

Quiet Cultivation

Creating an Introvert-Friendly
Work Environment





There are many factors that contribute to our professional success. Technical skills is absolutely one, and just as important is our emotional intelligence, which is directly tied to our personality.

How we show up – how we interact with others – our beliefs about who we are and what we have to offer – ALL influence our ability to be effective AND have fun along the way.

What's Your IQ*?

(use #2 pencils only, please)

* Introvert Quotient

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What's Your IQ*?

1. This psychologist coined the term “introvert” in the 1920s:

- a) Ivan Pavlov
- b) Sigmund Freud
- c) B.F. Skinner
- d) Carl Jung
- e) None of the above

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What's Your IQ*?

2. The general US population is roughly

- a) 25% innie, 75% outtie
- b) 10% innie, 90% outtie
- c) 60% innie, 40% outtie
- d) 50% innie, 50% outtie

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What's Your IQ*?

3. Introverts are:

- a) Shy
- b) Antisocial
- c) Party Poopers
- d) Energized by solitude
- e) Serial killers in waiting
- f) All of the above
- g) None of the above

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The top left photograph shows a group of people at a party. A man in a suit and a pink party hat is in the center, holding a red cup and looking excited. Two women, also wearing party hats, are sitting next to him, one blowing into a party horn. The background shows other people and wooden lockers. The top right photograph shows two people sitting at a table with a white tablecloth. Their heads are completely covered by large brown paper bags. They are holding glasses of wine and eating small appetizers. The background features a window with decorative white scrollwork.

How would you
describe yourself?
Introverted or
Extroverted?

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How To Vote via Texting

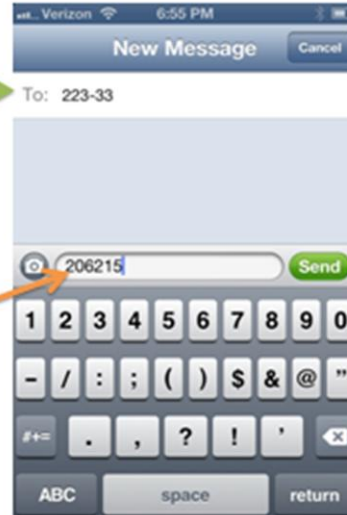
SEND A TEXT TO 22333

ANSWER THIS QUESTION:
ARE YOU AN INTROVERT OR AN
EXTROVERT?

INTROVERT: 206214

EXTROVERT: 206215

- TIPS**
1. Standard texting rates only
 2. We have no access to your phone number



Use text message/SMS voting in meetings. Your introverts won't have to speak up, and your Gen Y employees will LOVE being told to use their phones during a meeting!!

Poll Everywhere offers a free account where you can ask multiple choice or free text questions and receive up to 40 responses. Once you set up the poll in <http://www.polleverywhere.com/>, you can download it directly into your PowerPoint Presentation.

Introvert ≠ Shy



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It's about where we gain and drain energy, and how we prefer to process and communicate information

Sociologists tell us that
even the most introverted
individual will influence
10,000 people
during his or her lifetime.

Source:
Tim Elmore, Growing Leaders

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A Few Disclaimers...

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It's challenging to talk about personality types without generalizing. Being an introvert or extrovert is just one part of the complex human being that is you.

Because of the desire not to make absolute statements, you'll often hear me use the words "probably," "tend to," "might" and "most likely." Those are the best ways I can acknowledge that while there are dominant personality traits, no one matches each one or embodies 100% of them exactly. Everyone is on a continuum, and we have what I call our "core personality" and our "cultivated personality" that shifts depending on what's happening around us. And that doesn't mean we have a split personality, even though it can feel like it sometimes.

I also want to emphasize that claiming you're an introvert, extrovert or ambivert is not about putting you into a nice, neat little box that says, "oh, you're an introvert? Well, then, I know ALL about you!" As you increase your personal awareness about what makes you tick, you can use that awareness to inform, not define, you.

And these traits are shared in the spirit of offering an **explanation** for how we show up in the world, not an excuse.



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What's Your IQ*?

4. The following people are known introverts (choose all that apply):

- a) Steve Martin
- b) Eleanor Roosevelt
- c) Julia Roberts
- d) Barbara Walters
- e) Mark Zuckerberg
- f) All of the above
- g) None of the above

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The Recruiting Process



Update recruiting materials and your website to be more introvert-friendly:

Pictures: Include pictures of people working alone, feature solitary places in your office

Thoughts: Include introverts on the team in blog posts and video interviews.

