

SCOTTISH POLICE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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Summary: Maximising the potential leadership capability of Scottish policing is at the heart of this SIPR Research Summary. The reader is encouraged to expand their appreciation of diversity, to include the concept of personality preference - an element which is fundamental to, and can be evidenced within, any of the traditional strands of diversity. Data was gathered from different ranks within Scottish policing and some UK data is introduced to provide comparisons. Over- and under-representation of different personality preferences are presented in simple graphic form, anomalies in the data are highlighted and possible explanations proposed. Some of the key findings include the apparent reversal of personality preferences between the Probationer sample and that of the Accelerated Careers Development Programme; the very low prevalence of personality characteristics which appear to be important in enhancing community policing; and the minimal representation of entrepreneurial preferences in ACPOS at a time when financial constraints might warrant such expertise. An invitation is extended to those who have responsibility for the development and progression of officers in leadership positions within Scotland to consider the findings and decide whether taking steps to ensure greater diversity of personality preferences might afford benefits to the leadership capability within the Scottish police service.

INTRODUCTION

In June 2009, the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) launched its *Equality and Diversity Strategy 2009-2012: Celebrating and Valuing Difference* report. The report addresses all traditionally identified strands of diversity: Age, Disability, Gender, Gender Identity, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation.

The report states that equality and diversity are core values that run through the business of the Scottish police service and outlines four key commitments, one of which is focused on people: *"We will recruit, develop and maintain a skilled workforce that reflects and understands the diverse communities of Scotland, respects personal dignity, difference and individuality and actively promotes Equality and Diversity."* In the report's Foreword, Chief Constable Latimer states: *"Success depends on utilising the huge range of skills, aptitudes and experience our people possess, so that our ideas can remain fresh, creative and dynamic. We can only do this if we recognise the need to harness the richness of perspectives and ideas that Equality and Diversity offer . . ."*

The authors applaud the principles outlined in this ACPOS *Celebrating and Valuing Difference* report and the efforts of ACPOS to date, to ensure heightened awareness of the principles and practice of equality and diversity. This paper however proposes a stretching of the boundaries of understanding and appreciation of diversity, to include an integral and underpinning concept of personality preference - an element which is fundamental to, and can be evidenced within, any of the traditional strands of diversity.

In particular, this paper focuses on the recruitment and development of police officers within Scottish policing and the prevalence of diversity of personality preference in relation to leadership, at varying levels within Scottish policing.

The Scottish police service is committed to ensuring quality leadership capability, capacity and resilience in order to address the growing leadership challenges at senior strategic levels. The ramifications of the current financial circumstances are impacting significantly on policing - the *status quo* is not an option.

Will those officers who hold leadership positions within the organisation be able to maximise the opportunities that the drivers for organisational change present? With greater involvement in partnership working, the way of the future will necessitate an even greater flexibility within the police service from a leadership position of 'command and control' to that of 'command and convince' (Gwynne, 2011) or perhaps the demonstration of 'humble leadership' (Smith, 2009). It has been estimated by serving officers that potentially as little as five percent of policing demands a 'command' style of leadership. Leadership styles, and the ability to flex leadership style depending on particular contexts, are dependent on several factors including personality preference.

At the outset of this investigation, the authors proposed that as police officers progress from Probationer to Chief Officer ranks, certain personality preferences, as described by the Myers Briggs Type Indicator[®] (Briggs Myers & Myers, 1995) and Temperament Theory (Keirse, 1998; Berens, 2010), appear to be over or under-represented, and consequently the benefits of diversity at various leadership levels within the police service may not be maximised.

This paper will outline some initial analysis of data, highlight key findings and propose future considerations for policing practice. Data will be presented in graphic form and observable trends will be briefly explored.

MYERS BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR (MBTI)[®]

With translations into 15 languages, the MBTI is one of the most used and trusted personality instruments world-wide. Completion of the MBTI is now mandatory for participants in the Strategic Command Course – a pre-requisite for progressing to the rank of Chief Officer in the UK. It is for this reason that the authors chose this instrument as the basis for data collection and analysis.

