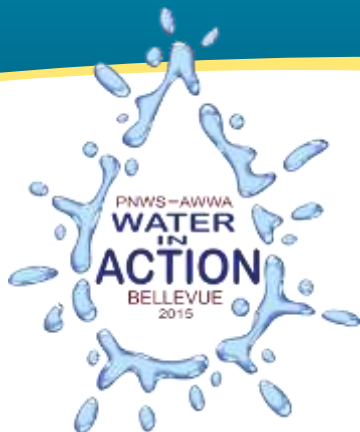




# Shying Away from Introvert Stereotypes: Impacts on Workforce Dynamics



**MWH**

**BUILDING A BETTER WORLD**

# Presentation Outline

- Background
- Common Introvert Misconceptions
- Workforce Impacts
- Summary
- Questions

# Background



- What is an introvert?

- Dictionary definition (noun):

- 1. A person who is introverted; one concerned predominantly with himself or his own feelings.
- 2. A person who is **shy**.

- Jung (main influence of Myers):

- Characterized by an inward flowing of personal energy - a withdrawal concentrating on subjective factors. Usually happy alone with a rich imagination, and prefers reflection to activity. **Can also lack confidence in relation to people and things and have a tendency to be unsociable, shy, and hesitant.**

**Numerous different definitions, but share a few main points.**

# Background – Is this important?

- **Knowing thyself**; I thought I was an extrovert (extravert), or needed to be one to be successful
  - Media, Politics, Business, Sports, Leaders
- Realized after high school, not really that extroverted
  - Took Myer Briggs and few other personalities tests
  - Required more alone time
- Work/Education environments geared towards simulation/extroverts & group dynamics
  - Open Plan office?
  - Good and bad; room for improvement



***Saw TED talk, read book and articles, and realized knowledge is key to helping “Quiet” Revolution***

# Background – Am I an Introvert?

50% are (54/46 Men; 47/53 Women; 7/10 perceive they are)

## **Most** of the time I...

- Prefer 1-on-1 conversations vs. group activities
- Rather express myself in e-mails/writing than phone/in-person
- Am not as motivated or talk to peers about wealth/fame/status
- Am told I am a good listener
- Tend to think before speaking
- Prefer not to share my work or discuss it with others until I'm finished
- Am risk-adverse (dislike taking big spontaneous risks)
- Dislike conflict
- Try to avoid scheduling lots of activities during my down-time or on the weekends
- Feel drained after a big speech or party where there is lots of people or interaction



