

Introversion: Thriving and Leading in an Extroverted World

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Introduction

The human race has defined itself via character traits since the dawn of time, from the four humors of ancient Greece to Carl Jung's personality theory. As we have labeled our characteristics, biases have emerged. Within present day United States of America, there is a definite bias towards extroversion. Extroverts dominate our media. They filter through our social media newsfeeds, shout from our television screens, and occupy our crowded subways with their spontaneous performances, both intentional and coincidental.

Educational facilities and work environments seek out and encourage outgoing, charismatic individuals. As a society, we have been told that leaders are gregarious and must enjoy being in the spotlight. Classes and self-help books are pushed upon those who fail to fit the extroverted ideal. Quiet children bring notes home to worried parents and, in some cases, are forced to endure therapy meant to "fix" their introversion. Negative labels abound. Those who fail to meet the extroverted ideal are labeled as "arrogant," "cold," "socially awkward," and "shy."

Yet forty percent of the United States population identifies as introverted. Indeed, introversion can be linked back to Biblical times. Until relatively recently, introversion was actually the ideal which men aspired to fulfill and in many Eastern cultures, the ideal still remains. Yet, within the United States, that forty percent are often made to feel ostracized or damaged while their extroverted peers are praised and promoted.

Within the theatrical community, that bias towards extroversion can seem impossible to overcome, an insurmountable mountain. In the realm of stage management, realizing and admitting that one is an introvert may seem like a career-ending sentence. The theater is a world of projected voices, loud personalities, and glamor; a stage manager must be able to be heard in

the midst of chaos. In a field that aims to build large audience and entertain the masses, how can an introverted individual not only survive, but thrive? How can an introvert manage a rehearsal room and run a technical rehearsal and performance calls?

Despite the cultural bias towards extroversion, introverts are just as capable of managing teams and running productions as their counterparts. In some cases, not only can introverts match their extroverted counterparts, but outperform them. Theater is run through adaption and each production is different from the last. Depending on the production team and director, an introverted stage manager can be the ideal. Indeed, most theatrical production can and do benefit from introverts on their production teams and in their offices.

Background

Defined by Merriam Webster as “the state of or tendency toward being wholly or predominately concerned with and interested in one's own mental life,” it is estimated forty percent of the United States population possess the character trait, introversion. Often described as withdrawn, antisocial, or cold, introverts may often feel as though they've been afflicted.

Despite introversion being an innate character trait, many people feel that it is something that should be changed. As will be discussed later in this paper, many introverts are bombarded by the “extrovert ideal.” In a recent survey conducted as part of the 2013 Firstline Veterinary Team Trends Study, it was found that 14.5% of introverted participants believed that their introversion hurt their career. Another 24.2% of introverts answered “maybe.” Whereas 9.5% of extroverts answered “maybe” and nobody believed their extroversion damaged their career.

Despite the belief that introversion can be changed, studies have proven that the trait is at least partly genetic. In *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, Susan Cain writes:

Extroversion is in our DNA – literally, according to some psychologists. The trait has been found to be less prevalent in Asia and Africa than in Europe and America, whose populations descend largely from the migrants of the world. It makes sense, say these researchers, that world travelers were more extroverted than those who stayed home – and that they passed on their traits to their children and their children's children. 'As Personality traits are genetically transmitted,' writes the psychologist Kenneth Olson, 'each succeeding wave of emigrants to a new continent would give rise over time to a population of more engaged individuals than reside in the emigrants' continent of origin.' (28)

As is logically discussed in the above excerpt, extroversion has been passed along through the generations. Similarly, introversion has also been shared through the generations.

One theory suggests that introversion has to do with the wiring within the brain. To be specific, the blood flows differently within the brains of introverts and extroverts. The path of blood within an introverted brain is longer and focused on the parasympathetic system, whereas extroverts have longer blood flow patterns that focus on the sympathetic system. The parasympathetic nervous system is the branch of the nervous system responsible for homeostasis. The sympathetic system, which is the focus of an extrovert's blood flow, is known for “fight or flight” response. In contrast, introverts' brains are wired to respond to stress by returning to equilibrium.

Another piece of evidence suggests that introversion is a genetic trait linked to the Dopamine D4 receptor, or D4DR, gene, which affects the neurotransmitter dopamine. Dopamine is believed to be responsible for the reward and pleasure centers of the brain. A sensitivity, or lack thereof, to Dopamine is believed to be responsible with an individual's placement on the scale of introversion and extroversion. An individual with a shortened D4DR gene, otherwise known as an introvert, is much more sensitive to the brain's feel-good chemical. This sensitivity to dopamine means that introverts need “zone out” to protect themselves from overstimulation. Whereas extroverts, who lack this sensitivity, often feel the need to chase after rewards to trigger dopamine within the brain. Cain writes, “Extroverts seem to be more susceptible than introverts to the reward-seeking cravings of the old brain.” (Cain 158)

A well-known professor at Harvard's Laboratory for Child Development created a system to evaluate and predict whether infants were likely to develop into introverts or extroverts. Dr. Jerome Kagan and his team exposed the children to new stimuli, such as popping balloons or

new voices and smells. Dr. Kagan's experiment is discussed within *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*. Susan Cain writes, “The high-reactive infants, the 20 percent who'd hollered at the mobiles bobbing above their heads, were more likely to have developed serious, careful personalities. The low-reactive infants – the quiet ones – were more likely to have become relaxed and confident types. (Cain 100) In other words, low-reactive infants were likely to grow into extroverted adults and the high-reactive infants became introverts.

While this may seem counter-intuitive, Dr. Kagan and his team believe that the reactions of the children to external stimuli mirrors the internal reactions of their adult counterparts. As the children grow into adults and become more familiar with the world surrounding them, their parasympathetic system is also developing. The parasympathetic nervous system eventually begins allowing the children to relax and settle, which explains the calm, collected persona many introverts display later in life.

The study also discusses other physiological evidence to suggest introversion as a genetic trait in the twenty percent of participating children. Cain writes, “High-reactive children pay what one psychologist calls “alert attention” to people and things. They literally use more eye movements than others to compare choices before making a decision. It's as if they process more deeply – sometimes consciously, sometimes not – the information they take in about the world.” (Cain 101) The children are noticing not just the items they fear, but the world in general more than their low-reactive counterparts.

Dr. Jerome Kagan and his colleagues followed the participants throughout their lives, checking in occasionally to run further tests and confirm their suspicions. As young children, the participants were used in a guilt or conscience study. The children were given a toy by a young

woman, who asked the participants to be careful as the toy was her favorite. The toy, as planned, broke after a few minutes. The high-reactive children were more upset and displayed more regret over having broken the toy. The study suggested that the high-reactive, or introverted, children were more aware of their actions and the consequences attached, both in regards to themselves and others.