The MBTI which was developed by Katharine Briggs and Isabel Myers and is based on the theory of psychological type developed by Swiss psychiatrist, Carl Jung, is concerned with the valuable differences in people and exemplifies the principles inherent in respect for equality and diversity. Differences are explored in relation to where people draw their energy and focus their attention (Extraversion or Introversion), how they take in information (Sensing or Intuition), how they like to make decisions (Thinking or Feeling) and the kind of orientation they adopt to their outer world (Judging or Perceiving). The MBTI describes 16 different personality types, each of which contributes its own particular gifts or strengths. No type is better than any other type and each type has areas where growth and development opportunities exist. The MBTI can be used to explore and enhance leadership styles, team working, problem solving, communication, conflict resolution, and learning. Although each person has natural preferences, s/he can learn to respond in a non-preferred way. An excellent introduction to MBTI can be gleaned from the publication, *You've Got Personality* (McGuinness, 2004) and a more extensive appreciation from Briggs Myers & Myers (1995).

In order to provide a slightly different interpretation of the data, the authors have also drawn upon another personality approach, Temperament patterns. These patterns can be approximated by collapsing the 16 MBTI type profiles into four Temperament patterns: Idealists (Catalyst); Guardians (Stabilisers); Rationals (Theorist) and Artisans (Improviser) (Keirse, 1998; Berens, 2010).

It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss the leadership styles literature or to provide extensive explanations of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)[®] or Temperament theory.

CAREER TRANSITION SAMPLES

In order to compare the prevalence of diversity of personality preferences at varying stages within Scottish policing, samples were gathered from:

Probationers: Probationer Training is the entrance level for policing in Scotland. Cohorts may consist of officers from a number of Scotland's eight Forces. An intake cohort sample of 116 Probationers (100%) was drawn from the January 2010 Probationer intake. This intake was seen to be representative of the annual probationer population. Feedback on the MBTI was provided for officers through four specifically organized, voluntary attendance, evening workshops facilitated by the authors.

Accelerated Careers Development Programme (ACDP):

The ACDP programme offers accelerated career challenges and personal growth opportunities which seek to optimize leadership and management potential for officers from Constable to Chief Inspector ranks. Entrance to the ACDP is by an annual competitive assessment centre and Force interview. A 100% sample of the 26 ACDP officers in the Programme in 2010 was gathered through scheduled programme activities.

Scottish Strategic Command Course (SCC) Graduates 2008-2010:

MBTI profiles of all 15 Scottish SCC graduates were gathered over the period 2008-2010. This represents data on 100% of this sample.

UK Strategic Command Course Graduates 2008-2010:

In order to compare the Scottish SCC graduates personality preference profiles with the UK SCC graduate population, data was sought from the SCC. Data on all 170 graduates from the SCC over the period 2008 -2010 was obtained. UK and Scottish SCC samples were similar. The Scottish SCC Graduates sample was subsumed within UK SCC data (greater population) which is used in the graphs that follow - providing a UK comparative perspective for ACPOS data.

Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS):

A sample size of 27 was obtained, representing an 82% response rate from Chief Officers in 2010.

WHAT WE FOUND

The authors have chosen to present the research findings in simplistic bar graphs. This method affords the reader an opportunity to detect and discern trends and contrasts which appear in the data without having to acquire specialist knowledge of either the MBTI or Temperament theory. Where there are obvious trends and comparisons appearing, the authors will make comment and attempt to provide everyday language explanations of the characteristics of the type preferences which are being demonstrated.

Extraversion (E), Figure 1, is a preference for focusing personal energy on, and being energized by, the external world of people, events, activities and things, while Introversion (I) is a preference for focusing energy on, and being energized by, the inner world of ideas, thoughts, feelings and impressions (McGuiness, 2004).

Sensing (S) and Intuition (N), Figure 2, describe how you prefer to gather information, to take information in from the outside world. Sensing focuses on past or present experience through the five senses. Intuition is a focus on patterns, future possibilities and the meaning behind ideas (McGuiness, 2004).

