Framing Group Projects: Leadership and Style in Small Group Dynamics

The Honors Program
Senior Capstone Project
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Senior Capstone Project for Jillian Bonafede

ABSTRACT

The purpose of my Capstone was to look at small group dynamics and the factors that have a profound impact upon them. I used Bryant University's IDEA Program as the template for my project for, and arena from which I collected my research. The IDEA Program is a three-day ideation and innovation program that all first-year students are required to participate in. I observed, filmed and questioned twenty-five of the first-year students participating in the program. After my research and analysis, I found that there were four factors that greatly influenced the dynamics of a small group, as well as its overall success. Those four factors include leadership style, the ability to play to the strengths of others, comfort with creativity and the detrimental effect of minimal contributors on the group.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>

What do you think of when you think of a group? Does school come to mind? A project? A team? What about the room that you're sitting in? If there are other people around you, you are participating in a group of sorts. Someone may have established themselves as a leader or perhaps all of you have an understanding that no one is to speak. Whatever the case may be, nearly anytime that you are with others, you are participating in a group and group dynamics come into play.

But why is that important? If we interact in groups and manage to come away relatively unscathed from groups every day, why are group dynamics, and their study, relevant? Take Bryant University for example, where a large emphasis is placed on group projects. As a typical Bryant student, I did a little number crunching and found that, in my 4 years here, I have been given a group project or formal group assignment in 68% of my classes and done informal group work in well over 80% during my Bryant career. That means that over 80% of the grades I have received and times that I have been evaluated have been based upon more than my personal effort and achievements. I, and many other students, are being measured not on whether or not we walk away unscathed from a group encounter, but how well we manage and thrive- how well we can effectively communicate with those around us.

It could then be argued that how well you work in groups can have an effect, either positively or negatively, on your GPA- so if you could figure out a way to make a better group, why wouldn't you? And for faculty members, if you had a way to encourage all groups and bring out the best in each, wouldn't you?

These are some of the things that the study of group dynamics looks into, it is the study of how to thrive and not just survive group encounters- it is the study of how to make groups function as best they can.

IDEA PROGRAM

One arena that group work, especially in recent years, has taken center stage at Bryant, is with the IDEA Program. The IDEA Program is an ideation and innovation program designed to encourage first-year students to be unabashedly creative and innovative. The program spans approximately fifty-six hours and puts students in a high energy, stress and context environment. It aims to enforce to students that failure is a necessary part of success- that you must fail early and fail often in order to have a better end result. One of the ways that this is taught, is through an exercise called The Marshmallow Challenge. The Marshmallow Challenge charges participants to create the tallest structure that they can under a strict time constraint using just dry spaghetti, tape, string and a marshmallow that must go on top. This exercise has been observed and tested thousands of times and of those times, one group of participants are cited as performing consistently as the worst- business students. Perhaps even more surprising is the group of participants that often does the best, kindergarten students. The reason that business students and the like underperform on this exercise is because they are afraid to fail. They plan, struggle for power and at the last minute construct and place the marshmallow on top only to find that the structure has collapsed, at which time there is a scramble to finish. Instead of rapid prototyping, as kindergarten students do, and finding out what does and does not work early on, they get stuck on an idea, a proposed solution. The IDEA Program is trying to reteach what we all once knew, that failure is an integral part of success.

Before The Marshmallow Challenge, however, there are several steps that the students participating must go through. All of the first- year students are broken up into cohorts of twenty-five and then divided into groups of five within their cohorts. Each cohort is given a design thinking challenge and asked to solve it. There are about thirty-six different topic choices and students are asked to rank their top choices. Once a topic is assigned and the groups are broken up, each cohort of twenty-five is assigned three mentors, a student, staff member and faculty member. The mentors help the cohort to reach their full potential by challenging and encouraging them through various exercises and activities, much like the Marshmallow Challenge. Additionally, each student is administered the Myers Briggs Type Indicator test, or

MBTI. The MBTI is a personality type indicator test widely used in business settings that gives those who take it a four letter typology of their personality preferences. Those preferences include introversion and extroversion, sensing and intuition, thinking and feeling and judging and perceiving. Your four letter typology is made up of one letter from each of the 4 set of characteristics. I chose to focus on the introversion and extroversion aspect of the MBTI and small group dynamics.