These sensitivities are not always positive attributes. High-reactive children, or introverts, are more likely to develop depression or social anxiety disorders than their low-reactive peers. The correlation between introversion and depression links back to the D4DR gene. As is commonly known, low levels of Serotonin cause clinical depression. Within the psychological field it is believed that the levels of serotonin may make an individual more responsive to dopamine. As discussed earlier, it is commonly accepted that a sensitivity to dopamine is the cause of introversion. It has also been discovered that high-reactive girls are more likely to have a short allele in the Serotonin transporter, or SERT, gene. This short allele has been linked to clinical depression.

Due to the belief that introverted children are more aware of their environment, it is also believed that high-reactive children are more susceptible to their environment. According to Jay Belsky, high-reactive children are more likely to become overwhelmed by childhood adversity. Introverted children have a harder time navigating familiar tensions, such as divorce, moving, or abuse. However, high-reactive children, Belsky believes, also stand to gain more from positive environments.

In other words, the sensitivities and the strengths are a package deal. High-reactive kids who enjoy good parenting, child care, and a stable home environment tend to have *fewer* emotional problems and more social skills than

their lower-reactive peers, studies show. Often they're exceedingly empathic, caring, and cooperative. They work well with others. They are kind, conscientious, and easily disturbed by cruelty, injustice, and irresponsibility. They're successful at the things that matter to them. They don't necessarily turn into class presidents or stars of the school play, Belsky told me, though this can happen, too: 'For some it's becoming the leader of their class. For others it takes the form of doing well academically or being well-liked. (Cain 111)

Introverts, unlike their extroverted peers, prefer to spend the majority of time within their own minds, cultivating their ideas and passions. Unlike extroverts who tend to jump into a variety of activities, introverts prefer intense engagement in few activities. In *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*, Cain writes, "Introverts often stick with their enthusiasms. This gives them a major advantage as they grow, because true self-esteem comes from competence, not the other way around." (Cain 258)

To summarize, introverts are known for a variety of things both good and bad. Beth L. Buelow writes in *Insight: Reflections on the Gifts of Being an Introvert*, "That said, there are lots of reasons to celebrate being an introvert. This is my personal list, to get the celebration started: depth of curiosity, ability to be alone, quiet energy, close listening, introspection, close friendships, self-contained, and looking before leaping." (Buelow 42 – 43)

Strengths of Introverts

What many people may find surprising is that introverts can, and often do, make strong leaders. It is estimated that forty percent of executives are self-described introverts. Despite what Harvard Business School and much of the modern media would like for people to believe, introversion is not a weakness and extroversion is not necessarily a strength. In fact, when discussing high-powered CEOs, it has been discovered that the largest downside of introverted leader, only affect the introvert themselves. Less charismatic leaders simply make less than their more extroverted and enthusiastic counterparts. “Brigham Young University management professor Bradley Agle studied the CEOs of 128 major companies and found that those considered charismatic by their top executives had bigger salaries, but not better corporate performance.” (Cain 53) While introverted leaders may sometimes resent the fact that they have a lower salary, introverted CEOs can take pride in the fact that the corporations and companies they lead are just as successful, if not more successful, than those run by their higher paid, extroverted colleagues. Employers can also take reassurance in the fact that introverts can make great employees and wonderful leaders.

In her book, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, Susan Cain refers to Jim Collins' book, *Good to Great*. Within his book, Collins researched every company that has made the Fortune 500 list. Collins' research team eventually selected eleven of the top performing corporations, seeking to discover the key to excellence.

While researching the eleven corporations, Collins inadvertently discovered a trend regarding leadership styles. Cain writes:

Collins hadn't set out to make a point about quiet leadership. When he started his research, all he wanted to know was what characteristics made a company

outperform its competition. He selected eleven standout companies to research in depth. Initially he ignored the question of leadership altogether, because he wanted to avoid simplistic answers. But when he analyzed what the highest-performing companies had in common, the nature of their CEOs jumped out at him. *Every single one of them was led by an unassuming man like Darwin Smith.* Those who worked with these leaders tended to describe them with the following words: quiet, humble, modest, reserved, shy, gracious, mild-mannered, self-effacing, understated. [sic]

The lesson, says Collins, is clear. We don't need giant personalities to transform companies. We need leaders who build not their own egos but the institutions they run. (Cain 54-55)

While Collins does not refer to introversion or extroversion explicitly, the traits used to describe the leaders of these companies are often used to describe introverts. Many of the terms are often listed as synonyms for introversion within in the dictionary.

An introverted stage manager would similarly seek to further the production. A stage manager with a large personality could be extremely detrimental to a production, since the main goal of a stage manager is to further the production. An introvert would be able to do what is necessary for a production without seeking the approval of their colleagues and team members. Considering how often stage management is described as a thankless job, a stage manager must be willing and able to work under those conditions.

Jim Collins sentiments were echoed by Jennifer B. Kahnweiler in *The Introverted Leader: Building on Your Quiet Strength*, "For instance, one study looked at the fit of city managers. The researchers determined that introverted city managers who were inwardly

oriented, reflective, and consider deeply before acting are more likely to have a longer tenure.” (Kahnweiler 44) Similarly, a stage manager who is able to consider deeply is less likely to make a mistake, which in turn would likely keep them employed.

These excerpts regarding introverts and why they make successful leaders are echoed throughout psychology research and introversion “help” books. In her article, “Leading as an Introvert,” Stephanie Taylor Christensen writes, “Introverted leaders aren't concerned with running the show. They're more adept at empowering employees to be proactive in their decision-making.”

Studies have also shown that introverts are better at empowering proactive employees. Due to their humility, employees feel more secure approaching introverted leaders with ideas and solutions. Introverted leaders are more likely, not only to listen to the proposal, but also more likely to put their employees ideas into action.

It is of utmost importance that cast, crew, and production team members feel comfortable approaching the stage management team with any concerns. An introverted stage manager is more likely to listen to an individual's concern and properly process the concern before implementing a solution. An introverted stage manager is also more likely to listen to other team members' solutions and implement the plan. This likelihood is due to both the ability to absorb information, but also due to their ability to forgo recognition.

Due to their sensitivity to dopamine, introverted leaders are less likely to take extreme risks in the pursuit of gratification. Cain writes, “Introverts, in contrast, are constitutionally programmed to downplay reward – to kill their buzz, you might say – and scan for problems.” (Cain 166) Due to the chemical difference within their brains, introverts are able to take a step back and think things through differently than their extroverted counterparts.

“They aren’t hell bent on being the most popular person in the group, or getting that promotion, finding Mr Right, or indeed any other external events beyond their immediate control, and their inward focus allows them to gain contentment from being alone with their thoughts.” (Blissett) Blissett’s sentiments echo those of many other writers of introversion. An introverted leader has an easier time ignoring the carrot being dangled at the end of the stick, looking before each step and analyzing their journey and the journey of their team. An introverted leader is constantly evaluating their surroundings and the factors that play into their reality. This awareness would allow an introverted stage manager the ability to notice that something is off before it disaster strikes. Noticing the smaller details can prevent small artistic changes or major catastrophe and safety issues while running a production, particularly in larger scale productions with significant automation.