Figure 1

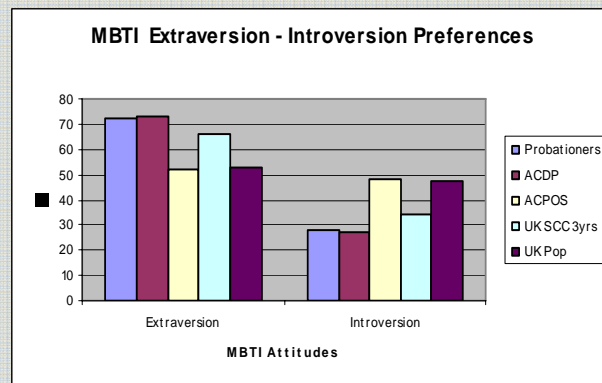


Figure 2

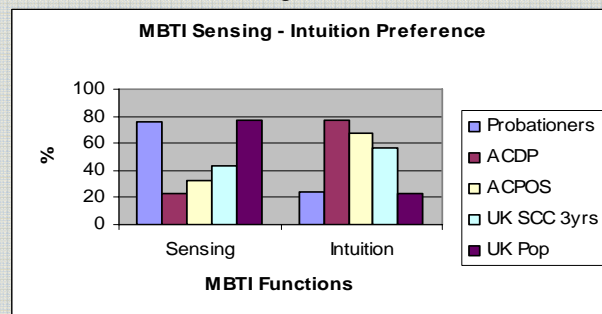


Figure 3

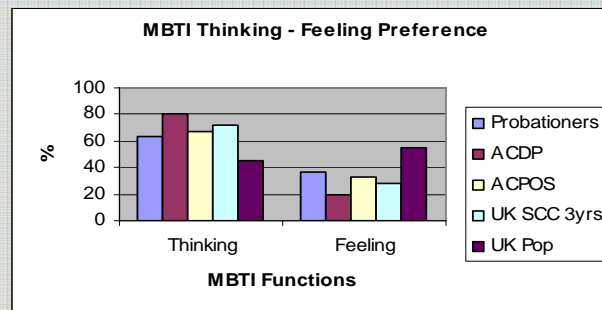
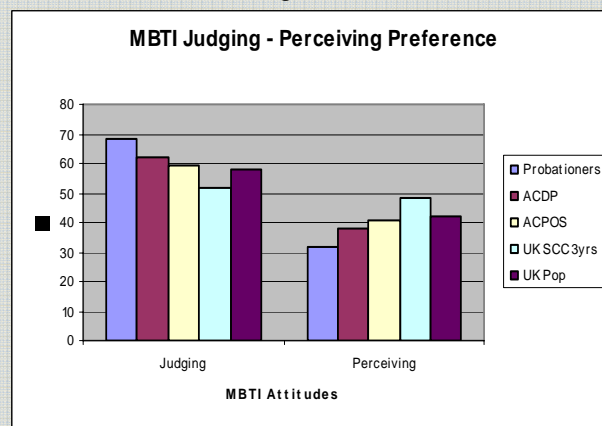


Figure 4



Both Thinking (T) and Feeling (F), Figure 3, are rational processes whereby you prefer to make decisions. Thinking uses logic to make decisions and bases decisions on laws and principles or logical analysis. Feeling weighs values to make decisions, considers relative worth and considers the impact on, and importance for, people. (McGuinness, 2004).

Judging (J) and Perceiving (P), Figure 4, refer to how you respond to and deal with your outer world. People with a Judging preference like to be planned and organized and seek closure and conclusions. People with a Perceiving preference like to remain spontaneous, flexible and are ready to explore new options (McGuinness, 2004). It is important to appreciate that all people use each of the preferences to some degree, however each person has a preferred way of responding on each of the four bi-polar dimensions.

