

Resources

[CareerBuilder.TV »](#)

[Job Seeker Blog »](#)

[Job Seeker Toolkit »](#)

[Salary Calculator »](#)

[Career Fairs »](#)

[Career Tests »](#)

[Degrees & Certificates »](#)

[Skills Training »](#)

[Networking Online »](#)



[Free Salary Calculator >>](#)

careerbuilder.com™

Shy? 10 Tips for Introverted Job Seekers

Jennifer B. Kahnweiler, author of "The Introverted Leader: Building on Your Quiet Strength"



There is no magic bullet or one-size method for managing your introversion in a job search. But in today's noisy business world, you can learn how to build on your quiet strength and succeed. The goal is not changing your personality or natural style, but embracing and expanding *who you are*.

As an ongoing framework, follow the "Four Ps": preparation (devising game plans); presence (focusing on the moment); push (stretching and growing); and practice (rehearsing and refining). Here are 10 specific tips for doing this:

1. Have a game plan

Rather than wing it on the people part of your job search, have a game plan. Prepare for high-stakes interviews and events -- anticipating key questions and rehearsing your responses.

2. Communicate early and often

It's easy for introverts to be out of sight and out of mind. So, take the initiative

in sharing information with others -- communicating early and often with former bosses and co-workers, industry contacts and prospective employers. Don't wait to be asked for info or updates. Find out what people need or want to know and provide it to them ahead of time.

3. Match the medium to the message

Resist the temptation to hide behind the Internet. E-mail, for instance, may appear to be the easiest or safest channel, but it's not always the right one. For every exchange throughout your search, match the medium to the message -- determining if e-mail, phone or face-to-face is best.

4. Use social networking to set the stage

Technology is a great tool for preparing to meet people in person. Use social

networking Web sites, such as LinkedIn, Facebook and BrightFuse, to set the stage for connecting with others at get-togethers and special events. You can introduce yourself, find common ground and warm up cold leads -- all in a low-key yet friendly way.

5. Assert yourself

Assertiveness gets a bum rap. Often confused with aggressiveness, it is simply being open, honest, and direct -- asking for what you need and want. If you fail to assert yourself in your job search -- from staying in front of employers to seeking the salary you deserve -- you risk losing out on critical opportunities and facing disappointment and frustration.

6. Stand up to "talkers"

Don't be afraid to deal with chatty, extroverted interviewers. One simple, sure-fire strategy for getting a word in edgewise: find a momentary opening, paraphrase what you've heard and bridge to your own point.

7. Ask great questions

There is power in the questions you ask. In interviews, asking great questions can mean figuring out what's really important to potential employers. Two invaluable questions for the person who might be your future boss: "What keeps you up at night?" and "How will you measure success?"

8. Value humor

"A smile is the shortest distance between two people," mused entertainer Victor Borge. As a reserved, introverted job seeker, you can overcome perceptions of being standoffish or too serious by smiling, laughing and having a little fun. You need not "yuk it up" -- just be good-humored.

9. Be a storyteller

Stories put oomph into ideas and help engage and connect people. Make storytelling a part of your own style -- weaving real-life anecdotes and examples into interviews and conversations. Try using the "SAR" approach -- situation (What was the situation or challenge?), action (What steps did you take?) and result (What was the outcome?)

10. Brag on yourself

Introverts tend to stay mum about their accomplishments -- seeming to abide by the old Southern adage, "Don't brag on yourself." Yet today job searches are made or broken by what others know about a person's skills and potential. Bottom line? Sell yourself.

Finally: practice, practice, practice. Learning different skills and behaviors may be uncomfortable at first, but with conscious repetition and refinement, you can manage your introversion -- and succeed in your job search.

Jennifer B. Kahnweiler is a workplace and careers expert and author of ["The Introverted Leader: Building on Your Quiet Strength"](#) (Berrett-Koehler, \$19.95). Founder and president of AboutYOU Inc., an Atlanta-based leadership consultancy, she is an executive coach and corporate speaker. Contact her on the Web at www.aboutyouinc.com and www.theintrovertedleaderblog.com.

Last Updated: 16/07/2009 - 4:10 PM

Related Articles

- 25 Best Jobs for Boomers
- 6 Benefits of a Bottom-Rung Job
- Discover Your Passions to Find the Right Job
- What Everyone Should Know About Rethinking Retirement