Selection: Don't just take volunteers – be thoughtful about your recruiting team and deliberately include introverts.

Social Media: Use social media where introverts (both employees and candidates) can shine.

Job Posting: Notice if language in job posting might discourage introverts.



what i think

{To date, this image has received
597 likes and 1,234 repins on my
Pinterest "Team Introvert" board}



what i say

🐦 @Chohemi

2012

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The Interview Process



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Introverts in an interview situation won't be like this guy... but they won't be like this guy either!

Interview Behavior

Adequately prepare candidate for interview before it begins with job description and schedule

Allow for pauses after questions (count to 9) and be comfortable with silence

Identify preferences with questions *"Do your best ideas come to you when you are alone or working in a group? Give me an example"*

Practice active listening and don't interrupt

Encourage candidates to contact you (give them an email option) after the interview and share any thoughts or additional questions that came up for them

Workplace Inclusion



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Private Space

The Seattle campus of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation includes "a variety of open and closed 'retreat' spaces that enable different personalities to find the work environments they need"

New York Times article from March 17, 2012

Public Space

Facebook just unveiled plans for its new campus expansion, which was designed by world-famous architect Frank Gehry. It will be a single room, stretching 10 acres, where everyone will sit in the open with moveable furniture. As Mark Zuckerberg says in his own status update, *"It will be the largest open floor plan in the world,"* housing over 2,800 engineers. Forbes.com, Aug 25, 2012



BEFORE THE MEETING:

Find ways to communicate about meeting topic in advance. Don't just distribute agendas no one reads. Assign pre-work.

Give people a heads up about when and on which topics you will specifically need their input in a meeting.

Let people know where this meeting is in the scope of a process or project, i.e. will there be time for continued input afterwards, or is this the decision-making meeting.

DURING THE MEETING:

Reconsider the notion that 'talking' = 'participation'.

Develop systems for balanced meetings (token system)

Try brainwriting instead of brainstorming (search Google for "Brainwriting SMU Research" to learn more)

Call on people to contribute, but don't point out that they're quiet

AFTER THE MEETING:

Don't make a big decision at the end of the meeting when you might tend to automatically give more weight to the spoken ideas; check-in with (but don't "call out") people who may not have said much to invite an opportunity for thoughts and questions.

Invite input and consideration after the meeting.

Supervising Introverts



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Tips for supervising introverts:

Check in: Introverts can tend to be DIYers – check in to see if they need/want assistance, but don't force it on them. Notice if they really do seem to need help but aren't asking, and find a way to provide help without “rescuing” them.

Communication preference: Write more, talk less

Schedule: Don't just “pop in” to their workspace

Dig deep: Take advantage of their natural tendencies and assign projects that let them dig deep into an issue and complete the project before moving on to something else

Key Harvard Study Finding

General Population



Managers/Executives



Introverts were found to be the most effective leaders of extroverted teams (and vice versa)



<http://hbr.org/2010/12/the-hidden-advantages-of-quiet-bosses/ar1>

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Thoughtfulness: Introverts process internally and generally make a decision and take action only after sufficient consideration. They think before they speak, rather than thinking by speaking.

Calm, Cool, Collected: Because of their thoughtful nature, introverts tend to have a calming energy. This contributes to an atmosphere of trust and safety for others.

Ambition for the company (mission/vision/team), not self: Being front and center, in the spotlight, is not the typical goal of the introvert. Introverts can and do lead the charge, but the focus is always on the company, rather than self-promotion.

Takes responsibility as needed, gives credit when it's due: Their focus on the job at hand means that introverts don't feel a strong need to claim the credit or displace the blame.

Active listening skills: Introverts are keen observers and like to gather information, process it, then come to a conclusion. Most prefer to listen more than talk.

Quiet charisma: Introverted leaders quietly command the respect of those around them and draw people in. Their magnetism is less polarizing and more team-oriented.

Are these traits the exclusive domain of introverts? Absolutely not; innies and outties can both exhibit these qualities. The point is that **these qualities can be easily overlooked in introverts** who exert their influence behind the scenes and through their more vocal colleagues.