The Probationer preference profile, ESTJ is a common profile for police services in a number of countries (Hennessy, 1999; Bathurst, 2007). Compared to the UK population statistics sourced from OPP (1996), the UK preference profile is ESFJ – thus we can conclude that proportionally fewer people with a Feeling preference join the police service.

The Thinking (T) – Feeling (F) preference is the only one of the four MBTI preferences which has a gender bias, in that more women prefer F, and more men prefer T, though there is a significant amount of cross-over between the genders. Thus this Probationer variance from the general population could be a reflection of the less than fully representative proportion of women joining the service - 23.1% in 2008 (ACPOS 2009).

The MBTI can produce a 'reported' type which may vary from the 'best fit' type. This is the reason why the MBTI must be fed back to respondents by accredited practitioners. Interestingly, one of the authors in undertaking personal feedback sessions with a large proportion of the sample, has found a number of men (and women) in policing whose 'reported' type is Thinking, but in the light of further discussion, choose Feeling as their 'best fit' preference. They admit that 'the job' often forces them to behave in a more Thinking way, whereas at home they most definitely present as Feeling preferences. These 'hidden' Feeling preferences may also contribute to the findings above.

There is consistency on three of the four preferences (ETJ) when we compare the Probationers with the other policing samples in this study. However, there is a variance on the Sensing (S) - Intuition (N) preference between the Probationer percentages and the percentages of all of the other police samples: ACDP, ACPOS and UK SCC. In these sample groups the predominant preference is not Sensing as it is with the Probationer cohort, but Intuition.

Further analysis of the data into the MBTI Function Styles (a combination of the 'Sensing or Intuition' function coupled with the 'Thinking or Feeling' function) provides the following findings:

These MBTI Function Styles, Figure 5, which are explored extensively in *Thinking Cop, Feeling Cop* (Hennessy, 1999) provide some further understanding in relation to the substantially lower Feeling (F) percentage identified in the police samples above compared to the UK population.

When the functions are combined we can see that it is not the Feeling preference which is across the board less prevalent, it is the Sensing (S) – Feeling (F) combination of functions which drops dramatically from the second highest of the four preference functions within the Probationer sample to the lowest percentages in the ACDP, ACPOS and the UK SCC samples. Whereas when Intuition (N) is combined with Feeling (F) in the case of ACPOS and the UK SCC data, the NF combination exceeds both the Probationer, ACDP and UK Population percentages.

Hennessy (1999) identifies SF preferences as being in the minority of his US sample of police officers, as is the case with this study's data. He describes SF preference characteristics as inter alia: sociable, practical, loyal, structured, traditional, caring, organised, trusting considerate, friendly, tactful, observant. He goes on to say that they "*do very well in community relations, media relations, personnel matters and anything where people concerns or relations are paramount*" (p18). With a growing focus on community policing, the authors would suggest that these personality preference characteristics are very much in demand – and very much missing from the Scottish policing data. Hennessy (1999) goes on to state that "*Being in the minority of police officers may cause some problems for them, especially with those with little seniority, as they may feel that they don't quite fit in.*" Is this something worth noting?

It is clear from Figure 5 that Intuitive (N) – Thinker (T) combination of functions is disproportionately represented in the ACDP cohort whereas in ACPOS, although the NT Function Style is still the predominant style, it is not as disproportionately so. The UK SCC sample illustrates almost an equal balance between ST and NT.

Building on this most recent observation, some striking comparisons can be illustrated by re-arranging the data into the four Temperament patterns.

Table 1 is a very simplified and brief outline of a selection of the characteristics of each of the four Temperament patterns and draws extensively on the work of Berens (2010) and McGuiness (2004).

The NT temperament pattern, Figure 6, is the predominant pattern for the ACDP, ACPOS and UK SCC samples. The second highest percentage across all three sample groups is the SJ Temperament pattern. Reflecting on the descriptors of the NT and SJ Temperaments, one can conclude that these two patterns are quite different in focus and intent. It would not be surprising to entertain the possibility that in any organisation with a similar spread of temperament patterns, that two ‘camps’ could readily form, especially if the people who populate the NT and SJ Temperament patterns are more senior, or longer serving, than the those who populate the remaining patterns. From personal knowledge, the authors are aware that in the ACPOS sample, the majority of those who populate the third NF Temperament pattern have joined ACPOS in the last two years.