***Agree with most things on this list? Might be an introvert.  
(No pure introvert/extrovert; varying levels)***

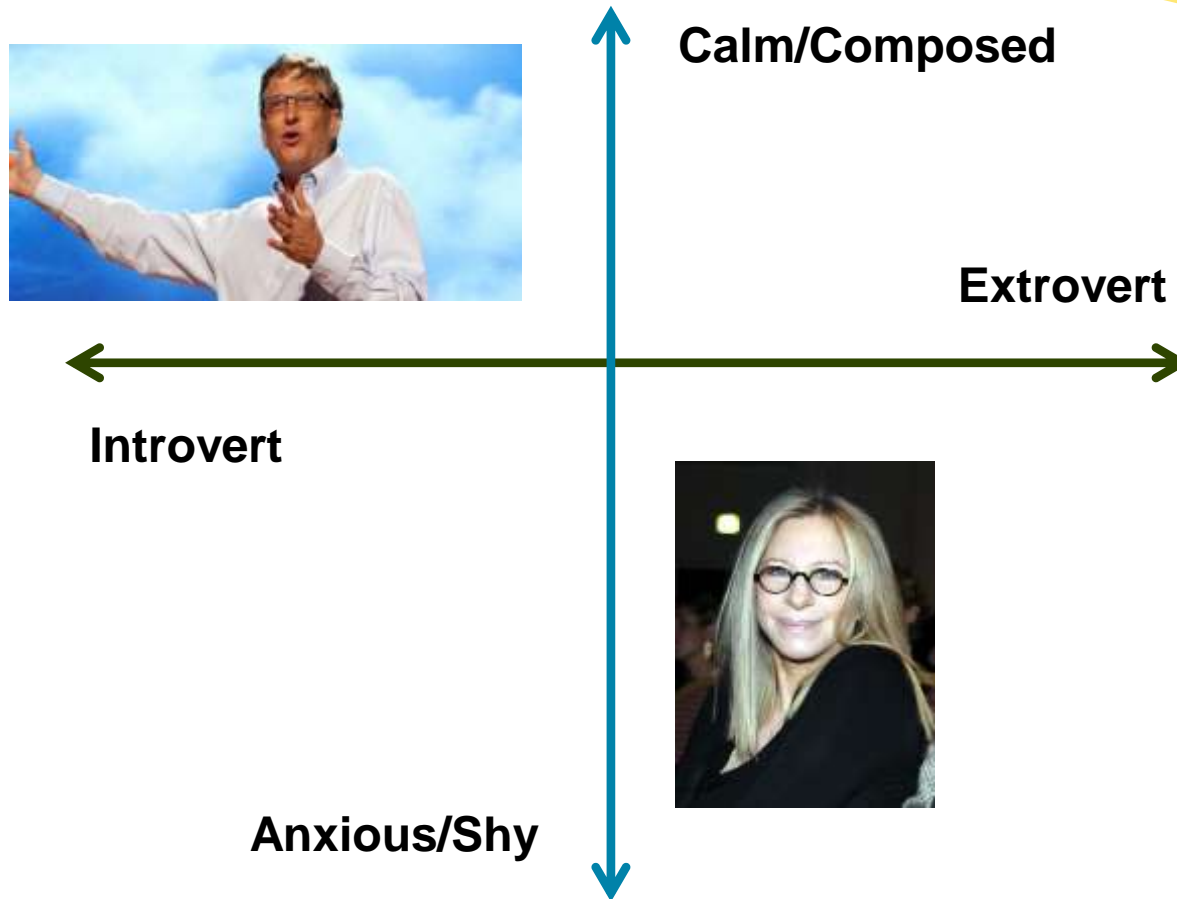
# Background – Myer Briggs

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ

- One of many different personality type tests (Big 5, 3-factor model, 16 personality factors)
- Widely used in public and corporate settings (2 million/year)
- Four main categories (16 different combinations)
- Criticisms:
  - Low repeatability (50% - 5 weeks)
  - Limited-to-no negative criticism

***Most Engineers/Scientists fall into INTJ; Management ST/NT; Customer Service – ES***

# Introvert Misconceptions - Shy



***Plenty of introverts are approachable and not necessarily shy. May just need 1-on-1 or be engaged in way to draw them out w/out over-stimulation***

# Introvert Misconceptions - Intelligence

- Extroverts get better grades in K-8
- Introverts get better grades High School/College; more go on for graduate studies
- IQ testing shows similar results
- Bold, visionary, risk-taking or calculated, focused, creativity?

“The measure of intelligence is the ability to change.”