I've heard from many introverts who say that in order to be considered for leadership roles, they pushed themselves to project more extroverted qualities. This certainly expanded their comfort zone, but it also led to less job satisfaction and higher burn-out, since they had to act like someone they weren't in order to be accepted.

Grooming Introverts for Leadership



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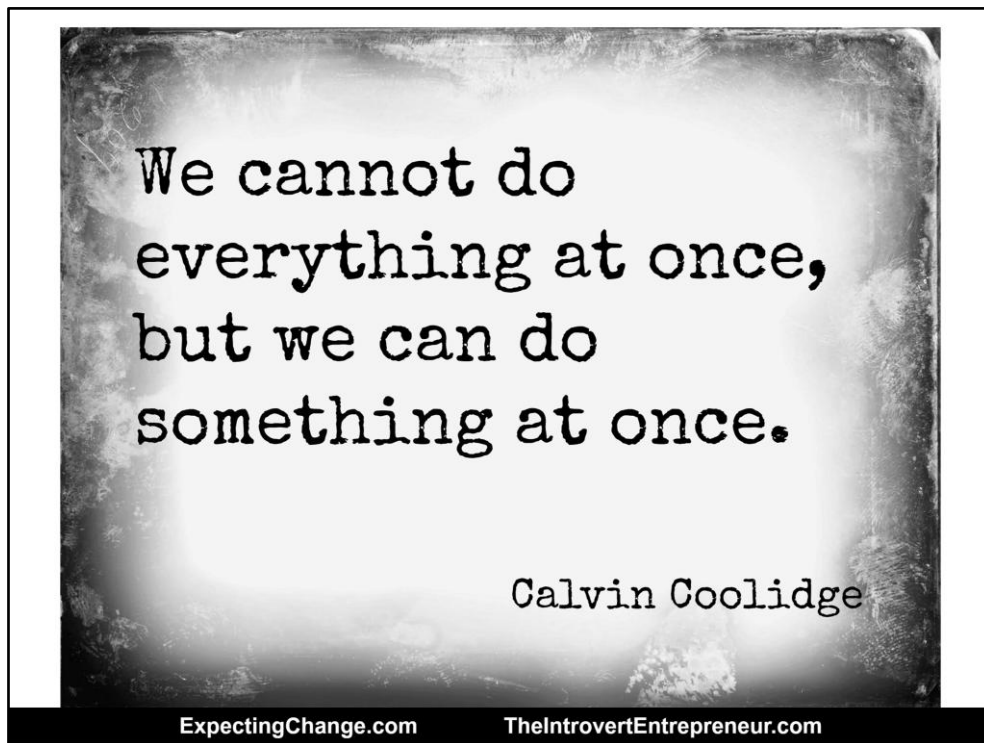
How do you support introverts standing out and being leaders, when they often just want to blend in?

Underselling: introverts stay quiet about their accomplishments, so create natural, ongoing opportunities for recognition

Unheard ideas: if the only opportunity you give is in impromptu meetings, introverts won't get a chance to shine

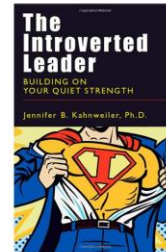
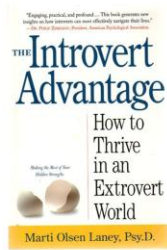
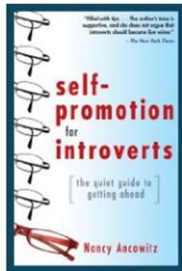
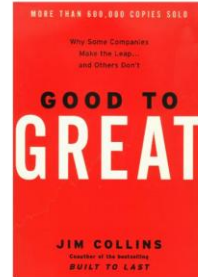
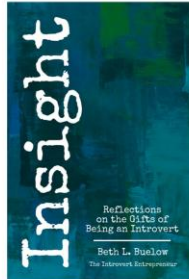
Office politics: Build relationships up and down the career ladder.

Mentoring: Strategize and plan ahead with potential leaders, building their confidence and image within the organization ("give them a fine reputation to live up to" – Dale Carnegie).



What's one action you can take this week based on what you've learned and discussed here?

Resources



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Professional Speaker, Certified Coach, Author
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Thank You!

Andrea Ballard, SPHR
Career Coach for Midlife Professionals
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