INTROVERSION AND EXTROVERSION, PILOT STUDY

So what are introversion and extroversion? Classically, and as defined by researchers such as psychologist Carl Jung, introversion and extroversion are two very distinct ideas and preferences. The defining point between the two is often cited as the area from which a person draws their energy- introverts draw their energy from within and require alone time to recharge in-between social interactions while extroverts are said to draw their energy from those around them (Jung, 1990). Introverts are thought of as quiet, maybe a little withdrawn, shy and tend to prefer individual work to group work. Extroverts, on the other hand, may be called the life of the party, loud, in your face. While these stereotypes can be true in some people, they are just that, stereotypes. While introversion and extroversion were thought to be these very rigid categories, as author Susan Cain states "There is no such thing as a pure extrovert or pure introvert. Such a man would be in the lunatic asylum" (Cain, 2013).

One of the main reasons that I chose to focus on introversion and extroversion was the groups that I was paired with my first year as an IDEA mentor. Of the five groups in my cohort, one was comprised of all introverted students, another of all extroverted students and the remaining three groups were a mix. While I hadn't yet officially begun my project, I observed how the introverted and extroverted groups interacted within their groups and it was fascinating. The all introverted group went against all that the IDEA Program is trying to teach- teamwork, self-expression- they worked completely separately from one another, coming together only when absolutely necessary. They were very classically introverted, all relatively quiet, to themselves and a little shy. The extroverted group was constantly talking with one another, putting building rapport above completing the task at hand. At the end of the program, it was very evident which

project had been completed by the introverted students and which by the extroverted students-the introverted group went on to be recognized by the IDEA committee for their excellent project. They were so completely different- in the way that they worked with one another, how they tackled the project, their end results. I began to question the effect that personality type could have on the dynamics of a small group. I hypothesized that introversion and extroversion were deciding factors in the dynamics of a small group and its overall success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Though I found a plethora of information, there were many contradictions on the approach to introversion and extroversion. For example, introversion and extroversion are often defined as "opposite psychological types. … [T]he activity of the extrovert directed more toward the external world and that of the introvert inward upon himself or herself" (Colombia, 2013). I found this bothersome as, in the preliminary experience that I have, the amount of overlap between introversion and extroversion is rather large.

The idea of academic performance was also a central topic in various articles. While I did not find a suitable definition within those sources, I defined academic performance, loosely, as how happy one was with the outcome of an academic endeavor, how they felt about the work that they were doing and if they would repeat their behaviors. I then defined social performance, which did not appear frequently in the literature but was relevant to my research, in a similar fashion- how satisfied one was with an interaction, if they would repeat their behavior et cetera. With all of that said, the literature that I found initially was very in line with my definitions. Many of the articles connected introversion with high academic achievement, in the form of grades, leaving extroverts to thrive, from what I deduced, in the social arena. Additionally, it was stated that there was a very real link between learning style and achievement (Offir & Barth, 2007). The article went on to say that while personality type may be an indicator of academic success, it is really only valid if the idea of "one size fits all learning" is phased out (Offir & Barth, 2007). I thought that that claim was especially important because it showed a possible flaw in previous research- if academic success is determined by grades and a student is not taught the way that they learn best, how is that an accurate representation of knowledge.

This also brings to light a possible flaw with my own research environment. The IDEA Program is a very intense, high pressure and social driven program and, regardless of personality type, is not the type of environment that all would be able to put forth their best effort.

Several other articles focused more on the social and peer-oriented side of introversion and extroversion. Many asserted that introverts and extroverts respond very differently to peer involvement- that introverted youths saw peers being around or intervening in a negative light while extroverts saw it more positively (Fouts, 1975). This particular article supported their claim by conducting an experiment where the subject was asked to alternate drop marbles in a box with the experimenter. In the case of introverts, it was stated that peers increase social inhibition and amplify the desire to withdraw while peers often have the complete opposite effect on extroverts (Fouts, 1975). I think that these findings will be extremely useful when trying to pinpoint different performative elements in introverts and extroverts. What is meant by performative, is that part of the personality that you display is an act and for the benefit of those around you. For example, often times, the personalities of group members are performances put on to fill a void and make the group most successful.

This is valuable because it may lead to individuals being able to better identify how they operate in group settings and how to maximize efficiencies based upon the role that is required of them at the time. This study may also help to put an end to the notion that personality types of rigid categories and that they are, necessarily, very indicative of a person's successes and abilities.

