I’m Donna and I’m an Introvert.

How this workshop came to be. GREAT meeting, session on diverse careers. Speaker urged listeners to get out and be visible, promote yourselves. An audience member got up and asked, “But what if we don’t know how to do that? We have never been taught.” The subtext was, we’re scientists, we’re introverts, it’s not what we do. So I got the idea to create a workshop to develop the skills and techniques. I called it, “Confidence for Introverts.” But the organizing committee asked me to change the title. Why? Because it stereotyped scientists! And that’s exactly the problem! The idea that introversion is a fault to be cured. Well, I am here today to tell you that it isn’t. The workshop is now called, “Your Inner Confidence: Make it Work for You” but in my mind it’s still Confidence for Introverts. Introversion is not a problem or a pathology. You don’t need to be cured.

If not an introvert, don’t worry. It’s best when we all understand each other, live & work w/all types

Not doing a quiz, you know who you are. But – definition - Who has taken MBTI?

While this isn’t a workshop about networking or public speaking, a lot of the issues are similar. And really, networking doesn’t happen only at Networking events. It’s an ongoing mindset. It’s building connections for mutual benefit. Which is getting outside yourself. Which takes confidence.

The basic idea is: You have strengths that you are not putting to use. Identify your strengths and see how they can help you make the most of a world that is not yet tuned to your wavelength.

First. Let’s shake off some misconceptions. Identify your negative self-talk and write your rebuttals. Base them on facts. Worksheet (Adapted from Ancowitz) [ex. I’ll never get a job in academia]

Next. Score yourself on these traits. What else can you add? (technical expertise, persistence, trustworthiness, creativity, problem-solving…). Which of these can you use?

Worksheets (adapted form Ancowitz).

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A. Identify your most common self-criticisms, then refute or respond to them, using facts and/or what others have said about you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Negative self-Talk</th>
<th>Your refutation/response</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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B. Rate how good you are at these activities
Very weak     Very strong
Researching literature  1  2  3  4  5
Concentrating  1  2  3  4  5
Thinking before you speak or act  1  2  3  4  5
Writing  1  2  3  4  5
Working Independently  1  2  3  4  5
Building deep, lasting relationships  1  2  3  4  5
Listening attentively  1  2  3  4  5

What does this tell you about your strengths?________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
Can you think of other, similar strengths?___________________________________________

What accomplishment are you most proud of?  (Does not have to be science-related)
_____________________________________________________________________________

Which of your strengths contributed to this accomplishment? _____________________________

Think of a time you solved a problem that helped another person. ___________________________
What strengths did you use?_________________________________________________________________________

What is the last thing you did that someone appreciated?_____________________________________
What does that tell you about your strengths?_______________________________________________

Which of all these strengths can you use to increase your visibility?______________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

The Big Three: Introverts are Reflective, focused and self-reliant: Think to talk, deep focus, energy <- within
Extroverts are verbal, expansive, social = talk to think, wide range, energy from others. Prefer conversation to silence. Expansive. Quantity over quality of connections. Energized by others, including small talk.

Quiz: Why do extroverts have voicemail? To never miss a call. Why do introverts have voicemail? To never answer the phone.

Think to Talk: Require time to process. Think through, even write down impressions, reactions, responses. Thus more committed to our spoken ideas than extroverts, who are deciding while they speak. If we are forced to answer without thinking, our answer may be inaccurate or incomplete. Guiding technique: Pause. Plan.
Strategize an approach, research options, clarify goals before acting. **Example:** Our relationship with email: It’s complicated. We love it because we can compose our thoughts and avoid talking when we don’t have the energy for it. BUT: we tend to read too much into emails and see unintended meanings.

**Deep Focus:** Highly selective in relationships and how we spend our time. Good listeners, can focus attention on others, and follow up well. When excited by a concept, drill down. Do not tolerate interruptions well. Can be intensely private: Don’t freely share personal information. **Guiding technique:** Process. **Focus.** This selectivity means less energy expended to get better results.