Having a constant state of awareness also allows an introverted leader the opportunity to notice schisms within their team and address the issue quickly and efficiently. This skill is extremely important when maintaining a production. A schism within a cast or artistic team can not only cause strained relationships, but can also lead to a poorer quality of production. Whereas a more extroverted leader may have to fight through a form of tunnel vision to evaluate the progression of the journey.

Psychologist Joseph Newman has performed studies on introverts' and extroverts' reactions to mistakes. In his lab at the University of Wisconsin, participants play a response game. In the study, participants are supposed to hit a button for certain numbers while ignoring others. If you press correctly, you gain points. Press the button for the wrong number and you lose points. When a mistake is made introverts pause whereas extroverted participants speed up. As a result, introverts tend to do better on the program than extroverts.

Introverts also tend to compare new information with their expectations, he says. They ask themselves, 'Is this what I thought would happen? Is it how it should be?' And when the situation falls short of expectations, the form associations between the moment of disappointment and whatever was going on in their environment at the time of the disappointment. These associations let them make accurate predictions about how to react to warning signals in the future.” (Cain 166)

The ability to slow down and reflect means that introverts are much less likely to rush through decisions that can negatively impact a company, a production, or themselves. Rather than make rash decisions or getting caught up in the “thrill of the chase,” introverts prefer maintaining a steady pace. If any member of a production team should avoid pursuing glory and the “thrill of the chase” it should be the stage manager, who is responsible for the safe and effective running of the production.

Part of maintaining a steady pace means that many introverts prefer to dedicate themselves to a single task at a time. They may become overwhelmed when they attempt to multitask too many tasks. However, this desire to work singularly means that introverted employees or leaders are less likely to miss details that a fast-talking, risk-taking extrovert may overlook. “Introverts often work more slowly and deliberately. They like to focus on one task at a time and can have mighty powers of concentration. They're relatively immune to the lures of wealth and fame.” (Cain 11) A stage manager with the ability to work deliberately and concentrate is likely to have more complete paperwork and be aware of many smaller details that an extroverted stage manager may overlook.

Introverted leaders are also less likely to give up on projects than their extroverted

counterparts. Persistence and focus come much more naturally to introverts. Through this persistence, introverts allow themselves more time to properly evaluate a challenge. “Introverts think before they act, digest information thoroughly, stay on task longer, give up less easily, and work more accurately.” (Cain 168) By allowing themselves more time to commit to and evaluate challenges, an introvert is less likely to make costly mistakes.

What is especially interesting is that introverts are even able to outperform extroverts in any task that require persistence. Through patience and determination, introverted leaders are able to work through anything that may seem challenging. In *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*, Susan Cain writes, “Introvert persistence was more than a match for extrovert buzz, in other words, even at a task where social skills might be considered at a premium.” (Cain 168) In the case where extreme challenges may occur, an introverted stage manager is better equipped to tackle the challenge. Due to their ability to work for long hours on similar tasks and their continual persistence, an introvert is less likely to lose heart and grow discouraged when a production hits an unanticipated snag that requires a significant input of time and self.

Due to the fact that introverts have the capacity for persistence, introverts are often able to put off rewards. As discussed earlier, an introverts' persistence is also linked to the D4DR gene. “Introverts also seem to be better than extroverts at delaying gratification, a crucial life skill associated with everything from higher SAT scores and income to lower body mass index.” (Cain 161)

Introverted leaders tend to be more creative than their extroverted. “One of the most interesting findings, echoed by later studies, was that the more creative people tended to be socially poised introverts.” (Cain 74) Introverts, who process the world around them inwardly,

better communicate their thoughts and intentions through other mediums. An extrovert, on the other hand, reacts to the world quickly and often vocally.

Within the realm of stage management, the ability to think things through and a strong sense of creativity can be extremely beneficial. When an unfortunate challenge arises, an introverted stage manager will have the ability to look at the challenge in a wide variety of ways. This ability allows for creative solutions and approaches that may not have been discovered if a challenge had not been examined from each direction.

It is not that extroverts cannot and are not creative, but that introverts prefer solitude, which helps introverts finesse their creative skills. Solitude is needed to partake in Deliberate Practice, which is a highly structured form of practice with the aim of improving performance. Susan Cain discussed Deliberate Practice and introversion with the research psychologist Anders Ericsson. “In many fields, Ericsson told me, “It’s only when you’re alone that you can engage in Deliberate Practice, which he has identified as the key to exceptional achievement. When you practice deliberately, you identify the tasks or knowledge that are just out of your reach, strive to upgrade your performance, monitor your progress, and revise accordingly.” (Cain 80) Introverts tend to have the patience and persistence for Deliberate Practice, which allows them to better train their creative skills.

In addition, introverts tend to have strong written communication skills. These skills are of utmost importance in today’s modern theatrical world, where the bulk of communication with a production team occurs via the internet and detailed report. Having a strong written communication style also allows an introverted stage manager the time and ability to create the proper phrasing of a specific challenge or request. This skill set allows the stage manager to better avoid unnecessary conflict that may be caused by a misunderstanding of

written tone.

Another strength of introverts is empathy. As discussed earlier, introverts have a higher likelihood of a strong guilt reaction. Introverts are better able to understand the struggles of their colleagues.

“It's as if they have thinner boundaries separating them from other people's emotions and from the tragedies and cruelties of the world. They tend to have unusually strong consciences. They avoid violent movies and TV shows; they're acutely aware of the consequences of a lapse in their own behavior. In social settings they often focus on subjects like personal problems, which others consider too heavy.” (Cain 136)

Because they are better able to understand and sympathize with the struggles of others, colleagues and employees may feel more comfortable approaching an introverted leader when they are struggling.

The ability to empathize is believed to be hardwired into the brains of introverts. Dr. Elaine Aron, a research psychologist, believes that due to their ability to process their environments more deeply, introverts are better able to notice subtle changes that their extroverted counterparts may miss. Due to this ability, introverts are much more sensitive to those around them. “Aron and a team of scientists have also found that when sensitive people see faces of people experiencing strong feelings, they have more activation than others do in areas of the brain associated with empathy and with trying to control strong emotions.” (Cain 138) There have been studies that suggest that an introvert's sensitivity is also genetically based. It has been suggest that sensitivity is linked to a gene variant of serotonin-transporter-linked polymorphic region, or 5-HTTLPR.

While stage managers must be firm with policies and guidelines, a stage manager must also have a degree of empathy. Theater is a totally human craft, created by people, with people, and for people. It is of utmost importance that a stage manager understand the element of humanity within our field. It is important that a stage manager is able to pick up on subtle changes within their cast and crew, as even the most subtle change in attitude or behavior has the ability to affect a performance. Once a worrisome change is noticed, a stage manager must be able to discuss the situation with the individual in question. This discussion requires a tact and understanding with which most introverted stage managers are better equipped.