One of the most important aspects and defining points of my research is that introversion and extroversion are ideas and fluid entities not black and white categories. Without deciding to look at introversion and extroversion in this light, and rather in a more traditional and categorical way, my project would have looked much different. Viewing introversion and extroversion as preferences on a continuum allowed me the ability to focus on, and make sense of, similarities between the two "groups" and those who found themselves prescribing to both introverted and extroverted ideals.

A main problem with trying to redefine the presumed rigid categories of introvert and extrovert is that when the concepts of introversion and extroversion were first brought to the public eye by Carl Jung, they were popularized as such. Jung asserted that introversion and extroversion, and thus those who identified with one or the other, were on polar opposite sides of a spectrum- though we may move back and forth between the different types of energy, as he called it, where we were most at home was very much one or the other.

Old definitions of introversion and extroversion are so ingrained in the way that we, as a society, operate that the process of changing is still just that, a process. Socio-cultural evolution often takes time, and the shift with regards to introversion and extroversion is a perfect example. Much of the current research begins with the original and dichotomized introversion and extroversion scale. However, when you delve a little further, the language used to describe the results is often much more in line with the fluidity that I am arguing. And with that, there are many concessions to previously accepted findings. This was particularly evident in Susan Cain's *Quiet* (2013). In her research she asserts that while, generally as, group size increases, performance decreases there are definite caveats. She found that online brainstorms, when properly managed, do better than individual work and continue to get better as group size increases (Cain, 2013). Additionally, and in contrast to much of the previous research, she found that those who identify as more introverted, while generally looked at as more productive in academic settings than social, may outperform extroverts in social settings when persistence is required.

This type of distinction can be seen even in a setting such as the IDEA Program- often times more than one type of leader is required to make a team great and the IDEA Program cultivates the natural tendencies of those involved and provides an environment to test out leadership styles.

Though most people imagine introverts to be more successful in the academic arena and extroverts to be more successful in the social arena, I have found that it is more common for there to be overlap between the two "groups". Introverts are able to build and maintain close

relationships which eases social anxiety, commonly associated with introversion, and extroverts are active leaders and participants in group projects and discussions which has been shown to increase academic performance (Cain, 2013).

Some of the main differences found within introverted and extroverted groups, include an individual's response to stress. While those who identified with being more extroverted sought out activities related with high stimulation, more introverted individuals may go to extreme lengths to steer clear of such activities (Kaefer, Chiviacowsky, Meira & Tani, 2014). With that being said, much of the research that I have found suggests that more introverted students prefer more cooperative environments than anything else. I think that this will be very useful while observing the IDEA Program. Though from the outside, the IDEA Program looks as if it is geared to be an introvert's worst nightmare and a place for extroverts to thrive, it is setup to be a very cooperative environment and I believe it will be very interesting, and will yield interesting results.

A potential problem that I see with the IDEA Program setup, however, is that with the rapid prototyping that occurs, interruption of one another is nearly an essential part of the process and one that would be very hard to control. One study found that just the act of interruption, even in a cooperative setting, can be a huge barrier to productivity (Cain, 2013).

METHODS, PILOT STUDY

In addition to my research, I sent in a proposal to Bryant's Internal Review Board (IRB). It is mandatory to get IRB approval for any research project in which human subjects are involved so as to ensure that nothing unethical is happening. In the very beginning stages of this project I was working with a small group of students in one of my classes. Once I received IRB approval, I surveyed my participants- a survey that was constricted from a combination of my own questions and questions from previously published surveys. Once the surveys were completed, I asked each of my participants to take the MBTI to then have a measure of how this metric saw them. Next, I interviewed, and recorded, each of my participants for approximately one hour, asking questions to get to know how they saw themselves and how

they felt that they communicated with others. I then coded the interviews, or went through the tape recording line by line to transcribe any and all important aspects of the interview. Finally, I observed half of my participant group in a social setting. The purpose of the observations was to assess how my participants acted in group settings and to see if how they acted was more in line with how the MBTI saw them or how they saw themselves.

After all of this was said and done, my initial hypothesis, that introversion and extroversion were major deciding factors in group dynamics and the overall success of a group, was negated. I had observed that introversion and extroversion were not major factors, one of the reasons being that everyone has the ability to be both an introvert and extrovert, depending on what the situation calls for. I found that, because introversion and extroversion were not rigid categories but fluid ideas on a continuum, that as long as there is a balance, which there nearly always is, introversion and extroversion do not have a profound impact.

PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Once my original hypothesis was disproven, I began to wonder what, if not personality, would have a significant impact on group dynamics. For the second IDEA Program that I was involved in, all groups contained a balance of introverted students and extroverted students, meaning that there was at least one introverted or extroverted student in each of the 5 groups. So instead of assuming that one factor or another would have a profound impact, as business students tend to do, I set out to find what factors, through observation, research and various other methods, had an impact. I went into the second part of my research without a hypothesis, but with two questions to guide my further research and observations.

1. *What makes a good group?*
2. *Why do some groups work better than others?*

METHODS

To answer these questions, I had to begin my research an observations again. I began by, once more, going to the IRB and requesting permission. Once that was obtained, I obtained consent

from all of my participants and then distributed a survey. The survey was a combination of questions that I had constructed as well as questions from previously published surveys, much like my original survey in my Pilot Study. At that, point each participant was administered the MBTI. Next, I began filming my participants. I filmed them during various activities over the three days, including an MBTI workshop, brainstorming session and prototyping session. Afterwards I informally interviews one of the groups, asking why they though their group did well, what could have been improved and similar questions. Finally, I conducted a Frame Analysis on all of the footage. Frame Analysis was invented by Dr. Erving Goffman and entails going through a series of videos frame by frame, looking for similarities, differences, changes in body language, tone et cetera.

RESULTS

After extensive research, analysis and observation, I found that there were four factors that had a profound impact on group dynamics and the overall success of a group. The factors were as follows:

Leadership Style

There were two leadership styles that I observed during the IDEA Program- a Participatory or Democratic Leadership style and a Dismissive or Ineffective style. The first style of leadership that I will discuss is Democratic Leadership. A key and defining point of democratic leadership is that it involves the whole team (Kearney & Gebert, 2009). A great focus is put on building relationships and rapport and decisions are made as a team. There is no set leader, and the team looks to ensure that everyone is comfortable and feels free from judgement. Much of the literature states that members under a more democratic style of leadership are more likely to strive to express themselves, propose solutions and are more likely to have a greater sense of innovation than members of more dismissively lead groups (Martin, 2009). Democratically lead groups often have more open exchanges of ideas and discussion which has been shown to lead to an increase in creative ideas as well as critical and analytical perspectives (Martin, 2009). Additionally, the literature also touches on the fact that team members are more likely to put great effort into the implementation of decisions, groups made or

otherwise, if they feel that they have had an active and valued role in the process (Hoegl & Parboteeah, 2006). Though it may seem intuitive and obvious, when asked what differentiates a great leader and experience from a poor one, the extent to which a team member feels valued and listened to is often cited as one of the most important factors (Tost, Gino & Larrick, 2013).

Of the five groups that I observed, one group, by far, worked the best together- they were enthusiastic, engaged and creative. The group consisted of Tim, introvert, Evan, extrovert, Ashley, extrovert, Tina, introvert and Caroline, extrovert- though no one person played any set introvert or extrovert role. One of the main reasons that this group worked so well, is that they laid a great foundation of support and understanding with one another. The group worked by the "Yes, and" rule and had all manner of crazy ideas. The "Yes, and" method is cited as one of the major rules of Improvisation or Improv. The point of the "Yes, and" method is to keep the conversation going, it is a way to build rapport and encourage comfort with those around you and a steady stream of ideas.

Throughout the entire brainstorming process the group members were all very engaged and having fun with the ideas that each other presented. Each member, in some way or another, took control at least once and they all played to the strengths of their team as a whole. For example, many times Tim would take the lead when redirection of the group was required, however, when the prototyping began and Tim was consumed with making the layout with Tina, Ashley took on more of a leadership role and began setting time goals for everyone. Each of them had a task that they were excited about completing and that energy and excitement helped to push them through the long hours.

Additionally, this group was the most creative in the cohort. While most of the other teams chose to design apps, this group thought about what they had seen that really bothered them, discussed options and decided on designing a whole new prototype of an ideal space. They incorporated ideas that each of them had. As one group member, Tim, said when asked why his group worked so well together, "the fact that there was

no clear leader, as in no dominant personality that exclusively needed to get their way, really helped. Everyone's opinion was valued and everyone was integrated; in a way it was the utopian ideal of democracy".

