

# Brain-based Best Practices: Van Pewthers

## 1. MBTI & Self-discovery Exercise

After the whole class does an on-line Myers-Briggs Inventory, I (1) have my students research whether they agree with the personality mix the assessment has given them. They do this by comparing themselves against other MBTI profile descriptions and specific personality characteristics including possible type strengths/weaknesses. They are to survey the materials themselves and then talk it over with their tablemates to come to a personality profile that they feel comfortable with (hybrid types are allowed very much allowed). Once this step is completed, I then (2) have them write a one page paper briefly stating how they see their personality type helping them to achieve their career goals and how aspects of their personality type might hinder or discourage them from achieving their goals. We then (3) have a follow-up discussion about what they might be able to do engage and change these potential hindrances or discouragements and how some of the other assets they possess (i.e., Learning Styles, Processing Strategies, Past Experiences, their own particular Multiple Intelligence, etc.) may help them accomplish their goals. Furthermore, these same qualities are discussed when, further into the semester, we work on establishing a Personal Mission Statement for each student and when we develop a Goal-driven Calendar to implement the on-going and new goals each student has discovered in the class discussions.

Depending on class size, timing and other factors, the paper may sometimes be a homework assignment and the whole process may take place over 2 class periods.

## 2. Transition From Values Clarification To Personal Mission Statement

Another thing I try to do is help my students is make the emotional and intellectual transition from what they SAY they value in life to how those values might look when they are played out in their everyday lives. Here's how it works:(1)Through a series of clarification exercises, I have my students establish somewhere around ten things they say have high value in their lives (i.e., health, friends, career, spiritual life, service, etc.). Once they have their list, I (2) ask them to turn these values into conditional statements (ex. If one of their values is, say, family, I ask them to make a statement such as, "I want my family to always know that I love them."). I then ask them to (3) make a second statement about what kind of actions they'll take to insure that their first statement will happen (ex. "I will always try to offer my family members a listening ear and a caring heart whenever they need support or help.").

What I have found is that by doing this exercise, the students have little difficulty transitioning to the writing of their Personal Mission Statements because they now see the connection between what they want or how they wish to be seen and the actions that need to take place for those intentions to be conveyed to others. This dynamic is also reinforced when we work on Goal Setting at a later date.