As leaders, introverts are able to present a calm and cool persona. Though this is partly due to their genetics and the D4DR gene, introverts are much less likely to “wing it.” Introverts, being self-aware, are more likely to prepare for situations. Introverts think things through and prefer to analyze situations. “Introverted leaders who have developed presence also consciously *prepare* for unanticipated happenings.” (Kahnweiler 22)

A stage manager must always be prepared and anticipate the needs of the production team, the cast, and the crew. If members of a production feel that a stage manager is flying by the seat of their pants, they are less likely to put their trust in the stage management team. As discussed earlier, an introvert is more likely to be more persistent in their work, noticing small details that may be overlooked. An introverted stage manager is likely to have thoroughly pursued their script, paperwork, and notes, creating detailed lists of possible troubleshooting and escape clauses.

This preparation allows introverts to anticipate the needs of their teams and projects. The introverted leader has the ability to foresee challenges and know how to either prevent the challenges before they occur. Otherwise, they may be better equipped to handle the challenge

once it arises. In the article “Introverts Can Make Great Leaders” the following is discussed as a strength, “Exude Calm: Introverted leaders are low-key in times of crisis, they project a reassuring, calm confidence.” (ESCAN 5)

Most importantly, a stage manager must be able to remain calm even as others panic. It is the responsibility of a stage manager to turn chaos into a color-coded, well-organized situation. An introverted stage manager is especially equipped to shut down the chaos due to their brain chemistry, but also through their preparation. When all others are losing their heads, the stage manager must be able to calmly assess a situation and restore order to the room. No member of a production wants to look to their stage manager and see panic. A nervous stage manager can only lead to nervous production members, which in turn will negatively impact the performance. When a scenario is discovered during tech, there is a significant chance that an introverted stage manager may have already anticipated the need and envisioned a solution.

An introvert's low-key personality also allows them to better communicate their own ideas and the ideals of the company. Due to their lack of excitability, it is less likely that an introvert's discussion points will be lost in their enthusiasm. “They can use their own low-key style and calm demeanor to effectively communicate insights and innovative ideas.” (Administrative Professional Today) As a stage manager, excitability can be dangerous for a production. Rather than slowly discuss a situation or map out a daily plan, an excitable stage manager may get caught up in the thrill of production, losing track of their goal within the conversation. However, as will be discussed later in this paper, it is possible for an extrovert's enthusiasm to drown out an introvert's calm demeanor in a meeting.

In addition, an introvert is able to utilize silence in a way that extroverts are not. Whether they utilize the silence to make a point or allow a thought to simmer, “introverts are less afraid of

silence than extroverts.” (Kahnweiler 39) Not only are introverts less fearful of silence, but they are better equipped to use the silence to their advantage. As discussed earlier, introverts easily pick up subtleties missed by their counterparts. Amid the silence, an introvert is able to pick up on minor details and process them. In her book, *Insight: Reflections on the Gifts of Being an Introvert*, Beth L. Buelow writes, “We’re also likely to be internal processors; we think before we speak, rather than thinking out loud. We live from the inside, out.[sic]” (Buelow 8) Introverts thrive in the quiet, using the silence to think evaluate their surroundings and address a situation in a thoughtful, well-rounded way.

Since silence feeds the mind of an introvert and allows them to prepare and think things through, it allows them to maintain their calming persona. Their ability to exude a calm and collected persona allows them to maintain a calmer work environment than may exist in an environment controlled by extroverts. “With superior reasoning and better decision-making skills, they’re able to maintain longer-lasting relationships and exude calm in our frenzied world where phones bleep incessantly, emails pour in and waiting more than two minutes for a coffee in Starbucks is liable to cause a riot.” (Blissett)

Introverts also tend to be more cautious. They think things through, examining every possible outcome. “Put another way, introverts tend to measure twice and cut once.” (Buelow 29) As mentioned earlier, introverted leaders also tend to spend more time preparing. The preparation is also another form of conscientiousness. A cautious stage manager is less likely to step onto people’s toes, mistakenly waste precious schedule time, or incorrectly call a cue that has the potential to be dangerous. An introverted stage manager is a stage manager who desires to make sure their tasks are completely efficiently and safely, benefitting the production.

Perhaps most importantly, introverts have the ability to triumph over adversity. As will be

discussed later in the paper, introverts have to overcome the extrovert ideal of the American culture, their own self-doubt, and their extroverted peers. Thomas Caldwell “believes that overcoming the challenges inherent to introversion prepares certain people for leadership. Think of the high-school geek, forever seeking vindication; the loner who masters the art of the cold call.” (Mcdowell 2)

Challenges

The biggest challenge to introverts, both as leaders and in general is the “Extravert Ideal.” In the United States of America, the constant perceived ideal is that of an extrovert. “Introversion – along with its cousins sensitivity, seriousness, and shyness – is now a second-class personality trait, somewhere between a disappointment and a pathology.” (Cain 3) The common perception is that introversion is a weakness to be overcome. We live in a society that values outgoing and talkative individuals. Whereas other cultures, most notably Asian cultures, value introversion.

A contributing factor to the extrovert ideal within the United States population is the genetic make-up of the population. As mentioned earlier, it is believed extroverts were the original adventurers and explorers. It is also believed that extroverts were more likely to be outspoken revolutionaries, who sought to fight back their persecution.

After fleeing Europe and the persecution there, the new settlers had an obvious preference for extroverts and the ideals they represented. In *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia*, E. Digby Baltzell writes about the differences between John Quincy Adams and the Congressional Federalists. “They were extroverts; he was shy and withdrawn. They were shallow men, bored by appeals to political fundamentals; he meditated and wrote profoundly upon all manner of subjects.” (Baltzell 199) It is believed that as a result of these differences that John Quincy Adams spent only a single term in the White House.

There are recorded critical reviews Protestant preachers who lacked a certain extroverted charisma. The early religious revivals depended on the enthusiasm and charismatic displays of their ministers. Cain writes, “Early Americans revered action and were suspicious of intellect, associating the life of the mind with the languid, ineffectual European aristocracy they had left behind.” (Cain 30)

There have been records throughout the rise of the Culture of Personality dating back to Puritans. Though the extrovert ideal has been in existence since the Greeks and Romans. As is illustrated by the importance of large social events that were prevalent throughout Ancient Greece, such as theatrical events, the Olympic Games, and extravagant festivals to honor the gods. The large events, such as Bacchanalia, are an extrovert's dream and would have required a surplus of extroversion within the culture.