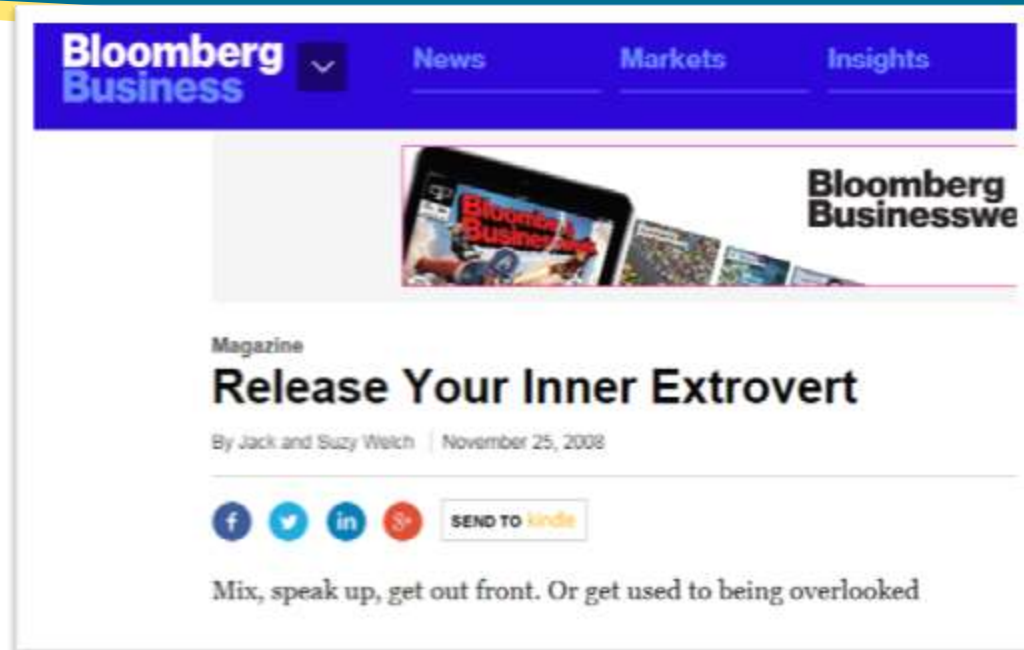
Albert Einstein

***What would happen if there were no introverts? No extroverts? Is it Nature vs. Nurture?***



# Introverts Misconceptions – Poor Leaders

- Harvard Business Review estimates 96% of managers/executives self-identify as extroverts
- 65% of Senior Execs see Introversion as barrier to becoming a leader
- 5% of Sr. Execs think introverts make good leaders
- Extrovert leaders thrive with less-proactive employees, and struggle with proactive employees
- Introverts thrive with proactive employees



***Reward-based or Risk-based?  
Chase next high (offensive) or  
mitigate for worst-case  
(defensive) ?***

# Introvert Workforce Impacts: Talents Underutilized

- Limit big group, idea sharing meetings
  - Extroverts can dominate conversation and direct ideas in one direction, or create multiple off-tangent directions
  - Make space and encourage small group sharing/breakout sessions, or allow night to sleep on ideas (formulate in writing)
- Rotate leadership/meeting presentation roles
  - Compelling topics can help overcome anxiety
- Create complementary, synergistic teams



# Introvert Workforce Impacts: Balanced, Supportive Environment

- If possible, have area(s) for focused, dedicated performance of tasks
  - Open concept offices can be deterring
- Assignment of well-defined tasks
  - Limit multi-tasking, constant direction change
- Value and engage for feedback
  - Introverts will often times see something differently than extroverts, but are more reluctant/ambivalent to speak up
- Provide feedback
  - Introverts will value feedback, and may not ask for it.

# Extrovert Workforce Impacts: Directed Energy

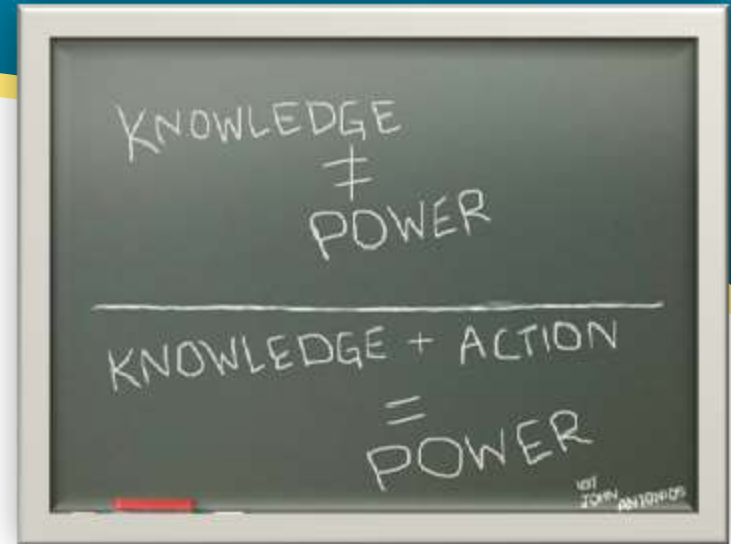


- Variety is spice of life
  - Multi-task or lots of different tasks
- Social interaction
  - Space to interact with others
- Stimulating environment
  - Light, open, activity
- Thoughtful team assignment

***Any others? Agree/Disagree?***

# Summary

- Knowledge is power
  - But need to follow up with action
- Realize where strengths lie
  - Maximize these areas
- Realize where there might be limitations
  - Find others to help compliment, or practice
- Don't be afraid to speak up!
  - Create space for tough discussions; they might not be so tough after all



# Questions?



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