The very low percentage of the SP Temperament, in both ACDP and ACPOS is concerning. In real terms this percentage equates to one person in each sample. The SP Temperament represents the natural negotiators who can identify and seize opportunities in the moment – they are in fact the ‘entrepreneurs’! In the current financial circumstances, ACPOS might be better placed to have more people with an SP Temperament within their number. It would be beneficial to explore whether the selection processes at both ACDP and ACPOS have a built-in bias which sifts out this Temperament pattern, reducing it from 20% in the Probationer sample to 4% in both the ACDP and ACPOS samples, or whether, given the entrepreneurial bent of the SP temperament, they seize better opportunities when they present themselves!

In terms of Temperament patterns, Figure 7, the Probationer sample approximates the UK population sample.

However, when the Probationer sample is compared with the ACDP sample, Figure 8, there is almost a complete reversal of the percentages of SJ and NT Temperament patterns. How does this come about?

Figure 5

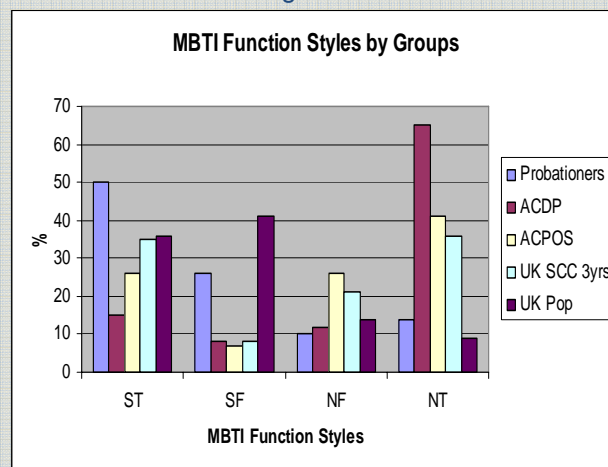


Figure 6

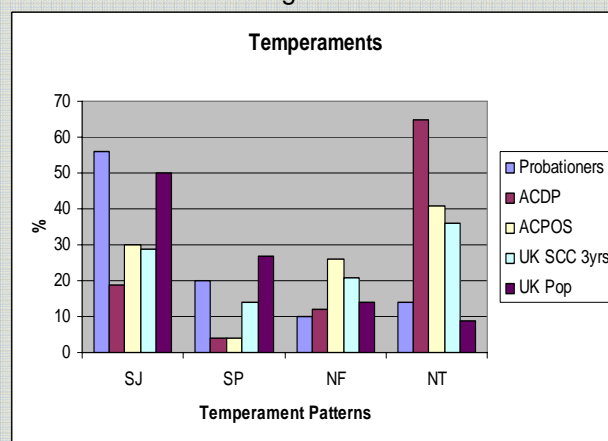
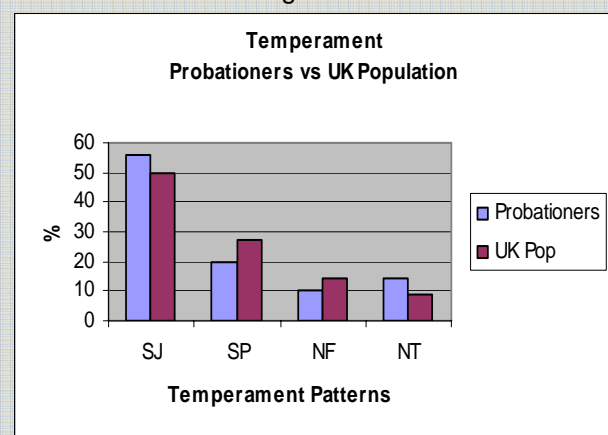


Figure 7



Officers who are part of the ACDP, have been successful in not only a Force selection interview, but have also competed in a formal assessment centre selection process. It would appear, at least in part, that the selection processes may have some built-in bias which contributes to this significant reversal of Temperament patterning. Any review of the ACDP might like to further investigate these findings in order to enhance the understanding of this finding.