Even today, the Greek culture puts a large emphasis on social events, such as attending the Greek Orthodox Church and community events. The Greeks as individuals are known for being open and friendly. Asli Omur writes, "When the Greek speaks his whole personality is revealed." (Omur) It is likely that a Greek individual would be engaging throughout a discussion, appearing enthusiastic and jovial. In his blog post, Omur writes:

The Greek personality includes warm disposition, gaiety, *jeux d'esprit*, serious humor, argumentative inclinations, contradictions and vigorous mannerisms – widened eyes, moving lips, raised and lowered brows, head and torso, hand and arm, foot and leg: "All are employed and meaningful." The Greeks have been called as "quarrelsome as sparrows" – their love of a good argument is something I find similar and very endearing. I am the same way. (Omur)

Near the turn of the twentieth century, the United States began a definite and noticeable shift within their culture. It was around this time that The Culture of Personality and the emergence of an extrovert ideal began taking a definite hold on the United States. Society chose to exchange the previous Culture of Character, which focused on duty and manners, for The Culture of Personality, which places an importance on charisma and attractiveness. "The social role demanded of all in the new Culture of Personality was that of a performer," Susman

famously wrote. ‘Every American was to become a performing self.’” (Cain 20) Where once people had been appraised by citizenship, duty, work, golden deeds, honor, reputation, morals, manners, and integrity, an individual’s worth was now described by words such as magnetic, fascinating, stunning, attractive, glowing, dominant, forceful, and energetic.

The largest contributing factor to the new shift in United States culture is believed to have been the rapid industrialization of the country. As more citizen moved into cities, neighbors became strangers. One needed to sell oneself to all with whom one may come into contact, from employers to coworkers to strangers in a bar.

Guidebooks were written and classes created with the aim of assisting people who needed to fit into the mold provided by the Culture of Personality. Out of such endeavors, the world was gifted with programs such as Dale Carnegie Training, founded in 1912, and Toastmasters International, founded in 1924. These programs, still active today, offer to coach and teach any individual until they are comfortable with public speaking and leadership skills.

The Culture of Personality is felt even more widely today. “The number of Americans who considered themselves shy increased from 40 percent in the 1970s to 50 percent in the 1990s, probably because we measured ourselves against ever higher standards of fearless self-presentation.” (Cain 31)

The Extrovert Ideal is further pushed onto us within our schools. Introverted children are often sent home with notes regarding their place within the group dynamic. Young students are being pushed to be outwardly outgoing.

The Huffington Post recently published an article discussing high school students who have taken the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator assessment or MBTI. The article, written by the introvert instructor, discusses the fact that every student within the class tested as an extrovert.

The instructor notes that he knows through observation and experience with the students that introverts are present. However, the author believes that the students avoid answers they view negatively to receive the “positive” confirmation of self.

Within the collegiate realm, the extrovert ideal runs rampant, particularly at the more prestigious universities and programs. Susan Cain visited Harvard Business School as she researched *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*. Cain described the campus as a sort of extrovert heaven. Everything at Harvard Business School is done in groups. Students are assigned morning study groups, attend large classes, and are expected to attend networking events and gatherings every evening. Students are told, “If you're preparing alone for class, then you're doing it wrong. Nothing at HBS is intended to be done alone.” (Cain 45) When Cain asked where one might find an introverted student, the repeated response was that there were not introverts within the program.

Cain eventually met Don, who admitted to believing he was an introvert. Don talked about the guilt he felt as a result of his introversion. Don felt that there must be something wrong with him for desiring to retire to his room rather than attend another large event in the evening. If you are a closet introvert, however, Harvard Business School is teeming with resources filled with advice on how to be an extrovert. Don and his classmates listed off a variety of the tips shared with them. The list included things, such as: “Don't think about the perfect answer. It's better to get out there and say something than to never get your voice in.” (Cain 45) As a result of these philosophies, Don and other introverted students have difficulty forcing their ways into conversations and making sure they're heard. Everyone is expected to be an extrovert, whether naturally or through hard work.

For a stage manager, struggling to be heard can be a danger, not only to your career, but

to the production. If an introverted stage manager has a concern regarding safety on a specific scenic piece and is drowned out of a conversation discussing the item, the perceived danger has not been addressed or rectified. In addition, an introverted stage manager who allows themselves to be elbowed out of conversations may find that important decisions are being made without their awareness. If a stage manager is unaware of changes, they are unable to participate any possible challenges or prepare themselves to deal with a situation should it arise. If such a thing occurs, the introverted stage manager may find that their cast, crew, and production team members do not feel secure in their decision-making or leadership skills. Such concern completely undermines the stage manager's ability to run a production.

As a result of having to struggle to be heard over extroverted voices, introverted employees are often seen as more simplistic or unable to think of new ideas. "We perceive talkers as smarter than quiet types – even though grade-point averages and SAT and intelligence test scores reveal this perception to be inaccurate." (Cain 50) To be blunt, no production wants to feel as though their stage manager lacks intelligence. If this perception comes to exist within a rehearsal room, it can destroy the trust and relationships between the team and stage manager. If an introverted stage manager is perceived as unintelligent, production team members will have difficulty letting the stage manager run technical rehearsals; cast and crew may feel unsafe if the calling stage manager is viewed as inept.

The perception of talkers as more intelligent is evident within United States school systems, which often treat introversion or quietness as faults to be fixed. Parents of introverted children often receive notices or warnings regarding their children's behavior, labeling them as antisocial or shy.

These labels have become dangerous warning symbols in an age wracked with school

violence. Newspapers blast headlines of shy youth turning on and attacking their peers and teachers. By propagating the myths of introversion as shyness and shyness as a mental instability, the media causes worry and fear of introverts. Due to these concerns, educators and parents are constantly pushing students to be more outgoing and involved in classroom and extracurricular activity. By “socializing” their youth, most adults wind up exhausting their introverted children.

Due to the societal ideal of extroversion, offices and classrooms are set up in such a way as to encourage employees to be more social. Not only does this impact an introverted person's idea of self, but negatively impacts their work. However, the extroverted layout for offices is believed to negatively impact every employee, whether they are introverted or extroverted. Cain writes:

“Open-plan offices have been found to reduce productivity and impair memory. They're associated with high staff turnover. They make people sick, hostile, unmotivated, and insecure. Open-plan workers are more likely to suffer from high blood pressure and elevated stress levels and to get the flu; they argue more with their colleagues; they worry about coworkers eavesdropping on their phone calls and spying on their computer screens. They have fewer personal and confidential conversations with colleagues. They're often subject to loud and uncontrollable noise, which raises heart rates; releases cortisol, the body's fight-or-flight “stress” hormone; and makes people socially distant, quick to anger, aggressive, and slow to help others.” (Cain 84)

Within this settings and layout, introverted individuals are often lost in the fray. In addition to the prior reasons, an open, extroverted layout is negative for introverts due to their vulnerability to information overload. Introverted individuals need a level of solitude to direct their thoughts and

focus.

Jason Fried, cofounder of Basecamp (formerly 37signals), asked a variety of people where they preferred to work in order to maximize efficiency and creativity. Overwhelmingly, the response was the best work was created outside of their offices. As a result of his poll, Fried does not require employees to show up to work, so long as they are able to accomplish any necessary tasks. In fact, Basecamp only mandates a four-day workweek, finding that productivity levels remain the same whether employees work four or five days in a given week.