**Energy from Within:** Being “on” in a group is draining. We need alone time or we get exhausted. **Guiding technique:** Pace yourself. Retreat to recharge.

Introvert strengths: Strong listening, focusing attention on others, well executed followup.

Hi-performance I’s Do well at: one-on-one discussion, delving into areas of expertise, writing and editing

E Strengths include: Promoting projects and people, conversation, generating excitement for new ideas.

High performance Es do well at: Group discussion, pursuing a range of topics, interaction and activity.

You would rather listen than talk. You are adept at building deep, lasting relationships. Trusted, accountable. A source of expertise. You’re not a schmoozer; you value your time and space.

**SCENARIOS**

CLOSE: (From Zack) Arm fold exercise: Stand up, shake out your arms. Relax your shoulders. Fold your arms. Hold it a few moments, noticing how it feels. Shake out again. Now fold with the other arm on top. Do the best you can. Shake out, fold your arms normally. Last, fold with the opposite arm on top again.

A. (Write three words or phrases) describing how it felt to fold normally.

B. (Write three words or phrases) describing how it felt to fold the opposite way.

C. Was it even slightly easier to fold your opposite arm the second time: Pick one: Yes No A little bit

D. If folding your opposite arm on top were crucial to your success and professional development, could you teach yourself to do it? Pick one: Yes No Maybe

Analyze. Automatic= your natural preference. Opposite=had to consciously think. **Preference is not ability.** Practicing a new behavior is like flexing your style. (Ambidextrous (and “centrovert”) people may have no trouble.)

**One is no better than the other.** You can be very effective in your career with an Introvert style now that you know how to use your Introvert strengths.

**SCENARIOS (Thanks to Audrey Trapp)**

**At a scientific meeting**

You are the only person from your University attending an international conference in Geneva. You have won a travel grant from your PDA, and your Department has paid the rest. Thus, you feel obligated to attend every event and make a complete report.
1. **Meet the VIP**: Before you left, your mentor strongly suggested that you “look up” a famous researcher from Beijing University who is doing important work on a topic related to your project in the lab. You know that this researcher is giving a presentation on the second day of the conference and you know you must make contact with her. What do you do?

   Understand your goal. Use your Think->talk and Deep Focus skills. Research her (find a photo). Contact her in advance. If possible, have your PI introduce you by email or LinkedIn. Plan to attend her talk. Prepare a question based on your knowledge of her research. Try to schedule a time to meet, e.g. at a coffee break following her talk. At her talk, you may come up with a different Q as you listen. Ask it in the Q&A if possible. If you are not able to ask your Q, you have something to ask later. If you did ask your Q, follow up when you meet.

2. **The Cocktail Party**: You barely have time to shower and change before the opening cocktail reception. You are apprehensive about attending but feel you should. The enormous hotel ballroom is packed with people and very noisy. You put on your name tag and get a drink. Then what do you do?

   Schedule your time. If you go to this party, stay away from some other event. You don’t have to go to everything. If you do, you will burn out and be of no help to your colleagues back home. Give yourself a goal (meet a specific person). Use your Pace Yourself skill. You need some time alone to recharge or you will drain your reserves. Reframe [cf Weightwatchers]: Change the way you think about the event. Not idle chat, sharing personal information, talk to a lot of strangers. Instead, an opportunity to do what we do best: listen, focus, pursue a meaningful connection to one or a few people. Prepare a few things to say (look at trending topics, current articles). Talk to the staff (non-threatening). Talk to people in line, using open-ended Qs. Keep a pleasant expression: people will perceive you as approachable and confident. Make eye contact (forehead), Perform small friendly, courteous gestures. Talk to another solo.

3. **Spotlight on You**: Your Abstract has been accepted for oral presentation. Good for you! What opportunities does this present for you? What worries you (be specific)? How will you make the best possible impression?

   Opportunities: You will get great visibility for your work. People will want to meet you, maybe even hire you. Think->Talk helps you plan and practice so your statements will be clear and forceful. You will project confidence. Deep Focus skills help you know your audience. The skills you used for networking (#2) work here too: looking professional, strong but natural posture, gestures and voice, “eye” contact.

