

The Extreme Fundraising Ezine, Vol. II Issue 9

Welcome to the April 27 edition of the Extreme Fundraising Ezine. And a special welcome to our new subscribers!

This week we'll begin our new series on our natural abilities and how these affect the way we go about raising money. We'll start with the abilities that are related to our "Personal Style": Extrovert/Introvert, Generalist/Specialist, and Time Frame Orientation. Today, we'll take a quick look at extroversion and introversion and what implications that might have on fundraising.

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I. Personal Style: Extrovert/Introvert

Extroversion and introversion fundamentally involves (1) where someone gets energy and (2) how that person processes information.

******EXTROVERTS******

Extroverts get energy from being around people in unstructured settings. Often, simply being in the same room with other people energizes them. They are drained when being isolated or in an environment with incredibly structured interpersonal relationships. Often extroverts in these situations will find themselves picking at food, making random phone calls, or getting up and walking the halls in an attempt to re-energize themselves.

When it comes to processing information, it's been said that if extroverts aren't talking, they aren't thinking. That isn't too far from the truth. Extroverts are verbal processors—they talk about their ideas, tweak them as they talk, and then figure out what they're thinking. This can be confusing for others because it can look like extroverts are forever changing their mind. Often an idea isn't "real" until an extrovert has been able to brainstorm about it with other people. For them, interacting with people IS a worthy objective and a concrete task.

******INTROVERTS******

Introverts, on the other hand, tend to get energy from being alone or working with people in very structured ways. This does NOT mean they are socially inept. It simply means interacting with people for extended periods of time, especially in unstructured settings, will usually drain them. They'll often need to go to lunch alone or close their office door to re-energize.

When introverts process information, they do the processing internally. They'll mull over an idea by themselves, polishing it, making it just right. THEN, they'll be ready to share it with others. When they finally do verbalize their idea, it's a finished product.

******CONFLICT******

Since we all tend to assume people think and act like we ourselves do, there is plenty of room for misunderstanding! Take for instance, when an extrovert hears an introvert share an idea in a staff meeting. The extrovert starts batting the idea around like a cat with a ball. The introvert gets angry that his idea is being treated so lightly. Both get offended, wondering how the other could be so callous. We all assume everyone else sees the world just as we do! Extroverts processing externally EXPECT to bat ideas around with a group of people. But introverts processing internally expect spoken ideas to have already been well thought out.

Can you imagine how much more productive this encounter would be if both people knew these differences BEFORE the meeting? Each would be able to step back and question their natural impulse. The extrovert could realize that the introvert has spent a lot of time with the idea they just shared. And the introvert would understand when the extrovert tries to play with the idea. That's just what extroverts do. It doesn't excuse either person but it does open up a way for each to begin speaking the other's "dialect."

******IMPLICATIONS FOR FUNDRAISING******

I bet you've already begun to see how this can affect the way we go about raising money. In a former life, I was an alumni director at a boarding school. One of the ideas I piloted was having alumni gatherings at brew pubs. Not an earth shaking new idea, but a huge step out of the norm for the school. I thought these events were great. I'd hang out with alum of all types, get to know them better, update them about the school, and ask for money, all in a completely unstructured way.

Then I introduced this concept to an event we were going to have with the headmaster. The director of development and the headmaster graciously agreed to try it out. Unfortunately I wasn't aware of the differences between extroversion and introversion. I loved the unstructured nature of these events. But neither of them did. And why would they? While it was always wonderfully enlivening to me, interacting with people for hours in such an unstructured way was incredibly draining for them. I thought the event went very well; but they were exhausted. We decided not to do that kind of event again.

******WHAT ABOUT YOU?******

Fortunately, this is natural tendency is very easy to act on. Where do you get your energy? From people or from time apart? Do you need to modify your interaction with donors and the events that you throw to include others? How do you process information: internally or externally? If you're a verbal processor, perhaps you should figure out what you want to say BEFORE you find yourself sitting across from the donor?

I'd love to hear your thoughts and ideas. (I'm an extreme extrovert!) Send them to me at: marc@fundraisingcoach.com.

II. Marc's Speaking

It's finally here; tomorrow I'm giving a brand new 3-hour seminar on "Handling Objections." If you're in the area Lewiston-Auburn area, there may still be room. You can find the details at <http://www.cmcc.edu/training/>.

III. A Survey

The Extreme Fundraising subscribers' survey is still available! Please help me make this ezine "extremely" effective. Take the survey at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=88096426510>

To your extreme fundraising success!

Marc

Marc A. Pitman is an executive coach to nonprofit leaders. An expert in helping people identify their natural abilities, he's committed to providing down-to-earth information that will decrease stress and put the "fun" back into fundraising!

The Extreme Fundraising Ezine is a complimentary newsletter of The Fundraising Coach <http://fundraisingcoach.com>. Feel free to pass it on!

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