Table 1. Selection of the characteristics of each of the four Temperament patterns

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>SJ Sensing / Judging Guardian; Stabiliser; Investigator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responsibility, accountability, predictability, service, duty, standards ▪ Establish and maintain institutions, order, operating procedures, traditions ▪ Want security and stability ▪ Ensure things are in the right place at right time ▪ Logical, practical, trusts what is known from experience | <p>SP Sensing / Perceiving Artisan; Improviser; Negotiator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generally excited and optimistic ▪ Natural negotiators or trouble-shooters ▪ Spontaneous, trusts impulses, ability to solve any problem ▪ Realistic, factual, like variety ▪ Gifted tactician – get the job done ▪ Seizes opportunities ▪ Focuses on the present, action in the moment |
| <p>NF Intuition / Feeling Idealist; Catalyst</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diplomatic ▪ Authentic, benevolent ▪ Imaginative, innovative ▪ Strong personal code of ethics ▪ Helps others achieve potential ▪ Catalyst for growth and development ▪ Use of metaphors to promote understanding | <p>NT Intuition / Thinking Rational; Theorist; Inventor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Independent thinker ▪ Likes models and theories ▪ Self critiquing – sets own standards ▪ Values expertise and competence ▪ Sceptical ▪ Trust logic and reason ▪ Precision in thought and language |

A comparison of the probationer sample with that of ACPOS, Figure 9, shows a slightly different and less pronounced trend. However there is still a significant shift from SJ to NT as the predominant temperament pattern.

CONCLUSION

This paper began by inviting readers to stretch their boundaries of understanding and appreciation of diversity, to include an integral and underpinning concept of personality preference - an element which is fundamental to, and can be evidenced within, any of the traditional strands of diversity. The study undertook to explore the prevalence of diversity of personality preference in relation to leadership, at varying levels within Scottish policing.

As with any initial investigation, only the surface is scratched. It is not the authors' responsibility to explain why the patterns presented above exist.

Figure 8

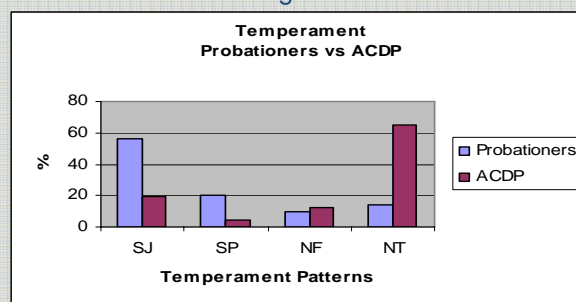
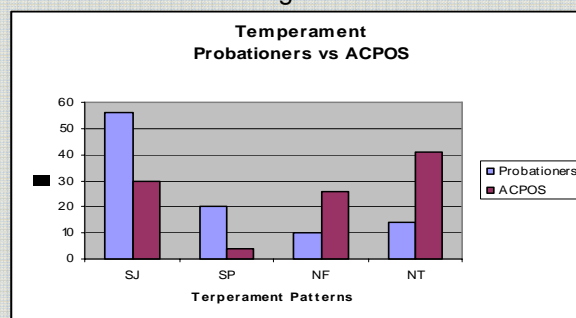


Figure 9



This investigation simply uncovers the patterns which were present in the available data. The authors have highlighted some anomalies and made considered comments on the findings. An invitation is extended to those who have responsibility for the development and progression of officers in leadership positions within Scotland to consider these, and to decide whether greater diversity of personality preferences is important and whether this could afford benefits to the capability of the Scottish police service.

The authors extend their thanks to all those who contributed to the various data samples.

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

The authors wish to express their thanks to Simon Knapman, the Strategic Command Course (SCC), Bramshill Police College and the NPIA for the provision of comparative MBTI data collected from the SCC 2008-2010.

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