While going through some of the recorded footage, on SD3.C05, I was able to observe Democratic Leadership in various forms. One of the most notable was the body language of the group. Evan would lean in and Ashley would turn and open her body and shoulders, inviting the rest of the group into the conversation. Tina would move her hand over the plane of the brainstorm. This both made her a part of the ideas that were written down, and also made the connection between herself and the group a little more intimate. Additionally, the group was constantly joking around with one another, building rapport and making one another comfortable. Ashley would sometimes use a gentle laugh to acknowledge an idea that was said and all group members would often repeat the most recent idea so as to both acknowledge the idea and to test it out. The group, though very accepting, did not shy away from questioning one another and making sure that everyone was always in the loop. They did not agree with one another for the sake of agreeing, rather they challenged one another and forced themselves to strengthen reasons and ideas.

A second style of leadership that I observed, was Dismissive or Ineffective Leadership. An Ineffective or Dismissive leader is often one who is not open to the ideas of his or her group. They may openly shut down ideas or fail to provide anything but negative feedback. Members of a group led by a dismissive leader often feel undervalued and unappreciated. Many times, as the literature has shown, Dismissive leaders will dominate a team's conversations as well as interactions- this signals to the team that their perspectives are less than those of the leader (Tost et al., 2013). In turn, when a member feels as though they are not appreciated, innovation, productivity and creativity all suffer.

It has been found that one of the key differences between effective, democratic, leaders and ineffective, dismissive, leaders, is the ability to give positive feedback and recognition. Effective feedback can have a significant positive effect on performance, and when it is not given, members may begin to feel as though they are irrelevant to the process (Longenecker, 2011). There is an idea known as Authority Openness that is shown to greatly suffer under Dismissive Leadership. Authority Openness is the extent to which a team's members feel that the team's formal leader listens to them, is interested in their perspective and cares about them- as people and group members (Tost et al., 2013).

With that in mind, there was a group that demonstrated a leadership style nearly totally opposite that which I described. This group, consisting of Dave, Megan, Rich and Ron, was comprised of two introverts, Megan and Rich, and two extroverts, Dave and Ron. During several of the preliminary brainstorming sessions, when the "Yes, and" method should have been at its most prominent, Dave took a formal leadership role. He designated himself as a sort of police officer of the ideas and had a comment about each idea- most of his comments were cutting the ideas down and dismissing them. When a member of the group would propose an idea, Dave would make a remark such as, "We said that, no", "That couldn't happen", "We can't do that". After this was consistently happening, the group would get into periods of either silence or off-topic chatter followed by a few ideas. As I watched the footage from this group, I found it very frustrating because not only was Dave completely going against the process that the program sets out to teach participants, but he was discouraging his group mates. The rest of the group was surprisingly resilient and managed to get an idea through, though the idea that they chose lacked creativity and originality.

In a number of the observations that I conducted, I found that though Dave was censoring the ideas of the rest of the group, he was also the one throwing the most ideas out. It was strange because in a sense the censorship of the ideas was holding the group back, but there was also such a plethora of ideas being thrown out by Dave.

Additionally, once the group had met or just exceeded their goal, the goal in most cases was to get at least twenty-five ideas, they would become complacent and really not try to improve upon what they already had.

Though Dave often took over the brainstorming sessions, throughout the several brainstorms, it was clear that the group was growing more comfortable with one another and that, specifically Megan, wanted to get involved. As the brainstorms wore on, Megan grew more confident and began throwing out more and more ideas as to how to make their project the best that it could. Despite her audience sometimes being disengaged, her body language was indicative of someone who was engaged and interested in the topic at hand. She would lean into the table and try to clearly articulate not only her point, but her reasoning and some of the potential biases that may occur.

Once past the brainstorming portion of the day and into the prototyping, the group style morphed into something very similar to the all introverted group that I observed my first year doing the IDEA program. Most of the work got done when they group was working individually and they interacted with one another very little, additionally most of the interactions were off-topic. When they did work together, Megan and Rich, the two introverts, worked together and very well while Ron and Dave continued to work separately for the most part. In this section of the day, Dave also sat back a little more and was not as productive or active in the group as he previously was.

Playing to the Strengths of Other Group Members

Playing to the strengths of others is a part of leadership. It is one skill to be able to recognize your own strengths and play to them, but it is a completely separate skill to recognize the strengths of others and harness that energy into a productive work environment. The group that worked exceptionally well together, Tim, Evan, Ashley, Tina and Caroline, was able to bring out the best in one another and channel all of their efforts in a common direction.

