

## Difference in leadership abilities of introverts and extroverts

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Some people are always in sight, open and sociable, they have a subtle sense of the moods of other people and can find a common language even with a lamppost. Others are withdrawn and shy. Some are burning with crazy ideas and are ready to risk everything for them. Others calculate every step, and with religious zeal they fight for control and order. The first are those whom the German psychologist Carl Gustav Jung called extroverts in 1920. The second are introverts, their antipodes. In what areas of business can representatives of these two psychological types perform best? And which of them is more likely to be a good leader?

From the beginning of time, individuals have been forced to work in groups via the circumstances they were presented with. Naturally, individuals within the groups stepped forward to take roles of leadership, guiding the rest of the group. Since then, an emphasis has been placed identifying those qualities which make successful leaders. Kouzes and Posner (1995) have identified five vital qualities of a leader: challenging the process; inspiring a shared vision; enabling others to act; modeling the way; and encouraging the heart (n4). In an effort to gain personal insight, leader or not, an emphasis on getting to know your personality and how it affects you, has recently taken root in our culture. Most commonly diagnosed via a personality test, persons are commonly defined by characteristics such as introversion and extroversion. The traits of introversion and extroversion help define who an individual is. In an attempt to combine the knowledge of who a person is with what tasks for which they are most equipped, the question has been raised of whether the personality traits of introversion and extroversion correlate with the level of leadership qualities one possesses (n1). Forty college subjects were given the Student Leadership Practices Inventory and a Jung Typology test from Humanmetrics.com. It was hypothesized that there would be significant, positive correlations between extroversion and leadership scores among the five subscales of leadership qualities. After analysis and data collection, it was found that there was not a significant correlation between introversion/extroversion and any of the five subscales of leadership as defined by Kouzes and Posner. Thus, the quality of either being an introvert or extrovert does not have significant bearing on the leadership quality of an individual (n2).

Personality-linked differences surfaced in the ways students divided their time and energy across academic pursuits and non-academic extracurricular pursuits. Further, academic involvement of students in the extraverted group exhibited a preference for higher levels of outward activity and interaction. Stronger responsiveness continued to characterize involvement of the extravert outside of academics, as did low sensory-processing sensitivity and unique social preferences in line with reward sensitivity (n5). Among the introverted group, involvement in and out of academics evidenced stronger preferences for reflectivity; outside of class, high sensory processing sensitivity and unique social preferences also surfaced. Students generally achieved person-environment congruence in college less through personal and more through environmental shifts. A high amount of environmental diversity at the study site helps to explain this finding. Still, personal change did occur. It was the introverted students who tended to speak of substantial challenges associated with personal shifts deemed necessary to achieve congruence.

Only limited evidence supported the prediction, in line with the fourth research question, that students' satisfaction with college and progress toward the degree would be positively associated with their perceptions of congruence between their own personalities and their environments, which reflected their involvement choices (n3).

The overall conclusion arrived at is that, like socioeconomic status and ethnic or cultural background, personality is an important variable to consider when examining student involvement in college. While there is no significant relationship between introversion/extroversion and the five qualities of leadership, the personality of an individual still has tremendous influence on their actions as a leader. Personality by its very definition lends itself to interaction and functioning with other people. Personality is the "distinctive qualities of a person, especially those distinguishing personal characteristics that make one socially appealing" (n4). Should a leader not be appealing, it is unlikely those following him will feel passionate about the goal, let alone follow at all. Perhaps the personality and make-up of an effective leader is something that cannot be studied; perhaps it is an innate gift developed over time. One thing is for certain: for the rest of time that man is on earth, there will be leaders and those who follow. Through further study, one can only hope to make the discovery of what will help to identify tomorrow's leaders.

### **References**

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