom you are mediating? For instance, would T's be happier or better at mediating a group of engineers, and F's happier mediating a group of counselors? Does the kind of system or structure you prefer to work in affect satisfaction? Although the risk of stereotyping is great (see Hammer, 1985), considerations of this sort may assist with mediators' choice of specialty and career satisfaction.

Summary

This research had several goals. One was to explore the connection between the personality type of Intuition, and whether it had a strong connection to emphasis on relational goals by mediators. Another goal was to produce a thoughtful piece of writing, attempting to bridge the communication divide between researchers and practitioners in the field of conflict resolution. Yet another goal was to explore how and why mediators look at things differently, and how that fits in to the current literature. A questionnaire was developed & employed along with the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator ® to collect data from mediators in a specific consortium of workplace mediators called *Shared Neutrals* in the fall of 1999.

As described in Chapter one, this study was important for several reasons. It attempted to bring about some understanding of workplace mediation generally and to define *Shared Neutrals* as a group, encouraging healthy self-awareness. Lastly, it attempted to fill a gap in MBTI research about a specific population not previously studied. In some small way, each of these goals was achieved. Through consideration

of the Conflict Scenario Questionnaire and subjects' responses, the reader has more understanding of workplace mediation, and mediators. An interesting distribution of personality type was discovered about the mediators in *Shared Neutrals*. Future areas of study are proposed based on questions generated from the current one. And, in pursuing these kinds of questions, we have added to the growing body of literature in both mediation and personality type.

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Mediator Cover Letter

APPENDIX A

October 19, 1999

Dear

You may remember me from 1998, when I did some case intake and administrative work with Shared Neutrals as part of my master's program practicum. This recently accredited Masters Program in Conflict Resolution at Portland State University is bringing an academic interest into the field of ADR. Part of the intent of having a graduate program is to allow the time and support for students not only to enter the field, but also to study its development, its practitioners, and perhaps even to help shape its future. This study is a small step toward understanding what kinds of people are drawn to workplace mediation. It is a very small piece of a larger overall goal of understanding the expanding field and, through respect for its practitioners, helping to educate the public about ADR and its uses.

Your participation is vital to the success of this study. Shared Neutrals, as a group, is a statistically small sample for reputable research. Your participation could be the difference between a handful of seemingly unrelated data and a statistically significant outcome. With your help, I will achieve the latter, and produce respectably academic results while reflecting true information. Completing this study should take about one hour of your time.

The use of identification numbers with only one master list means your name will never be on the questionnaire or the Myers-Briggs (MBTI) form, so your answers will be kept completely confidential. I will only refer to the list if I require clarification of one of your answers.

The overall results of this study will be shared with other academics. The kind of academic work attempted here can shed light on the very important work that you do, and helps answer the question, "Who are those guys?"

In return for your participation, you will receive the results of your MBTI, which could provide some interesting and thought-provoking information for you reflect upon. In addition, you will have my eternal gratitude for helping me complete my degree!

If you should have any questions regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED], or e-mail me at wallerk@juno.com.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. It is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Karin Waller
Graduate Student
PSU – Masters Program in Conflict Resolution

Study Consent Form

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Form

In completing and returning the enclosed questionnaires, I agree to take part in this research project on conflict goals in workplace mediation and mediator personality type, and agree to the following items:

I understand that the study involves approximately an hour of my time in taking the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, filling out a questionnaire, and returning them to the researcher.

I understand that as a result of my participation in this study, I may benefit by receiving the results of the Myers-Briggs Personality Indicator, and that the study may help to increase knowledge that may help others in the future.

Karin A. Waller, [REDACTED], wallerk@juno.com has offered to answer any questions I have about the study and what I am expected to do. She has promised that all information I give will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law, and that the names of all people in the study will be kept confidential.

I understand that I do not have to take part in this study, and that my participation or non-participation will not affect my relationship with Shared Neutrals or any other agency. I understand that I may also withdraw from this study at any time without affecting my relationship with Shared Neutrals or any other agency.

I have read and understand the above information and agree to take part in this study. I indicate my willingness to participate by completing the questionnaires enclosed and returning them to the researcher.

Conflict Scenario Questionnaire (CSQ)

APPENDIX C

Instructions:

- Complete the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator form M.
Please do not self-score. Your results will be sent to you.
- Read the four scenarios presented below.
- Each describes a workplace situation that might come to a mediation.
- Take the statements in the scenarios at face value and try not to "read in" to them too much. Read them as though you were the mediator getting this information from the parties.
- Answer the questions at the end of each scenario.
 First : For each scenario, distribute 100 points between the three goals rating them from most to least important for resolution (total must equal 100).