During an informal interview that I conducted, when asked about the success of her group, Tina stated, "We all had one job, something we're good at, and didn't fight each other on it". The group members recognized that the sum of the parts of the project that they could create together would be greater than any individual effort. They pushed and challenged one another to work to the best of their individual and group capabilities.

Comfort with Creativity

The comfort with creativity is about more than the ability to be creative, it is about group members feeling valued and comfortable enough to share parts of themselves with those around them (Robinson & Stubberud, 2014). This was frequently a problem in the IDEA groups that I observed. Often times when your ideas are shot down, whether in front of a group or individually, you begin to censor what you say. People do not like to be wrong or feel that they are wrong and thus we hold our tongues because this idea couldn't possibly work and we want to avoid the embarrassment again. In the groups that struggled with creating a safe and stimulating environment, as observed on SD3.C05, the formal leader would act dismissively and verbally tell the other group members why their ideas were wrong, physically cover parts of others ideas that they did not feel were worthy or use their body language to indicate that they did not approve.

In the IDEA group that managed to figure out the key to building a base of rapport had very free flowing ideas. The members would lean into one another and turn their bodies towards the reset of the group. Additionally, the group was questioning one another and using their diverse backgrounds as a spring board to enhance their group. Diversity is cited as one of the main factors that hinders group works- groups use their differences as an excuse for why they did not perform. This group was comprised of athletes, international students, young men and women, introverts and extroverts, several racial and ethnic groups and they used all of their varied experiences to elevate their project. Creativity requires the ability to think divergently and see things from different perspectives and combine previously unrelated processes and ideas into something new

and better, and this is exactly what they did- they embodied creativity (Shin, Kim, Lee & Bian, 2012).

Minimal Contributors and their Detrimental Effect

There was another very interesting phenomenon within the groups when a very extroverted student would be engaged in the large group discussions but a minimal and disengaged contributor within the individual groups. One such instance was with Phil, he was energetic, vibrant, a classic extrovert, while in the large group. However, once the cohort was broken into individual groups, Phil became very detached from the rest of the group, unless speaking about himself. Phil would interject an idea here and there and often position himself to appear as if he was contributing, but would be on his phone the whole time. It was almost as if he was two different people and, while the group worked it out and other members rose to the occasion, it set the tone for the group members who were not directly involved at any given time.

As a whole, this group was comprised of Phil, extrovert, Allie, introvert, Greg, extrovert, Chris, introvert and Jeff, introvert. They split the work, both idea generation and prototyping, fairly evenly between Allie, Greg, Chris and Jeff throughout the course of the project. Much of the planning fell on the shoulders of Allie, who really stepped up and filled the role as a group leader, along with Greg. The two of them often directed and led the conversation, with Jeff contributing a significant amount though not really taking on a leadership role. At first, it almost seemed as if both Phil and Chris were disengaged however, upon further inspection, I realized that though Chris was quiet, he was very actively listening and processing. Chris would make a point only after he had thoroughly thought about it first.

It was very frustrating to see how Phil's behavior not only affected not only the number of ideas put forth and the flow of the group's conversations, but the attitudes of his group members. Additionally, Phil would put himself in positions, physically, that made it seem as if he were a top contributor but would make few comments before going back

to his phone. Phil had positioned himself to be the physical focal point of the group, however, his body language was that of someone who was completely disengaged. His shoulders were slumped, his body was leaning back onto his chair and he was constantly checking his phone. Though, as I said, the group members stepped up and put forth a great effort, when they weren't required to be present and active, phones would come out and each of them would disengage themselves. While that cannot be solely attributed to Phil's behavior, while in the large group, Phil was a focal point and for his behavior to be so drastically different did not help his groups cause.

RELEVANCE, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

But why is all of this important? If we all manage to participate in groups on a near daily basis and survive, why are these factors, and the study of group dynamics important? If there was a way to maximize each and every interaction that you had, wouldn't you want to? Wouldn't you want to increase efficiency, effectiveness, quality of ideas, comfort within the group and overall experience? Knowing how to craft the best teams, or make existing teams perform to the full potential could potentially change the face of group work.

Though the sample size of my study was small, twenty-five participants, and the topics all uniform, that does not detract from the facts- and the facts are that these findings are formidable. Additionally, these findings are just the beginning. To get a more complete analysis of the four factors and why they work, one could observe all cohort within a given IDEA Program, and then extended that over several years. You would be able to not only test to see if, and when, these factors appear and how profound of a role they play, you could also begin to implement them on groups that are struggling in various areas.

