

## Introverts vs Extroverts at work

Author: Kudzai Derera . November 2019

Many times people wonder how they can measure or define someone's personality. One way to figure it out is to determine where a person falls on the introvert-extrovert spectrum. *What is the difference between introverts and extroverts?* An introvert can be described as someone who is shy and prefers to be in calm situations whereas an extrovert is an outgoing, socially and confident person. Extroverts like to interact with others whenever they get a chance and they enjoy being in the spotlight. Introverts like to think long and hard even about the mistakes they have made and are less likely to take risks. They *do overthink* and *hide their feelings*. Many employers firmly believe that their staff works best when their workplaces are perfectly tailored to the ideal of the extroverted employee as these are deemed to be the most successful in the workplace.

### Are extroverts more successful than introverts?

This comes from the notion that in today's society an extrovert who captivates other people's attention and sets the tone is said to be more competent than an introvert who sits quietly in the corner and listens. Extroverts are not only considered to be more qualified and intelligent because of their sociability but also more interesting and cooperative. They are seen as being more physically attractive and nonchalant. The introverts, on the other hand, are pale, nondescript and awkward – maybe even has bad skin or seems to be from a different planet. Different cultures value different temperaments therefore it depends on how the culture perceives it. The western culture believes that extroverts are more successful at work because they are able to stand out in front of crowds in a competitive world. The Japanese and Koreans believe the introverts are more successful and respectful since them speaking without being asked is considered arrogant, inappropriate, big-mouthed and a sign of bad manners.

### Can introverts and extroverts work together?

It is very common today to work in open offices, perform group-brainstorming sessions and present workshop results in interactive PowerPoint presentations. This kind of work setup shows that extroverts and introverts can actually work together. Although introverts are constantly interrupted, the best way to work is as a team and is surely influenced by the many successes achieved by big working groups in recent decades. Think about Wikipedia or the Linux operating system, big groups of people may be behind these great accomplishments, but the actual teamwork generally does not take place in an open-plan office or a meeting room. Rather, developers usually sit at home, alone, in front of their computer screens. A good deal of significant and creative achievements have come about in private. Steve Wozniak built Apple's first personal computer by himself at home; Newton formulated the law of gravity alone, sans brainstorming or group discussions; and J.K. Rowling wrote Harry Potter in solitude.

Modern workplaces make extroverts happy. However, companies risk squandering their full potential if

they ignore their introverted employees. Throughout history we have noted that the finest inventors are artists, and as such work best alone. If you are lucky enough to have such a person in your company, you do not want to force them into committees or teams, but rather let them work on revolutionary projects alone. To provide both extroverts and introverts with a suitable environment, make your workspace more flexible: give employees the chance to exchange ideas but also to withdraw and be alone. Retractable walls are an excellent solution, allowing both integration and privacy.

Kudzai Derera is the Business Systems Manager at Industrial Psychology Consultants (Pvt) Ltd, a management and human resources consulting firm.

LinkedIn: <https://zw.linkedin.com/in/kudzaiderera>

Phone: +263 242 481946-48/481950

Mobile: +263 773 523 084

Email: [kudzai@ipcconsultants.com](mailto:kudzai@ipcconsultants.com)

Main Website: [www.ipcconsultants.com](http://www.ipcconsultants.com)

<https://thehumancapitalhub.com/articles/Introverts-Vs-Extroverts-At-Work>