   Risks: You fear you’ll forget or mispronounce something. Memorize your start and finish. Practice! Use notes (top half of page). Or the crowd will drain your energy. Don’t greet at the door. Sit in front and save your strength. Or there will be tough questions. Anticipate. Seize control if need be. You are the expert, after all. You were invited and it’s your job to speak, not the big professor in the audience.

**Interviewing for an Assistant Professor Position**

You are completing your postdoc and applying for jobs in research universities where you can pursue your science and teach graduate students. After a few positive telephone interviews, you are invited for a two-day visit to a school in which you have a real interest. You are confident about your ability to interview with future colleagues and the Dean and to present your research to faculty and students. You are less comfortable with the more informal activities.

4. **Dinner with Grumpy**: The Chair of the Search Committee is an older professor with a reputation for being difficult and unfriendly. This professor asked a very challenging question during the telephone interview. You
You have been feeling embarrassed about your response. You have played this question and your inadequate answer over and over in your mind. The itinerary arrives and you discover, to your dismay, that you are having dinner with this professor at a restaurant immediately after checking into your hotel. What do you do?

Our Deep Focus can make us exaggerate the effect of our faux pas. Other people don’t. Beware of running yourself down with negative self-talk about your lack of confidence etc. [Again, see Weightwatchers: use words that will keep you motivated and make you feel and perform better]. Don’t overestimate the impact of adverse events. Grumpy won’t remember or won’t care, so don’t remind him. Be a learner not a victim. Consciously replace negativity with a revised, positive version. You are a researcher: Learn about Grumpy and his Department. Find common ground. Prepare intelligent Qs. You are a problem-solver: Be prepare with how you can contribute, and how you can be the answer to the need they are trying to fill. Don’t eat messy foods or drink too much.

5. Unhappy Hour: Your itinerary lists a “Happy Hour” reception as the very last item on your hectic schedule. Faculty and students are invited to a patio outside of a campus cafe to “relax and ask final questions of the candidate for Assistant Professor of Human Genetics.” You arrive at the patio feeling totally exhausted from the grueling two days of interviews and wanting to simply catch the plane back home. “I don’t have any words left for these people,” you think to yourself. What can you do?

When you do your homework for the interview, prepare in advance a few things to say for this event specifically. Select a few personal facts you are comfortable sharing. You will sound spontaneous, like an easy conversationalist. Don’t take advice from Extroverts, like, “collect as many cards as you can.” Change the rules. You don’t have to connect with the whole world. Limit your talk time with people and how many you engage. Get them to talk. Schedule downtime and take breaks. Don’t be embarrassed if you forgot some names. Hydrate. Have your host or guide get you out on time.

6. Career Change: You are a postdoc in a large cancer research group. You have been productive and enjoy science. For a variety of reasons, however, you have become interested in exploring careers away from the bench. Your PI is cautiously supportive.

You think you would like to have more of an impact on the public. The nonprofit sector seems appealing; perhaps a foundation or association, but you don’t know where to begin. How can you get started and position yourself for a job in that arena?

Use your connections, as well as career Web sites to and books, to get a general idea about the field. These will lead you to individuals you can contact. Use your contact’s name if you have permission, or better, have him/her make the introduction. Do Informational interviewing: You can learn a lot about an organization, and it can open doors. Research the specific place and Google the person. Find common ground. Use your Deep Focus skills to craft intelligent Qs. You are asking for insights and advice, not a job. Some areas: What is the work like, How does one prepare, Work-life satisfaction, Advancement, Compensation, Additional sources/Recommendations

Ancowitz, Nancy, Self-Promotion for Introverts, the Quiet Guide to Getting Ahead. McGraw Hill, 2010 (more business-oriented but a lot of nuggets)

Zack, Devora Networking for People Who Hate Networking Berret-Koehler, San Francisco, 2010 [Not targeted to scientists but fairly universal]