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This article stated that personality type is an important explanatory variable in

student performance in economic course at the upper level. The findings were in

line with the hypothesis in that it was found that introverted students received better

marks than otherwise identical extroverted students. The article also went on to

further breakdown personality type by using the Myers-Briggs Personality Type

Indicator Test, which I am planning on having my subjects take. The study also

goes on to discuss how certain personality types combined with race and gender

effects produce students who outperform others.

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Gregory Fouts' article *The Effects of Being Imitated and Awareness on the*

Behavior of Introverted and Extroverted Youth details an experiment using

preadolescents as the subjects. It starts by stating the differences between

introverts and extroverts and how they see imitation- whether in a positive or

negative light. It was hypothesized that extroverts are more positively reinforced

by imitation than introverts are. The experiment that was conducted had 34

participants, each participant was placed in front of a bow with six holes in the

shape of a circle on the top. Four scenarios were tested, "(a) baseline-the subject

dropped marbles 1 at a time in any holes he wished; (b) imitation-the subject and

experimenter alternated dropping marbles, with the experimenter imitating the

subject if he dropped his marbles at a hole designated a priori for imitation; (c)

imitation plus awareness-this was identical to the previous condition except that the

subject was told that he was being imitated at the designated hole; and (d)

extinction-the experimenter dropped her marbles in a prearranged random order"

(Fouts). The findings were in line with the hypothesis, however, I am curious as to

how effective some parts of the experiment were. For example, I wonder how

accurate of a test the marble-dropping experiment was- it is very possible that

whether an individual was classified as an introvert or extrovert that they could

have just caught on to what the experimenter was doing and changed their normal

course of action. The article also states that gender does not actually make a

difference in the results but I question how true that is. Additionally, I am unsure as

whether they take into account people on the line between introverts and extroverts.

Overall, I found this article very helpful. I have found how, in general, introverts

and extroverts respond to imitation as well as the tendencies of extroverts to imitate

other more than introverts. I think that these findings will be helpful because I will

be able to observe how my participants react, while in a group setting, to others

agreeing or imitating what they are saying- or conversely disagreeing. I will look to

see how the introverts and extroverts that I observe react to different scenarios to

see if what I find goes along with the findings in this article.

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Resource Management*, 67-79.

Jung, C. G. (1990). *Psychological Types* (Vol. 6) (S. H. Read, M. Fordham, G. Adler, & W.

McGuire, Eds.). Princeton.

Kaefer, A., Chiviacowsky, S., Meira, C., & Tani, G. (2014). Self-Controlled Practice

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Exercise & Sport, 85*(2), 226-233.

Kaiser, R. B., & Hogan, J. (n.d.). Personality, Leader Behavior, and Overdoing It. *Consulting

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Kearney, E., & Gebert, D. (2009). Managing Diversity and Enhancing Team Outcomes: The

Promise of Transformational Leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77-89.

Longenecker, C. O. (2011). Characteristics of Really Bad Bosses. *Industrial Management*, 10-

15.

MacLellan, C. R. (n.d.). Differences in Myers-Briggs Personality Types Among High School

Band, Orchestra, and Choir Members. In *Journal of Research in Music Education* (pp.

85-100). (Original work published 2011)

The purpose of this article was to explore personality type differences among high

school band, orchestra and choral students using the Myers-Briggs Personality

Type Indicator test. The MBTI for those students as a whole were markedly

different from the school norm- it was found that members of the musical group

were more likely to be intuitive and feeling, though those are not factors that I will

we testing for it is interesting to not as characteristics generally assigned to people

with those personality types can transfer to whether they are introverted or

extroverted. While the groups had similarities when compared to the rest of the

school, they had many differences when compared to one another. For example,

choral students were found to be more likely to be extroverted than students who

participated in orchestra. The connection from this article to my study would have

to be proven and at the moment is a little bit of a stretch. If some of my survey

questions asked about high school and college extracurricular activities I might be

able to see the correlation between their involvements and personality type.

