

Return On Investment and Your Personality Type: Thinking Beyond Financial Metrics

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What comes to mind when you think of “Return on Investment?” For most of us, our mind probably jumps to calculations of costs and revenues. The end goal, no matter the project, is for the last cell in the spreadsheet to be black or green - not red.

In this month’s Know How Network, we want to encourage you to expand your thinking about ROI. Measuring the ROI for pursuing a goal needs to extend beyond financial metrics. Look at the capabilities you’ve created, the reputation you developed, the insight you’ve gained, and the relationships you’ve nurtured to get the complete picture. Getting a positive ROI on these non-financial metrics has a lot to do with your personality type. Knowing which dimensions of ROI are most productive for you to pursue has to do with your unique strengths and challenges for growing each of your four non-financial sources of capital.

Before we move on to maximizing ROI using the strengths of your personality type, let’s review the five sources of capital. These are: our financial capital (money you REALLY have - not credit cards!), social capital, knowledge capital, brand capital, and infrastructure capital. Since we’ve all heard plenty about ROI based on financial capital, in this article we’re going to focus on the four sources of non-financial capital.

Depending on your personality type, you will have unique strengths and challenges for using each of these four sources of capital. Knowing how you can best leverage your strengths and balance out your challenges with each of these sources of capital can help you much more quickly pursue the goals that are right for you. When you can achieve the goals that are important to you with less effort, in less time, and achieve better results, then you have increased your return on investing the truly most important asset you have: your time.

Below is an example showing my personality type’s strengths (I’m an ENTP) for each of the four types of capital.

Personality Type - ENTP

Source of Capital	Strengths	Challenges
Social	Makes friends easily. Loves to help people. Finds opportunities for others.	Sometimes forgets to keep in touch. Can be pushy with ideas.
Knowledge	Broad knowledge in multiple areas. Good synthesizer across many domains. Good at communicating	Gets bored easily and doesn’t go deep enough. Loses patience with teachers who do not move fast enough.

	information to others.	
Brand	Likes to be liked so has a pleasant personality. People can trust them to share what is on their mind so they know where they stand. Flexible and prefers to leave options open.	Can get overcommitted with a tendency to over promise and under deliver. Sometimes can be insensitive to others feelings. May be hard to pin down on the details – contracts are important to finalize terms.
Infrastructure	Resourceful and good at finding new ways to use what already exists when pushed up against the wall. Good at acquiring needed tools quickly.	Likes to create new things and can sometimes forget what they already have in place. Sometimes forgets to do maintenance on tools so they don't work optimally when needed.

So what does all this tell me about increasing the ROI on my projects? Let's go through an example: one goal I currently have is to sail the Northwest inside passage in six months to a year from today. Which sources of capital will my pursuit of this goal help me develop? Let's see: Social capital? Not so much, since this a goal I want to pursue on my own. Knowledge capital? Definitely - this goal both builds on my current sailing knowledge and will help me develop my skills in new areas. I'll get a great knowledge ROI from this project. Brand capital? Possibly - I'll gain bragging rights and will be able to make new connections with other people who sail based on this experience. Infrastructure capital? Yes, as pursuing this goal will require me to invest in supplies I'll need to complete the trip, so I'll be prepared to take other sailing trips in the future.

Choosing goals and projects based on the strengths of your personality type will help you get the greatest ROI in terms of social, knowledge, brand, infrastructure, and financial capital. You can learn about your own personality type's strengths and challenges for growing your sources of capital in our new Cheetah Learning 15 hour online course, [Project ROI](#).

About the Author:



Michelle LaBrosse, PMP, is an entrepreneurial powerhouse with a penchant for making success easy, fun, and fast. She is the founder of [Cheetah Learning](#), the author of the Cheetah Success Series, and a prolific [blogger](#) whose mission is to bring Project Management to the masses.

Cheetah Learning is a virtual company with 100 employees, contractors, and licensees worldwide. To date, more than 50,000 people have become “Cheetahs” using Cheetah Learning’s innovative Project Management and accelerated learning techniques.

Michelle also developed the [Cheetah Certified Project Manager \(CCPM\)](#) program based on Myers-Briggs Type Indicator personality profiling to help students master how to use their unique strengths for learning, doing projects, and negotiating. CCPM graduates are able to choose the right projects and complete those projects “cheetah fast” based on their personality. They also learn how to leverage others’ strengths which significantly improves overall project team performance. When an employer has a cadre of CCPMs on staff, they achieve whatever they set out to achieve in record time. This is why over 90% of Cheetah’s clients experience an increase in both profitability and revenue within the first year of retaining Cheetah Learning for their Project Management training needs.

Honored by the Project Management Institute (PMI®), Cheetah Learning was named Professional Development Provider of the Year at the 2008 PMI® Global Congress. A dynamic keynote speaker and industry thought leader, Michelle is recognized by PMI as one of the 25 Most Influential Women in Project Management in the world.