Second: Choose the one goal you feel is the most essential for resolution for each scenario.

There are no right or wrong answers!! The researchers recognize there are many issues, the issues are complex, you are given too little information, and there are many different styles of mediation. These questions are about **your** (confidential) perceptions of which mediation goals are most and least important in each scenario.

How many years have you been a mediator? _____

How many cases have you mediated/co-mediated? _____

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I truly appreciate your time!

-Karin Waller (503) 231-4194

Subject# _____

Conflict Scenario Questionnaire

Scenario #1

Paula, an employee from the field, contacts you because she is upset and tired of the treatment she has had to endure for the last few months. This morning as she walked into her work area *Greg*, her first-level supervisor, verbally announces to everyone that she is late and makes some jokes about banker's hours. Later that morning, her second-level supervisor advises *Paula* that if she is going to be late she needs to call. *Paula's* work group is made up of mostly men.

Paula's Perspective:

Paula is too upset to confront *Greg* directly. She had previously requested that *Greg* address her in private about conduct concerns, but he continues to make comments like this to her. She is very upset by the way *Greg* embarrassed her in front of her peers and others. *Paula* is aware she is not the only one who comes in late, but no other employees have their tardiness noted in the same manner, nor do they have to call if they are going to be a few minutes late. She believes *Greg* does this because she is a woman. She also feels that assignments and training are not given fairly, and that some of her peers are given prime assignments and training because "the guys" socialize outside of work with *Greg*.

Greg's perspective:

Greg is upset that *Paula* didn't come and talk to him about the matter. He has an open-door policy and feels he encourages his employees to come and talk to him about any concerns they may have. He is hurt that she "went running to others" about the situation, and thinks they could have straightened it out if she had just come to him. *Greg* sees his behavior of this morning as no different from any other day. He often teases employees who are caught coming in late, and he means no harm by it. *Greg* feels *Paula* is being too sensitive and is picking at everything he does. *Greg* tells you that *Paula* has expressed a specific interest in the type of tasks he is currently assigning her, and he thinks he treats his employees equally. He rotates assignments, and training is approved based on the needs of the employee.

POINTS

Distribute 100 points to rate the relative importance of each issue:

1. *Paula & Greg* need to clarify & agree upon how to air issues and how to communicate about what is going on in the office.

1. _____

2. *Paula & Greg* need to understand each other's perspective of the other's actions, move past their mutual anger/hurt and learn to work together effectively.

2. _____

3. *Paula* needs *Greg* to acknowledge that his actions embarrass her in front of co-workers, and *Greg* needs *Paula* to recognize his authority and competence.

3. _____

TOTAL = 100

If you had to pick ONE issue to address, which one would it be?

(circle one) 1 2 3

Why? _____

Scenario #2

Pat and *Robbi* have worked in the same division for 5 years, although they do not work in close proximity. For 3 years, there has been a Friday-night cocktail social after work, and the two have developed a friendship through that event. They do not socialize outside of this regular event. 6 months ago, *Robbi* stopped coming to the cocktail socials, and has not provided any explanation of her absence. *Robbi* has also ignored *Pat* in the office, and has not responded to *Pat's* e-mails and phone calls. They have just recently been put together on a project, and it is increasingly uncomfortable for them to work together.

Pat's perspective:

Pat doesn't know why *Robbi* suddenly stopped coming to what she feels was an enjoyable social event. She is hurt and confused by the fact that *Pat* won't talk to her, and that she seems to have forgotten that they were friends. With these feelings unspoken between them, *Pat* finds it very uncomfortable to work with *Robbi* on their current project. She is concerned about *Robbi*, but feels like she is unwilling to talk about whatever is going on with her.

Robbi's Perspective:

Robbi's father died 6 months ago, and she has become acutely depressed. She is seeing a psychiatrist for this condition (which is nobody's business), and is taking anti-depressants. Her doctor told her she has to stop drinking alcohol, so she has stopped socializing with her "drinking buddies". She finds it exhausting to pull herself out of bed every morning, and just wishes everyone would leave her alone to do her work. She doesn't see the point in continuing a friendship with *Pat*, since it was based on alcohol in the first place, and she really doesn't have the energy to deal with it.

POINTS

Distribute 100 points to rate the relative importance of each issue:

1. *Robbi* and *Pat* need to work out a mutually-agreeable plan to complete this project efficiently. 1. _____
2. *Robbi* and *Pat* need to learn about their perceptions of each others' actions, discuss where their friendship stands, and discuss their mutual discomfort. 2. _____
3. *Pat* needs *Robbi* to recognize she feels rejected and confused about why *Robbi* doesn't want to be her friend. *Robbi* needs to share what is comfortable for her to share, and have *Pat* respect her privacy. 3. _____

TOTAL = 100

If you had to pick ONE issue to address, which one would it be?