Martin, R. (2009). PathGoal Theory of Leadership. In J. M. Levine & M. A. Hogg (Eds.),

Encyclopedia of Group Processes & Intergroup Relations. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nussbaum, E. M. (n.d.). How Introverts versus Extroverts Approach Small-Group

Argumentative Discussions. In *The Elementary School Journal* (Vol. 102, pp. 183-

197). (Original work published 2002)

Offir, B., Bezalel, R., & Barth, I. (n.d.). Introverts, Extroverts, and Achievement in a Distance

Learning Environment. In *American Journal of Distance Education* (Vol. 21, pp. 3-

19). (Original work published 2007)

This article examines the relationship between cognitive style and achievement

levels. One of the main purposes is to try and understand student related variables

so as to help phasing out the idea of one size fits all learning. This article is a great

one for me because by being able to see how learning styles dictate achievement, and from that possibly drawing conclusions about how personality type is a factor in determining achievement, it may be able to explain in part why introverts and extroverts are the way that they are. For example, two nearly identical people- say both extroverts- have shown to perform better under drastically different circumstances- this article may help me, along with my research and observations to better understand the spectrum that is personality types.

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Pittenger, D. J. (n.d.). The Utility of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. In *Review of Educational Research* (Vol. 63, pp. 467-488). (Original work published 1993)

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Robinson, S., & Stubberud, H. A. (2014). Teaching Creativity, Team Work and Other Soft Skills for Entrepreneurship. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, *17*, 186-197.

Ruf, D. L., & Radosevich, D. M. (n.d.). How Personality and Gender May Relate to Individual Attitudes Toward Caring for and About Others. In *Caring and Global Issues* (pp. 207-215). (Original work published 2009)

This article went into trying to identify whether there were differences, beyond intelligence, between those who experience feelings of empathy and altruism and those who do not. The study asserted that those who were mentally gifted were often more morally sensitive. It also questioned the assumption that advanced moral reasoning was required of gifted individuals and looked to find other factors

that may be the cause. Participants of the study took and MBTI type test on personalitypage.com. Though the results are not as solid had the participants taken a more well-known test, they still held. It was found that extroverts were more concerned in general. Table seven of this article broke the introverted/extroverted results of this study up and was very helpful. Something that I found interesting about the article was that though the responses of extroverts showed more concern then responses of introverts, there was no reported significant difference in action. I think that this article will be really helpful especially with regards to questions that I may ask during my interviews. I definitely plan on seeing how true it is if extroverts care more than introverts. A slight problem that I have with the study is just the part that I hope to look into, though. I am really curious as to how exactly empathy was measured. Overall, I think that it will be an extremely useful article for me.

Shin, S. J., Kim, T.-Y., Lee, J.-Y., & Bian, L. (2012). Cognitive Team Diversity and Individual Team Member Creativity: A Cross-Level Interaction. *Academy of Management Journal*, *55*(1), 197-212.

Somech, A. (2005). Directive Versus Participative Leadership: Two Complementary Approaches to Managing School Effectiveness. *Educational Administration Quaterly*, *41*(5).

Suda, W., & Fouts, G. (n.d.). Effects of Peer Presence on Helping in Introverted and Extroverted Children. In *Child Development* (Vol. 51, pp. 1272-1275). (Original work published 1980)

The purpose of this article is to determine the effects of a social extrinsic variable, peer presence, on the helping of introverted and extroverted children. It is very similar to another of Fouts articles. The article states that introverts and extroverts differ in their degrees of social inhibition and that the presence of a peer amplifies their intrinsic feelings towards a situation. The article states that a peer may serve as a model for motivation, imitation and/ or helping, but in the case of introverts the peer may serve as more of a hindrance- there may be more social inhibition- while extroverts may be more socially aroused by the presence of another. Another issue that is addressed in the article is the concept of diffusion of responsibility. During the experiment, pairs of children were put in rooms with, to their knowledge, little children in the next. Sounds indicating that the children had fallen and may be hurt were played and the action or inaction of the participants was documented. It was found that introverts were more comfortable assisting with the problem after the main trauma had occurred and in auxiliary roles such as describing the situation while extroverts were more likely to jump in and do something. The findings of the study supported that peer presence had different effects on introverts and extroverts as well as the notion that children have different socialization experiences when it comes to helping others. I think that this article will be helpful in my study because I can make note of how forth coming my participants seem to be when in their groups and conversely while in our one on one interviews.

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Exploratory Study. *Journal of Business Communication*, 11-24.

Tost, L. P., Gino, F., & Larrick, R. P. (2013). When Power Makes Others Speechless: The

Negative Impact of Leader Power on Team Performance. *Academy of Management

Journal*, 1465-1486.