Who are we when we govern? Self Reflection and understanding personality types as tools for responsible and agile decision making in times of uncertainty.

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Abstract: In this day and age of persistent uncertainty, expanding global conflict and hightened complexity, developing both agility and integrity has become much more than an optional trait that is nice to have - it has become a critical part of effective decision making, especially at the higher level of governance. Without self reflection and no small amount of wisdom, public administrators risk causing more problems than they actually solve.

This paper aims to look at how understanding personality types, particularly through systems such as the Big 5, or MBTI can help both teachers of public administration and public administration officials hone in on their strengths and qualities while avoiding potentially inhenerent pitfalls, making for smoother, more agile and potentially more effective decision making.

The main argument of the paper is that before guiding others and making decisions that will impact the lives of many more, administrators need to understand themselves and the sometimes conflicting forces that shape their inner world - their perceptions, their strongly held beliefs, their values and principles and of course their reactions.

As institutions require accounting and oversight to keep them honest, so too individuals need a system of self-reflection in order to keep their biases, preconcieved judgments, impulses and reactions at bay.

We will draw on many fields of knowledge for this paper - from psychology, to sociology,from philosophy, to behavioral economics and of course public administration, weaving all of them together to paint a picture of how self reflection and understanding personality types can make us more agile, tolerant, emotionally inteligent and resilient professionals in the field of either teaching or practicing public administration.