

## INTROVERSION 2.0

# Reshaping the way we work

**9 tips** to help managers and Introversion types return to the workplace—and feel good about it



Due to the pandemic, large numbers of people have experienced the alternative to working from the office.

Home working has been a practical reality. And for those with introverted preferences, it's confirmed what they already knew deep down:

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**full-time presence in the office is counterproductive for people who prefer Introversion**

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Historically, workplace culture hasn't embraced this.

But now that many are slowly transitioning from remote back to in-office working (or a hybrid of both), you need to evaluate and act on the data about remote working.

It's time to be bold about Introversion. And it's time for everyone to speak up, finally, for what they need and how they work best.

Not sure where to start? Take a look at the below tips for **managers and HR professionals** and **employees with Introversion preferences**.

You've been given a rare opportunity to reshape our working culture.

**Time to use it.**

# Tips for managers and HR professionals

## Listen to your people—and honor introverted preferences

Our research (**The COVID-19 Crisis: Personality and Perception**, 2020) showed that people with introversion preferences have been more worried about COVID-19 and are more worried about the return to the office.

Part of this is about health and safety relating to COVID-19 itself. But part is also about the proposed shift back to working in distracting, loud, energy-sapping work environments.

So, talk to your employees. Get their assessment of how things have gone. Most importantly, listen. Be empathetic. If they say they need easier access to quiet time, for example, take it seriously.

This is how you help your employees **stay engaged** with their role—and your organization.



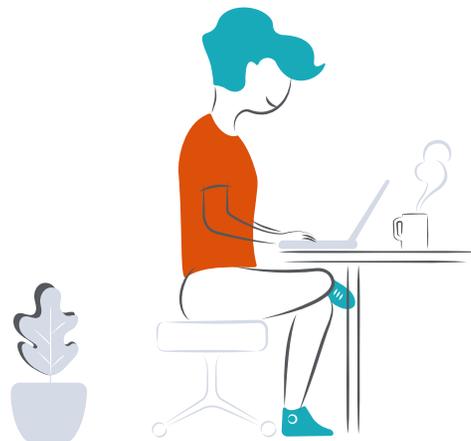
## Learn who works best at home (and let them do it)

Again, research from The Myers-Briggs Company and others showed that those preferring Introversion were more likely to enjoy and appreciate working from home than those who prefer Extraversion.

They were less concerned with having people around them, too.

**This experiment by Professor Nicholas Bloom** highlights huge productivity gains for people working from home.

Flexibility and experimentation is key. Don't force the same model on everyone.



## Recognize your biases

Leaders tend to be people who prefer Extraversion. The more senior a leader is, the more likely they are to have these preferences.

Leaders also shape company culture. But, **as our work on inclusion shows**, unconscious bias is a factor in everyone's behavior. Before getting training in this area, how many leaders think about the impact of their Extraversion behaviors on others?

With self-awareness training, you learn to see your behaviors from others' perspectives. You start to recognize your biases.

Other people have biases too, of course. Everyone does. But it's leaders who need to set the example.



## Create quiet spaces—with input from those who need them

Our research with office furniture manufacturers KI Europe found that although no-one supports open-plan offices 100%, it's people who prefer Introversion who are less happy with it.

Previous research (Allread & Marras, 2006) has shown that when an employee's personality is matched with the nature of their work environment, they are likely to report less anxiety and physical discomfort. They're also likely to report more job satisfaction and social support.

It's been suggested that the modern office is 'designed for Extraverts' (Cain, 2012) and might be toxic for people who prefer Introversion.

So, change the layout for this reason as well as COVID-19 safety. Create quiet areas. To avoid bias, get input from those who with preferences for Introversion.

Use this **personality and workspace quick guide** for ideas. It tells you what different types respond to, based on our research.



## Encourage everyone to be in the office sometimes

Those preferring Introversion are less likely than those preferring Extraversion to miss having people around (The Myers-Briggs Company, 2020).

But social connection is vital for well-being. Why not promote office time as social connection time?

Find a day or half day, for example, each week when more or most people come into the office (COVID precautions permitting). Then reframe it.

Encourage your Introversion-preferring employees to organize their workloads so that the office isn't for 'heads down' work.

Distractions are then less stressful.

Doing this also prevents an Extraversion/Introversion divide at work. It's more inclusive.



## Do a post-lockdown MBTI® teams session

The world of work has changed massively since the pandemic. Your team might have changed.

Even if it still has the same people in the same roles, the people themselves will likely have changed in some way.

As our **research about the COVID-19 crisis and personality type** shows, the data you get from the MBTI® assessment has huge potential for understanding individuals.

Doing an MBTI session refreshes the team for any return to the workplace. It gives everyone a chance to be open in a safe way, which might be a concern after prolonged remote working.

Reading the results in a post-lockdown light will offer fresh perspectives on what they need in the new work landscape.



# Tips for people who prefer Introversion

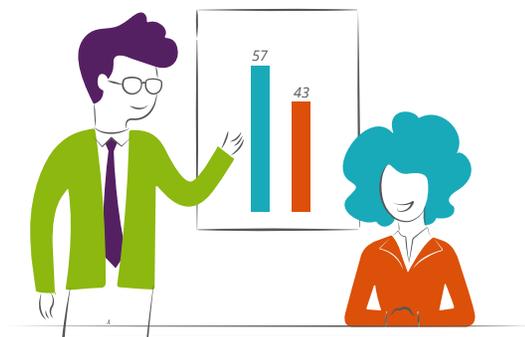
## Own your Introversion

Our global research sample shows that 57% of people have a preference for Introversion. It's the majority group.

Stand up for it.

"We need to honor our preference for Introversion," says Michael Segovia, Principal Consultant at The Myers-Briggs Company, "but that's not what we tend to do.

"Modify your working day if you can. Perhaps you can start earlier and leave earlier? Ask if you can work from home however many times a week that works for you and your team. Try not to have those back-to-back meetings. Don't apologize for who you are and don't be embarrassed to ask for help."



## Clarify what works for you

Even though we talk about Introversion and Extraversion as two groups, the reality is that everyone has their own spin on it (shown by their MBTI Step II™ facets for Introversion and Extraversion, or their interpersonal need for inclusion and connection).

We're all individuals.

To help you 'own' your preference for Introversion, write down when, where, and how you work best. What did you do to make remote working successful?

Revisit your own MBTI results and refresh your insights. See if anything has emerged more clearly.

By doing this, you'll be prepared for the next step, which is the text tip, #9.



## Share your findings with your manager

This might be the most difficult thing to do. But it's possibly the most important.

Put your case forward while the modes of working and returning to the office are being shaped. Encourage any colleagues with a preference for Introversion to do the same.

You might not get everything you want, but you could get more than you thought. If you don't ask, you'll never know.

And you'll certainly gain confidence in your preference for Introversion and how you can make it work at work.

