

Marketing for Introverts

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The Myers-Briggs assessment for personality styles shows that only one percent of the population is considered introverted and intuitive, two traits that many artists share. Regardless of what role introverts fill in society, they are such a small group, demographically speaking, and are typically not strong at marketing their product or service. The challenge comes when they have completed the perfect design, the perfect book, the perfect blog, the perfect piece of art ... now they have to look for a buyer. To find that buyer, introverts must leave their comfort zone and be “loud and proud.” (We introverts have other words for that, including “rude and pushy”!)

Introverts must recognize their strengths, which include being creative and inspired. Introverts have a sense about people. If they have exercised their intuitive muscle, they sort of know who would welcome a connection and who would not. Introverts are more likely to be aware of their own inner landscape and nurture that landscape when needed. They also are more likely to have a guess about another person’s inner state, and can match that mood with respect. For all you introverts, below are some scenarios and suggestions on how you can handle these situations.

You might be an introvert if you say ...

- **“I don’t want it to seem like I am bragging.”** When we were six and naturally loud and proud, someone told us “bragging is nasty.” This probably someone who did not have the skill that we were proud of, so they played the One-Down game by putting you down so they could feel better. That wasn’t about you; it was really about their insecurities.

Alternate approach: If you’re worried about sounding like a braggart, talk about how the project made you feel instead of just how fantastic it is. Say something like: “I just finished a really fun project! It might be my favorite project so far. I used some new fabric and was amazed at the results. You’ve just got to see it. I get chills just remembering how it felt to be in that room.”

- **“I don’t want to seem too pushy.”** As an introvert, I’m very sensitive to people pushing themselves into my space ... the type that don’t really care about me (other than the fact that I’m breathing and I might have money). There’s just no way I ever, ever, ever want to do that to other people.

Alternate approach: Don’t do that to other people. Start by asking questions about them and what they want. They might just want what you have, or they might not want what you have. Your job is to listen, be curious about their situation, and have your 30 second “elevator speech” ready if they ask what you do.

- **“I don’t want to draw attention to myself.”** Most introverts like being alone and don’t like being in the limelight. Remember that marketing usually is not jumping up on center stage, grabbing the microphone, and making sure all eyes are on you. Marketing is about connecting to some interesting people and sharing what you do.

Alternate approach: Go to marketing events with a friend. Create an agreement as to what you want the other person to highlight about you (and vice versa), and commit to supporting each other as you create new connections. As the two of you meet a new person, after some preliminary conversation,

your friend's job is to say something like, "I'm so glad to meet you, I know you'll enjoy getting to know Mary here. You know, she just got the Chmemmy Award for her unique use of wax finishes on t-shirts ... they're really cool!"

- **"I don't want to come across like I am making a sales pitch."** When we hear ourselves saying that, we're thinking about a specific sales person that was especially pushy or rude. Instead of thinking about a bad experience, think about a positive experience you had, perhaps at a great restaurant. The waitress is taking care of you, suggesting something that would improve your dinner, and essentially "selling" herself to you to ensure a generous tip.

Alternate approach: If you're marketing your product or your business, you *are* in sales. Be all those things that you love about your favorite waiter – kind, respectful, thoughtful. Lead with the benefits and you can be loud, proud *and* respectful. It sounds like this, "I just finished a project for XYZ company. I'll bet what we did for them would be helpful as you develop ideas for your project. Would you like me to arrange for you to see their place?" (If you can, hire someone like Faith Monson who specializes in helping artistic people market their business, www.faithmonson.com).

- **"I'm not comfortable selling myself."** Unless you are walking the streets at night, you're probably not selling yourself. You're selling a product or a legitimate service and you're offering connection and to help others who are building businesses.

Alternate approach: Be very clear what you're selling – a product, a service, knowledge – and what you're selling is separate and distinct from who you are. I really don't want to buy a 200 acre farm in Texas. Trust me, it isn't because I think you dress funny, are too educated, are blue, or speak Texarcana. It isn't about you, it's your product or service and how it would fit into my life. Never take my opinions personally. My favorite saying is "What you think of me is none of my business."

- **"Isn't that too pushy?"** If you work alone, just giving eye contact and being the first to say "hi" can feel pushy. But what if that conversation opener is a welcome connection for the other person? Standing next to someone on the subway and shoving your business card in their hand without any conversation would probably be considered pushy to most everyone.

Alternate approach: Marketing is about creating relationships. Focus on how many and what type of relationships you want. Define who you want those relationships with. Think about how you will create, develop and maintain those relationships. Is it pushy for your neighbor to ask you to care for their cat while they're on vacation, or pushy for you to ask if they'll pick up your paper while you're gone? In my neighborhood, it's just being neighborly. Find your comfort place where you can ask for what you want and are willing to support those in your circle when you can.

**HERE'S TO THE LOUD & PROUD, KIND & THOUGHTFUL, RESPECTFUL & DIRECT
BUSINESS PEOPE THAT WE ARE. INTROVERTS AND ALL!**