(circle one) 1 2 3

Why? _____

Scenario #3

Mary and Rene are Division Managers of equal status whose offices are next to each other. Mary has a son who became the captain of his high school football team, the Willamette Warriors. Mary has covered her office with pictures of her son in his football uniform, including one large photo with the Warrior mascot, a cartoon character American Indian in war paint with crazed features and a huge tomahawk. Several weeks ago, Rene told Mary that the picture is demeaning to Native Americans, and asked her to please take it down. Mary refused, and they stopped speaking to each other after that. This silence has become a hindrance to both of their work, since they work together on several region-wide concerns.

Mary's Perspective:

Mary's son is her pride and joy. She can't understand how Rene could be oblivious to that, since they have always had a good working relationship. Mary is of Anglo descent, and doesn't understand why the pictures offend Rene so much. Mary is upset that it has become such a big problem, but does not feel that she owes anyone an apology for her son.

Rene's Perspective:

Rene is Native American and takes pride in her heritage. Seeing the Indian caricature being used in such a humiliating way infuriates her. She is angry and appalled that Mary, who she has never had any problem working with, will not respect how she feels about it. She is too upset to talk directly to Mary, and feels that it wouldn't help anyway since Mary is obviously unsympathetic. Every time she walks by the office, it is a reminder that makes her more angry. She knows it is a problem that needs to be addressed somehow so that they can get their work done.

Distribute 100 points to rate the relative importance of each issue:

POINTS

1. *Rene and Mary need to talk about the issue while saving "face", and where neither feels they are "giving in", or are in the wrong.*
2. *Rene and Mary need to agree on a course of action with regards to the picture that allows them to get their mutual work done.*
3. *Rene and Mary need to hear and acknowledge each other's feelings and perspective of the issue and come to agreement which will allow them to regain their good working relationship.*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

TOTAL = 100

If you had to pick ONE issue to address, which one would it be?

Why? _____

(circle one) 1 2 3

Scenario #4

Bill has been an engineer with the firm for 15 years. The supervisor that he worked with the last 10 years retired six months ago, and *Ted* was hired into the supervisory position over *Bill*. *Ted* is five years out of business school and is considered a real "go-getter", and a great asset to the firm. For 6 months (since *Ted* first arrived), *Ted* and *Bill* just haven't been able to communicate with each other. They have started talking to each other only through intermediaries (coworkers), and there is a lot of office tension over it.

Ted's perspective:

Since *Ted* started working at the firm, he recognized that *Bill* was an unbearably slow worker, and refused to recognize *Ted's* authority on projects. *Ted* feels that *Bill* avoids him when he tries to talk to him, and thinks he is dragging his feet on assignments. He suspects *Bill* is trying to do as little as possible until his retirement, which couldn't come soon enough. *Ted*, who prides himself on being clean cut and professional simply finds *Bill* annoying, from the tie-dye shirts and Birkenstocks to his "laid back" attitude about everything from eating lunch to completing a job.

In *Ted's* opinion, the unprofessional way *Bill* presents himself isn't good for the firm. *Ted* has a lot of training and experience, and a lot of marketing savvy, and he wants to be respected for that.

Bill's perspective:

Bill thinks *Ted* is UPTIGHT, and needs to learn to relax. *Bill* loves his job, and his professional reputation rests on his error-free work. He prides himself on working methodically and effectively. Until *Ted* took over, *Bill's* thoroughness had never been questioned nor the pace at which he worked been a hindrance to meeting deadlines. He is VERY uncomfortable when *Ted* rushes around, as though his running around and shouting will get the job done faster. Quite frankly, *Bill* thinks the kid has a lot to learn, and doesn't take him too seriously, preferring to simply do the job he loves in the way he does it best.

Distribute 100 points to rate the relative importance of each issue:

POINTS

1. *Ted* and *Bill* need to agree to how work will be assigned, how deadlines are decided, and at what level *Ted* will be involved in *Bill's* work.
2. *Ted* and *Bill* need to acknowledge their differences and talk about each others' perspectives & interests for themselves and the firm. They also need to find a way to work together without sabotaging each other.
3. *Ted* needs *Bill* to respect his expertise/decisions, and *Bill* needs *Ted* to respect his work habits are the root of his professional reputation.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

TOTAL = 100

If you had to pick ONE issue to address, which one would it be?

(circle one) 1 2 3

Why? _____