

THE INTROVERT SPOT

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How to get more out of an introvert

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You have a talented person on your team that could offer so much more. They're professional ... but keep to themselves and don't reveal much. It's the introvert! Use these ideas to get and keep them engaged.

Perception and trust

Introverts are well aware that a big personality is valued in society — and that just isn't them. They save their breath because louder colleagues often soak up all the attention. To combat this, show that you prize ideas over charisma. They will appreciate this, even if they're not used to it.

Talk to them

It really is this simple. If you want to catch a glimpse of an introvert's world, make some time to talk to them. Ask open-ended questions and listen more than you talk. You can even discuss things unrelated to work; just keep it light and don't get too personal. If you want to know more about their life, start by sharing details of yours ... they might feel the urge to reciprocate a bit. Above all, your efforts need to be sincere. You're investing in a relationship that can pay dividends for years to come.

A different kind of inclusive

If your introvert is to contribute to the team, help them feel comfortable in your work environment. Don't force an extrovert ethos on them. Give them assignments, and space to operate. If they are competent, you won't need to micro-manage them. Otherwise, they might begin planning their exit.

Final thoughts

Your talent search will sometimes lead you to an introvert. With the right approach you can optimize their production ... and gain an edge over competitors who lack the flexibility to work with these capable people.



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