More than Meets the “I”

Tammie Dedmon-Mason
USC Admission

Margarita Landeros
Camino Nuevo Charter Academy

Ruthie Portillo
Camino Nuevo Charter Academy

Noël Viramontes
USC Admission
Agenda and Goals

- Define the “I”
- Dispel myths about introversion
- Recognize advantages and disadvantages to the personality trait
- Identify strategies
- Narratives
- Activity
- Provide resources for self-assessment and learning

“Don’t underestimate me because I’m quiet. I know more than I say, think more than I speak and observe more than you know.” ~ Michaela Chung
How do you define introversion?
Myths

- Fast talkers are more competent and likeable than slow ones.
- Introverts can fix their problems by becoming more like an extrovert.
- Introverts are shy.
- Introverts cannot be extroverts.
- Most of the population is extroverted.
- Introverts do not like to lead.

What might be other myths you heard before?
Famous Introverts
Defining the “I”

“I like getting my energy from dealing with the ideas, pictures, memories, and reactions that are inside my head, in my inner world. I often prefer doing things alone or with one or two people I feel comfortable with. I take time to reflect so that I have a clear idea of what I’ll be doing when I decide to act. Ideas are almost solid things for me. Sometimes I like the idea of something better than the real thing.”

- Myers Briggs Type Indicator

“People who prefer quieter, more minimally stimulating environments.”

- Susan Cain, *Quiet* in a TIME Q&A

“Tend to recharge by spending time alone. They lose energy from being around people for long periods of time, particularly large crowds”

- Fast Company article, using Carl Jung and other influences, “Are You An Introvert Or An Extrovert? What It Means For Your Career”
I might be an introvert if...

- I am seen as "reflective" or "reserved."
- I feel comfortable being alone and like things I can do on my own.
- I prefer to know just a few people well.
- I sometimes spend too much time reflecting and don't move into action quickly enough.
- I sometimes forget to check with the outside world to see if my ideas really fit the experience.

“Most inventors and engineers I’ve met are like me. They’re shy and they live in their heads. The very best of them are artists. And artists work best alone…” ~ Steve Wozniak
What does the “I” look like in the office/workplace?

- Uninterested, aloof
- Anti-social
- Limited verbal contribution during staff meetings
- Declining social activities after hours or leaving early
- Eating alone
- Non-confrontational, easy-going attitude

“How clearly and concisely you can articulate your thoughts”

“People inspire you, or they drain you — pick them wisely.” ~ Hans F. Hansen
Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages
- Thorough thinkers
- Manage risks well
- Ability to focus and willingness to explore topics in depth
- Asynchronous communication
- Work well in areas they are passionate about
- Great researchers, writers and strategizers
- Work very well in small groups
- Listen and observe well
- May provide unorthodox perspective
- Exude calmness

Disadvantages
- Often passed over for awards, or distinctions and promotion
- May be perceived as uninterested
- May lose the opportunity to contribute to conversation because of the time they need to process
- May prefer to work on one task at a time
- May struggle with voicing ideas in large group setting
Strategies

For the “I”

- Understand your need to recharge
- Be proactive in knowing your schedule
- Communicate to your strength (writing)
- Foster a strong relationship with your manager
- Network one-on-one
- Find your area of passion and build on it
- If you fear public speaking, practice in a setting that feels comfortable

“In an extroverted society, the difference between an introvert and an extrovert is that an introvert is often unconsciously deemed guilty until proven innocent.” ~ Criss Jami
Strategies cont.

To Engage the “I”

- Recognize the strengths of the “I”
- Rethink how the job interview is conducted
- Meeting agendas, virtual brainstorming sessions, announce brainstorming sessions in advance
- Cleanse yourself of “introvert bias”
- Push them to brag (a little)
- Give them a chance to shine
- Mentoring programs
- Take the time to look at who has received accolades and ensure all work is honored.
- Allow introverts time to think before they speak.
- Do not assume that alone means “lonely” rather know it is time for the “I” to recharge.
- Provide uninterrupted space for introverts and limit open office plans
- Request that the “I” takes the lead on a project
Interviews

Tim Brunold, Dean, USC Admission

Sarah Esquivel, Assistant Director, USC Sol Price School of Public Policy

Chantelle Frazee, Assistant Principal, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy

Julie Jhun, Principal, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy

Chris Miller, Assistant Principal, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy

Tom Studdert, Vice President of Learning and Development, Discover Org
On admission work…
“Know you’ll be uncomfortable.”
“Playing a role, like an actor”

On being in a leadership role…
● Be aware of politics in the workplace, it present different challenges for an introvert

On challenges…
“I have difficulty networking with large professional groups because I take each relationship with more weight and I cannot quickly traverse large social structures.”

On looking beyond louder voices…
“Effective leadership is harnessing the full-potential out of your team and leaders have to be aware of it.”

On values…
“Introverts are very good at quality control for high-stakes decision-making.”

“It’s okay to cross the street to avoid making small talk.”
**Interviews - Extrovert**

On being in a leadership role…
- Try to steer clear from open brainstorming.
- If decision making is urgent, giving options is best.
- Making sure there is time for you as a leader to clarify and ask questions.
- “Own self disclosure” to ensure that there is a level of comfort and trust.
- In terms of self promotion for others, framing the conversation as something that worked well and asking for permission to share on their behalf.
- Written communication works well to give the receiver time to process their thoughts.

“Quiet leadership” is not an oxymoron.
What would make you feel most appreciated?
Resources

Books, articles
- Quiet

Personality assessments
- MBTI

Online forum, extended learning
- Introvert Spring

Appreciation Language

“Quiet People Have the Loudest Minds...” ~ Professor Stephen Hawking
If you have follow up thoughts you’d like to share...

**USC Admission**

Tammie Dedmon-Mason  
[tededmon@usc.edu](mailto:tededmon@usc.edu)

and

Noël Viramontes  
[nviramon@usc.edu](mailto:nviramon@usc.edu)

**Camino Nuevo Charter Academy**

Maggie Landeros  
[margarita.landeros@caminonuevo.org](mailto:margarita.landeros@caminonuevo.org)

and

Ruthie Portillo  
[ruthie.portillo@caminonuevo.org](mailto:ruthie.portillo@caminonuevo.org)