

Inside Out

Writing and Personality: Finding Your Voice, Your Style, Your Way

By John K. Ditiberio and George H. Jensen (Review: Rebecca Atherton)

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As writers, we are most effective when we let our personality guide us; tapping into our natural strengths helps us to channel those same strengths into our writing. Whatever your personality type, *Writing and Personality* will help you to locate and engage your natural writing voice, overcome anxiety and writer's block, adapt to the requirements of different audiences and writing settings, write with co-authors or collaborators of varying personality types, and find the right words to communicate effectively, whatever the assignment.

Our personalities influence our approach to writing. Subsequently, each of us has a way of writing that works best for us. When we find ourselves unable to write as we would like to, it is often because we are not allowing ourselves to write in our natural way. Inviting the writer to journey back to the time when they first started writing, *Writing and Personality* helps them to remember what worked for them when there were no restrictions on the way they did it. Having established this, it helps them to relearn this process and encourages them to start using it. Knowing about and understanding our personality types can be a real gift, we are told. We can relax, having discovered our secret quirks (only being able to write when we are alone and surrounded by complete silence, or only finding the words flow when we are sharing ideas with other people) are actually perfectly normal and natural extensions of who we are as people, integral to supporting our work as writers. Knowledge of our preferred writing process can be practical as well, allowing us to draw on these natural preferences in order to problem solve and move past blocks at various points in our work.

How we write, what works for us, and what makes sense to us when we are writing is dependent on who we are as people – our personality type, our preferences, our individual style of thinking and feeling. Individuals who would class themselves as confident and outspoken (*extroverts*), will have a different way of writing to those who consider themselves shy and retiring (*introverts*). Beyond that, the way we learn to write and improve upon this as we mature will differ as well.

Writing and Personality begins with an exploration into our development as a writer, with short written exercises to help us recall how we first learned to write and how we reacted to these events. It moves on to present the different personality types (*based on the Carl Jung and Myers Briggs Type Indicator Personality Inventory*), in order to illustrate how writing styles differ accordingly. As you begin to assess your own personality type, it provides helpful explanations on how best to work with yourself, and how to collaborate with others. Aimed at addressing the needs of each of the personality types, both in the way that it is written and the exercises that it sets, *Writing and Personality* is different from other 'how-to' manuals: you will find yourself immediately engaged, and able to digest and understand every word and concept presented. If you want to understand the natural strengths of your personality type and find painless ways in which to apply this to your writing, enabling you to approach new tasks with increased confidence and achieve success in your results, then this is the book for you.