In addition, Fried does not believe in mass meetings, finding them counterproductive and toxic. According to Fried, meetings tend to lengthen what could be a shorter discussion and cut a day into small chunks, leaving small pockets of forty-five minute intervals in which to accomplish individual tasks. Despite his distaste for meetings, Fried encourages e-mail, instant messaging, and other passive forms of communication. Basecamp also employs a “No-Talk Thursday,” in which employees are not allowed to talk to each.

Due to this vulnerability and tendency to feel overwhelmed, introverts often have difficulty multitasking. This tendency is due in part to their sensitivity to their surroundings. It is also impacted by their genetic thought process.

“And on many kinds of tasks, particularly those performed under time or social pressure or involving multitasking, extroverts do better. Extroverts are better than introverts at handling information overload. Introverts' reflectiveness uses up a lot of cognitive capacity, according to Joseph Newman. On any given task, he says, “if we have 100 percent cognitive capacity, an introvert may have 75 percent on task and 25 percent off task, whereas an extrovert may have 90 percent on task.”

This is because most tasks are goal-directed. Extroverts appear to allocate most of

their cognitive capacity to the goal at hand, while introverts use up capacity by monitoring how the task is going.” (Cain 167 – 168)

Not only are offices and classrooms set up in a way that negatively impacts introverts and the general work environment, but also various business practices. “The 'evidence from science suggests that business people must be insane to use brainstorming groups,' writes the organization psychologist Adrian Furnham. 'If you have talented and motivated people, they should be encouraged to work alone when creativity or efficiency is the highest priority.’” (Cain 88-89) During brainstorming sessions, a large group of people are throwing out any and all ideas that occur to them, without actually thinking them through. There is no filter involved when participating in a brainstorming session.

As a result, many impractical ideas are shared, which can be time-consuming to sort through. The sorting of ideas may also lead to criticisms of ideas, which in turn may lead to wounded prides among team members and may cause friction as the project progresses. For introverted team members, however, the brainstorming process has another challenge; brainstorming sessions tend to be chaotic and noisy. For an introvert, the chaos limits their processing speed and slows their response time. The ringing of voices may lead to too much stimulation and cause introverted team members to feel overwhelmed. The stimulation may also cause an introverted team member to clam, causing misperceptions regarding their ability to work for the team or their intelligence.

Brainstorming sessions are also believed to cause groupthink. Groupthink is a psychological phenomenon where individuals only share thoughts and ideas that they believe the group will agree upon. In an effort to avoid controversy and disagreements, individuals suppress any opposing ideas. Introverts have a higher chance of being affected by the hive mind of

groupthink, allowing the louder, predominant opinions to drown out their own. Groupthink is a phenomenon that feeds upon the innate fear of rejection within ourselves.

Groupthink also causes those within the group to feel as though their ideas are invulnerable. This is partly due to the fact that those afflicted by groupthink seek to discredit any opposing evidence and the group's self-censorship and complacency. In essence, groupthink is everything your parents warned you about peer pressure.

The military often shares a parable describing the Abilene paradox, which, in essence, describes a group's tendency to follow the idea of the first to think of an idea. The parable begins with a family sitting on a porch on a summer's day. Someone eventually suggests that the family go to Abilene to avoid boredom. Once the family has arrived in Abilene, someone admits that they did not really want to go to Abilene. After their admission, another person admits the same, and so on. "The Bus to Abilene" is used to illustrate the tendency to follow a suggested action. Within the military, one can ask "Are we getting on a bus to Abilene?" to cause all to pause and think through their actions and plans.

It is extremely important that an introverted stage manager be aware of the risk of groupthink and know how to derail what can be a dangerous pathway. Not only must they be aware of the possibility of groupthink, but also must be extremely wary of falling into it. This can prove challenging to an introverted stage manager, who may already struggle to be heard over the cacophony of their colleague's opinions. The possibility of an introverted stage manager having their voice and opinions stomped out increases tenfold when a production team is swallowed by groupthink. Not only is the stage manager struggling to be heard, but the a groupthink production team will seek to discredit or ignore any concerns brought forth by the stage manager.

As previously mentioned, introverted individuals are much easily distracted by the world around them. In addition, introverts live internally. Introverts retreat into their own minds, pondering their lives and the world, whereas extroverts live in the moment. Cain writes:

Introverts and extroverts also direct their attention differently: if you leave them to their own devices, the introverts tend to sit around wondering about things, imagining things, recalling events from their past, and making plans for the future. The extroverts are more likely to focus on what's happening around them.. It's as if extroverts are seeing "What is" while their introverted peers are asking "what if." (Cain 168)

While an introvert's ability to think about the "what ifs" of a production can be beneficial, it can also lead to distraction. An introverted stage manager may have to work to stay in the moment, rather than concerning themselves with vague possibilities that may never occur.

Famous Introverts

Despite popular opinion that many introverts are painfully shy homebodies or that they lack ambition and initiative, introverts have helped shape the world as much as any extrovert. Introverts are responsible for many technological and scientific developments, but have also had a large impact on the political and cultural field. Of course, many writers are also introverts.

For example, it is widely accepted that Rosa Parks was an introvert, reserved and quiet. Many who have written about Ms. Parks and her impact on the civil rights movements argue that the impact of her actions would not have had such an effect if Ms. Parks had been an extrovert. Parks' introversion allowed her to play an introverted counterpart to Martin Luther King Jr.'s extroverted grandness.

I had always imagined Rosa Parks as a stately woman with a bold temperament, someone who could easily stand up to a busload of glowering passengers. But when she died in 2005 at the age of 92, the flood of obituaries recalled her as soft-spoken, sweet, and small in stature. They said she was 'timid and shy' but had 'the courage of a lion.' They were full of phrases like 'radical humility' and 'quiet fortitude.' (Cain 1)

Another well-known figure believed to lean towards introversion is Bill Gates, co-founder and chairman of Microsoft. In 2007, USA Today Named Gates as the number one most influential person in the world. Gates is also an example of an introvert who is not considered shy, as Gates has a public presence and has given many lectures and interviews in regards to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. In fact, Mr. Gates has the honor of having given what is now known as one of the most success TED talks ever. Gates' "Mosquitos, Malaria, and Education" talk has been viewed by 2,246, 756 people and is known as one of the most

memorable for releasing mosquitoes during the presentation. Interestingly, Gates chose Susan Cain's TED Talk "The Power of Introverts" as one of his top thirteen favorites.

