



A good place to begin our efforts in this guide is to confirm whether your preferences are predominantly towards extraversion or introversion. If you know already because you have taken a type or temperament assessment of some kind, that's great. If not, simply review the two side by side lists of characteristics below and make your choice as to what fits you best.

Are you...

EXTROVERTED	OR	INTROVERTED
→ Attuned to external environment		→ Drawn to inner world of thoughts and ideas
→ Having a wide range of acquaintances and friends from whom they draw energy		→ Prefer fewer, more intense relationships socially (and may need time to re-energize)
→ Prefer to communicate by talking		→ Prefer to communicate by writing
→ Learn best through doing, discussing, working in groups		→ Learn best by reflection or "mental practice", working alone
→ Breadth of interests, jump into activities quickly		→ Depth of interest
→ Tend to speak first and reflect later		→ Tend to reflect before acting or speaking
→ Sociable and expressive		→ Private and contained
→ Take initiative in work and relationships		→ Focus readily

I think my preferences are more: _____

Contrasting Preferences to Understand the Differences

Notice that both lists start and end with how extraverts and introverts use their energy:

EXTROVERTED	INTROVERTED
→ Energized by what goes on in the outer world	→ Energized by what goes on in their own inner world
→ Need to talk to fully clarify what they think	→ Need to reflect before they talk
→ Can be seen as accessible and understandable	→ Can be seen as subtle and difficult to know well initially
→ Difficult for them to just sit and listen	→ Work quietly, often without interruption
→ Often work to change the world	→ Often work to understand the world
→ Interests often have breadth	→ Interests often have depth
→ Interaction	→ Concentration
→ Multiplicity of relationships	→ Limited relationships
→ Expenditure of energies	→ Conservation of energies



HOW DOES AN EXTRAVERT GENERALLY RELATE TO THE WORLD?

Sociable and even apparently “loud” people may be extraverted but this is not always the case as extraverts can be shy and quiet for a short period and some introverts can adopt more extraverted and non-quiet or more socially outgoing behaviours for a limited period. We can tune into the language that extraverts tend to use to get a better idea of when individuals may have a greater preference for extraversion. For example, we might hear statements such as:

- ➔ “I find it hard to sit in one place/at a desk all day.”
- ➔ “I like being in a group of people.” (or even sometimes “in the limelight”)
- ➔ “It’s pretty easy to talk about most things.”
- ➔ “People give me energy.”
- ➔ “I don’t mind interruptions.”
- ➔ “I get bored fairly easily.”

Outside of observing language clues we might also see the following general behaviours:

- Attuned to external environment
- Prefer communicating by talking
- Learn best through doing or discussing
- Have breadth of interests and/or activities
- Tend to speak first and reflect later (and can sometimes speak without thinking)
- Sociable and expressive (can express idea, even feelings, easily)
- Often take initiative in work and relationships
- Can require a lot of person’s time and attention
- Is usually fairly easy to understand – willing to explain and clarify
- Is quite accessible and may even welcome interruptions
- Understands life in general by living it

Coaching Strategies to Adopt and Avoid

There are a range of effective strategies for a coach to adopt, as well as approaches to avoid as follows:



Effective coaching strategies to adopt with Extraverts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make good eye contact, smile and be friendly ✓ Engage in small talk and social banter for a short period at the outset, as this helps to quickly build the relationship ✓ Let them talk and set the scene in terms of what they want or what personal goals they might have ✓ Show interest and enthusiasm when they are talking (but let them know when you want to say something in response) ✓ Paraphrase and summarize as often as



Coaching approaches to avoid with Extraverts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Don’t spend too much time sitting silently taking notes or thinking before you begin the session ✗ Avoid giving them documents to read in session ✗ Don’t ask the same question twice (or more). When they haven’t answered a question or got off track, simply rephrase your question ✗ Avoid giving them subtle or indirect signals about how you feel or what you are thinking – tell them directly ✗ Try to discourage thinking that is too off-

<p>necessary to clarify their meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourage them to take their time and reflect before answering questions ✓ Let them talk but occasionally redirect them to stay on track when they wander off point and bring them back by asking focused questions ✓ Plan with them how a little solitude and time for quiet reflection will take place on a regular basis ✓ Let them suggest next steps first and then comment 	<p>subject or lateral and talking about minor side-issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Discourage them from making decisions about what you are suggesting too quickly ✗ Bring each part of the discussion to an agreed action point (specifically and without delay tactics) ✗ Avoid giving them follow-up tasks which they have to complete alone and allow them to collaborate and talk to other people to learn ✗ Don't give them just one task as work to do between sessions; instead, give them choice about what they can do ✗ Allow input but avoid giving them control over where you need to take them next
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Which of the above is likely to be your greatest strength as a coach and your greatest weakness and what will you do to leverage the former and minimize the impact of the latter?

How should an Extravert relate to his or her Introvert coach?

It is up to the Extravert person to play his or her part in managing the relationship to get most from the experience. Here are a few ways in which this can be done:

- ✓ Always clear sufficient time in your calendar to have quality time to talk to your manager without interruption
- ✓ Find a quiet place, ideally away from your normal office space and from phone and other possible distractions so that you can try to concentrate
- ✓ Listen attentively to your manager and try to avoid jumping in or finishing his or her sentences
- ✓ Try to avoid letting your mind wander or to think about/rehearse your next answer
- ✓ Think/reflect on each question before you respond; even practice counting 5 seconds minimum before opening your mouth to say anything
- ✓ Carefully think through questions to ask your manager for clarification before you put it out there
- ✓ Stay on subject as much as you can to avoid one more topics that are similar or related in your own mind before you have truly finished on the topic at hand

- ✓ After your coaching conversation, take some quiet time for reflection without talking to anyone. If necessary make some notes for yourself on what you see to be useful
- ✓ Make changes to your behaviour or approach carefully and discretely avoiding the need to inform lots of people what you are getting from the coaching conversation. If you feel that it is necessary to talk to others be selective about who you choose
- ✓ Think about the whole coaching journey on a big picture basis to assess its value and communicate adjustments to the relationship you would like to quietly suggest each time you meet

Summary

Extraverts have much to bring to any workplace. In general they are more effective than introverts at promoting ideas, exhibiting general enthusiasm, communicating and bringing people together to work in team-oriented or collaborative ways. They may occasionally be a little insensitive to quieter and more introverted people but they are usually open to being reminded that they need to bring someone into a debate before a decision is made; what they don't do well with is silence. The more extraverts become knowledgeable about introverts, the less tension and misunderstanding will exist and workplace productivity can improve dramatically.

If you don't know what an extravert is thinking you haven't been listening and if you don't know what an introvert is thinking, you haven't asked.

Adapted from Dr. Jon Warner