

Insights for Today's Leaders

A FREE publication for you from Joyce Shelleman, PhD
Leveraging the Potential of Introverts in Professional Life

Dear Joyce,

In this issue of Insights for Today's Leaders, you'll find:

- * Survive Hard Times by Using the Three P's of Career Positioning for Introverted Professionals -- Part 1
- * A Practical Tip for Introverts
- * A Special Offer

My Best Regards to You,

Joyce

Survive Hard Times by Using the Three P's of Career Positioning for Introverted Professionals -- Part 1

By Joyce Shelleman, PhD



Tired of economic doldrums? In times of uncertainty, many professionals are afraid to change positions. Even when a move might signal new opportunity. Often, this reluctance is for good reason due to the instability in markets and industries and to the difficulty that introverts sometimes face in being understood in professional settings where extraversion is idealized.

The good news is that you can keep moving forward despite the stagnation. By taking on what I call the "3 P's of career positioning for introverted professionals", you will be poised to take advantage of the upturn when it comes, as it surely will. The three P's are: Prepare, Practice, and Portfolio.

These P's are tailor made for an introvert to implement successfully because they rely on skills that you already possess in abundance, such as quiet reflection, analysis, and persistence. In this article, part 1 of 3, we consider the first P: Prepare.

Prepare

At this time of flux, it is especially important to be alert to the macro-level changes that will lead to an altered professional and business environment for you in the future. Change is happening all around us. Learn to look far and wide at the trends and events where effects may ripple back and create new opportunity for you. As an introvert, you have the reflective skill to do this effectively.

Consider this example. Downturns in industries such as mortgage lending and automobiles may be coupled with steady -- even if currently slowed -- growth in fields like alternative energy and health services for seniors, especially boomers.

Here's what you can do. Read the news and ask yourself, "How will these trends affect my **clients** (or customers), my **competitors**, and **development in my field** (or industry)?" Pay attention to both the news in general as reported in major newspapers as well as updates from your trade and professional publications/web sites.

With regard to clients, consider: 1) their needs for new or different services/products, 2) their desired services/products, and 3) their willingness and ability to pay that could affect your price points. How does this economy affect them? You may find that recessionary effects are not universally negative but that needs and demands are simply redirected in some cases as client priorities change in response to their employment situations and retirement portfolios.

Consider competitors who may be weakened, strengthened, or retired or put out of business by the recession. Keep in mind that other professionals in your field may be your personal competitors when it comes to your future career advancement.

Finally, consider recessionary effects on business development in the form of new construction, service/product line and geographic expansions, and possible acquisitions. For example, if you're in the nonprofit sector, grant-making may be down. How does this affect the ability of your organization to grow and develop? Does it spur new collaborative effort with another agency, or might it stimulate a merger? These potential effects may seem removed from you now but they can lead to new career opportunities. By making the effort to anticipate changes, you will be better prepared to take advantage of them.

To Be Continued

In Parts 2 and 3 of this article, we will consider the second and third P's that can help you move forward with your career even during downturns: Practice and Portfolio.

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A Practical Tip for Introverts

When you are annoyed by an extravert -- as all of us can be on occasion -- here's a way to gain perspective. Try to go beneath the surface talk and imagine what unmet need the individual is experiencing. Is it to be heard? To be connected with you or others? To feel as if his or her work really matters? Or something else. Once you connect with someone's unspoken human need, it becomes easier to listen with compassion.

A Special Offer -- Want to meet or do you need a speaker?

I am preparing an itinerary that could take me to various locations next winter and spring. If you are interested in a gratis consult with me or in having me speak to your group or present a workshop, please get in touch soon. For more information, see the Resources page of my Website.



[Link to more information on this topic.](#)

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Joyce Shelleman, PhD
PO Box 902
Gardiner, Maine 04345
(207) 582-1204

Email: [joyce\(at\)selleman.com](mailto:joyce(at)selleman.com)

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