In a 2013 question and answer session, Gates was asked he managed to thrive in an extroverted world. Gates answered:

Well, I think introverts can do quite well. If you're clever you can learn to get the benefits of being an introvert, which might be, say, being willing to go off for a few days and think about a tough problem, read everything you can, push yourself very hard to think out on the edge of that area. Then, if you come up with something, if you want to hire people, get them excited, build a company around that idea, you better learn what extroverts do, you better hire some extroverts like Steve Ballmer I would claim as an extrovert, and tap into both sets of skills in order to have a company that thrives both as in deep thinking and building teams and going out into the world to sell those ideas. (Jager)

Brenda Barnes, the former CEO of Sara Lee, is a self-described introvert. Responsible for a major turnaround at Sara Lee, Barnes is known for keeping her personal information private and avoiding public events and interviews. As an introvert, Barnes was named the eighth most powerful woman by Forbes magazine in 2005.

The late Darwin Smith, the CEO credited with leading Kimberly-Clark to being the most successful paper company in the world, was a known introvert. Described as mild-mannered and hard-working, Smith helped elevate Kimberly-Clark from good to great status. More importantly, Smith helped Kimberly-Clark to maintain that status. Smith did so by making the gutsy decision to sell the Kimberly-Clark paper mills in order to pursue consumer products, eventually outperforming the competition by four hundred percent. Smith was able to pull off the shift in

the company's goals through insightfulness, thoughtfulness, and significant persistence. Smith was concerned for the well-being of Kimberly-Clark, rather than his own reputation. For many years, Smith's decision was criticized and derided. Smith was able to ignore the criticisms and follow his beliefs to benefit the country. Darwin Smith's listing in the Paper Industry International Hall of Fame reads, "Mr. Smith was the type of leader who gave credit for success to the employees, the managers, his predecessors, and the customers."

Eleanor Roosevelt was also believed to have been an introvert. Though the First Lady was known for her public persona and presence within the community, Ms. Roosevelt preferred an introverted existence. As discussed earlier, introverts have a great empathy for those suffering or struggling. It is believed that it was Roosevelt's empathy for those she saw struggling that caused her to push herself towards an extroverted life. Roosevelt's empathy led her to action for both the working classes and her husband, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. When Franklin was struck with polio, Eleanor made public appearances on her husband's behalf, keeping up his political contacts and encouraging Franklin to remain in politics.

Mahatma Gandhi is perhaps the most well-known example of introverted leadership. Having once said, "In a gentle way, you can shake the world," Gandhi is known for his quiet leadership and non-violent civil disobedience, through which Gandhi led India to independence from the British. The term "satyagraha", coined by Gandhi, means "firm insistence of truth." Satyagraha is often used to describe the form and policy of the nonviolent protests led by Gandhi and his followers. Gandhi often credited his introversion and shyness in allowing him to find his purpose and achieve his goal. Gandhi is quoted as saying,

I have naturally formed the habit of restraining my thoughts. A thoughtless word hardly ever escaped my tongue or pen. Experience has taught me that silence is part of the spiritual discipline of a votary of truth. We find so many people impatient to

talk. All this talking can hardly be said to be of any benefit to the world. It is so much waste of time. My shyness has been in reality my shield and buckler. It has allowed me to grow. It has helped me in my discernment of truth.

It is also widely accepted that Abraham Lincoln was an introvert as well. The sixteenth president was known for withdrawing into himself, even to the point of being able to completely block out stimuli. Oftentimes, people had difficulty breaking into Lincoln's withdrawn, trance-like state. It has been argued that Lincoln's ability to debate and discuss topics successfully was due to much preparation and planning. It is believed that Lincoln was not the sort of man to "wing it." As is commonly known, Lincoln was self-educated, spending what free time he had available to build upon what little formal education he had. Lincoln would borrow and read books repetitively, embracing the solitude involved with such an endeavor.

Barack Obama, the forty-fourth and current president of the United States, is commonly believed to be an introverted individual. It has been mentioned that after large events and speeches, President Obama requires a few moments alone in order to recharge before rejoining the crowds. According to sources within the White House, President Obama is reserved and private. "He's opaque even to us," an aide told me. "Except maybe for a few people in the inner circle, he's a closed book." (Baker)

Introversion is also credited with the creation of the beloved Harry Potter series. J.K. Rowling, creator of the magical world of Hogwarts, discusses Harry's humble beginnings on her website:

I had been writing almost continuously since the age of six but I had never been so excited about an idea before. To my immense frustration, I didn't have a pen that worked, and I was too shy to ask anybody if I could borrow one...

I did not have a functioning pen with me, but I do think that was probably a good thing. I simply sat and thought, for four (delayed train) hours, while all the details bubbled up in my brain, and this scrawny, black-haired, bespectacled boy who didn't know he was a wizard became more and more real to me. (Rowling)

While Rowling admits that she is unsure what might have been forgotten over the span of those four hours, Rowling has also admitted that if she had been in possession of a working pen, she is unsure of what might have been stifled.

As has previously been discussed, introverts are able to reach their highest level of creativity in solitude. J.K. Rowling famously locked herself away in a hotel room with no distractions in order to complete *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

In an attempt to avoid some of the spotlight brought on by her massive fame, Rowling has also written a novel under the alias Robert Galbraith, even creating a false biography for the pseudonym. Rowling told the Sunday Times of London, "I had hoped to keep this a secret a little longer because being Robert Galbraith has been such a liberating experience. It has been wonderful to publish without hype or expectation and pure pleasure to get feedback under a different name."

As an introvert, J.K. Rowling was voted the most influential woman in Britain in 2010 by leading magazine editors and the 20th most influential person by USA Today in 2007. Rowling's influential status is not simply due to the legacy of Harry Potter, but also by her wide array of philanthropic work and empathy for others.

Another introvert of note is T.S. Eliot. Eliot's classmate, Brand Blanshard, once described the poet as "reserved, shy, economical of speech, rather frostily formal of manner." (Durham 203) As a child, Eliot spent much of his time alone reading, partially due to the vast age

difference between his elder siblings and himself and partially due to Eliot's preference for solitude. As Eliot grew older, he was said to have preferred deeper and more thoughtful conversations, rather than idle small talk. Indeed, introversion and the struggles that introverts began to face during the culture of personality seem evident within much of Eliot's writing. "Even T. S. Eliot's famous 1915 poem *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* - in which he laments the need to "prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet" - seems a *cri de coeur* about the new demands of self-presentation." (Cain 30)

When counting introverted writers, one must not forget Theodor Geisel, or the famous Dr. Seuss. Geisel was a quiet individual, preferring his writing and books to social obligations. Geisel despised public events, particularly televised interviews. Geisel was quoted as saying, "I can't handle it very well. I always lose about 15 pounds worrying. And no matter what you want to be asked, they always ask, 'Where do you get your ideas?,' which is impossible." The man behind *The Cat in the Hat* was also famously fearful of his youthful fan base, admitting that large groups of children terrified him.

Another notorious introverted writer is Franz Kafka, who in his diary credited all of his accomplishments to his solitude. The writer claimed that he never had lengthy conversations in which he revealed himself or his thoughts to others. Kafka admitted he was unable to write if another was watching him work, telling his fiancé, "there can never be enough silence around one when one writes."

