

Needs & Gifts of Introverts
“Facilitating Introverts” - Chicago IAF – May 16, 2014
(5/16/14 workshop participant additions in green)

Needs

- Need time alone to recharge
 - Become drained around large groups of people
 - Energized by spending time alone; need time to process the stimulation
 - Long time frames (e.g., 4 hour meeting) can be draining

- Think then talk then think
 - Think carefully before speaking
 - Like to reflect and analyze information before commenting
 - Prefer to share well-thought-out or near-perfect thoughts and ideas
 - Use silence to allow even more thoughts to bubble up
 - Like to take time to plan ahead and do research in advance

- One-on-one vs. groups
 - Prefer to work on their own rather than do group work
 - Communicate best in small groups/one-on-one

- Seek depth over breadth
 - Prefer to dig deep, delving into issues and ideas before moving on to new ones
 - Drawn to meaningful conversations, not small talk

- Act cautiously in meeting people
- Do not enjoy being the center of attention; Don't want to call attention to themselves
- May prefer writing or drawing/doodling to talking

- Have rich inner lives (including visual). Daydreams and imagining can yield breakthroughs and insights.

- Need validation.
Dominant culture values extroversion. So introverts can see their unique needs (e.g., need for additional reflection time) as meaning they are “not good at something”.
Dominant leaders can push own opinions. But never label or call out anyone as an “introvert”.

Gifts

- Comfort with the written word often helps them articulate their positions and document their actions
- Ask great/provocative questions

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- Listen and concentrate deeply
- Good at noticing; strong observation skills
- Get deeper insights after a conversation
- Take initiative especially when the situation or issue is very important to them