

Organizational behavior



Organizational Behavior Managing the Introvert Managing the Introvert

According to Jennifer Kahnweiler of The Wall Street Journal, there is an introvert among us. Introverts are usually less noisy in the workplace, but by all accounts, according to Jennifer, they outnumber extroverts. These introverts do not respond to the same to management as extroverts do and yet they are not only the larger part of a diverse employee group but have a depth of knowledge that is often not tapped. This paper will compare the method of management suggested in the Kahnweiler (2010) article with recent literature related to the same.

According to Kahnweiler (2010), the introvert seeks solitude, thinks first before they speak, focuses on the depth of the problem and prefer writing to talking. They love to manage projects but prefer quiet spaces to do it. They dislike interruptions and they like to finish a project before moving on to a new one. It is noted by the news article that these employees communicate best through relationships and learning to engage them is important as they frequently harbor ideas that will move the team forward.

The suggested tactic for dealing with this group of employees is to slow down in meetings, leaving space between directions. This allows this group to think about the issue and respond. Do not stop at their desk frequently. Be aware of what you need to say and bundle it into one visit. Use email or other writing tools to communicate and encourage balanced participation at meetings, allowing introverts to prepare ahead of time. (Kahnweiler, 2010).

Sauer, Felsing, & Franke et. al. (2006), describes cognitive diversity and team performance in a diverse organization. As part of the diverse team is the introvert. We often put down the introvert because Freud did not like them and they have been criticized since. Sauer tells us that true to many

other researchers, a diverse team is important and that includes the talents of the introvert. Introverts, according to Belleck, (2003) are energized by the internal world of ideas, impressions and emotion. They like to know a lot about what they experience and often build up large stores of knowledge that is often not tapped. This article supports the news article in the need of the introvert to manage projects and to finish a project before they move to a next one, assuring that it is complete. Belleck (2003) finishes her article by stating that a diverse team should include introverts as they are a stabilizing and knowledgeable base for the team as a whole. She goes on to say that providing for their communication style will yield information that has lay dormant before.

At the same time, Sauer, Felsing, and Frank support the news article in their study as they discover that personality differences were very important in driving a team forward. Diversity is important in all aspects but having those that think about the process (introvert) and those that allow external stimulus to drive the process (extrovert), once they learn to communicate manage to push a team forward more efficiently.

In conclusion, this was a very interesting experience as this writer had not noted literature about introversion before and it is very important in the continued change that organizations are doing today. In essence, when the word diversity is used, it means much more than color of skin, culture, or ability, it includes personality types working together to make the change happen. In this case, I would recommend the news article to my boss.

Resources:

Belleck, J. (2003). Understanding the introvert preference. *Journal of Nursing Education*

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Kahnweiler, J. (2010). How to manage an introvert. *The Wall Street Journal*.

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Sauer, J., Felsing, T., Franke, H. et. al. (2006). Cognitive diversity and team performance in a complex multiple task environment. *Ergonomics*. 49(10) 934-954.