Biblically speaking, it is commonly believed that Moses was an introvert. In Exodus chapter four, verse ten, Moses responded to God's call to action "I am not a man of words ... but I am heavy-tongued and heavy-mouthed." Despite this proclamation, Moses is now known as being responsible for leading the Israelites out of Egypt. One would expect that a man credited

with facing down the pharaoh of Egypt and leading thousands through the wilderness to the Promised Land would be an extrovert, able to command crowds with a loud personality.

However, Cain writes:

Moses, for example, was not, according to some interpretations of his story, the brash, talkative type who would organize road trips and hold forth in a classroom at Harvard Business School. On the contrary, by today's standards he was dreadfully timid. He spoke with a stutter and considered himself inarticulate. The book of Numbers describes him as “very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth. (Cain 59)

Albert Einstein, the world-renowned physicist responsible for the theory of relativity, was also a notorious introvert. Famously, Einstein was so withdrawn as a child that it was feared that he was dull-witted. Despite this assumption by the adults in his life, Einstein is now recognized as one of the greatest genius within the scientific community. Einstein was able derive energy and creativity from his solitude, spending significant time alone and in thought. By doing so, Einstein was able to make huge breakthroughs within the scientific realm, winning the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1921. Einstein wrote,

My passionate sense of social justice and social responsibility has always contrasted oddly with my pronounced lack of need for direct contact with other human beings and human communities. I am truly a ‘lone traveler’ and have never belonged to my country, my home, my friends, or even my immediate family, with my whole heart; in the face of all these ties, I have never lost a sense of distance and a need for solitude. (Einstein)

Craig Newmark, founder of Craigslist, is also a noted introvert. Like many introverts, Newmark struggled with social interaction after moving to a new location. Craigslist was created as a simple e-mail list of events that may be interesting to Newmark and his friends within the San Francisco area. The e-mail list is now a website that is believed to be worth five million dollars. Despite the possible wealth potential, Newmark has no desire to sell or monetize Craigslist, stating that he feels the site provides a service.

When discussing social media mogul introverts, one must also discuss Mark Zuckerberg. Responsible for co-founding Facebook, the largest contribution to the world of social media, Zuckerberg is a notorious introvert. While deeply protective of his privacy and nervous appearance in public, Zuckerberg has revolutionized the way that the world communicates. In doing so, Zuckerberg has opened pathways for many introverts to connect in ways that are more comfortable to them. In fact, Facebook receives more United States internet traffic than any other website, including the Google search engine. Zuckerberg is further proof that introverts can have an astonishing effect on the world around them and be recognized for doing so. Zuckerberg was named Time's Person of the Year in 2010 and listed as the number one most influential person of the information age by Vanity Fair.

Stephen Wozniak, inventor of the Apple computer, is an introvert as well. When developing the first prototypes, Wozniak spent a significant amount of time tinkering in his garage. In his biography, *iWoz*, Wozniak writes, "Most inventors and engineers I've met are like me. They're shy and they live in their heads. They're almost like artists. In fact, the very best of them are artists. And artists work best alone... Not on a committee. Not on a team." In fact, it is quite apparent that Wozniak viewed his invention as art and an act of leisure as Wozniak wanted to give his invention away. Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple computer, convinced Wozniak

otherwise.

Warren Buffett, CEO and largest shareholder of Berkshire Hathaway, is also a known introvert. Buffett tends to vie away from the spotlight, avoiding large public speeches and lengthy interviews. While studying at Columbia University, Buffett enrolled in a Dale Carnegie course, but never attended due to his immense fear of public speaking. When it comes to life and work, Buffett is firmly stationed in Omaha, Nebraska, where he has lived nearly all his life. Despite being an introvert Buffett was listed as one of *Time*'s most influential people in the world in 2007, named one of the most influential global thinkers in Foreign Policy's 2010 report, and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2011.

Introverts exist openly in the public limelight. Emma Watson, most well-known for her portrayal of Hermione Granger within the Harry Potter films, is also an introvert. While one may believe that introversion could be detrimental to an acting career, Watson's has flourished. Watson is the largest-grossing female film star of the last decade, grossing more than five billion dollars in global box office receipts.

Watson fully embraces her introversion, recently raving about Susan Cain's *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* in an interview with Rookie. Watson gushes:

It discusses how extraverts in our society are bigged up so much, and if you're anything other than an extravert you're made to think there's something wrong with you. That's like the story of my life. Coming to realize that about myself was very empowering, because I had felt like *Oh my god, there must be something wrong with me, because I don't want to go out and do what all my friends want to do*. Anyway, I just went off on a tangent... (Gevinson)

In the interview, Watson also admits that her body sort of shuts down while on the red carpet due to sensory overload. Watson admits that she goes numb and has difficulty maintain a conversation in those scenarios. Watson also confesses that she takes breaks from parties by hiding out in the restroom.

In addition to performing, Watson also admits that she draws, paints, and writes. When asked if she would ever seek to publish her written work, Watson confesses that if she were to ever publish anything, she would likely do so under a pseudonym. Watson feels that people have an idea of who she is from her public persona and would not want any written work marked by those perceptions.

Audrey Hepburn is a famously introverted performer. Hepburn has been quoted as saying, "I'm an introvert... I love being by myself, love being outdoors, love taking a long walk with my dogs and looking at the trees, flowers, the sky." When discussing her most famous role in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, Hepburn claims that playing the extroverted Holly Golightly was the most challenging role she undertook. Despite her extreme introversion, Hepburn performed in a wide variety of roles, onstage, on film, and in real life. Hepburn is one of the few performers to be awarded an Oscar, an Emmy, a Grammy, and a Tony. Outside of the entertainment industry, Hepburn was extremely active in the role of a United Nations Children's Fund Goodwill Ambassador. And in 1993, following her death, Hepburn was awarded the Jean Hershot Humanitarian Award.

Conclusion

While extroversion may dominate our media and may appear to dominate our world, the truth of the matter is that much of the world is introverted. Not only are introverts present in day to day lives, but, in many cases, they are largely responsible for creating and running the modern world. However, since introverts do not seek glory and fame like their extroverted counterparts, they often go unnoticed in our day-to-day lives.

As demonstrated above, introversion is not weakness and extroversion is not a prerequisite for success. Introverted leaders have the ability to run Fortune 500 companies, Broadway musicals, and countries as well, if not better than, their extroverted counterparts.

Due to their constant state of awareness, introverted leaders and stage managers are able to pick up on subtle changes within their team, allowing them the opportunity to address the shift and stifle a possible problem prior to disaster. Prone to deep thought and analysis, introverted stage managers are also able to process possible challenges and discover creative and innovative solutions. In addition, their sense of empathy allows introverted stage managers and leaders to effectively consider the human aspect of a production and the challenges that may arise as a result.

The truth of the matter is that while we may live in a Culture of Personality and work to obtain the extrovert ideal, the world is actually run by the introvert community. We simply allow the extroverts to believe that the world belongs to them.

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